# Table of Contents

Introduction ................................................................................................................... 1
  - Framework Purpose and Organization ................................................................. 1
  - Evolution of the Framework ................................................................................. 3
  - Relationship to NIMS ........................................................................................ 3
  - Intended Audience ............................................................................................. 4

Scope ............................................................................................................................. 4
  - Guiding Principles ............................................................................................. 5
  - Risk Basis ............................................................................................................. 6

Roles and Responsibilities ........................................................................................... 7
  - Individuals, Families, and Households .............................................................. 8
  - Communities ....................................................................................................... 8
  - Non-governmental Organizations ..................................................................... 8
  - Private Sector Entities ....................................................................................... 9
  - Local Governments .......................................................................................... 11
  - State, Tribal, Territorial, and Insular Area Governments ................................ 12
  - Federal Government ....................................................................................... 15

Core Capabilities ......................................................................................................... 18
  - Context of the Response Mission Area ............................................................. 19
  - Response Actions to Deliver Core Capabilities ............................................... 25

Coordinating Structures and Integration .................................................................. 28
  - Local Coordinating Structures ........................................................................ 29
  - State Coordinating Structures ......................................................................... 29
  - Private Sector Coordinating Structures ........................................................... 29
  - Federal Coordinating Structures ..................................................................... 29
  - Operations Coordination .................................................................................. 36
  - Integration ......................................................................................................... 42
Relationship to Other Mission Areas ................................................................. 43

Operational Planning ............................................................................................... 44
  Response Operational Planning ................................................................. 44
  Planning Assumptions .............................................................................. 45
  Framework Application ......................................................................... 46

Supporting Resources ......................................................................................... 46

Conclusion ............................................................................................................. 46
Introduction

The National Response Framework (NRF) is an essential component of the National Preparedness System mandated in Presidential Policy Directive (PPD)-8: National Preparedness. PPD-8 is aimed at strengthening the security and resilience of the United States through systematic preparation for the threats that pose the greatest risk to the security of the Nation. PPD-8 defines five mission areas—Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery—and mandates the development of a series of policy and planning documents to explain and guide the Nation’s collective approach to ensuring and enhancing national preparedness. The NRF sets the doctrine for how the Nation builds, sustains, and delivers the response core capabilities identified in another PPD-8 product, the National Preparedness Goal (the Goal). The Goal establishes the capabilities and outcomes the Nation must accomplish across all five mission areas in order to be secure and resilient.

Prevention: The capabilities necessary to avoid, prevent, or stop a threatened or actual act of terrorism. As defined by PPD-8, the term “prevention” refers to preventing imminent threats.

Protection: The capabilities necessary to secure the homeland against acts of terrorism and man-made or natural disasters.

Mitigation: The capabilities necessary to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters.

Response: The capabilities necessary to save lives, protect property and the environment, and meet basic human needs after an incident has occurred.

Recovery: The capabilities necessary to assist communities affected by an incident to recover effectively.

Framework Purpose and Organization

The NRF is a guide to how the Nation responds to all types of disasters and emergencies. It is built on scalable, flexible, and adaptable concepts identified in the National Incident Management System (NIMS)¹ to align key roles and responsibilities across the Nation. The NRF describes specific authorities and best practices for managing incidents that range from the serious but purely local to large-scale terrorist attacks or catastrophic natural disasters.

This document supersedes the NRF that was issued in January 2008. It becomes effective 60 days after publication.

The term “response,” as used in the NRF, includes actions to save lives, protect property and the environment, stabilize communities, and meet basic human needs following an incident. Response also includes the execution of emergency plans and actions to support short-term recovery. The NRF describes doctrine for managing any type of disaster or emergency regardless of scale, scope, and complexity. This Framework explains common response discipline and processes that have been developed at all levels of government (local, state, tribal, territorial, insular area,² and Federal) and have matured over time.

¹ http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims
² Per the Stafford Act, insular areas include Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Other statutes or departments and agencies may define the term insular area differently.
To support the Goal, the objectives of the NRF are to:

- Describe scalable, flexible, and adaptable coordinating structures, as well as key roles and responsibilities for integrating capabilities across the whole community, to support local, state, tribal, territorial, insular area, and Federal Government efforts to respond to actual and potential incidents.
- Describe, across the whole community, the steps needed to prepare for delivering the response core capabilities.
- Foster integration and coordination of activities within the Response mission area.
- Outline how the Response mission area relates to the other mission areas as well as the relationship between the response core capabilities and the core capabilities in other mission areas.
- Provide guidance through doctrine and establish the foundation for the development of the supplemental Federal Interagency Operational Plan (IOP)-Response.

The NRF is comprised of a base document, Emergency Support Function (ESF) Annexes, Support Annexes, and Incident Annexes (see Figure 1). The annexes provide detailed information to assist with the implementation of the NRF.

- **ESF Annexes** describe the Federal coordinating structures that group resources and capabilities into functional areas that are most frequently needed in a national response.
- **Support Annexes** describe the essential supporting processes and considerations that are most common to the majority of incidents.
- **Incident Annexes** describe the unique response aspects of incident categories.

All of the documents associated with the NRF are available at the NRF Resource Center, [http://www.fema.gov/NRF](http://www.fema.gov/NRF).

---

3 Whole community includes: individuals, families, communities, the private and nonprofit sectors, faith-based organizations, and Federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial governments. Whole community is defined in the National Preparedness Goal as “a focus on enabling the participation in national preparedness activities of a wider range of players from the private and nonprofit sectors, including nongovernmental organizations and the general public, in conjunction with the participation of Federal, state, and local governmental partners in order to foster better coordination and working relationships.” The National Preparedness Goal is located at [http://www.fema.gov/ppd8](http://www.fema.gov/ppd8).
Evolution of the Framework

This NRF is currently the most mature of the national planning frameworks because it builds on 20 years of Federal response guidance. The Federal Response Plan published in 1992 focused largely on Federal roles and responsibilities. The establishment of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the emphasis on the development and implementation of common incident management and response principles led to the development of the National Response Plan (NRP) in 2004. It broke new ground in integrating all levels of government, the private sector, and NGOs into a common incident management framework. In 2008, the NRP was superseded by the first NRF which streamlined the guidance and integrated lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina and other incidents. This NRF reiterates the principles and concepts of the 2008 version of the NRF and implements the new requirements and terminology of PPD-8. By fostering a holistic approach to response, this NRF emphasizes the need for involvement of the whole community. Along with the national planning frameworks for other mission areas, this document now describes the all-important integration and inter-relationships among the mission areas of Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery.

Relationship to NIMS

The response protocols and structures described in the NRF align with NIMS. NIMS provides the incident management basis for the NRF and defines standard command and management structures. Standardizing national response doctrine on NIMS provides a consistent, nationwide template to enable the whole community to work together to prevent, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of incidents regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity. All of the components of the NIMS—including preparedness, communications and information management, resource management, and command and management—support response. The NIMS concepts of multi-agency coordination and unified command are described in the command and management component of NIMS. These two concepts are essential to effective response operations because they address the importance of: (1) developing a single set of objectives; (2) using a
collective, strategic approach; (3) improving information flow and coordination; (4) creating a
common understanding of joint priorities and restrictions; (5) ensuring that no agency’s legal
authorities are compromised or neglected; and (6) optimizing the combined efforts of all participants
under a single plan.

**Intended Audience**

The NRF is intended to be used by the whole community. The whole community concept focuses
on enabling a full range of stakeholders—the private sector, non-governmental organizations
(NGOs), the general public, and all levels of government—to participate in national preparedness
activities and to be full partners in incident response. Government resources alone cannot meet all the
needs of those affected by major disasters. All elements of the community must be activated,
engaged, and integrated to respond to a major or catastrophic incident.

Engaging the whole community is essential to the Nation’s success in achieving resilience and
national preparedness. Individual and community preparedness is a key component to this objective.
By providing equal access to acquire and use the necessary knowledge and skills, the whole
community contributes to and benefits from national preparedness. This includes children,
individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs, those from religious, racial
and ethnically diverse backgrounds, and people with limited English proficiency. Their contributions
must be integrated into preparedness efforts, and their needs must be incorporated into planning for
and delivering the response core capabilities as defined in the Goal. 4

**Scope**

The NRF describes structures for implementing nationwide response policy and operational
coordination for all types of domestic incidents. 5 This section describes the scope of the Response
mission area, the guiding principles of response doctrine and their application, and how risk informs
response planning.

The Response mission area focuses on ensuring that the Nation is able to respond effectively to all
types of incidents that range from those that are adequately handled with local assets to those of
catastrophic proportion that require marshaling the capabilities of the entire Nation. The objectives of
the Response mission area define the capabilities necessary to save lives, protect property and the
environment, meet basic human needs, stabilize the incident, restore basic services and community
functionality, and establish a safe and secure environment moving towards the transition to
recovery. 6

The NRF describes the principles, roles and responsibilities, and coordinating structures for
delivering the core capabilities required to respond to an incident and further describes how response
efforts integrate with those of the other mission areas. The NRF is always in effect, and elements can
be implemented at any time. The structures, roles, and responsibilities described in the NRF can be
partially or fully implemented in the context of a threat or hazard, in anticipation of a significant
event, or in response to an incident. Selective implementation of NRF structures and procedures

---

4 For further information, see the Core Capabilities section.
5 A domestic incident may have international and diplomatic impacts and implications that call for coordination and
consultations with foreign governments and international organizations. See the International Coordination Support
Annex for more information.
6 As with all activities in support of the National Preparedness Goal, activities taken under the response mission
must be consistent with all pertinent statutes and policies, particularly those involving civil and human rights, such
allows for a scaled response, delivery of the specific resources and capabilities, and a level of coordination appropriate to each incident.

In this Framework, the term incident includes actual or potential emergencies and disasters resulting from all types of threats and hazards, ranging from accidents and natural disasters to terrorist attacks. The NRF’s structures and procedures address incidents where Federal support to local, state, tribal, territorial, and insular area governments is coordinated under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act) as well as incidents where Federal departments and agencies exercise other authorities and responsibilities.

Nothing in the NRF is intended to alter or impede the ability of any local, state, tribal, territorial, insular area, or Federal government or agency to carry out its authorities or meet its responsibilities under applicable laws, executive orders, and directives.

Guiding Principles

The priorities of response are to save lives, protect property and the environment, stabilize the community and provide for basic human needs. The following principles establish fundamental doctrine for the Response mission area: (1) engaged partnership, (2) tiered response, (3) scalable, flexible, and adaptable operational capabilities, (4) unity of effort through unified command, and (5) readiness to act. These principles are rooted in the Federal system and the Constitution’s division of responsibilities between state and Federal governments. These principles reflect the history of emergency management and the distilled wisdom of responders and leaders across the whole community.

Engaged Partnership

Effective partnership relies on engaging all elements of the whole community as well as international partners in some cases. This also includes survivors who may require assistance and who may also be resources to support community response and recovery.

Those who lead emergency response efforts must communicate and support engagement with the whole community by developing shared goals and aligning capabilities to reduce the risk of any jurisdiction being overwhelmed in times of crisis. Layered, mutually supporting capabilities of individuals, communities, the private sector, NGOs, and governments at all levels allow for coordinated planning in times of calm and effective response in times of crisis. Engaged partnership and coalition building includes ongoing clear, consistent, effective\(^7\), and culturally appropriate communication and shared situational awareness about an incident to ensure an appropriate response.

Tiered Response

Most incidents begin and end locally and are managed at the local level. These incidents typically require a unified response from local agencies, the private sector, and NGOs. Some may require additional support from neighboring jurisdictions or state governments.\(^8\) A smaller number of incidents require Federal support or are led by the Federal Government. National response protocols are structured to provide tiered levels of support when additional resources or capabilities are needed.

---

\(^7\) Information, warnings, and communications associated with emergency management must ensure effective communication, such as through the use of appropriate auxiliary aids and services (e.g., interpreters, captioning, alternate format documents) with individuals with disabilities and provide meaningful access to limited English proficient individuals.

\(^8\) Certain incidents such as a pandemic or cyber event may not be limited to a specific geographic area and may be managed at the local, insular area, territorial, tribal, state, or Federal level depending on the nature of the incident.
Scalable, Flexible, and Adaptable Operational Capabilities

As incidents change in size, scope, and complexity, response efforts must adapt to meet evolving requirements. The number, type, and sources of resources must be able to expand rapidly to meet the changing needs associated with a given incident and its cascading effects. As needs grow and change, response processes must remain nimble and adaptable. The structures and processes described in the NRF must be able to surge resources from the whole community. As incidents stabilize, response efforts must be flexible to support the transition from response to recovery.

Unity of Effort through Unified Command

Effective, unified command is indispensable to response activities and requires a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of all participating organizations. The Incident Command System (ICS), a component of the NIMS, is an important element in ensuring interoperability across multi-jurisdictional or multi-agency incident management activities. Unified command, a central tenet of ICS, enables organizations with jurisdictional authority or functional responsibility for an incident to support each other through the use of mutually developed incident objectives. Each participating agency maintains its own authority, responsibility, and accountability.

Readiness to Act

Effective response requires a readiness to act that is balanced with an understanding of the risks and hazards responders face. From individuals, families, and communities to local, state, tribal, insular area, and Federal governments, national response depends on the ability to act decisively. A forward-leaning posture is imperative for incidents that may expand rapidly in size, scope, or complexity as well as incidents that occur without warning. Decisive action is often required to save lives and protect property and the environment. Although some risk to responders may be unavoidable, all response personnel are responsible for anticipating and managing risk through proper planning, organizing, equipping, training, and exercising. Effective response relies on disciplined processes, procedures, and systems to communicate timely, accurate, and accessible information about an incident’s cause, size, and current status to the public, responders, and other stakeholders.

Risk Basis

The NRF leverages the findings from the Strategic National Risk Assessment (SNRA) to build and deliver the response core capabilities. The SNRA identifies the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk to the Nation. These findings affirm the need for an all-hazards, capability-based approach to preparedness to ensure that all types of scenarios are accounted for. The risks and threats identified by SNRA include the following:

- Natural hazards—including hurricanes, earthquakes, tornados, wildfires, and floods—present a significant and varied risk across the country.
- A virulent strain of pandemic influenza could kill hundreds of thousands of Americans, affect millions more, and result in considerable economic loss. Additional human and animal infectious diseases, including those previously undiscovered, may also present significant risks.

---

9 The Incident Command System’s “unified command” concept is distinct from the military use of this term. Concepts of “command” and “unity of command” have distinct legal and cultural meanings for military forces and military operations. Military forces always remain under the control of the military chain of command and are subject to redirection or recall at any time. Military forces do not operate under the command of the incident commander or under the unified command structure, but they do coordinate with response partners and work towards a unity of effort while maintaining their internal chain of command.
Technological and accidental hazards, such as dam failures or chemical substance spills or releases, have the potential to cause extensive fatalities and severe economic impacts, and the likelihood of occurrence may increase due to aging infrastructure.

Terrorist organizations or affiliates may seek to acquire, build, and use weapons of mass destruction. Conventional terrorist attacks, including those by lone actors employing explosives and armed attacks, present a continued risk to the Nation.

Cyber attacks can have catastrophic consequences and may also have cascading effects such as power grid or financial system failures.

No single threat or hazard exists in isolation. As an example, a hurricane can lead to flooding, dam failures, and hazardous materials spills. The Goal, therefore, focuses on core capabilities that can be applied to deal with cascading effects. Since many incidents occur with little or no warning, these capabilities must be able to be delivered in a no-notice environment.

In order to establish the basis for these capabilities, planning factors drawn from a number of different scenarios are used to develop the Federal IOP-Response which supplements the NRF. Refer to the Operational Planning section for additional details on planning assumptions.

Roles and Responsibilities

Effective response depends on integration of the whole community and all partners executing their roles and responsibilities. This section describes those roles and responsibilities and sharpens the focus on identifying who is involved with the Response mission area. It also addresses what the various partners must do to deliver the response core capabilities and to integrate successfully with the Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, and Recovery mission areas.

An effective, unified national response requires layered, mutually supporting capabilities. Individuals and families, communities, the private sector, NGOs, and local, state, tribal, territorial, insular areas, and Federal governments should each understand their respective roles and responsibilities and how to complement each other in achieving shared goals. All elements of the whole community play prominent roles in developing the core capabilities needed to respond to incidents. This includes developing plans, conducting assessments and exercises, providing and directing resources and capabilities, and gathering lessons learned. These activities require that all partners understand how they fit within and are supported by the structures described in the NRF.

Emergency management staff in all jurisdictions has a fundamental responsibility to consider the needs of all members of the whole community, including children; individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs; those from religious, racial, and ethnically diverse backgrounds; and people with limited English proficiency. The potential contributions of all these individuals towards delivering core capabilities during incident response (e.g., through associations and alliances that serve these populations) should be incorporated into planning efforts. 

Staff must also consider those who own or have responsibility for animals both as members of the community who may be affected by incidents and as a potential means of supporting response efforts. This includes those with household pets, service and assistance animals, working dogs, and livestock, as well as those who have responsibility for wildlife, exotic animals, zoo animals, research animals, and animals housed in shelters, rescue organizations, breeding facilities, and sanctuaries.

---

Individuals, Families, and Households

Although not formally part of emergency management operations, individuals, families, and households play an important role in emergency preparedness and response. By reducing hazards in and around their homes by efforts such as raising utilities above flood level or securing unanchored objects against the threat of high winds, individuals reduce potential emergency response requirements. Individuals, families, and households should also prepare emergency supply kits and emergency plans so they can take care of themselves and their neighbors until assistance arrives. Information on emergency preparedness can be found at many community, state, and Federal emergency management web sites, such as http://www.ready.gov.

Individuals can also contribute to the preparedness and resilience of their households and communities by volunteering with emergency organizations (e.g., the local chapter of the American Red Cross, Medical Reserve Corps, or Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)) and completing emergency response training courses. Individuals, families, and households should make preparations with family members who have access and functional needs or medical needs. Their plans should also include provisions for household pets or service animals. During an actual disaster, emergency, or threat, individuals, households, and families should monitor emergency communications and follow guidance and instructions provided by local authorities.

Communities

Communities are groups that share goals, values, and institutions. They are not always bound by geographic boundaries or political divisions. Instead, they may be faith-based organizations, neighborhood partnerships, advocacy groups, academia, social and community groups, and associations. Communities bring people together in different ways for different reasons, but each provides opportunities for sharing information and promoting collective action. Engaging these groups in preparedness efforts, particularly at the local and state levels, is important to identifying their needs and taking advantage of their potential contributions.

Non-governmental Organizations

NGOs play vital roles at the local, state, tribal, territorial, insular area, and national levels in delivering important services including those associated with the response core capabilities. NGOs include voluntary organizations, racial and ethnic organizations, faith-based groups, veteran-based, and non-profit organizations that provide sheltering, emergency food supplies, and other essential support services. NGOs are inherently independent and committed to specific interests and values. These interests and values drive the groups’ operational priorities and shape the resources they provide. NGOs bolster government efforts at all levels and often provide specialized services to the whole community, as well as to certain members of the population to include children; individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs; those from religious, racial, and ethnically diverse backgrounds; and people with limited English proficiency. NGOs are key partners in preparedness activities and response operations.

Examples of NGO contributions include:

- Training and managing volunteer resources
- Identifying physically accessible shelter locations and needed supplies to support those displaced by an incident
- Providing emergency commodities and services, such as water, food, shelter, assistance with family reunification, clothing, and supplies for post-emergency cleanup
Supporting the evacuation, rescue, care, and sheltering of animals displaced by the incident

Providing search and rescue, transportation, and logistics services and support

Identifying those whose needs have not been met and helping to provide assistance

Providing health, medical, and mental health resources

Assisting, coordinating, and providing disability-related assistance and functional needs support services, including providing language assistance services to individuals with limited English proficiency.

At the same time that NGOs support response core capabilities, they may also require government assistance. When planning for local community emergency management resources, government organizations should consider the potential need to assist NGOs to better enable them to perform their essential response functions.

Some NGOs are officially designated as support elements to national response capabilities.

**The American Red Cross.** The American Red Cross is chartered by Congress to provide relief to survivors of disasters and help people prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies. The Red Cross has a legal status of “a federal instrumentality” and maintains a special relationship with the Federal Government. In this capacity, the American Red Cross supports several ESFs and the delivery of multiple core capabilities.

**National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD).** National VOAD is the forum where organizations share knowledge and resources throughout the disaster cycle—preparation, response, and recovery—to help disaster survivors and their communities. National VOAD is a consortium of approximately 50 national organizations and 55 territorial and state equivalents.

**Volunteers and Donations.** Incident response operations frequently exceed the resources of government organizations. Volunteers and donors support response efforts in many ways, and governments at all levels must plan ahead to incorporate volunteers and donated resources into response activities. The goal of volunteer and donations management is to support jurisdictions affected by disasters through close collaboration with the voluntary organizations and agencies. The objective is to manage the influx of volunteers and donations to voluntary agencies and all levels of government before, during, and after an incident. Additional information may be found in the Volunteers and Donations Management Support Annex.

**Private Sector Entities**

Private sector organizations contribute to response efforts through partnerships with each level of government. They play key roles before, during, and after incidents. Private sector entities include businesses, commerce, private universities, and industry. Private sector organizations may be involved in incidents in several different capacities (as described in Table 1). During an incident, key private sector partners should have a direct link to emergency managers and, in some cases, be involved in the decisionmaking process. Communities may not be able to respond effectively to incidents without private sector resources; therefore, strong cooperative relations between government agencies and the private sector are essential.

---

11 Additional information is available at http://www.nvoad.org.
# Table 1: Private Sector Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Role in This Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Affected Organization or Infrastructure</td>
<td>Private sector organizations may be affected by direct or indirect consequences of an incident. Such organizations include privately owned critical infrastructure and other entities that are significant to local, regional, and national economic recovery from an incident. Examples of privately owned infrastructure include transportation and transit, telecommunications, utilities, financial institutions, hospitals, and other health regulated facilities.(^{12})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Regulated and/or Responsible Party</td>
<td>Owners/operators of certain regulated facilities or hazardous operations may be legally responsible for preparing for and preventing incidents and responding when an incident occurs. For example, Federal regulations require owners/operators of nuclear power plants to maintain emergency plans and to perform assessments, notifications, and training for incident response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Response Resource</td>
<td>Private sector entities provide response resources (donated or compensated) during an incident—including specialized teams, essential services, equipment, and advanced technologies—through local public-private emergency plans or mutual aid and assistance agreements or in response to requests from government and non-governmental-volunteer initiatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Partner With State/Local Emergency Organizations</td>
<td>Private sector entities may serve as partners in state and local emergency preparedness and response organizations and activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Components of the Nation’s Economy</td>
<td>As key elements of the national economy, private sector resilience and continuity of operations planning, as well as recovery and restoration from incidents, represent essential homeland security activities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

12 Additional information on protection of critical infrastructure can be found in the National Protection Framework, the National Infrastructure Protection Plan, and the Critical Infrastructure Support Annex available at the NRF Resource Center, http://www.fema.gov/NRF.
Planning for, responding to, and recovering from incidents that impact their own infrastructure and facilities

Collaborating with emergency management personnel to determine what assistance may be required and how they can provide needed support

Contributing to communication and information sharing efforts during incidents

Planning, training, and exercising their response capabilities

Providing assistance specified under mutual aid and assistance agreements

Contributing resources, personnel, and expertise; helping to shape objectives; and receiving information about the status of the community.

Local Governments

The responsibility for responding to natural and manmade incidents that have recognizable geographic boundaries generally begins at the local level with individuals and public officials in the county, parish, city, or town affected by an incident. The following paragraphs describe the responsibilities of specific local officials who have emergency management responsibilities.

Chief Elected or Appointed Official

Jurisdictions’ chief executives are responsible for the public safety and welfare of the people of that jurisdiction. These officials provide strategic guidance and resources across all five mission areas. Chief elected or appointed officials must have a clear understanding of their emergency management roles and responsibilities and how to apply the response core capabilities as they may need to make decisions regarding resources and operations during an incident. Lives may depend on their decisions. Elected and appointed officials also routinely shape or modify laws, policies, and budgets to aid preparedness efforts and improve emergency management and response capabilities. The local chief executive’s response duties may include:

- Obtaining assistance from other governmental agencies
- Providing direction for response activities
- Ensuring appropriate information is provided to the public.

Emergency Manager

The jurisdiction’s emergency manager oversees the day-to-day emergency management programs and activities. The emergency manager works with chief elected and appointed officials to establish unified objectives regarding the jurisdiction’s emergency plans and activities. This role entails coordinating and integrating all elements of the community. The emergency manager coordinates all components of the local emergency management program. This includes assessing the capacity and readiness to deliver the capabilities most likely required during an incident and identifying and correcting any shortfalls. The local emergency manager’s duties often include:

- Advising elected and appointed officials during a response
- Conducting response operations in accordance with the NIMS
- Coordinating the functions of local agencies
- Coordinating the development of plans and working cooperatively with other local agencies, community organizations, private sector entities, and NGOs
- Developing and maintaining mutual aid and assistance agreements
- Coordinating resource requests during an incident through the management of an emergency operations center
- Coordinating damage assessments during an incident
- Advising and informing local officials and public about emergency management activities during an incident
- Developing and executing accessible public awareness and education programs
- Conducting exercises to test plans and systems and obtain lessons learned.

**Department and Agency Heads**

Department and agency heads collaborate with the emergency manager during the development of local emergency plans and provide key response resources. Participation in the planning process helps to ensure that specific capabilities are integrated into a workable plan to safeguard the community. These department and agency heads and their staffs develop, plan, and train on internal policies and procedures to meet response needs safely. They also participate in interagency training and exercises to develop and maintain necessary capabilities.

If local resources are inadequate, local authorities may seek assistance from the county emergency manager or the state. Under some Federal authorities, local jurisdictions may also seek assistance directly from the Federal Government for non-Stafford Act incidents.

**State, Tribal, Territorial, and Insular Area Governments**

State, tribal, territorial, and insular area governments are responsible for the health and welfare of their residents, communities, lands, and cultural heritage.

**States**

State governments\(^1\) supplement local efforts before, during, and after incidents by applying in-state resources first. If a state anticipates that its resources may be exceeded, the governor\(^2\) may request assistance from the Federal Government and from other states through mutual aid and assistance agreements such as the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC).\(^3\)

Federal assistance may be available to the states under the Stafford Act and other Federal authorities. Under some Federal laws, Federal response actions may be taken without a request from the state. For example, when notified of an oil discharge or chemical release, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) are required to evaluate the need for Federal response and may take action without waiting for a request from state or local officials. Federal financial assistance may also be available to supplement non-Stafford Act incidents and for disability-related

---

\(^1\) States are sovereign entities, and the governor has responsibility for public safety and welfare. Although U.S. territories, possessions, freely associated states, and tribal governments also have sovereign rights, there are unique factors involved in working with these entities. Stafford Act assistance is available to states and to the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, which are included in the definition of “state” in the Stafford Act. Federal disaster preparedness, response, and recovery assistance is available to the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands pursuant to Compacts of Free Association. The extent to which Federal response or assistance is provided to insular areas, territories, and tribes under other Federal laws is defined in those laws and supporting regulations.

\(^2\) “Governor” is used throughout this document to refer to the chief executive of states, territories, and insular areas.

\(^3\) A reference paper on the EMAC is available at the NRF Resource Center, http://www.fema.gov/NRF.
access and functional needs equipment. The following paragraphs describe some of the relevant roles and responsibilities of key officials.

**Governor**

The public safety and welfare of a state’s residents are fundamental responsibilities of every governor. The governor coordinates state resources and provides the strategic guidance for response to all types of incidents. This includes supporting local governments as needed and coordinating assistance with other states and the Federal Government. A governor also:

- In accordance with state law, may make, amend, or suspend certain orders or regulations associated with response
- Communicates to the public, in an accessible manner (e.g., effective communications to address all members of the whole community), and helps people, businesses, and organizations cope with the consequences of any type of incident
- Coordinates with tribal governments within the state
- Commands the state military forces (National Guard personnel not in Federal service and state militias)
- Coordinates assistance from other states through interstate mutual aid and assistance agreements, such as the EMAC
- Requests Federal assistance including, if appropriate, a Stafford Act declaration of an emergency or major disaster.

**State Homeland Security Advisor**

Many states have designated homeland security advisors who serve as counsel to the governor on homeland security issues and may serve as a liaison between the governor’s office, the state homeland security structure, DHS, and other organizations both inside and outside of the state. The advisor often chairs a committee comprised of representatives of relevant state agencies, including public safety, the National Guard, emergency management, public health, environment, agriculture, and others charged with developing prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery strategies.

**State Emergency Management Agency Director**

All states have laws mandating the establishment of a state emergency management agency as well as the emergency plans coordinated by that agency. The director of the state emergency management agency is responsible for ensuring that the state is prepared to deal with large-scale emergencies and coordinating the statewide response to any such incident. This includes supporting local and tribal governments as needed, coordinating assistance with other states and the Federal Government, and, in some cases, with NGOs and private sector organizations. The state emergency management agency may dispatch personnel to assist in the response and recovery effort.

**National Guard**

The National Guard is an important state and Federal resource available for planning, preparing, and responding to natural or man-made incidents. National Guard members have expertise in critical areas, such as emergency medical response, communications, logistics, search and rescue, civil
National Response Framework

engineering, chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high-yield explosives response and planning, and decontamination.16

The governor may activate elements of the National Guard to support state domestic civil support functions and activities. The state adjutant general may assign members of the Guard to assist with state, regional, and Federal civil support plans.

Other State Departments and Agencies

State department and agency heads and their staffs develop, plan, and train on internal policies and procedures to meet response and recovery needs. They also participate in interagency training and exercises to develop and maintain the necessary capabilities. They are vital to the state’s overall emergency management program, as they bring expertise spanning various response functions and serve as core members of the state emergency operations center (EOC) and incident command posts (ICP). Many of them have direct experience in providing accessible and vital services to the whole community during response operations. State departments and agencies typically work in close coordination with their Federal counterpart agencies during joint state and Federal responses, and under some Federal laws, they may request assistance from these Federal partners.

Tribal Governments

The United States has a trust relationship with federally-recognized Indian tribes and recognizes their right to self-government. Tribal governments are responsible for coordinating resources to address actual or potential incidents. When tribal response resources are inadequate, tribal leaders may seek assistance from states or the Federal Government. For certain types of Federal assistance, tribal governments work with the state in which they are located. For other types of Federal assistance, as sovereign entities, tribal governments can elect to work directly with the Federal Government.

Tribes are encouraged to build relationships with local jurisdictions and their states as they may have resources most readily available. The Tribal Coordination Support Annex outlines processes and mechanisms that tribal governments may use to request direct Federal assistance during an incident regardless of whether or not the incident involves a Stafford Act declaration.

Territories/Insular Areas

Territorial and insular area governments are responsible for coordinating resources to address actual or potential incidents. Due to their remote locations, territories and insular areas often face unique challenges in receiving assistance from outside the jurisdiction quickly and often request assistance from neighboring islands, other nearby countries, states, private sector or NGO resources, or the Federal Government. Federal assistance is delivered in accordance with pertinent Federal authorities (e.g., the Stafford Act or through other authorities of Federal departments or agencies).

Tribal/Territorial/Insular Area Leader

The tribal/territorial/insular area leader is responsible for the public safety and welfare of the people of his/her jurisdiction. As authorized by the tribal, territorial, or insular area government, the leader:

- Coordinates resources needed to respond to incidents of all types

16 The President can federalize National Guard forces for domestic duties as active duty military under Title 10 (e.g., in cases of invasion by a foreign nation, rebellion against the authority of the United States, or where the President is unable to execute the laws of the United States with regular forces under 10 U.S.C. §12406). When National Guardsmen are mobilized under Title 10 of the U.S. Code, the active duty forces are no longer under the command of the governor. Instead, the Department of Defense assumes full command and control over National Guard forces.
In accordance with the law, may make, amend, or suspend certain orders or regulations associated with the response
Communicates with the public in an accessible manner and helps people, businesses, and organizations cope with the consequences of any type of incident
 Commands the territory’s military forces
 Negotiates mutual aid and assistance agreements with other tribes, territories, insular areas, states, or local jurisdictions
 Can request Federal assistance under the Stafford Act.

Federal Government

The Federal Government maintains a wide range of capabilities and resources that may be required to deal with domestic disasters or emergencies. Although Federal disaster assistance is often considered synonymous with Presidential declarations under the Stafford Act, Federal assistance can actually be provided to state and local jurisdictions, as well as to other Federal departments and agencies, through a number of different mechanisms and authorities.

For incidents in which Federal assistance is provided under the Stafford Act, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) coordinates the assistance. For non-Stafford Act incidents, Federal response or assistance may be led or coordinated by various Federal departments and agencies consistent with their authorities.

For incidents on Federal property (e.g., National Parks, military bases) or where the Federal Government has primary jurisdiction (e.g., oil/hazmat spill), Federal departments or agencies may be the first responders and coordinators of Federal, state, and local activities.

Coordination of Federal Response and Assistance

The President leads the Federal Government response effort to ensure that the necessary resources are applied quickly and efficiently to large-scale and catastrophic incidents. When the overall coordination of Federal response activities is required as defined in Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 (HSPD-5), it is implemented through the Secretary of Homeland Security. Other Federal departments and agencies carry out their response authorities and responsibilities within this overarching construct.

Secretary of Homeland Security

The Secretary of Homeland Security is responsible for the Federal Government’s preparedness activities including preventing, protecting against, mitigating, responding to, and recovering from terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies. As part of these responsibilities, the Secretary coordinates Federal entities to ensure Federal unity of effort for domestic incident management. The Secretary’s preparedness responsibilities also include overseeing the broad emergency management and response authorities of FEMA and other DHS components.

As the principal Federal official for domestic incident management, the Secretary of Homeland Security provides the President with an overall architecture for domestic incident management and coordinates the Federal response, as required. The Secretary of Homeland Security may monitor activities and activate specific response mechanisms to support other Federal departments and
agencies without assuming the overall coordination of the Federal response during incidents that do not require the Secretary to coordinate the response or do not result in a Stafford Act declaration.  

The President expressly charged the Secretary of Homeland Security with coordinating the Federal Government’s resources utilized in response to or recovery from terrorist attacks, major disasters, or other emergencies. Generally, the Secretary assumes responsibility for domestic incident management when any one of the following conditions is satisfied: (1) a Federal department or agency acting under its own authority has requested the assistance of the Secretary; (2) the resources of state and local authorities are overwhelmed and Federal assistance has been requested by the appropriate state and local authorities; (3) more than one Federal department or agency has become substantially involved in responding to the incident; or (4) as directed by the President.

DHS component heads have lead response roles or other significant roles depending on the type and severity of the incident. For example, the U.S. Secret Service is the lead agency for security design, planning, and implementation of National Special Security Events (NSSEs).

Other Federal departments and agencies may have a lead or support role in operations coordination. When the Secretary of Homeland Security is not exercising HSPD-5 response coordination responsibilities, other Federal departments and agencies may coordinate Federal operations under their own statutory authorities and may activate response structures applicable to those authorities. The head of the department or agency may also request the Secretary to activate other NRF structures and elements to provide additional assistance, while still retaining leadership for the response. For all incidents, Federal department and agency heads serve as advisors to the Executive Branch for their areas of responsibility. Nothing in the NRF precludes any Federal department or agency from executing their authorities.

Several Federal departments and agencies have authorities to respond to and declare specific types of disasters or emergencies apart from the Stafford Act. These authorities may be exercised independently of, concurrently with, or become part of a Federal response coordinated by the Secretary of Homeland Security under HSPD-5. Federal departments and agencies carry out their response authorities and responsibilities within the NRF’s overarching construct or under supplementary or complementary operational plans. Table 2 provides examples of scenarios in which specific Federal departments and agencies have the responsibility for coordinating response activities. This is not an all-inclusive list. Refer to the NRF Incident Annexes for more details.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row</th>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Department/Agency</th>
<th>Authorities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Agricultural and Food Incident</td>
<td>Department of Agriculture (USDA)</td>
<td>The Secretary of Agriculture has the authority to declare an <strong>extraordinary emergency</strong> and take action due to the presence of a pest or disease of livestock that threatens livestock in the United States. (7 U.S. Code § 8306 [2007]) The Secretary of Agriculture also has the authority to declare an <strong>extraordinary emergency</strong> and take action due to the presence of a plant pest or noxious weed whose presence threatens plants or plant products of the United States. (7 U.S. Code § 7715 [2007])</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row</th>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Department/Agency</th>
<th>Authorities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Public Health Emergency(^{18})</td>
<td>Department of Health and Human Services</td>
<td>The Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services has the authority to take actions to protect the public health and welfare, declare a <strong>public health emergency</strong> and to prepare for and respond to public health emergencies. (Public Health Service Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 201 et seq. [2007])</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Oil and Hazardous Materials Spills</td>
<td>EPA or USCG</td>
<td>EPA and USCG have the authority to take actions to respond to oil discharges and releases of hazardous substances, pollutants and contaminants, including leading the response. (42 U.S. Code § 9601, et seq., 33 U.S. Code § 1251 et seq.) The EPA Administrator and Commandant of the USCG(^{19}) may also classify an oil discharge as a Spill of National Significance and designate senior officials to participate in the response. (40 CFR § 300.323)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><strong>NOTE:</strong> These authorities may be exercised independently of, concurrently with, or become part of a Federal response coordinated by the Secretary of Homeland Security under HSPD-5.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When a Federal department, agency, or component of DHS has responsibility for directing or managing a major aspect of a response coordinated by the Secretary of Homeland Security, that organization is part of the national leadership for the incident and is represented in field, regional, and headquarters unified command and coordination organizations.

**The FEMA Administrator**

The Administrator is the principal advisor to the President, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Homeland Security Council regarding emergency management. The FEMA Administrator’s duties include assisting the President, through the Secretary, in carrying out the Stafford Act, operation of the NRCC, the effective support of all ESFs, and more generally, preparation for, protection against, response to, and recovery from all-hazards incidents. Reporting to the Secretary of Homeland Security, the FEMA Administrator is also responsible for management of the core DHS grant programs supporting homeland security activities.\(^{20}\)

**Law Enforcement**

Generally acting through the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Attorney General has the lead responsibility for criminal investigations of terrorist acts or terrorist threats by individuals or groups inside the United States or directed at United States citizens or institutions abroad, as well as for coordinating activities of the other members of the law enforcement community to detect, prevent, and disrupt terrorist attacks against the United States. In addition, the Attorney General approves requests submitted by state governors for personnel and other Federal law enforcement support during incidents. The Attorney General also enforces Federal civil rights laws, such as the

\(^{18}\) A declaration of a Public Health Emergency does not provide a funding source.

\(^{19}\) The Commandant of the USCG coordinates the designation of a Spill of National Significance with the Secretary of Homeland Security, as appropriate.

\(^{20}\) See the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act, enacted as part of the FY 2007 DHS Appropriations Act, P.L. 109-295.
Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Further information on the Attorney General’s role is provided in the National Prevention Framework and Federal IOP.

National Defense and Defense Support of Civil Authorities
Because of the Department of Defense’s (DOD’s) critical role in national defense, its resources are committed only after approval by the Secretary of Defense or at the direction of the President. Many DOD components and agencies are authorized to respond to save lives, protect property, and mitigate human suffering under imminently serious conditions as well as to provide support under their separate established authorities, as appropriate. When DOD resources are authorized to support civil authorities, command of those forces remains with the Secretary of Defense. DOD elements in the incident area of operations and National Guard forces under the command of a governor coordinate closely with response organizations at all levels.

International Coordination
A domestic incident may have international and diplomatic implications that call for coordination and consultation with foreign governments and international organizations. The Secretary of State is responsible for all communication and coordination between the U.S. Government and other nations regarding the response to a domestic crisis. The Department of State also coordinates international offers of assistance and formally accepts or declines these offers on behalf of the U.S. Government based on needs conveyed by DHS or other Federal departments and agencies as stated in the International Coordination Support Annex. Some types of international assistance are pre-identified, and bilateral agreements are already established. For example, the USDA/Forest Service and Department of the Interior have joint bilateral agreements with several countries for wildland firefighting support.

Other Federal Departments and Agencies
Various Federal departments or agencies play primary, coordinating, or support roles in delivering response core capabilities. They may also have responsibilities and authorities to respond independent of any Stafford Act declaration as indicated above. Additional information regarding Federal department and agency roles in delivering core capabilities may be found in the Coordinating Structures and Integration section and in the various annexes to this Framework.

Core Capabilities
Once an incident occurs, efforts focus on saving lives, protecting property and the environment, and preserving the social, economic, cultural, and political structure of the jurisdiction. Depending on the size, scope, and magnitude of an incident, local, state, tribal, territorial, and insular area governments, and, in some cases, the Federal Government, may be called to action. The response core capabilities are a list of the activities that generally must be accomplished in incident response regardless of which levels of government are involved.

21 In response to a request for assistance from a civilian authority, under imminently serious conditions, and if time does not permit approval from higher authority, DOD officials may provide an immediate response by temporarily employing the resources under their control, subject to any supplemental direction provided by higher headquarters, to save lives, prevent human suffering, or mitigate great property damage within the United States. Immediate response authority does not permit actions that would subject civilians to the use of military power that is regulatory, prescriptive, proscriptive, or compulsory. (DOD Directive 3025.18).
22 Additional information on DOD support is available at the NRF Resource Center, http://www.fema.gov/NRF.
This list was developed based on the results of the SNRA which identified a variety of threats and hazards that would likely stress the Nation’s response capabilities. Planners for each mission area—Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery—identified functions that would be required to deal with these threats and hazards, and these are the core capabilities. The core capabilities thus provide a common vocabulary describing the significant functions that must be developed and executed across the whole community to assure national preparedness.

This section addresses the core capabilities for the Response mission area and the actions required to build and deliver these capabilities.

**Context of the Response Mission Area**

By engaging the whole community to build and deliver the response core capabilities, the Nation is better prepared to respond to any threat or hazard, assist in restoring basic services and community functionality, and support the transition to recovery. The Response mission area includes 14 core capabilities—11 that apply to response and three that are common to all five mission areas. The Goal assigned specific objectives and performance thresholds for each capability from which metrics will ultimately be identified to track the Nation’s progress towards achieving these objectives. Table 3 provides a summary of each response core capability and the critical tasks to achieve its objective.

### Table 3: Overview of Response Core Capabilities in the National Preparedness Goal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row</th>
<th>Core Capabilities and Critical Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><strong>1. Planning</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>(Cross-cutting with all mission areas)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td><strong>Critical Tasks:</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Develop operational plans at the Federal level and in the states and territories that adequately identify critical objectives based on the planning requirements, provide a complete and integrated picture of the sequence and scope of the tasks to achieve the objectives, and are implementable within the time frame contemplated in the plan using available resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td><strong>2. Public Information and Warning</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>(Cross-cutting with all mission areas)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td><strong>Critical Tasks:</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Inform all affected segments of society by all means necessary, including accessible tools, of critical lifesaving and life-sustaining information to expedite the delivery of emergency services and aid the public to take protective actions.&lt;br&gt;- Deliver credible messages to inform ongoing emergency services and the public about protective measures and other life-sustaining actions and facilitate the transition to recovery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row</td>
<td>Core Capabilities and Critical Tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 14  | **3. Operational Coordination**  
     *(Cross-cutting with all mission areas)*  
     **Objective:** Establish and maintain a unified and coordinated operational structure and process that appropriately integrates all critical stakeholders and supports the execution of core capabilities. |
| 15  | **Critical Tasks:**  
     - Mobilize all critical resources and establish command, control, and coordination structures within the affected community and other coordinating bodies in surrounding communities and across the Nation and maintain, as needed, throughout the duration of an incident.  
     - Enhance and maintain National Incident Management System (NIMS)-compliant command, control, and coordination structures to meet basic human needs, stabilize the incident, and transition to recovery. |
| 16  | **4. Critical Transportation**  
     **Objective:** Provide transportation (including infrastructure access and accessible transportation services) for response priority objectives, including the evacuation of people and animals, and the delivery of vital response personnel, equipment, and services to the affected areas. |
| 17  | **Critical Tasks:**  
     - Establish physical access through appropriate transportation corridors and deliver required resources to save lives and to meet the needs of disaster survivors.  
     - Ensure basic human needs are met, stabilize the incident, transition into recovery for an affected area, and restore basic services and community functionality. |
| 18  | **5. Environmental Response/Health and Safety**  
     **Objective:** Ensure the availability of guidance and resources to address all hazards, including hazardous materials, acts of terrorism, and natural disasters, in support of the responder operations and the affected communities. |
| 19  | **Critical Tasks:**  
     - Conduct health and safety hazard assessments and disseminate guidance and resources, to include deploying hazardous materials teams, to support environmental health and safety actions for response personnel and the affected population.  
     - Assess, monitor, perform cleanup actions, and provide resources to meet resource requirements and to transition from sustained response to short-term recovery. |
| 20  | **6. Fatality Management Services**  
     **Objective:** Provide fatality management services, including body recovery and victim identification, working with state and local authorities to provide temporary mortuary solutions, sharing information with Mass Care Services for the purpose of reunifying family members and caregivers with missing persons/remains, and providing counseling to the bereaved. |
| 21  | **Critical Tasks:**  
     - Establish and maintain operations to recover a significant number of fatalities over a geographically dispersed area. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row</th>
<th>Core Capabilities and Critical Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 22  | **7. Infrastructure Systems**  
(Cross-cutting with Recovery mission area) | **Objective:** Stabilize critical infrastructure functions, minimize health and safety threats, and efficiently restore and revitalize systems and services to support a viable, resilient community.  
- **Critical Tasks:**  
  - Decrease and stabilize immediate infrastructure threats to the affected population, to include survivors in the heavily-damaged zone, nearby communities that may be affected by cascading effects, and mass care support facilities and evacuation processing centers with a focus on life-sustainment and congregate care services.  
  - Re-establish critical infrastructure within the affected areas to support ongoing emergency response operations, life sustainment, community functionality, and a transition to recovery. |
| 23  | **Critical Tasks:**  
- Decrease and stabilize immediate infrastructure threats to the affected population, to include survivors in the heavily-damaged zone, nearby communities that may be affected by cascading effects, and mass care support facilities and evacuation processing centers with a focus on life-sustainment and congregate care services.  
- Re-establish critical infrastructure within the affected areas to support ongoing emergency response operations, life sustainment, community functionality, and a transition to recovery. |
| 24  | **8. Mass Care Services**  
**Objective:** Provide life-sustaining services to the affected population with a focus on hydration, feeding, and sheltering to those with the most need, as well as support for reunifying families.  
- **Critical Tasks:**  
  - Move and deliver resources and capabilities to meet the needs of disaster survivors, including individuals with access and functional needs and others who may be considered to be at-risk.  
  - Establish, staff, and equip emergency shelters and other temporary housing options (including accessible housing) for the affected population.  
  - Move from congregate care to non-congregate care alternatives, and provide relocation assistance or interim housing solutions for families unable to return to their pre-disaster homes. |
| 25  | **Critical Tasks:**  
- Move and deliver resources and capabilities to meet the needs of disaster survivors, including individuals with access and functional needs and others who may be considered to be at-risk.  
- Establish, staff, and equip emergency shelters and other temporary housing options (including accessible housing) for the affected population.  
- Move from congregate care to non-congregate care alternatives, and provide relocation assistance or interim housing solutions for families unable to return to their pre-disaster homes. |
| 26  | **9. Mass Search and Rescue Operations**  
**Objective:** Deliver traditional and atypical search and rescue capabilities, including personnel, services, animals, and assets to survivors in need, with the goal of saving the greatest number of endangered lives in the shortest time possible.  
- **Critical Tasks:**  
  - Conduct search and rescue operations to locate and rescue persons in distress, based on the requirements of state and local authorities.  
  - Initiate community-based search and rescue support operations across a wide geographically dispersed area.  
  - Ensure the synchronized deployment of local, regional, national, and international teams to reinforce ongoing search and rescue efforts and transition to recovery. |
| 27  | **Critical Tasks:**  
- Conduct search and rescue operations to locate and rescue persons in distress, based on the requirements of state and local authorities.  
- Initiate community-based search and rescue support operations across a wide geographically dispersed area.  
- Ensure the synchronized deployment of local, regional, national, and international teams to reinforce ongoing search and rescue efforts and transition to recovery. |
| 28  | **10. On-Scene Security and Protection**  
**Objective:** Ensure a safe and secure environment through law enforcement and related security and protection operations for people and communities located within affected areas and for all traditional and atypical response personnel engaged in lifesaving and life-sustaining operations.  
- **Critical Tasks:**  
  - Establish a safe and secure environment in an affected area.  
  - Provide and maintain on-scene security and meet the protection needs of the affected population over a geographically dispersed area while eliminating or mitigating the risk of further damage to persons, property, and the environment. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row</th>
<th>Core Capabilities and Critical Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td><strong>11. Operational Communications</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Objective:</strong> Ensure the capacity for timely communications in support of security, situational awareness, and operations by any and all means available between affected communities in the impact area and all response forces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td><strong>Critical Tasks:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Ensure the capacity to communicate with both the emergency response community and the affected populations and establish interoperable voice and data communications between local, state, tribal, territorial, and Federal first responders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Re-establish sufficient communications infrastructure within the affected areas to support ongoing life-sustaining activities, provide basic human needs, and transition to recovery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td><strong>12. Public and Private Services and Resources</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Objective:</strong> Provide essential public and private services and resources to the affected population and surrounding communities, to include emergency power to critical facilities, fuel support for emergency responders, and access to community staples (e.g., grocery stores, pharmacies, and banks) and fire and other first response services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td><strong>Critical Tasks:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Mobilize and deliver governmental, non-governmental, and private sector resources within and outside of the affected area to save lives, sustain lives, meet basic human needs, stabilize the incident, and transition to recovery, to include moving and delivering resources and services to meet the needs of disaster survivors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Enhance public and private resource and services support for an affected area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td><strong>13. Public Health and Medical Services</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Objective:</strong> Provide lifesaving medical treatment via emergency medical services and related operations, and avoid additional disease and injury by providing targeted public health and medical support and products to all people in need within the affected area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td><strong>Critical Tasks:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Deliver medical countermeasures to exposed populations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Complete triage and initial stabilization of casualties and begin definitive care for those likely to survive their injuries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Return medical surge resources to pre-incident levels, complete health assessments, and identify recovery processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td><strong>14. Situational Assessment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Objective:</strong> Provide all decisionmakers with decision-relevant information regarding the nature and extent of the hazard, any cascading effects, and the status of the response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td><strong>Critical Tasks:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Deliver information sufficient to inform decisionmaking regarding immediate lifesaving and life-sustaining activities, and engage governmental, private, and civic sector resources within and outside of the affected area to meet basic human needs and stabilize the incident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Deliver enhanced information to reinforce ongoing lifesaving and life-sustaining activities, and engage governmental, private, and civic sector resources within and outside of the affected area to meet basic human needs, stabilize the incident, and transition to recovery.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
No core capability is the responsibility of any one party or single level of government. Each requires an approach that integrates the abilities of elements in the whole community from the individual through the Federal Government, including traditional and non-traditional partners. The Nation must be prepared to deal not only with the normal type of incidents that communities handle every day, but also with incidents of catastrophic proportions. Most of the resources and functions provided at the local level to deliver a given core capability are provided by local government agencies with additional members of the community assisting as needed. Catastrophic incidents require many more response assets and engagement with a broader set of partners. Community involvement is vital to providing additional response support. Local residents may well be the primary source of additional manpower in the first hours and days after a catastrophic incident.

Cross-cutting Response Core Capabilities

Three response core capabilities—Planning, Public Information and Warning, and Operational Coordination—span all five mission areas. These common core capabilities are essential to the success of the other core capabilities. They help establish unity of effort among all those involved in the Response mission area.

- **Planning.** Planning makes it possible to manage the life cycle of a potential crisis, determine capability requirements, and help stakeholders learn their roles. It includes the collection, analysis, and dissemination of risk assessment data and the development of plans, procedures, mutual aid and assistance agreements, strategies, and other arrangements to perform specific missions and tasks. Governments at all levels have a responsibility to develop all-hazards response plans prior to and during an incident. Including a broad range of partners in the planning process helps ensure that the needs and potential contributions of all elements are integrated into workable plans.

- **Public Information and Warning.** For an effective response, jurisdictions must provide accurate and accessible information to decision-makers and the public. This includes development of accessible message content, such as incident facts, health risk warnings, pre-incident recommendations, evacuation guidance, and other protective measures. It also includes developing strategies for when, where, how, and by whom information will be delivered and ensuring that all levels of government agree on unified messages. Information must be shared with the public and other members of the response community efficiently, effectively, and in an accessible manner. Effective public information and warning is particularly important in dealing with incidents that start small but may evolve to have greater consequences.

- **Operational Coordination.** For incident response, coordination of operations must occur both among those tasked to deliver the various response core capabilities and with those delivering the core capabilities of other mission areas. This coordination occurs through response structures based on clearly established roles, responsibilities, and reporting protocols. Using NIMS principles, structures, and coordinating processes enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of response. Specific actions to achieve this core capability may include coordinating initial actions, 23 A catastrophic incident is defined as any natural or manmade incident, including terrorism, which results in extraordinary levels of mass casualties, damage, or disruption severely affecting the population, infrastructure, environment, economy, national morale, or government functions.

Given the scope and magnitude of a catastrophic incident, waivers, exceptions, and exemptions to policy, regulations, and laws may be available in order to save and sustain life, and to protect property and the environment. However, any such waivers, exceptions, and exemptions must be consistent with laws that preserve human and civil rights and protect individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.
managing ESFs, coordinating requests for additional support, and identifying and integrating resources and capabilities.

**Integration among Response Core Capabilities and Mission Areas**

Interdependencies exist among many of the core capabilities. For example, organizations involved in providing *Mass Care Services* often rely on resources and functions from organizations that provide *Critical Transportation* or *Public and Private Services and Resources* for commodities distribution; *Public Information and Warning* for messaging, translators, and interpreters; and *Operational Communications* for reporting and communication that allows shelters to stay in touch with operations centers.

The core capabilities in various mission areas may also be linked through shared assets and services. For example, the functionality provided by geographic information systems can be applied across multiple response core capabilities, as well as core capabilities in the other four mission areas. Thus synergy among mission area resources and processes is important to maximize capabilities and minimize risk. The overarching nature of functions described in these capabilities frequently involves either support to or cooperation of several incident management partners to ensure the seamless integration and transitions among prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery activities.

Potential points of intersection between the Response mission area and other mission areas include the following:

- **Prevention.** Many of the assets that are used on a day-to-day basis to perform intelligence, cyber security, law enforcement, homeland security, and homeland defense can be applied to support delivery of response core capabilities such as *On-Scene Security and Protection* and *Public Information and Warning*.

- **Protection.** Protection of critical infrastructure systems and implementation of plans for the rapid restoration of commercial activities and critical infrastructure operations are crucial aspects of the Protection mission area. Many of the 18 critical infrastructure sectors within the Protection mission area are also represented in the Response mission area. For example, the *Public and Private Services and Resources* capability depends on private sector owners and operators of critical infrastructure for achieving the capability’s objective.

- **Mitigation.** Achieving the mitigation core capability preliminary targets allows for the incorporation of lessons learned in the analysis and planning processes and makes the response core capabilities more resilient and effective.

- **Recovery.** Even while response activities are underway, recovery operations must begin. The emphasis on response gradually gives way to recovery operations; however, recovery core capabilities may involve some of the same functions as response core capabilities. This includes providing essential public health and safety services, restoring interrupted utility and other essential services, reestablishing transportation routes, providing food and shelter for those displaced by an incident, ensuring equal access, reunifying children who have been displaced from their families/guardians, and reopening schools and child care centers.

These overlapping areas are identified through comprehensive planning with the whole community to ensure that they are properly addressed during response to an incident. Ensuring that IOPs properly account for the integration and transition between mission areas is essential.

---

25 The critical infrastructure sectors are described in the National Infrastructure Protection Plan.
Response Actions to Deliver Core Capabilities

This section describes the key tasks each major element of the whole community must accomplish to be prepared to deliver the core capabilities. More detailed concepts of operations for the delivery of the core capabilities are provided in the Federal IOP-Response and operational plans developed by various jurisdictions, the private sector, and NGOs.

Individuals and Households

Many individuals have talents and experience that can be tapped to support core capabilities. Individuals can contribute to the delivery of response core capabilities through community organizations, by participating in community preparedness activities, such as CERT, and by ensuring that they have household/family emergency plans.26

Private Sector

Roles and responsibilities of private sector entities are described in the Roles and Responsibilities section. Private sector entities can assist in delivering the response core capabilities by collaborating with emergency management personnel before an incident occurs to determine what assistance may be necessary and how they can support local emergency management during response operations.27

Non-governmental Organizations

NGOs manage volunteers and resources that bolster government efforts to ensure a successful incident response. Collaboration with responders, governments at all levels, and other agencies and organizations helps NGOs to tailor and direct their efforts that are necessary to accomplish and deliver the response core capabilities.

State and Local Actions

Communities apply NIMS principles to integrate response plans and resources across jurisdictions and departments as well as with the private sector and NGOs. Neighboring communities play a key role by providing support through a network of mutual aid and assistance agreements that identify the resources that communities may be able to share during an incident.

The state is the gateway to many government resources that help communities respond. When an incident grows or has the potential to grow beyond the capability of a local jurisdiction and responders cannot meet the needs with mutual aid and assistance resources, local officials contact the state. Upon receiving a request for assistance from a local government, state officials may:

- Coordinate warnings and public information through the activation of the state’s public communications strategy
- Distribute supplies stockpiled to meet the needs of the emergency
- Provide technical assistance and support to meet the response and recovery needs
- Suspend or waive statutes, rules, ordinances, and orders, to the extent permitted by law, to ensure timely performance of response functions
- Implement state volunteer and donations management plans, and coordinate with the private sector and NGOs

26 Individual and household preparedness information can be located at http://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan.
27 Additional information sharing and collaborative opportunities can be located at FEMA Private Sector Focus http://www.fema.gov/privatesector/index.shtm
Order or recommend evacuations ensuring the integration and inclusion of the requirements of populations such as: children, individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs, diverse communities, people with limited English proficiency, and owners of animals including household pets and service animals.

Mobilize resources to meet the requirements of individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs in compliance with Federal civil rights laws.

State-to-State Assistance
If additional resources are required, states request assistance from other states through interstate mutual aid and assistance agreements such as the EMAC. Administered by the National Emergency Management Association, the EMAC is an interstate mutual aid agreement that streamlines the interstate mutual aid and assistance process.

Federal Actions
In certain circumstances, Federal departments and agencies may provide assistance or even lead response efforts consistent with their own authorities.

Federal Response and Assistance under the Stafford Act
When an incident is anticipated to exceed state resources or when the Federal Government has unique capabilities needed by states, the governor may request Federal assistance. In such cases, the affected local jurisdiction, territory, tribe, state, insular area, and the Federal Government coordinate to provide the necessary assistance. The Federal Government may provide assistance in the form of funding, resources, and services. Federal departments and agencies respect the sovereignty and responsibilities of local, state, tribal, territorial, and insular area governments while rendering assistance that supports the affected local or state governments.

Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
Local, state, tribal, territorial, and insular area governments do not require Federal assistance to respond to most incidents; however, when an incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the state and the local governments, the governor can request Federal assistance under the Stafford Act. In certain circumstances, the President may declare an emergency without a request from a governor when the primary responsibility for response rests with the United States because the emergency involves a subject area for which, under the Constitution or laws of the United States, the United States exercises exclusive or preeminent responsibility and authority.

The Stafford Act authorizes the President to provide financial and other assistance to local, state, tribal, territorial, and insular area governments, certain private non-profit organizations, and individuals to support response, recovery, and mitigation efforts following a Stafford Act Emergency or Major Disaster Declaration. Most forms of Stafford Act assistance require a state cost share. While Federal assistance under the Stafford Act may only be delivered after a declaration, FEMA may pre-deploy Federal assets when a declaration is likely and imminent. The Stafford Act provides for two types of declarations:

- An Emergency Declaration is more limited in scope than a Major Disaster Declaration, provides fewer Federal programs, and is not normally associated with recovery programs.

---

28 The President has delegated most of his authority under the Stafford Act to the Secretary of Homeland Security, who has in turned delegated those authorities to the FEMA Administrator.
However, the President may issue an Emergency Declaration prior to an actual incident to lessen or avert the threat of a catastrophe. Generally, Federal assistance and funding are provided to meet specific emergency needs or to help prevent a catastrophe from occurring.

- A Major Disaster Declaration provides more Federal programs for response and recovery than an Emergency Declaration. Unlike an Emergency Declaration, a Major Disaster Declaration may only be issued after an incident.

**Requesting a Stafford Act Declaration**

Before requesting a declaration under the Stafford Act, the governor must take appropriate response action under state law and direct execution of the state’s emergency plan. Ordinarily, the governor must ensure certain state and local actions have been taken or initiated, including:

- Surveying the affected areas to determine the extent of private and public damage
- Conducting joint preliminary damage assessments with FEMA officials to estimate the types and extent of Federal disaster assistance required
- Agreeing to provide, without cost to the Federal Government, easements and rights-of-way necessary to accomplish the work and to indemnify the Federal Government against any claims arising from such work when requesting direct Federal assistance
- Agreeing to pay the state’s cost share.

The state’s request for a Stafford Act declaration, addressed to the President, is submitted through the FEMA Regional Administrator, who evaluates the request and makes a recommendation to the FEMA Administrator. The FEMA Administrator, in coordination with the Secretary of Homeland Security, then makes a recommendation to the President. The governor, appropriate members of Congress, and Federal departments and agencies are immediately notified of a Presidential declaration.

U.S. territories may use the same incident management and response structures and mechanisms as state governments for requesting and receiving Federal assistance. U.S. territories often pose special response challenges. Working in partnership with territorial governments, the processes and structures described in the NRF can be adapted to meet these geographic challenges through preparedness plans and the pre-staging of assets.

Territorial governments may receive federally-coordinated response for U.S. possessions, including insular areas. The freely associated states of the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands may also receive assistance. Stafford Act assistance is available to Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, which are included in the definition of “state” in the Stafford Act.

**Proactive Response to Catastrophic Incidents**

Prior to and during catastrophic incidents, especially those that occur with little or no notice, the Federal Government may mobilize and deploy assets in anticipation of a formal request from the state. Such deployments of significant Federal assets typically occur in anticipation of or following catastrophic incidents involving chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or high-yield explosive weapons of mass destruction, large-magnitude earthquakes, or other incidents affecting heavily populated areas. Proactive efforts are intended to ensure that Federal resources reach the scene in time to assist in restoring any disruption of normal functions of state and local governments and are...
done in coordination and collaboration with state and local governments, private sector entities, and NGOs when possible.

**Federal Response and Assistance Available Without a Stafford Act Declaration**

The NRF covers the full range of complex and constantly changing requirements in anticipation of, or in response to, threats or actual incidents, including terrorist attacks and major disasters. In addition to Stafford Act support, the NRF or other supplementary or complementary operational plans may be applied to respond or provide other forms of support.

**Federal Departments and Agencies Acting Under Their Own Authorities**

Immediate lifesaving assistance to states, as well as other types of assistance, such as wildland firefighting support or response to an agricultural disease incident, are performed by Federal departments or agencies under their own authorities and funding or through reciprocal mutual assistance agreements and do not require a Stafford Act declaration. Some Federal departments or agencies conduct or may lead Federal response actions under their own authorities using funding sources other than the President’s Disaster Relief Fund. For example, specific trust funds are established under Federal environmental laws to support and fund oil and hazardous substances response operations.

**Federal-to-Federal Support**

Federal departments and agencies may execute interagency or intra-agency reimbursable agreements in accordance with the Economy Act or other applicable authorities. The Financial Management Support Annex 30 to the NRF contains information about this process. A Federal department or agency responding to an incident under its own authorities may also request support from DHS in obtaining and coordinating additional Federal assistance. DHS may activate one or more ESFs to provide the requested support.

**Coordinating Structures and Integration**

Scalable, flexible, and adaptable coordinating structures are essential to align the key roles and responsibilities to deliver the Response mission area’s core capabilities. The flexibility of such structures helps ensure that communities across the country can organize response efforts to address a variety of risks based on their unique needs, capabilities, demographics, governing structures, and non-traditional partners. The NRF is not based on a one-size-fits-all organizational construct, but instead acknowledges the concept of tiered response which emphasizes that response to incidents should be handled at the lowest jurisdictional level capable of handling the mission. These structures can be partially or fully implemented in the context of a threat, in anticipation of a significant event, or in response to an incident. Selective implementation allows for a scaled response, delivery of the exact resources that are needed, and a level of coordination appropriate to each incident.

Coordinating structures aid preparedness and response at all levels of government and within the private sector, communities, and non-governmental entities. The structures help organize and measure the whole community’s capabilities in order to address the requirements of the Response mission area, facilitate problem solving, improve access to response resources, and foster coordination prior to and following an incident.

---

30 Annexes to the NRF are available on the NRF Resource Center (www.fema.gov/nrf).
The following section describes the coordinating structures within the Response mission area and explains how they integrate with the coordinating structures that support other mission areas to build preparedness and enhance the Nation’s resilience to all types of risks and hazards.

**Local Coordinating Structures**

Local jurisdictions and states employ a variety of coordinating structures to help identify risks, establish relationships, organize, and build capabilities. Due to the unique partnerships, geographic conditions, threats, and established capabilities each jurisdiction faces, the coordinating structures at these levels vary. Examples of local response coordinating structures include local planning committees, CERTs, and chapters of national-level associations. These structures organize and integrate their capabilities and resources with neighboring jurisdictions, the state, the private sector, and NGOs. One example of this type of coordinating structure is described below:

- **Citizen Corps Councils** bring together local government, civic, private sector, and NGO leaders to prepare for and respond to incidents. Citizen Corps Councils are typically sponsored by elected or appointed officials and emergency managers. These Councils provide leadership and support for programs that educate, train, and engage community volunteers to support emergency management and responders.

**State Coordinating Structures**

States also leverage the capabilities and resources of partners across the state when identifying needs and building capabilities. The coordinating structures at the state level also vary depending on factors such as geography, population, industry, and the capabilities of the local jurisdictions within the state. These structures are also designed to leverage appropriate representatives from across the whole community—some of which may also participate in local or regional coordinating structures. Many states create independent committees or councils focused on specific areas or functions as a sub-set of their emergency management agency. For example, some states have Animal Disaster Planning Advisory Committees that provide important input to statewide response plans on animal issues.

**Private Sector Coordinating Structures**

Business emergency operation centers, industry trade groups, and business sector fusion centers serve as coordinating structures for the private sector. These organizations, comprised of multiple businesses and entities brought together by shared geography or common function (e.g., banking, supply chain management, transportation, venue management), support the collaboration, communication, and sharing of information within the private sector. Such organizations can coordinate with and support NGOs, and in many cases they serve as a conduit to local and state government coordinating structures.

**Federal Coordinating Structures**

**Emergency Support Functions**

The Federal Government and many state governments organize their response resources and capabilities under the ESF construct. ESFs have proven to be an effective way to bundle and manage resources to deliver core capabilities. The Federal ESFs are the primary, but not exclusive, Federal coordinating structures for building, sustaining, and delivering the response core capabilities. The ESFs are vital structures for responding to Stafford Act incidents; however, they may also be used for other incidents. Most Federal ESFs support a number of the response core capabilities. In addition,
there are responsibilities and actions associated with Federal ESFs that extend beyond the core
capabilities and support other response activities as well as department and agency responsibilities.

The Federal ESFs bring together the capabilities of Federal departments and agencies and other
national-level assets. ESFs are not based on the capabilities of a single department or agency, and the
functions for which they are responsible cannot be accomplished by any single department or agency.
Instead, Federal ESFs are groups of organizations that work together to deliver core capabilities and
support an effective response.

As noted above, many state and local jurisdictions have adopted and tailored the ESF construct.
Because state and local jurisdictions establish ESFs based on their specific risks and requirements,
there is no mandatory or direct linkage to the 15 Federal ESFs. State and local governments are
encouraged to engage non-traditional members of the whole community as part of their ESF
processes.

Table 4 summarizes the Federal ESFs and indicates the response core capabilities each ESF most
directly supports. All ESFs support the common core capabilities—Planning, Public Information and
Warning, and Operational Coordination—and many ESFs support more than those that are listed.

Additional detail regarding the Federal ESFs is provided in the ESF Annexes which can be found in
the NRF Resource Center.

Table 4: Emergency Support Functions and ESF Coordinators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row</th>
<th>ESF #1—Transportation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Key Response Core Capabilities: Critical Transportation, Mass Search and Rescue Operations, Operational Communications</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 39  | Coordinates the support of management of transportation systems and infrastructure, the regulation of transportation, management of the Nation’s airspace, and ensuring the safety and security of the national transportation system. Functions include but are not limited to: |
|     | • Transportation modes management and control |
|     | • Transportation safety |
|     | • Restoration and recovery of transportation infrastructure |
|     | • Movement restrictions |
|     | • Damage and impact assessment. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>40</th>
<th>ESF #2—Communications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Key Response Core Capability: Operational Communications</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 42  | Coordinates the restoration of the critical communications infrastructure, facilitates the recovery of systems and applications from cyber-attacks, and coordinates communications support to response efforts. Functions include but are not limited to: |
|     | • Coordination with telecommunications and information technology industries |
|     | • Restoration and repair of telecommunications infrastructure |
|     | • Protection, restoration, and sustainment of national cyber and information technology resources |
|     | • Oversight of communications within the Federal response structures. |
| 43 | ESF #3—Public Works and Engineering  
ESF Coordinator: Department of Defense/U.S. Army Corps of Engineers |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Key Response Core Capabilities: Infrastructure Systems, Critical Transportation, Public and Private Services and Resources</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 45 | Coordinates the capabilities and resources to facilitate the delivery of services, technical assistance, engineering expertise, construction management, and other support to prepare for, respond to, and/or recover from a disaster or an incident. Functions include but are not limited to:  
  - Infrastructure protection and emergency repair  
  - Infrastructure restoration  
  - Engineering services and construction management  
  - Emergency contracting support for life-saving and life-sustaining services. |
| 46 | ESF #4—Firefighting  
ESF Coordinator: USDA/U.S. Forest Service |
| 47 | Key Response Core Capabilities: Critical Transportation, Operational Communications, Public and Private Services and Resources |
| 48 | Coordinates the support for the detection and suppression of fires. Functions include but are not limited to:  
  - Support to wildland, rural, and urban firefighting operations. |
| 49 | ESF #5—Information and Planning  
ESF Coordinator: DHS/FEMA |
| 50 | Key Response Core Capabilities: Situational Assessment, Planning, Operational Coordination |
| 51 | Supports and facilitates multiagency planning and coordination for operations involving incidents requiring Federal coordination. Functions include but are not limited to:  
  - Incident action planning  
  - Information collection, analysis, and dissemination. |
| 52 | ESF #6—Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing, and Human Services  
ESF Coordinator: DHS/FEMA |
| 53 | Key Response Core Capabilities: Mass Care Services, Public and Private Services and Resources, Public Health and Medical Services |
| 54 | Coordinates the delivery of mass care, emergency assistance, housing, and human services. Functions include but are not limited to:  
  - Mass care  
  - Emergency assistance  
  - Disaster housing  
  - Human services. |
| 55 | ESF #7—Logistics  
ESF Coordinator: General Services Administration and DHS/FEMA |
| 56 | Key Response Core Capabilities: Public and Private Services and Resources, Mass Care Services, Critical Transportation |
| 57 | Coordinates comprehensive incident resource planning, management, and sustainment capability to meet the needs of disaster survivors and responders. Functions include but are not limited to:  
  - Comprehensive, national incident logistics planning, management, and sustainment capability  
  - Resource support (e.g., facility space, office equipment and supplies, contracting services). |
|   | ESF #8—Public Health and Medical Services  
|   | ESF Coordinator: Department of Health and Human Services |
| 58 | Key Response Core Capabilities: Public Health and Medical Services, Fatality Management Services, Mass Care Services, Critical Transportation |
| 59 | Coordinates the mechanisms for assistance in response to an actual or potential public health and medical disaster or incident. Functions include but are not limited to: |
|   | - Public health |
|   | - Medical surge support including patient movement |
|   | - Behavioral health services |
|   | - Mass fatality management. |

|   | ESF #9—Search and Rescue  
|   | ESF Coordinator: DHS/FEMA |
| 61 | Key Response Core Capability: Mass Search and Rescue Operations |
| 62 | Coordinates the rapid deployment of search and rescue resources to provide specialized lifesaving assistance. Functions include but are not limited to: |
|   | - Structural Collapse (Urban) Search and Rescue |
|   | - Maritime/Coastal/Waterborne Search and Rescue |
|   | - Land Search and Rescue. |

|   | ESF #10—Oil and Hazardous Materials Response  
|   | ESF Coordinator: Environmental Protection Agency |
| 64 | Key Response Core Capabilities: Environmental Response/Health and Safety, Critical Transportation, Infrastructure Systems |
| 65 | Coordinates support in response to an actual or potential discharge and/or uncontrolled release of oil or hazardous materials. Functions include but are not limited to: |
|   | - Environmental assessment of the nature and extent of oil and hazardous materials contamination |
|   | - Environmental decontamination and cleanup. |

|   | ESF #11—Agriculture and Natural Resources  
<p>|   | ESF Coordinator: Department of Agriculture |
| 67 | Key Response Core Capabilities: Environmental Response/Health and Safety, Mass Care Services, Public Health and Medical Services, Critical Transportation |
| 68 | Coordinates a variety of functions designed to protect the Nation’s food supply, respond to plant and animal pest and disease outbreaks, and protect cultural resources. Functions include but are not limited to: |
|   | - Nutrition assistance |
|   | - Animal and plant disease and pest response |
|   | - Food safety and security |
|   | - Natural and cultural resources and historic properties protection |
|   | - Safety and well-being of household pets, service animals, working animals, and livestock. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESF #</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td><strong>Energy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>ESF Coordinator:</strong> Department of Energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td><strong>Public Safety and Security</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>ESF Coordinator:</strong> Department of Justice/Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td><strong>Superseded by National Disaster Recovery Framework</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td><strong>External Affairs</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>ESF Coordinator:</strong> DHS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ESF Member Roles and Responsibilities

ESFs are not solely attributed to any one organization, nor are they mechanisms for executing an agency’s statutory authorities. Each ESF is comprised of a department or agency that has been designated as the ESF coordinator along with a number of primary and support agencies. Primary agencies are designated on the basis of their authorities, resources, and capabilities. Support agencies are assigned based on resources or capabilities in a given functional area. To the extent possible, resources provided by the ESFs are identified consistently with NIMS resource-typing categories.

- **ESF Coordinators.** ESF coordinators oversee the preparedness activities for a particular ESF and coordinate with its primary and support agencies. Responsibilities of the ESF coordinator include:
• Maintaining contact with ESF primary and support agencies through conference calls, meetings, training activities, and exercises
• Monitoring the ESF’s progress in meeting the targets of the core capabilities it supports
• Coordinating efforts with corresponding private sector, NGO, and Federal partners
• Ensuring the ESF is engaged in appropriate planning and preparedness activities.

**Primary Agencies.** ESF primary agencies have significant authorities, roles, resources, and capabilities for a particular function within an ESF. Primary agencies are responsible for:

• Orchestrating support within their functional area for the appropriate response core capabilities and other ESF missions
• Notifying and requesting assistance from support agencies
• Managing mission assignments (in Stafford Act incidents) and coordinating with support agencies, as well as appropriate state officials, operations centers, and other stakeholders
• Coordinating resources resulting from mission assignments
• Working with all types of organizations to maximize the use of all available resources
• Monitoring progress in achieving core capability targets and other ESF missions, and providing that information as part of situational and periodic readiness or preparedness assessments
• Planning for incident management, short-term recovery operations, and the transition to long-term recovery
• Maintaining trained personnel to support interagency emergency response and support teams
• Identifying new equipment or capabilities required to prevent or respond to new or emerging threats and hazards or to validate and improve capabilities to address changing risks
• Promoting physical accessibility, programmatic inclusion, and effective communication for the whole community, including individuals with disabilities.

**Support Agencies.** ESF support agencies have specific capabilities or resources that support primary agencies in executing the mission of the ESF. Support agencies activities typically include:

• Participating in planning for incident management, short-term recovery operations, transition to long-term-recovery, and the development of supporting operational plans, standard operating procedures (SOPs), checklists, or other job aids
• Providing input to periodic readiness assessments
• Maintaining trained personnel to support interagency emergency response and support teams
• Identifying new equipment or capabilities required to respond to new or emerging threats and hazards, or to improve the ability to address existing threats
• Coordinating resources resulting from response mission assignments.

**ESF Activation**

Departments and agencies supporting Federal ESFs may be selectively activated by FEMA or as directed by the Secretary of Homeland Security to support response activities for both Stafford Act
and non-Stafford Act incidents. Not all incidents requiring Federal support result in the activation of ESFs. When departments and agencies supporting Federal ESFs are activated, they may assign staff at headquarters, regional, and incident levels. FEMA may issue mission assignments at all levels to obtain resources and services from Federal departments and agencies across the ESFs.

ESFs are the primary, but not exclusive, response coordinating structures at the Federal level for Stafford Act incidents. Communities, states, regions, and other Federal departments and agencies may use the ESF construct, or they may employ other coordinating structures or partners appropriate to their location, threats, or authorities. Whatever structures are used, they are encouraged to work closely with Federal ESFs at the incident, regional, or headquarters levels if they are activated.

One example of a unique Federal coordinating structure is described below:

- **Tribal Assistance Coordination Group (TAC-G).** Governments at the Federal, state, and local levels foster effective government-to-government working relationships with tribes to achieve the common goal of responding to disasters impacting tribal lands. The TAC-G is comprised of multiple Federal organizations who are dedicated to cooperation and collaboration to strengthen emergency management as it relates to the over 560 federally-recognized tribal nations.

**Non-Stafford Act Coordinating Structures**

Although the Federal ESFs are designed to coordinate Federal response resources for both Stafford Act and non-Stafford Act incidents, the ESFs may not always be the most appropriate response coordinating structures for non-Stafford Act incidents. For incidents in which there is no Stafford declaration, the department or agency with primary legal authority may activate the coordinating structures appropriate to that authority. These structures are generally organized consistently with NIMS concepts and principles. In addition to their own structures, departments or agencies responding under their own legal authorities may request DHS to activate relevant ESFs. Per HSPD-5, the Secretary of Homeland Security coordinates with the head of the department or agency with primary legal authority but retains the authority to activate ESFs or other coordinating structures, as appropriate.

**NRF Support Annexes**

The NRF Support Annexes describe other mechanisms by which support is organized among private sector, NGO, and Federal partners. Federal departments and agencies designated as coordinating and cooperating agencies in NRF support annexes, conduct a variety of activities to include managing specific functions and missions and providing Federal support within their functional areas. The Support Annexes are available at the NRF Resource Center and include:

- Critical Infrastructure
- Financial Management
- International Coordination
- Private sector Coordination
- Tribal Coordination
- Volunteer and Donations Management
- Worker Safety and Health.
NRF Incident Annexes

NRF Incident Annexes describe coordinating structures, in addition to the ESFs, that may be used to deliver core capabilities and support response missions that are unique to a specific type of incident. Incident annexes also describe specialized response teams and resources, incident-specific roles and responsibilities, and other scenario-specific considerations. The NRF Incident Annexes are available on the NRF Resource Center. NRF Incident Annexes address the following contingencies or hazards:

- Biological Incident
- Catastrophic Incident
- Cyber Incident
- Food and Agriculture Incident
- Mass Evacuation Incident
- Nuclear/Radiological Incident
- Terrorism Incident

Operations Coordination

Response operations involve multiple partners and stakeholders. Operations coordination occurs at all government levels and consists of actions and activities that enable decisionmakers to determine appropriate courses of action and provide oversight for complex homeland security operations to achieve unity of effort and effective outcomes.

Local Response Operational Structures

Emergency responders at all levels of government use ICS command and coordinating structures to manage response operations (see Figure 2). ICS is a management system designed to integrate facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications within a common organizational structure.

At the local level, coordinating structures are usually comprised of entities within a specific functional area such as public works, law enforcement, emergency medical services, and fire departments. Integration among these structures occurs at an incident command post, which provides on-scene incident command and management.

![Diagram of Incident Command and Staff](image)
ICS is widely used by all levels of government, as well as by private sector organizations and NGOs to organize field-level operations for a broad spectrum of incidents. Typically, the incident response is structured to facilitate activities in five areas: command, operations, planning, logistics, and finance/administration.

Emergency personnel may also use the Multiagency Coordination System (MACS). The primary function of MACS, as defined in NIMS, is to coordinate activities above the incident level and to prioritize competing demands for incident resources. MACS consists of personnel, procedures, protocols, facilities, business practices, and communications integrated into a common system. MACS elements at the local level include EOCs and coordination centers.

If the local incident commander determines that additional resources or capabilities are needed, he or she contacts the local EOC and relays requirements to the local emergency manager. Local EOCs are the physical locations where multiagency coordination typically occurs and where a variety of local coordinating structures come together to solve problems. EOCs help form a common operating picture of the incident, relieve on-scene command of the burden of external coordination, and secure additional resources to help meet response requirements.

EOCs at all levels of government may also encourage participation by the private sector, NGOs, academia, associations, racial and ethnic organizations, and access and functional needs subject matter experts. These members of the whole community, in turn, often maintain their own structures, such as non-governmental or private sector EOCs.

**State Response Operational Structures**

The local incident command structure directs on-scene incident management activities and maintains command and control of on-scene incident operations. State EOCs are activated as necessary to support local EOCs and to ensure that responders have the resources they need to conduct response activities. This is achieved through integration of state-level coordinating structures working with local coordinating structures or the local incident command structure.

**State Emergency Operations Center**

State EOCs are the physical location where multiagency coordination occurs through state-level coordinating structures. Every state maintains an EOC to manage incidents requiring state-level assistance (see Figure 3). Some states have additional EOCs for coordinating information and resources within a region or area.
State EOCs are typically organized by a combination of ESFs or other coordinating structures aligned to disciplines or capabilities. Many states involve their tribal counterparts within the EOC to ensure that tribal coordinating structures are integrated into the delivery of capabilities and that tribal needs are addressed.

Federal Response Operational Structures

When an incident occurs that exceeds, or is anticipated to exceed, local or state resources—or when an incident is managed by Federal departments or agencies acting under their own authorities—the Federal Government may use the management structures described within the NRF. Additionally, the Federal Government may utilize supplementary or complementary plans to involve all necessary department and agency resources to organize the Federal response and ensure coordination among all response partners.

All Federal departments and agencies may play significant roles in response activities depending on the nature and size of an incident. Many of the arrangements by which departments and agencies participate are defined in the ESF Annexes, coordinated through pre-scripted mission assignments in a Stafford Act response, formalized in interagency agreements or described in NRF supplementary plans.

Unity of effort differs from unity of command. Various Federal departments and agencies may have statutory responsibilities and lead roles based upon the unique circumstances of the incident. Unity of effort provides coordination through cooperation and common interests and does not interfere with Federal departments’ and agencies’ supervisory, command, or statutory authorities. The Secretary ensures that overall Federal actions are unified, complete, and synchronized to prevent unfilled gaps or seams in the Federal Government’s overarching effort. This coordinated approach ensures that the Federal actions undertaken by DHS and other departments and agencies are harmonized and mutually supportive. The Secretary executes these coordination responsibilities, in part, by engaging directly with the President and relevant cabinet, department, agency, and DHS component heads as necessary to ensure a focused, efficient, and unified Federal preparedness posture. All Federal departments and agencies, in turn, cooperate with the Secretary in executing domestic incident management duties.
The following sections describe Federal support operations at the incident, regional, and headquarters levels.

**Federal Incident-Level Operations**

To help deliver Federal support or response at the incident level, coordinating structures are aligned to incident-level structures. The following section describes the Federal coordinating structures typically associated with Stafford Act incidents that can also be used for Federal-to-Federal support or other non-Stafford Act threats or incidents such as a NSSE.

**Unified Coordination (UC)**

UC is the term used to describe the primary state/Federal incident management activities conducted at the incident level. UC is typically directed from a JFO, a temporary Federal facility that provides a central location for coordination of response efforts by the private sector, NGOs, and all levels of government. UC is organized, staffed, and managed in a manner consistent with NIMS principles using the NIMS/ICS structure. A Unified Coordination Group (UCG) comprised of senior officials from the state and key Federal departments or agencies leads UC. The UCG is supported by a Unified Coordination Staff (UCS). Personnel from state and Federal departments and agencies, other jurisdictional entities, the private sector, and NGOs may be assigned to the UCS at various incident facilities (e.g., JFO, staging areas, and other field offices). The UCG determines staffing of the UCS based incident requirements.

Although UC is based on the ICS structure, it does not manage on-scene operations. Instead, it focuses on providing support to on-scene response efforts and conducting broader support operations that may extend beyond the incident site. UC must include robust operations, planning, public information, and logistics capabilities that integrate local, state, and Federal—as well as tribal, territorial, and insular area—personnel when appropriate, so that all levels of government work together to achieve unity of effort.

When incidents affect multiple localities and states or the entire Nation, multiple UCGs with associated UCS may be established. In these situations, coordination occurs according to the principles of area command as described in NIMS.

As the primary field entity for Federal response, UC integrates diverse Federal authorities and capabilities and coordinates Federal response and recovery operations. Figure 4 represents an overview of the UC organization and its key components.
Figure 4: Unified Coordination

Federal Incident-level Operations for Non-Stafford Act Incidents
UC is the primary, but not the only, incident-level structure for coordinating Federal response and assistance particularly for non-Stafford Act incidents. The response structures used in response to a Stafford Act incident may not be applicable during non-Stafford Act Federal incidents coordinated by the Secretary of Homeland Security. For non-Stafford Act incidents, the department or agency with primary legal jurisdiction activates the response structures appropriate to its authorities; these structures are generally organized based on NIMS concepts and principles. When coordinating under HSPD-5, the Secretary coordinates with the head of the department or agency with primary legal jurisdiction but retains the authority to activate the additional response structures the Secretary determines appropriate.

Federal Incident Command/Area Command in Non-Stafford Act Incidents
In non-Stafford Act incidents, Federal agencies who have responsibility for on-scene, tactical-level operations may establish incident command and area command structures, or coordinate with state and local agencies to form unified incident command and unified area command structures.

Federal Regional Operational Support
Coordinating structures can be assembled and organized at the regional level to address incidents that cross state borders or have broad geographic or system-wide implications or to manage competing requirements for response assets among multiple incidents.

Federal Regional Facilities
Most Federal departments and agencies have regional or field offices that may participate with state and local governments in planning for incidents and provide initial response assets when an incident occurs. Some Federal departments and agencies share the same standard Federal regional structure as FEMA.
FEMA Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC). FEMA has 10 regional offices, each headed by a Regional Administrator (see Figure 5). Each of FEMA’s regional offices maintains an RRCC. When activated, RRCCs are multi-agency coordination centers generally staffed by ESFs in anticipation of a serious incident or immediately following an incident. Operating under the direction of the FEMA Regional Administrator, the staff within the RRCCs coordinates Federal regional response efforts and maintains connectivity with FEMA Headquarters and with state EOCs, state and major urban area fusion centers, Federal Executive Boards, and other Federal and state operations and coordination centers that potentially contribute to the development of situational awareness. The UCG assumes responsibility for coordinating Federal response activities at the incident level once UC is established freeing the RRCC to deal with new incidents should they occur.

Federal Headquarters Operational Support

Coordinating structures are assembled and organized at the headquarters level, particularly to address incidents that cross regional borders or have broad geographic or system-wide implications.

Federal Operations Centers

Most cabinet-level departments and agencies have at least one headquarters-level operations center. A wide range of such centers maintain situational awareness within their functional areas and provide relevant information to the National Operations Center (NOC). These operations centers may also coordinate ESF activities, communicate with other Federal operations centers, and communicate with their local, state, tribal, territorial, and insular area counterparts. Examples of Federal Operations Centers include:

- National Operations Center (NOC). The NOC is the principal operations center for DHS consisting of a NOC Watch, Intelligence Watch and Warning, FEMA National Watch Center and National Response Coordination Center, and the National Infrastructure Coordinating Center. In the event of a natural disaster, act of terrorism, or other man-made disaster the NOC provides
situational awareness and a common operating picture for the entire Federal Government, and for local, state, tribal, territorial, and insular area governments as appropriate. The NOC also ensures that critical terrorism and disaster-related information reaches government decision-makers. This is achieved through the coordination and integration of information from the NOC as well as the National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center and other Federal operations centers. Additionally, the NOC serves as the national fusion center, collecting and synthesizing all-source information, including information from the state fusion centers, for all threats and all hazards covering the homeland security enterprise across the spectrum of prevent, protect, mitigate, respond, and recover.

- **National Response Coordination Center (NRCC).** The NRCC is a multiagency center located at FEMA Headquarters. Its staff coordinates the overall Federal support for major disasters and emergencies, including catastrophic incidents and emergency management program implementation. FEMA maintains the NRCC as a functional component of the National Operations Center for incident support operations.

- **Other DHS Operations Centers.** Depending on the type of incident, the operations centers of other DHS operating components may serve as the primary operations management center in support of the Secretary. These are the U.S. Coast Guard, Transportation Security Administration, U.S. Secret Service, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection operations centers.

- **National Military Command Center (NMCC).** DOD’s NMCC is the Nation’s focal point for continuous monitoring and coordination of worldwide military operations. It directly supports combatant commanders, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of Defense, and the President in the command of U.S. Armed Forces in peacetime contingencies and war. The NMCC participates in a wide variety of activities, ranging from missile warning and attack assessment to management of peacetime operations such as Defense Support of Civil Authorities during national emergencies.

- **Strategic Information and Operations Center (SIOC).** The FBI SIOC is the focal point and operational control center for all Federal intelligence, law enforcement, and investigative law enforcement activities related to domestic terrorist incidents or credible threats, including leading attribution investigations.

The specific structures that are activated for any given incident depend on the levels of government involved, as well as the legal authorities under which the response is being conducted.

**Integration**

Effective emergency response requires the ability for the response coordinating structures to link to and share information with the coordinating structures in the other mission areas. For example, in the wake of a terrorist attack that results in the need for a coordinated Federal response, Response mission area coordinating structures must work closely with those in the Prevention, Protection, and Recovery mission areas. Prevention and protection activities continue after an attack to prevent and protect from follow-on attacks. This requires close coordination of prevention and protection activities with response and recovery efforts. Integration of response mission activities with protection efforts may also occur in the context of a credible threat. Following determination of such a threat, Protection mission area organizations may switch to an enhanced steady-state posture. At that time, Response mission area assets may need to be positioned to respond quickly should protection and prevention efforts fail. Establishing close working relationships, lines of communication, and coordination protocols between protection, prevention, response, and recovery organizations facilitates this process.
Examples of Response mission area coordinating structures cooperating with Protection mission area assets include the following:

- Sharing threat information including issuing watches, warnings, and other emergency bulletins
- Coordinating with Protection mission area structures in the wake of an incident to ensure that communities and emergency responders have the protection needed to perform their jobs
- Coordinating anticipatory Response mission area activities with the mitigation and recovery mission activities.

Although they are generally considered to be prevention or protection focused organizations, the various state and major urban area fusion centers are examples of coordinating structures whose utility spans mission areas. The collection, analysis, and dissemination of information by the fusion centers can inform response activities through information sharing and operational coordination efforts.

Because of the natural relationship between response and recovery efforts and the fact that response and recovery activities often occur simultaneously, the responsibilities of some ESFs overlap with or transition to the responsibilities of Recovery Support Functions (RSFs), the Recovery mission area coordinating structures defined in the National Disaster Recovery Framework. The RSFs frequently build on the ESF resources and short-term recovery efforts applied by the ESFs to meet basic human needs to integrate short-term recovery efforts with intermediate and long-term recovery needs. The relationships and integration between the ESFs and the coordinating structures of other mission areas are detailed in the Federal IOPs.

**Relationship to Other Mission Areas**

All five mission areas integrate with each other through interdependencies, shared assets, and overlapping objectives. These overlapping areas are identified through comprehensive planning with the whole community to ensure that they are addressed during response to an incident.

The Response mission area integrates with the other four mission areas in the following manner:

- **Prevention.** Response organizations coordinate with those responsible for preventing acts of terrorism to understand potential and specific threats and to prepare accordingly by planning for general threats and through crisis action planning for credible threats. Response mission area capabilities must be available in case efforts to prevent terrorist attacks fail or credible threat are identified. Coordinating with prevention officials aids response officials in understanding the extraordinary response capabilities that terrorist attacks may require. When response activities are occurring, whether due to a terrorist attack or another type of incident, prevention activities continue.

- **Protection.** Efforts to protect people and communities as well as vital facilities, systems, and resources are inextricably linked to response efforts. Responders that support the Protection and Recovery mission areas include many of the same people and organizations. Protection activities occur before, during, and after incidents. In the aftermath of an incident, a physically secure environment should be established before Response mission area organizations can deliver essential response capabilities.

- **Mitigation.** Reducing risk through hazard mitigation reduces requirements for response capabilities. Mitigation organizations often have special insight into risks and hazards that can be shared with response personnel to improve response planning and execution.
Recovery. As with Protection, the Response and Recovery mission areas include some of the same people and organizations. Communities should build general recovery plans before an incident occurs. After an incident, recovery efforts must begin as soon as possible, often while response capabilities are still being applied.

Operational Planning

Planning across the full range of homeland security operations is an inherent responsibility of every level of government. This NRF fosters unity of effort for emergency operations planning by providing common doctrine and purpose.

A plan is a continuous, evolving instrument of anticipated actions that maximizes opportunities and guides response operations. Since planning is an ongoing process, a plan is a product based on information and understanding at the moment and is subject to revision.

Operational planning is conducted across the whole community, including the private sector and non-governmental organizations and all levels of government. Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101 provides further information on the various types of plans and guidance on the fundamentals of planning.

From the Federal perspective, integrated planning helps explain how Federal departments and agencies and other national-level whole community partners provide the right resources at the right time to support local, state, tribal, territorial, and insular area response operations. From their perspectives, integrated planning provides answers to questions about which traditional and non-traditional partners can provide the necessary resources.

The following section outlines how operational planning is applied within the Response mission area and provides guidance for the development of the Federal IOP-Response.

Response Operational Planning

Federal Planning

At the Federal level, the NRF is supported by the Federal IOP-Response. The concepts in the NRF and NIMS guide Federal operational response planning and development of the IOP-Response which provides further information regarding roles and responsibilities, identifies the critical tasks an entity will take in executing core capabilities, and identifies resourcing and sourcing requirements.

The IOP-Response further defines the concepts, principles, structures, and actions introduced in this Framework with a specific focus on these elements at the Federal level. It addresses interdependencies and integration with the other mission areas throughout the plan’s concept of operations. It also describes the management of concurrent actions and coordination points with the areas of prevention, protection, mitigation, and recovery.

The IOP-Response takes an all-hazards approach to preparedness, highlights key areas of interoperability across the five mission areas, and addresses the whole community to optimize resources. The concept of operations in the IOP-Response is based on a no-notice catastrophic incident that spans multiple regions and states and assumes hundreds of thousands of casualties, severe damage to critical infrastructure, and limited ingress and egress due to massive damage to transportation systems. Such an incident would have significant ramifications on the political, economic, social, environmental, logistical, technical, legal, and administrative structures and would overwhelm local, state, tribal, territorial, and insular area response capabilities.
While the planning factors used for the Federal IOP-Response suggest an incident that will result in a Stafford Act declaration, the plan also addresses the unique responsibility of certain Federal departments and agencies to lead elements of a response under their own authorities. This information is primarily contained in supplemental incident annexes for Stafford Act and non-Stafford Act scenarios.

The Federal IOP-Response contains:
- A detailed concept of operations
- A description of critical tasks and responsibilities
- Detailed resourcing, personnel, and sourcing requirements
- Specific provisions for the rapid integration of resources and personnel to incidents caused by any of the hazards/threats to which the whole community is particularly vulnerable
- Functional and incident-specific annexes as necessary.

It does not contain detailed descriptions of specific department or agency functions as such information is located in department or agency-level operational plans.

The NRF is based on the concept of tiered response with an understanding that most incidents start at the local level, and as needs exceed resources and capabilities, additional local, state, and Federal assets are applied. The Federal IOP-Response, therefore, is intended to align with other local, state, tribal, territorial, insular area, and Federal plans to ensure that all response partners share a common operational focus. Similarly, integration occurs at the Federal level among the departments, agencies, and non-governmental partners that comprise the respective mission area through the frameworks, Federal IOPs, and departmental and agency operations plans.

In developing the Federal IOP-Response, the following planning needs are taken into account:
- Food and water
- Evacuation and sheltering
- Accessible transportation
- Medical surge, medical countermeasures, and treatment capability
- General and medical supplies and durable medical equipment
- Emotional, behavioral, and mental health needs
- Reunification and safety of unaccompanied minors
- Guardianship
- Accessible communications
- Animal emergency management needs.

**Planning Assumptions**

The detailed planning factors for the Federal IOP-Response focus on the impacts associated with a large-scale emergency or disaster which could occur anywhere within the continental United States, its territories, or insular areas and results in a substantial number of fatalities and injuries, widespread property loss, and disruption of essential services across a large geographic area. Such an occurrence has significant ramifications on the political, economic, social, environmental, logistical, technical,
The plan addresses the potential, unique requirements and needs of all members of the whole community. While the Federal IOP-Response contains assumptions for each of the response core capabilities, some of the overarching assumptions include the following:

- A catastrophic incident or attack will occur with little or no warning.
- Incidents are typically managed at the lowest possible geographic, organizational, and jurisdictional level.
- Incident management activities will be initiated and conducted using the principles contained in NIMS.
- The combined expertise and capabilities of government at all levels, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations will be required to respond to a catastrophic incident.

Framework Application

Implementation of the concepts within the NRF and Federal IOP-Response is mandatory for Federal departments and agencies. While the NRF does not direct the actions of other response elements, the guidance contained in the NRF and the Federal IOP-Response is intended to inform local, state, tribal, territorial, and insular area governments as well as NGOs and the private sector regarding how the Federal Government responds to incidents. These partners can use this information to inform their planning and ensure that assumptions regarding Federal assistance and response and the manner in which Federal support will be provided are accurate.

Supporting Resources

To assist NRF users, FEMA maintains the NRF Resource Center (http://www.fema.gov/NRF), an online repository that contains electronic versions of the current NRF documents—base document, ESF Annexes, Support Annexes, and Incident Annexes—as well as other supporting materials. The NRF Resource Center provides information, training materials, and other tools, such as an overview of the main Stafford Act provisions, a guide to authorities and references, and an acronym list to assist response partners in understanding and executing their roles under the NRF.

Resource Center materials are regularly evaluated, updated, and augmented as necessary. Additional content may be added or modified at the request of Response mission area partners and other users.

Conclusion

The NRF is one element of the National Preparedness System mandated by PPD-8. The NRF describes how the Nation prepares to deliver the core capabilities established in the National Preparedness Goal for the Response mission area. The other mission areas defined by PPD-8 have corresponding frameworks that explain how the core capabilities established for those mission areas are delivered. All of the frameworks address how structures created to coordinate their core capabilities ensure integration and interoperability with the structures and core capabilities of the other mission areas.

The NRF is a living document; it will be regularly reviewed to evaluate consistency with existing and new policies, evolving conditions, and the experience gained from its use. The first review will be completed no later than 18 months after publication of the NRF and then every four years, or more
frequently as determined by the Secretary of Homeland Security. FEMA is the executive agent for
management and maintenance of the NRF and coordinates this work closely with the Office of the
Secretary of Homeland Security. FEMA is responsible for coordinating proposed modifications to
the NRF with all appropriate stakeholders. The Secretary of Homeland Security is the final approver
of changes to the NRF and its annexes.

The reviews will consider lessons learned and best practices identified during exercises and
responses to actual incidents as well as pertinent new technologies. Updates to the NRF Annexes
may occur independently from reviews of the base document.
This page intentionally left blank.