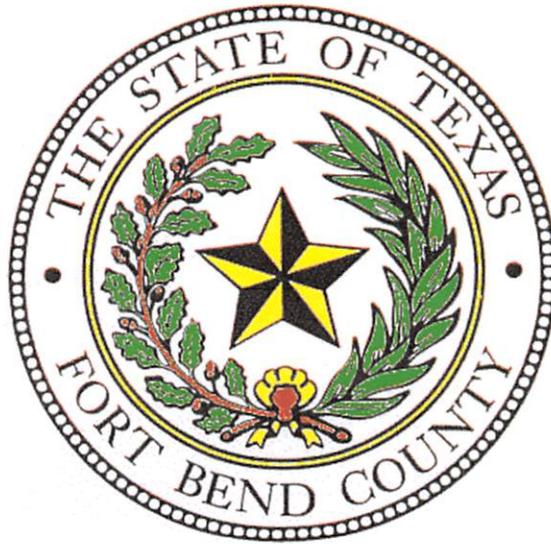


Fort Bend County  
Emergency Management



Annex R  
Search and Rescue

# Approval and Implementation

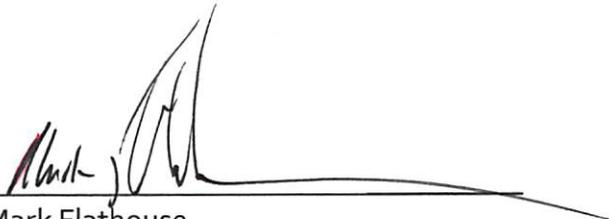
Added Once Signed By All

---

KP George  
County Judge  
Fort Bend County

---

Date



---

Mark Flathouse  
Fire Marshal / Emergency Management Coordinator  
Fort Bend County

---

1/4/2021  
Date

# RECORD OF CHANGES

Change #	Location of Change	Description	Date of Change	Recorded By
1			8/2006	Jill Boehm
2			1/2011	Judy Lefevers
3			10/2015	Alan Spears
4			11/2015	Caroline Egan
5			05/2020	Justin Jurek
6			12/2020	Alan Spears

## I. Authority

See Basic Plan, Section 1.

## II. Purpose

The purpose of this annex is to outline operational concepts and organizational arrangements for Search and Rescue (SAR) operations during emergency situations in Fort Bend County. This annex is applicable to all agencies, organizations and personnel assigned SAR functional responsibilities.

## III. Explanation of Terms

Acronym	Term
DDC	Disaster District Committee
EMC	Emergency Management Coordinator
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
IC	Incident Commander
ICP	Incident Command Post
ICS	Incident Command System
JP	Justice of the Peace
ME	Medical Examiner
NIMS	National Incident Management System
SAR	Search and Rescue
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
TEEX	Texas Engineering Extension Service
TIFMAS	Texas Intrastate Fire Mutual Aid System
TX-TF <sub>1</sub>	Texas Task Force 1
TX-TF <sub>2</sub>	Texas Task Force 2
US&R	Urban Search and Rescue
VFD	Volunteer Fire Department

## Definitions

Hazmat- Hazardous materials.

Secondary Hazard- A situation that occurs as a result of an initial hazard. For example, a chemical release from a tank car involved in a train derailment or a gas leak within a collapsed building.

Terrorist Incident- A violent act, or an act dangerous to human life, in violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any state, to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political and social objectives.

Texas Task Force 1- Also known as TX-TF1, this task force is the State's urban search and rescue (US&R) team, headquartered at the Texas Engineering Extension Service's Emergency Response and Rescue Training Field in Bryan, Texas. Its members are from city and county agencies throughout the state. They respond to mass casualty disasters anywhere in the state. Their assistance is not limited to heavy US&R. They also have a Flood Rescue Strike Team to assist during flood situations.

Texas Task Force 2- Also known as TX-TF2, this task force is a regional Urban Search and Rescue Team from the North Central Texas Council of Governments. The team is made up of members from the Dallas Fire-Rescue Department. Their mission is to provide a coordinated effort including the necessary personnel and equipment to locate, extricate, rescue and provide immediate medical treatment to victims trapped as a result of a natural or man-made disaster.

## IV. Situation and Assumptions

### A. Situation

1. Fort Bend County and/or the Joint Resolution Jurisdictions depend on municipal fire departments and volunteer fire departments for SAR.
2. Local buildings are subject to severe structural damage from hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, explosions, and acts of terrorism, which could result in injured people trapped in the damaged and/or collapsed structures.

3. In emergency situations involving structural collapse, large numbers of people may require rescue.
4. The mortality rate among trapped victims rises dramatically after 72 hours; therefore, SAR operations must be initiated without delay.
5. Secondary hazards may compound problems and threaten both disaster victims and rescue personnel.
6. Weather conditions such as rain, temperature extremes, and high winds, may pose additional hazards to disaster victims and rescue personnel.
7. Large-scale emergencies, disasters, and acts of terrorism may adversely impact SAR personnel, equipment, and facilities as well as communication systems.

## B. Assumptions

1. A trained, equipped, organized rescue service will provide the capability to conduct methodical SAR operations, shore up and stabilize weakened structures, release trapped persons, and locate the missing or dead.
2. Access to disaster areas may be limited because of damaged infrastructure.
3. If county resources and those obtained pursuant to inter-local agreements are insufficient and additional support is required, assistance will be requested from the State.
4. During major emergency situations, SAR resources may be damaged and specialized supplies depleted.

## V. Concept of Operations

### A. General

1. The fire departments within Fort Bend County have the primary responsibility for providing SAR operations.
2. SAR activities may be extensive during some types of emergency situations. SAR activities include the search for and extrication of victims during events such as structural collapse, hazmat accidents, flooding incidents, radiological incidents, and major fires or explosions.

### B. Implementation of ICS

The first responder on the scene of an emergency situation should initiate ICS and establish an Incident Command Post (ICP). As other responders arrive, the Incident Command System (ICS) will be implemented. The individual present, most qualified to deal with the specific situation will be designated as the Incident Commander (IC). The IC will implement ICS to direct and control responding resources and designate emergency operating areas.

### C. Terrorist Incident Response

During terrorist incident response it is essential that the incident command team establish operating areas and formulate a plan of action that will allow SAR personnel to conduct operations in such a way as to minimize impact to the crime scene. Emergency responders should be especially watchful for any signs of secondary devices usually set off for the purpose of injuring responders. Refer to Annex V (Terrorist Incident Response) for more information on the response to terrorist threats and activities.

### D. Requesting External Assistance

1. If local SAR resources are inadequate to deal with an emergency situation, SAR resources covered by mutual aid agreements will be requested by the Incident Commander. (See Appendix 2, TEXSAR Agreement)
2. If SAR resources and those obtained pursuant to inter-local agreements are insufficient to deal with an emergency situation, statewide mutual aid will be

requested in accordance with the *Texas Intrastate Fire Mutual Aid System* during an emergency situation (see *State of Texas Emergency Management Plan, Annex R, Section IV.G*).

3. If the foregoing resources are inadequate to deal with an emergency situation, the Fort Bend County Judge and/or a Joint Resolution Jurisdiction Mayor may request SAR assistance from the State through the Disaster District in Pierce, Texas. The county should be the first channel through which a municipality requests assistance when their resources are exceeded.

## E. Activities by Phases of Emergency Management

### 1. Prevention

- a. Maintain up-to-date information on known hazards present in facilities such as refineries, factories, power plants, and other commercial businesses.
- b. Maintain up-to-date information on types and quantities of hazardous materials present in local businesses and industrial facilities.

### 2. Preparedness

- a. Maintain a schedule for testing, maintenance, and repair of rescue equipment.
- b. Maintain a list of all SAR resources (see Annex M, Resource Management) and stock specialized supplies.
- c. Make arrangements for responders to obtain building plans during emergencies.
- d. Identify sources of dogs that can be used for SAR operations.
- e. Develop communications procedures to ensure adequate communications between SAR units, fire units, law enforcement units and other emergency responders.
- f. Plan and execute training exercises for all SAR personnel on a regular basis.
- g. Revise and update response plans at regular intervals.

### 3. Response

- a. Initiate rescue missions, as necessary.
- b. Mobilize support resources.

#### 4. Recovery

- a. Perform or assist in decontamination and cleanup.
- b. Assess damage to SAR equipment and facilities, if necessary.
- c. Inventory and replace depleted supplies.

## VI. Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

### A. General

1. The normal emergency organization, described in Section VI.A of the Basic Plan and depicted in Attachment 3 to the Basic Plan, shall carry out the function of providing SAR services in emergency situations. Routine SAR operations can be handled by our Joint Resolution Jurisdiction municipal and volunteer fire departments, with limited support from one or two other emergency services, operating under an IC. The EOC will normally be activated for major emergencies and disasters that require extensive SAR operations.
2. The Joint Resolution Jurisdiction Fire Chief or Incident Commander shall coordinate emergency SAR operations.

### B. Task Assignments

1. The Joint Resolution Jurisdiction Fire Departments will:
  - a. Coordinate all SAR operations using Fort Bend County and Joint Resolution Jurisdiction resources or those obtained pursuant to inter-local agreements.
  - b. Provide assistance during evacuations (see Annex E, Evacuation).
  - c. Prepare and execute inter-local agreements for SAR support.

d. Provide support for other public safety operations, as necessary.

2. The IC will:

- a. Establish an ICP and control and direct emergency response resources.
- b. Assess the incident, request any additional resources needed, and provide periodic updates to the EOC, if activated.
- c. Determine and implement initial protective actions for emergency responders and the public in the vicinity of the incident site.
- d. Establish a specific division of responsibilities between the incident command operation and the EOC, if activated.

3. Law Enforcement will:

- a. Upon request of the IC, control access to and traffic around incident sites.

4. The Fort Bend County Road and Bridge Department and Joint Resolution Jurisdiction Public Works Departments will:

- a. Upon request of the IC, provide heavy equipment support for SAR operations.

5. The Fort Bend County EMS will:

- a. Provide trained personnel and equipment to administer emergency medical support, if necessary.

6. The Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office, Fort Bend County EMS and/or the Joint Resolution Jurisdiction Police Departments, Fire Departments, and Volunteer Fire Departments will:
  - a. Coordinate body recovery activities with the Justice of the Peace's (JP's) office, as needed.

## VII. Direction and Control

### A. General

1. For most emergency situations, the IC will establish an ICP and direct and control emergency operations at the scene from that ICP. All SAR resources will carry out missions assigned by the IC. The IC will be assisted by a staff of the size and expertise required for the situation. The individual most qualified to deal with the specific type of emergency situation present should serve as the IC.
2. In some situations, the EOC may be activated without an incident command operation. This type of organizational arrangement is most likely when: (a) a hazard threatens, but has not yet impacted the local area (such as the predicted landfall of a hurricane), or (b) when a generalized threat exists and there is no identifiable incident site (as may be the case for a terrorist threat). During these situations, a senior SAR officer will normally report to the EOC to coordinate any response by SAR personnel.
3. External response agencies are expected to conform to the general guidance provided by our senior decision-makers and carry out mission assignments directed by the IC or the EOC. However, organized response units will normally work under the immediate control of their own supervisors.

### B. Incident Command System – EOC Interface

1. If both the EOC and an ICP are operating, the IC and the EOC must agree upon a specific division of responsibilities to ensure proper response to the incident without duplication of effort. A general division of responsibilities between the ICP and the EOC that can be used as a basis for more specific agreement is provided in Section V of Annex N (Direction and Control).

### C. Line of Succession

The line of succession for the Fort Bend County Fire Official is:

1. Fort Bend County Fire Marshal
2. Fort Bend County Assistant Fire Marshal
3. Fort Bend County Deputy Chief over Investigations
4. Fort Bend County Deputy Chief over Inspections

In most Municipal Fire Departments, the line of succession is:

1. Fire Chief
2. Assistant Chief
3. Battalion Chief
4. Captain

In most Volunteer Fire Departments, the line of succession is:

1. Fire Chief
2. Assistant Fire Chief
3. Captain

## VIII. Increase Readiness Action

### A. Readiness Level IV– Normal Conditions

See the mitigation and preparedness activities in paragraphs V.E.1 and V.E.2 above.

### B. Readiness Level III – Increased Readiness

1. Monitor situation.
2. Alert key personnel.
3. Check readiness of all equipment and supply status and correct deficiencies.
4. Review inter-local agreements for use of SAR resources operated by other agencies.
5. Review plans and procedures and update them, if necessary.

### C. Readiness Level II – High Readiness

1. Alert personnel of possible emergency duty.
2. Place selected personnel and equipment on standby.
3. Identify personnel to staff the EOC and ICP if those facilities are activated.

4. Prepare to implement inter-local agreements.

#### **D. Readiness Level I – Maximum Readiness**

1. Mobilize selected SAR personnel.
2. Consider precautionary deployment of personnel and equipment, if appropriate.
3. Dispatch SAR representative(s) to the EOC when activated.

## **IX. Administration and Report**

### **A. Reporting**

In addition to reports that may be required by their parent organization, Fire Departments participating in SAR operations should provide appropriate situation reports to the IC, or if an incident command operation has not been established, to the EOC. The IC will forward periodic reports to the EOC. Pertinent information will be incorporated into the Initial Emergency Report and the periodic Situation Report that is prepared and disseminated to key officials, other affected jurisdictions, and state agencies during major emergency operations. The essential elements of information for the Initial Emergency Report and the Situation Report are outlined in Appendices 2 and 3 to Annex N (Direction and Control).

### **B. Records**

1. **Activity Logs.** The IC and, if activated, the EOC, shall maintain accurate logs recording significant operational activities, the commitment of resources, and other information relating to emergency response and recovery operations. See Section IX.B of Annex N (Direction and Control) for more information on the types of information that should be recorded in activity logs.
2. **Documentation of Costs.** Expenses incurred in carrying out emergency response operations for certain hazards, such as radiological accidents or hazmat incidents may be recoverable from the responsible party. Hence, all SAR service elements will maintain records of personnel and equipment used and supplies consumed during large-scale emergency operations.

### C. Preservation of Records

Vital records should be protected from the effects of disaster to the maximum extent feasible. Should records be damaged during an emergency situation, professional assistance in preserving and restoring those records should be obtained as soon as possible.

### D. Resources

A listing of local SAR resources is found in Annex M (Resource Management).

### E. Communications

General emergency communications capabilities and connectivity are discussed and depicted in Annex B (Communications). The SAR team communications network is shown in Appendix 1.

### F. Post Incident Review

For large-scale emergency operations, the County Judge, Mayor, City Manager or EMC shall organize and conduct a review of emergency operations in accordance with the guidance provided in Section IX.E of the Basic Plan. The purpose of this review is to identify needed improvements in this annex, procedures, facilities, and equipment. SAR personnel who participated in the operation should participate in the review.

## X. Annex Maintenance and Development

- a. The Fort Bend County Fire Marshal is responsible for developing and maintaining this annex. Recommended changes to this annex should be forwarded as needs become apparent.
- b. This annex will be updated in accordance with the schedule outlined in Section X of the Basic Plan.
- c. Departments and agencies assigned responsibilities in this annex are responsible for developing and maintaining SOPs covering those responsibilities.

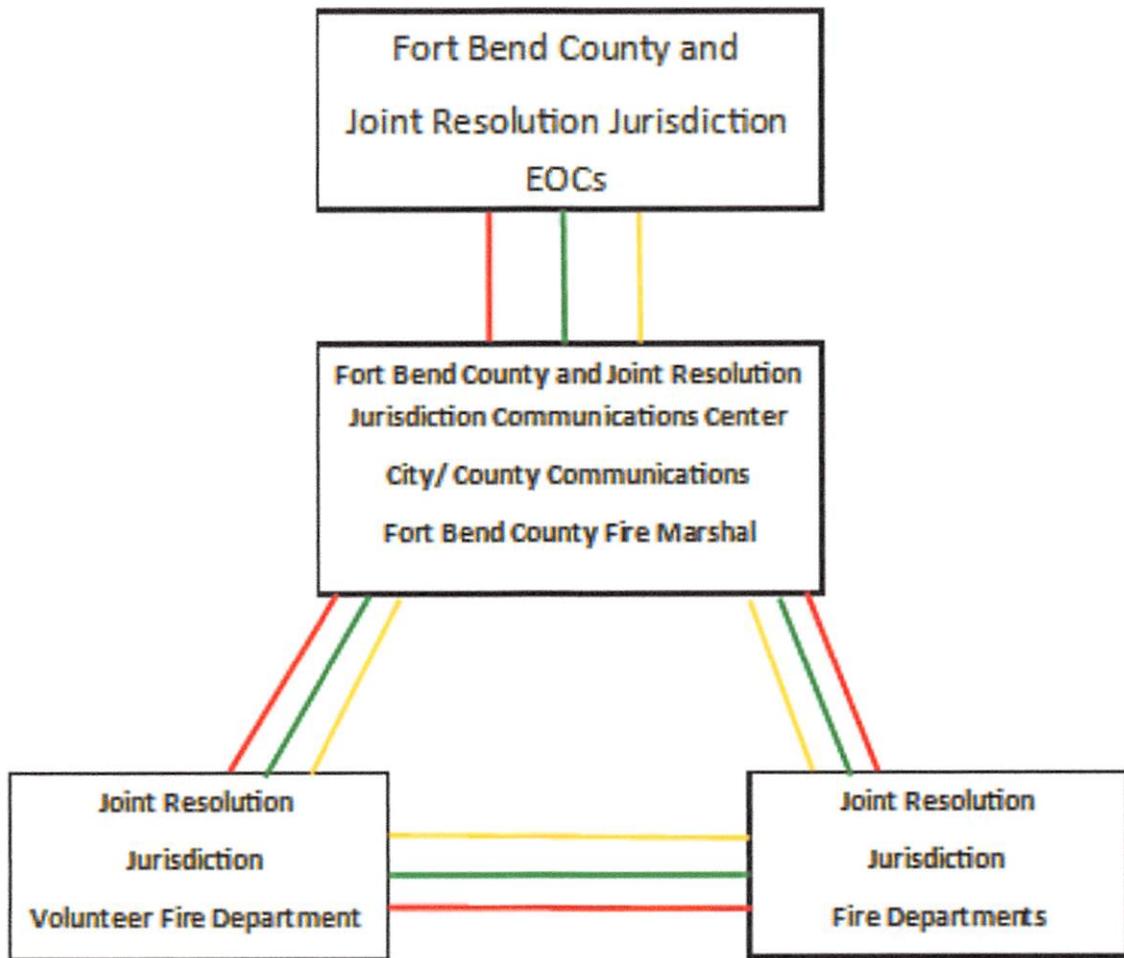
## XI. References

- a. Annex R (Search and Rescue) to the *State of Texas Emergency Management Plan*.
- b. Annex U (Terrorist Incident Response) to the *State of Texas Emergency Management Plan*.
- c. *Texas Intrastate Fire Mutual Aid System (TIFMAS)* February 2014

## XII. Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Communications Network

## SAR Communications Network



### Legend:

Phone: —

800 MHz: —

Cell Phone: —