

2022

# Special Operations Program Guide

**TENNESSEE  
SPECIAL OPERATIONS**



**RESPONSE TEAM**



Version 1

1/13/2022

## Statement of Intent

The State of Tennessee is committed to a consistent and inclusive approach to ensure that statewide emergency management, public safety responders, and local government stakeholders have the planning, organization, equipment, and training tools they need to create a program to develop and sustain special operations capabilities that will save lives, protect the public, and protect property and the environment. This Special Operations Program Guide assists the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency, in collaboration with state and local partners, in setting a path for the future.



13 JANUARY 2022  
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## Program Overview

The Tennessee Special Operations Response Program is a cooperative program between the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA) and the Tennessee Fire Chief's Association's Mutual Aid System (TMAS) utilizing state and local resources from multiple disciplines to create a network of highly trained and properly equipped response teams (TN-SORT) deployable to mutual aid requests for technical rescue and special operations assignments statewide and nationally. This program will support the resource needs as outlined in the *Tennessee Emergency Management Plan (TEMP)* for the Emergency Support Functions (ESF) 4- Firefighting, ESF 9- Search and Rescue, and ESF-10 Hazardous Materials.

The program is created by a formal working sub-committee of the TFCA's Mutual Aid Committee with the support of TEMA, the Emergency Management Association of Tennessee (EMAT), the Tennessee Association of Rescue Squads (TARS), and State Parks.

All local jurisdictions within the state are vulnerable from time to time for the need of additional outside resources to be deployed due to magnitude of the incident, available resources, and/or local capability limits. The state and local response agencies represented in the program include fire service, emergency management, law enforcement, emergency medical and rescue squads.

The purpose of this guide is to create the framework for the creation and maintenance of the TN-SORT program. This framework includes standards of conduct, minimum training and equipment requirements, credentialing process, and activation procedures. The capabilities of this program include, but not limited to: Urban Search and Rescue (US&R), Swiftwater/ Floodwater Rescue Teams (WRT), Hazardous Materials (Haz-Mat), Rope Rescue, and Technical Rescue capabilities.

In all cases, the teams/individuals activated as part of this program will perform their duties for the benefit of the citizens and constituents of the impacted area when deployed. They shall conduct the operations of the TN-SORT with loyalty, integrity, and impartiality, without allowing prejudice, favoritism, or the opportunity for personal gain to influence their decisions or actions or to interfere with serving the public interest.

It is the responsibility of the sponsoring (response) agency/ team to prepare its team members before deployment regarding conduct expectations and training. Each deployed member is duty-bound by their sponsoring agency's rules, regulations, policies, and procedures. Any violations must be documented, with appropriate follow-up action taken by the sponsoring agency.

The accreditation process as outlined in this document will serve as a guide to create the minimum standards for all teams throughout the state. While accreditation is not a requirement for local agencies or teams to establish or operate within their local jurisdictions, it will be a requirement for out of state responses. Additionally, for in-state activations, credentialed teams will be deployed as the primary agencies to coordinated mutual aid responses through the ESF 4, 9, and 10 functions.



## Mission

Save lives utilizing a highly trained network of technical rescue teams deployable 24/7/365.

## Vision

The vision of the TN-SORT is to create a statewide system of technical rescue and special operations teams that will assist state and local governments in times of disasters or large-scale incidents. The teams will be highly trained, properly equipped, and capable of deploying in an efficient and quick manner when requested.

## Goals

- Conduct analysis of current technical rescue/ special operations capabilities throughout the state.
- Identify gaps in capabilities in relation to risk.
- Establish minimum training, equipment, and activation procedures for response teams.
- Develop formal credentialing process for technical rescue/ special operations teams.
- Create relationships between state and local resources to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of responses statewide.

## Mentorship

The processes described in this document will be best served and understood with active communication and coordination. When requested the TEMA Team Development Manager will assist in coordinating a program mentor to assist the applicant team as they work through the process. A standing recommendation for all teams will be to request a mentor and have a Team Leader participate as an observer on a Phase II evaluation for another team.

## Deployment

For the purposes of team deployment on EMAC and Mutual-Aid missions, it is the responsibility of the team to ensure that all rostered personnel are fully qualified and meet the defined criteria for deployment.

## Code of Conduct

All representatives shall adhere to the following code of conduct to build public trust and ensure equitable treatment for all.

### **Expectations:**

TN SORT members are expected to conduct themselves in a professional, ethical manner at all times. Remember, you are representing the State of Tennessee, TEMA, the associations that comprise the Special Operations committees, and both employing or providing organizations, and all others that participate, as well as yourself when deployed. Failure to follow Special Operations Program policy could result in removal from the task force and all evidence of violation(s) forwarded to the member's employer.

Many times, we are deployed to areas that are experiencing an event that is one of, if not the worst, events of their lives. For that reason:

- Be considerate of the conditions under which the hosting Chief or organization is operating.
- **Be nice.** Make suggestions politely but keep working while you are talking. Play your role.
- Operate safely or, please, stay home.
- Listen a lot. Help quietly.
- Appreciate the opportunity to serve.
- Do not talk to the media unless the host specifically asks you to.

### **Code of Conduct:**

Responding personnel will conduct themselves in the following manner.

- Keep the value of life and the welfare of the victim constantly in mind
- Remain aware of cultural issues including race, religion, gender, and nationality
- No pictures or information will be posted on any social media without the express consent of the team commanders, who will coordinate with the supported jurisdiction
- Abide by all regulations regarding the handling of sensitive information
- Follow local regulations regarding medical care and handling of patients and/or deceased
- Maintain your safety gear and clothing at all times
- No firearms or other weapons allowed by non-law enforcement personnel
- Not be in possession of non-prescribed or illegal substances
- Not consume alcoholic beverages while on duty or subject to call
- Only procure equipment through appropriate channels
- Do not take anything without proper authorization
- Be sure your supervisor always knows your location
- Travel only using approved roadways and do not stray into restricted areas
- Demonstrate proper consideration for other team's capabilities and operating practices
- Not accept gratuities
- Willingly accept missions as assigned



## Definitions

**Animal Technical Rescue** - Rescuing of an animal requiring technical skills; not to be confused with “animal rescue” which typically refers to abuse or neglect.

**Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ)** - An organization, office, or individual responsible for enforcing the requirements of a code or standard, or for approving equipment, materials, an installation, or a procedure.

**Certification Organization** - An independent, third-party organization that determines product compliance with the requirements of this standard with a labeling/listing/follow-up program.

**General Use (NFPA “G” rated)** - One designation of equipment item or manufactured systems designed for general-use loads, technical-use loads, and escape based on design loads that are calculated and understood.

**High Angle** - Refers to an environment in which the load is predominantly supported by the rope rescue system.

**Incident Management System (IMS)** - A system that defines the roles and responsibilities to be assumed by personnel and the operating procedures to be used in the management and direction of emergency operations; the system is also referred to as an incident command system (ICS).

**Large Animal** - Domesticated livestock including, but not limited to, horses, cows, mules, donkeys, goats, llamas, alpacas, pigs, and exotic animals, such as zoo species, wildlife, and excluding household pets.

**Life Safety Rope** - Rope dedicated solely for the purpose of supporting people during rescue, firefighting, other emergency operations, or during training evolutions.

**Low Angle** - Refers to an environment in which the load is predominantly supported by itself and not the rope rescue system (e.g., flat land or mild sloping surface).

**Personal Flotation Device (PFD)** - A device manufactured in accordance with U.S. Coast Guard specifications that provides supplemental flotation for persons in the water.

**Recovery** - Nonemergency operations taken by responders to retrieve property or remains of victims.

**Rescue** - Activities directed at locating endangered persons at an emergency incident, removing those persons from danger, treating the injured, and providing for transport for the injured to an appropriate health care facility.

**Rescue Area** - Sometimes called the “hot,” “danger,” or “collapse” zone, an area surrounding the incident site (e.g., collapsed structure or trench) that has a size proportional to the hazards that exist.

**Risk/Benefit Analysis** - A decision made by a responder based on a hazard identification and situation assessment that weighs the risks likely to be taken against the benefits to be gained for taking those risks.

**Self-Rescue** - Escaping or exiting a hazardous area under one’s own power.

**Shall** - Indicates a mandatory requirement.

**Should** - Indicates a recommendation or that which is advised but not required.

**Strike Team** - Specified combinations of the same kind and type of resources, with common communications and a leader.

**Swift Water** - Water moving at a rate greater than one knot [1.15 mph (1.85 km/hr.)].

**Task Force** - A group of resources with common communications and a leader that can be pre-established and sent to an incident or planned event or formed at an incident or planned event.

**Technical Specialists** - Personnel with special skills who are activated only when needed.

**Technical Use** – (Previously NFPA “L” Light Use) One designation of an equipment item or manufactured systems designed for technical-use loads, and escape based on design loads that are calculated and understood.

**Webbing** - Woven material in the form of a long strip; can be of flat or tubular weave.

## Credentialing/ Accreditation Process

State Credentialing/Accreditation shall be coordinated through TEMA, in coordination with the TN Special Operations program committee.

### Phase I: Application and Self-Evaluation Packet

Teams seeking State credentialing/accreditation shall complete an application and self-evaluation packet; to include a completed Mission Ready Package and Swiftwater Team Credentialing Tool. The requesting agency/team shall identify the type of team accreditation being requested and shall follow the application and documentation procedures included in the self-evaluation packet. Each team is being evaluated with an expectation to qualify with a minimum of 1 level of bench depth.

#### Included in the Self-Evaluation will be a review of the team's:

- Management- including sponsoring agency, any participating agencies, and team leadership. If an inter-agency team, documentation supporting “how” the team is approved to deploy and defining the host/home agency; MOU's or other documents that clarify the relationship
- Roster of Personnel- including related levels of qualifications. Each team shall maintain a current roster of all deployable special operations/technical rescue personnel. This roster must document, at a minimum:
  - Personnel Names
  - Team Position (qualified for)
  - Training Credentials
  - Payroll/Fringe Benefit Rates
  - Personal Contact Information
  - Emergency Contact Information
- Personnel Records- training records, certificates, and documentation to qualify personnel for position, and documentation to support refresher/annual training requirements to maintain position status. Certifications being submitted shall be no more and no less than what is required for position qualification. All personnel records that are AHJ validations must clarify that the training or certification met or exceeded ASTM/NFPA standards and/or meets the intent of the training described in the FEMA RTLT or Special Operations Program Guide.
- Team Procedures and Documentation- including deployment, operations, and team operational structure.
- Equipment Inventory - showing that the team has the equipment and supplies needed for the team type. Teams should show ownership and maintenance procedures for the equipment.
- Vehicle Inventory - showing vehicles available to the team for deployments, including ownership of vehicles if not all owned by a single sponsoring agency.

- Documentation of any Deployment and Training Experience
- Annual Swim Test- showing documented completion for all team members
- Mission Ready Package- completed to the best of your ability, based on current personnel, salaries, supplies, and equipment values

The TN-SORT worksheets should be utilized to provide uniformity between teams. The information should be updated annually or as changes are made to the information pertaining to the personnel.

Teams seeking State credentialing/accreditation shall submit the application and self-evaluation packet that includes use of the SWT Credentialing tool, to the appropriate TEMA Regional Office via the Local County EMA office. The TEMA Regional Office will forward the application to the TEMA Team Development Manager at TEMA Headquarters in Nashville.



The TEMA Team Development Manager will then submit the application and self-evaluation packet to the TN Special Operations credentialing committee. Once received, the TN Special Operations Credentialing Committee will distribute all documentation to one of the regional coordination teams for review and recommendation.

Once the Phase I Self-Evaluation review has been completed by the regional review team and recommendations are submitted to the TN Special Operations Credentialing Committee, a final recommendation shall be forwarded back to the TEMA Team Development Manager. The TN Special Operations Committee shall recommend that the team is ready for a site visit, that they require additional information or that the team is not ready for further evaluation.

### Phase II: Site Evaluation

Once the TN Special Operations Credentialing Committee has reviewed the team application and self-evaluation and recommended the team for site evaluation, the TEMA Team Development Manager shall coordinate the assembly of an Evaluation Team composed of one or more TEMA District Coordinators from outside the team’s Region and select peer SME representatives from the TN Special Operations Program, preferably one from each grand division. A copy of the Phase I Self –Evaluation will be provided to this Site Evaluation Team. The TEMA Team Development Manager shall schedule a Phase II Site Evaluation with the requesting team/jurisdiction and the Site Evaluation Team.

The Phase II Evaluation shall include an “on-site” peer review of the materials as defined in the “Phase I: Application and Self-Evaluation Packet” section of this document to include a review of the team’s:

- Management
- Roster of Personnel
- Personal Records
- Team Procedures & Documentation
- Equipment Inventory
- Vehicle Inventory
- Documentation of any Deployment and Training Experience
- Annual Swim Test
- Mission Ready Package

The Phase II Evaluation will also include an Operational Readiness Exercise to show the ability of the Team to deploy and operate appropriately. This ORE may include testing of select skill sets. Upon completion of the evaluation process, a determination will be made by the Special Operations Credentialing Committee as to full Accreditation or whether some areas need to be further addressed.

The Special Operations Credentialing Committee will notify the Team Development Manager of any deficiencies noted in the evaluation. After receiving a formal letter from the Special Operations Credentialing Committee, the team will have six months to remedy all areas in question. Once the team has completed the requirements as outlined by the Special Operations Credentialing Committee and all information has been received and verified, the Special Operations Credentialing Committee will offer a recommendation for team accreditation.

#### [Site Evaluation Requirements/Expectations](#)

To provide for team and evaluator safety all Phase II evaluations will be scheduled March through November of each year. Exceptions can be made upon request if the climate remains tenable. Once dates are established and confirmed for the Phase II Site Evaluation, the team can anticipate the following:

- A review and verification of all Application Checklist identified records and documentation
  - Please identify a team leader to be in contact with the evaluation team prior to the event. This person will assist in facilitating communications, preparations, and once on site will provide a direct point of contact for the evaluation team
  - Please provide a low traffic area for paperwork/records review, for the evaluation team
  - Please coordinate how documentation will be shared/reviewed (hard copy or thumb drive) with the evaluation team, prior to the site visit

- Please ensure that all team training records are in order and provide documentation to meet the typing requirement.
- Please do not provide additional training records that are not requirements for Team members
- If there is a deficiency found by the team, please utilize the Team Credentialing Tool (excel) to note the area that needs correction
- If personnel certifications are dated 3 years prior to the site evaluation, the team is required to provide verification of the team member's annual/refresher training, either by documented records or by an AHJ verification statement
- A review and verification of all equipment, vehicle logs, and maintenance records
  - Please prepare to display all team equipment for evaluation and ensure that all required equipment is easily visible for verification
- A Team Operational Readiness Exercise (ORE)
  - The host agency should coordinate ORE site examination with the evaluation team, prior to facilitating the ORE; including areas of operation for the team and providing for ease of evaluator movement and visibility
  - The ORE will require host agency assistance to prepare the site in coordination with the evaluation team
  - The ORE will require the host agency to provide for safety throughout the exercise
  - ORE participation should reflect the appropriate number of team members according to the team typing being sought
  - **ORE participation should only be composed of personnel who are specifically listed on the Swiftwater Credentialing Tool, for evaluation.**
  - Evaluators should be prepared to spot check team composition with rostered personnel and ensure that operating personnel are qualified in the appropriate position.
  - In the event that a team is unable to successfully complete the assigned Operational Readiness Exercise as judged by the site evaluators, the team will be notified of their areas for improvement and may re-apply for credentialing 6 months after notification by the Special Operations Credentialing Committee.

### Designation/Accreditation

A certificate of team accreditation will be issued upon successful completion of the Accreditation process. This Certificate shall identify the Team Typing obtained, such as Swiftwater Type I Team or US&R Type III Task Force. TEMA may also designate the Team as a State level team and assign a team designation, such as TN Task Force 4 Urban Search and Rescue Team (TN-TF4). The TEMA Team Development Manager will maintain a list of accredited State Special Operations Teams. Any accredited Team may respond at the Team Typing level that they were accredited or a lower level.



## Mission Ready Packages

Mission ready packages (MRP's) are vital for quick and efficient deployment of technical rescue resources. Complete and current MRP's are required for teams seeking accreditation. Accredited team MRP's will be uploaded and stored on the EMAC website.

## Length of Accreditation

Accreditation shall be valid for a period of five years.

## Re-accreditation

Re-accreditation/Recertification of the Team is the responsibility of the team and should be completed prior to the expiration date of the Accreditation Certificate. It shall be the team's responsibility to initiate the recertification process.

Teams seeking State Re-accreditation/Recertification shall request by letter prior to the expiration date of their intent to recertify to the appropriate TEMA Regional Office via the Local County EMA office. The TEMA Regional Office will forward the letter to the TEMA Team Development Manager at TEMA Headquarters in Nashville.

The letter must document and describe levels of training conducted, equipment purchased, planning taken place, and personnel changes, including updated team roster of all qualified members that have occurred within the certification period. The TEMA Team Development Manager will review the request, evaluate the task force's response, their training and exercise activities. If deemed appropriate, a site visit will be coordinated by the TEMA Team Development Manager, TEMA regional office and TN Special Operations Credentialing Committee. The Site re-evaluation team shall include, as a minimum, a representative from the TEMA Regional Office and SME Peers from the TN Special Operations Program.

State accredited Teams shall complete an Operational Readiness Exercise to evaluate their ability to deploy and operate at their appropriate Team level at least every 5 years. The TEMA Regional Office/Team Development Manager shall be notified of such ORE's at least 90 days prior to the exercise to allow for peer evaluation of the exercise. Upon successful completion of the review and validation process a new Certificate of Accreditation will be produced by the TEMA Training Branch.

## Decertification of Teams/ Individuals

Any team accreditation issued by TEMA may be suspended or revoked for good cause including, but not limited to, failure to meet requirements specified in the standards, fraud, misrepresentation, or deception in applying for or securing accreditation, unlawfully discriminating in the provisions of services, representing qualifications at any level other than the team's current level, or inability to perform at the accreditation level during a deployment. **A pattern of not meeting deadlines with reimbursement paperwork may cause a team to lose its eligibility for out of state EMAC deployments. A pattern will be more than two consecutive missed deadlines. Teams may be disqualified from out of state EMAC deployments for up to one calendar year from the date of notification of ineligibility.**

Any Accredited Team shall notify TEMA any time there are changes in the Team's authority, organization, personnel, inventory and/or planning efforts which may affect its continued ability to perform at the level accredited or comply with applicable standards, regulations, or statutes. Any report to TEMA indicating changes noted above may be reviewed by the TEMA Team Development Manager.

Additionally, any accredited team may notify TEMA that they are currently unavailable for response or available for response at a lower Task Force Type.

Individual team members will be deemed disqualified for failure to maintain individual qualifications or violation of the “Code of Ethics.” This action may be implemented by the task force leader or the credentialing committee.

### Joint ventures/ Memorandum of Understandings (MOU’s)

Many times, it is essential for special operations/ technical rescue teams to join forces with one or more agencies outside of their local jurisdiction. In compliance with the Mutual Aid and Disaster Assistance Act of 2004, the joint ventures should be formalized in an interlocal agreement or MOU. The MOU should at a minimum address:

- Agencies participating in the joint team
- Team leadership
- Worker’s compensation
- Liability
- Joint training plan
- Equipment usage

## Training/ Qualifications

### Program Overview

The training and qualifications program are necessary to ensure that all personnel participating on accredited teams have completed the minimum training competencies as outlined in the applicable National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards and appropriate NIMS resource typing.

### Approval of Training Programs

All training programs must fully meet and/or exceed the applicable NFPA standards.

### Training Equivalency Determination Process

For teams that want to have their training program reviewed for possible approval, they should contact the TN Special Operations Committee Chair and submit the requested documents. Once the chairperson has received all needed documentation, a meeting of the TN Special Operations Committee will be called to review the proposed training program. The documents that teams should submit are:

- Skills sheets
- Curriculum information
- Web links for the company
- Class description (classroom vs. hands on skill development)
- Recertification timeline and process
- Contact information for questions the committee might have

A written decision will be issued to the team within 60 days after all documentation was received.

## Minimum Qualifications

To establish guidelines for TN-SORT response personnel, the minimum qualifications are identified:

- Personnel shall present a positive, professional attitude always
- Must be an employee or volunteer with a recognized State of Tennessee or local government public safety agency
- Shall be more team oriented and less individually motivated
- Must be able to attend scheduled training events
- Shall be in appropriate physical and medical condition for mission demands. TN-SORT responses are EXTREMELY PHYSICALLY DEMANDING.
- Shall be mentally prepared to handle technical rescues incidents and deployments.
- Current Tennessee EMR, EMT, AEMT or Paramedic License preferred
- The AHJ shall determine if agency disciplinary actions will disqualify individual from deployment consideration

A TN Special Operations Response Team will be deployable for in state and out-of-state events. Personnel mobilized in conjunction with this team will be at least 18 years of age and be **currently** medically qualified to wear a respirator (SCBA) as per NFPA 1582 requirements as determined by the home agency. The personnel will be covered by their department or employer's worker's compensation insurance and be adequately trained and qualified for the position tasked. Organizations participating in the TN-Special Operations Response Program will be required to maintain the certification and training documents and provide proof when requested by program committee and/ or review team. The agency director or their designee will be required to certify that their deployed personnel are properly trained and medically qualified for the work required. A list of training required is located throughout the document.

All technical rescue/ special operations personnel must conduct quarterly a minimum of six (6) hours training in the technical rescue discipline.

## Equipment Readiness

### Agency/Team Specific Considerations

#### **Communications:**

Communications is of utmost importance for emergency operations. Teams must identify and have available a means to provide radio communications during responses, including when outside their local jurisdiction. Generally, local radio frequency licenses are not valid outside the local jurisdiction. Teams must have the ability to utilize the National or State Interoperability Channels when deploying outside the local jurisdiction. Therefore, it is critical to assure these channels are included in the radios that will be used by the Team. Once on the scene of an incident, the Communications Unit Leader (COML) or other person responsible for communications for the Team, shall coordinate with the local agencies and other Teams as to communications channels. It is recommended that a Communications Unit Leader (COML) designated by the local IC/AHJ be available to coordinate the radio communications between all the agencies working at the incident.

Additional Communications support may be provided by TEMA, through mutual aid, or through a TN Special Operations Overhead Team.

**Vehicles:**

Vehicle needs and capabilities shall be determined by the supporting agency (local jurisdiction). Each jurisdiction must evaluate their ability to move the equipment and personnel. It is recognized that it may be difficult to maintain an adequate stand-alone fleet of vehicles to allow transporting the full equipment and personnel for large teams, such as US&R Task Forces. However, each Team shall have a plan to assemble the needed vehicles quickly upon deployment, including through rental.

**Tire Care and Maintenance:**

It will be the responsibility of each team, to develop a written tire care and replacement policy in accordance with DOT standards, manufacturers recommendations, current industry standards, and Sponsoring Agency tire length of service and replacement requirements, to include:

- Suggested tire replacement timeline:
  - Heavy vehicles not to exceed 10 years
  - Light/Medium vehicles not to exceed 5 years
  - Utility/Boat trailers not to exceed 3 years
- DOT inspections shall include Inflation, Condition, Depth(ICD):
  - Inflation
  - Condition
  - Depth
- An information collection point shall be created/developed to capture all tire data information to include:
  - Inspection information, tire date codes and storage conditions
  - All tires should be rated for the intended use to include:
    - Load rating
    - Speed rating
    - Position or intended use

**Additional information to assist with policy development is available at the following links:**

- FMCSA Commercial Tire Safety Tips  
[https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/sites/fmcsa.dot.gov/files/docs/USDOT\\_1168\\_1097\\_TireAdvisory.pdf](https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/sites/fmcsa.dot.gov/files/docs/USDOT_1168_1097_TireAdvisory.pdf)
- Care and Service of Commercial Truck Tires  
[https://www.ustires.org/sites/default/files/CareAndService\\_Commercial\\_TruckBusTires.pdf](https://www.ustires.org/sites/default/files/CareAndService_Commercial_TruckBusTires.pdf)
- Care and Service of Passenger and Light Truck Tires  
[https://www.ustires.org/sites/default/files/CareAndService\\_PassengerAndLightTruckTires.pdf](https://www.ustires.org/sites/default/files/CareAndService_PassengerAndLightTruckTires.pdf)
- Sidewall Indentations in Radial Tires  
[https://www.ustires.org/sites/default/files/TISB\\_21\\_USTMA.pdf](https://www.ustires.org/sites/default/files/TISB_21_USTMA.pdf)
- Tire Storage Recommendations

- [https://www.ustires.org/sites/default/files/TISB\\_23\\_USTMA.pdf](https://www.ustires.org/sites/default/files/TISB_23_USTMA.pdf)
- Zipper Failures  
[https://www.ustires.org/sites/default/files/TISB\\_33\\_USTMA.pdf](https://www.ustires.org/sites/default/files/TISB_33_USTMA.pdf)
- NFPA Automotive Fire Apparatus Tire Replacement Report  
<https://www.nfpa.org/News-and-Research/Data-research-and-tools/Emergency-Responders/Automotive-Fire-Apparatus-Tire-Replacement>

### **Logistics:**

Logistical support for Teams will be the primary responsibility of the teams themselves. Additional logistical support may be available through the local or state government requesting the team or through TEMA, such as sheltering, food, re-supply, and coordination.

### Maintenance/ Spare Parts

Maintenance of vehicles and equipment of the various teams will be the responsibility of the individual teams. It is recommended that all vehicles and equipment be current on their preventative maintenance schedule and be in good working order.

Due to the logistical issues of finding spare parts in the impacted areas the teams will be working in, some spare parts to address common mechanical and equipment issues should be carried. Specific examples can be found in the appendices for the different disciplines.

### Shared Equipment Cache

For jurisdictions/organizations that jointly contribute personnel and equipment to a team, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) should be developed between the parties that identifies, among other things, what equipment will be used for deployments and what equipment will be kept back to cover those home areas. The MOU should also address how and by whom the equipment will be listed for reimbursement purposes, and insurance coverage for the equipment. For additional information, please refer to the **Joint ventures/Memorandum of Understandings** section.

## Overhead Support Team (OST)

### Purpose

An Overhead Support Team (OST) may be provided for the response of Special Operations Teams, especially when multiple teams are deployed or when teams are deployed through EMAC. The OST can provide coordination between the teams, the requesting agencies, and TEMA. The OST can also provide support and supervision for the team deployment. Makeup of the OST will include personnel from the TN Special Operations Program, TFCA Mutual Aid System, and TEMA personnel and should be as efficient as possible to support the mission.

### Positions

The size and role of the OST will depend upon the situation. Team selection will be coordinated between TN Special Operations Program and TEMA. Roles of the OST may include:

**Operations** - Assist with coordination of teams and resources in accordance with the established incident command system.

**Planning** - Assist with Planning functions for the teams, as coordinated with the local incident command system. This can also include long range planning for resource needs and potential for future team requests. Should have access to GIS data and printing/ scanning capabilities.

**Logistics** - Provide logistical support for the teams.

**Communications** - Coordinate communications between the teams and local incident command system. This could include providing additional communications equipment, including radios, satellite phones, antennas, and communications trailers/vehicles.

**Safety** - Safety Officers may be provided to help oversee the safety of the personnel deployed with the teams.

**Mechanic** - Assist with the repair and maintenance of various pieces of small equipment, boat motors, vehicles, and other mechanical assets.

### Qualifications

Personnel serving on an OST shall be fully qualified and experienced in the position that they are serving. They shall have completed the FEMA O-305 (All Hazards IMT) Course and position specific training for their position. Preferably, they shall also be credentialed in their specific position.

### Equipment

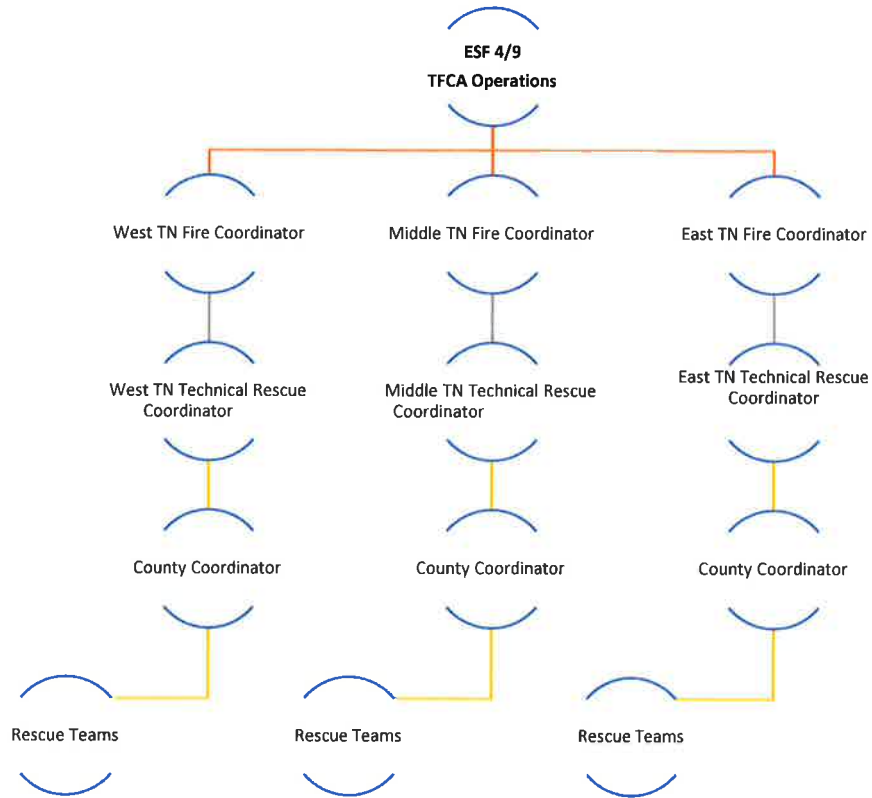
The OST will utilize similar equipment to an Incident Management Team of similar configuration. The equipment needed will depend upon the situation anticipated to be encountered. The team shall be self-sufficient for at least 3 days.



## Activation Process

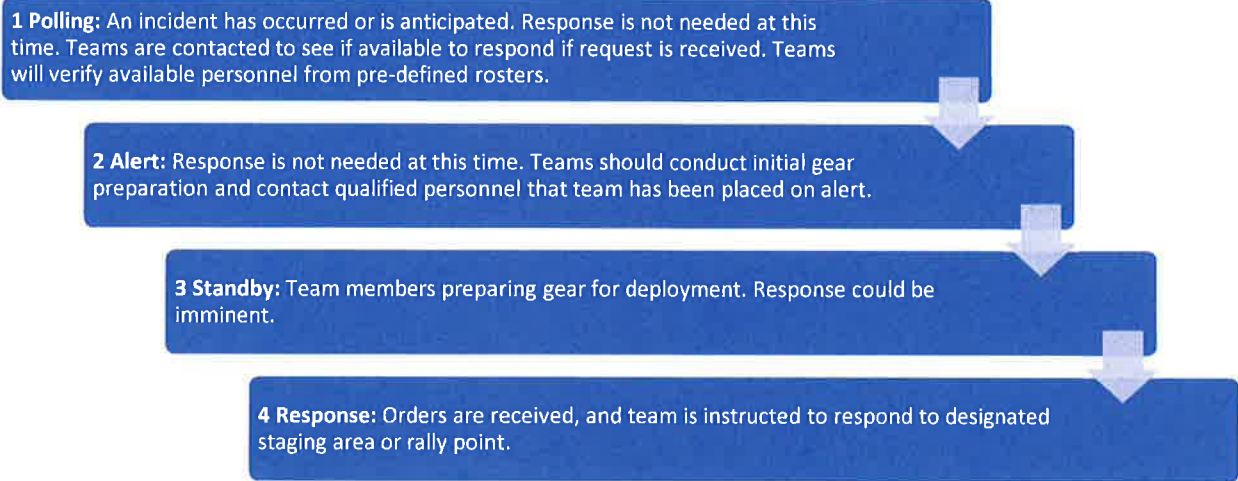
Critical to the success of this deployment plan is the concept of efficient timeframe for deployment. In concert with this concept, it is critical that all resources deployed are adequately documented and tracked. The steps of the activation process are outlined in the lists and flowcharts located in this section of the program document.

## Notification Hierarchy



## Activation Notification Levels:

While each response will have varying timeframes for deployment, the notification process will generally follow the following stages:



It is important to note the stages may be compressed or combined depending on the event and location. In-state scramble responses will be much more compressed from the polling to the response phase, while an EMAC request may take several hours or days. Requests may be withdrawn prior to response depending on the conditions in the impacted area.

## Time Frame for Deployment

### Scramble Response

In many emergencies, a more rapid deployment may be deemed necessary and authorized as a scramble response. Time frame for deployment of these missions shall be as soon as possible but preferably within thirty (30) minutes of notice from the TFCA Mutual Aid Coordinator. Unless otherwise stated, the anticipated duration of the deployment will be up to 24 hours. Deployed resources shall respond to the designated Staging Area or assigned location. It is anticipated that immediate need responses will peak rapidly and will terminate within a shorter time frame, thereby allowing for a shorter preparation time.

### Standard Response

Unless specified otherwise at the time of request, the standard for deployment of resources shall be within three (3) hours of notice from the Mutual Aid Coordinator. Unless otherwise stated, the anticipated duration of the deployment will range from 24 to 72 hours. Deployed resources shall respond to the designated Staging Area or assigned location.

### Extended Response

Unless specified otherwise at the time of request, the standard for deployment for an extended response shall be within twenty-four (24) hours of notice from the Mutual Aid Coordinator. Unless otherwise stated, the anticipated duration of the deployment will range from 3 days to a maximum of 14 days. Deployed resources shall respond to the designated Staging Area or assigned location.

## Emergency Management Assistance Compact

The TN-SORT may be deployed out-of-state through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) which is an all hazards - all disciplines mutual aid compact that serves as the cornerstone of the nation's mutual aid system.

EMAC offers assistance during governor-declared states of emergency or disaster through a responsive, straightforward system that allows states to send personnel, equipment, and commodities to assist with response and recovery efforts in other states.

EMAC establishes a firm legal foundation for sharing resources between states. Once the conditions for providing assistance to a requesting state have been set, the terms constitute a legally binding agreement. The EMAC legislation solves the problems of liability and responsibilities of cost and allows for credentials, licenses, and certifications to be honored across state lines.

The documentation process is extremely important, especially for an out-of-state deployment where organizations/teams will seek reimbursement. The EMAC website, as well as TEMA, can offer valuable information about what information needs to be gathered for reimbursement. For more information, visit <https://www.emacweb.org/index.php>

An EMAC request is a formal request and contractual response between an impacted state and the state of Tennessee. EMAC deployments will be filled by state and local government agencies. Non-affiliated agencies (non-profit and private organizations) must have a formal memorandum of understanding (MOU) between their agency and a local government or state agency prior to submitting a mission ready package (MRP) to the TN-SORT program. At a minimum, the MOU must address the local governmental agency accepting the non-affiliated agency and/or personnel as part of local government's response. Liability, worker's compensation, equipment damage, and compensation must be addressed.

**To assist in expediting the EMAC process, a completed and updated must be submitted to the TEMA Team Development Manager on an annual basis by no later than 15 July each year; based on current personnel, salaries, supplies, and equipment values.**

## In-State Deployment

All responding agencies must have a *mission/incident number* and *code word* before deploying or the agency will not be allowed into the secured or operating area.

### Clear Sky Days

- Equipment:
  - Inventory to determine minimum compliance with NIMS Resource Typing standards
  - Additional equipment/ apparatus necessary to respond identified
  - Equipment checks complete at a minimum on a monthly basis
- Personnel:
  - Personnel records up to date (training, testing, certifications, position task books, contact info., emergency contact)
- Personnel Data Sheet:
  - Complete
  - Update July 1 minimum or as changes to team members are identified
- Accreditation:
  - Complete team application submitted
  - Team accreditation process completed
- NMAS data updated

### Impending Event/ Possible Activation

- State EOC or local agencies receive threat of significant weather or impending event
- TEMA Ops and/or ESF 4/9 Coordinator contacts TN Fire Chiefs Mutual Aid Coordinator of potential threat
- Mutual Aid Coordinators are notified to **poll** accredited teams of availability of resources
  - Additional non-accredited teams are notified (in-state deployment)
- TEMA Regional Coordinators notified (no further action required)
- Teams conduct routine activation preparation procedures

### Activation Preparation

- Impending threat or weather event appears likely to occur
- Teams are selected based on qualifications, area impacts, and mix of deployment operational experience
- Selected teams are notified to prepare for impending activation
- TEMA Regional Coordinators and County EMA directors notified of teams that may be deployed
- Rosters submitted of activated teams with actual personnel to be deployed

### Deploying Resources

- Teams are cleared for deployment
  - Notified by Fire Mutual Aid Coordinator
- Deployment orders issued
  - Teams will report to designated staging area

## Out of state (EMAC)

### Clear Sky Days

- Equipment:
  - Inventory to determine minimum compliance with NIMS Resource Typing standards
  - Additional equipment/ apparatus necessary to respond identified
  - Equipment checks complete at a minimum on a monthly basis
- Personnel:
  - Personnel records up to date (training, testing, certifications, contact info., emergency contact)
- Personnel Data Sheet:
  - Complete
  - Update July 1 minimum or as changes to team members are identified
- Accreditation:
  - Complete team application submitted
  - Team accreditation process completed
- NMAS data updated

### Impending Event/ Possible Activation

- State EOC or local agencies receive threat of significant weather or impending event
- EMAC support team contacted by threatened states regarding potential response
- TEMA Ops and/or ESF 4/9 Coordinator contacts TN Fire Chiefs Mutual Aid Coordinator of potential threat
- Mutual Aid Coordinators are notified to *poll* accredited teams of availability of resources
- TEMA Regional Coordinators notified (no further action required)
- Teams conduct routine activation preparation procedures
- Team submits updated MRP with actual names of personnel to be deployed and updated financial (hourly rates, benefit rates, equipment charges, etc.) to TFCA Coordinator

### Activation Preparation

- Impending threat or weather event appears likely to occur
- Official EMAC request received with deployment details
- Teams are selected based on qualifications, area impacts, and mix of deployment operational experience
- Selected teams are notified to prepare for impending activation
- TEMA Regional Coordinators and County EMA directors notified of teams that may be deployed
- Rosters (contact information, emergency notification info. Etc.) submitted of activated teams with actual personnel to be deployed on official forms issued

### Deploying Resources

- Teams are cleared for deployment
  - Notified by Fire Mutual Aid Coordinator
- Deployment orders and information issued
- Teams will arrive and designated deployment check-in location per orders