

## ESF 9 – Search and Rescue

### Purpose

Emergency Support Function (ESF) #9 provides guidance for the organization of Sumner County resources to conduct life saving search and rescue operations. Specifically, ESF-9 discusses:

- Specialized search and rescue resources
- Agency roles and responsibilities
- State and Federal search and rescue resources
- Local coordination and liaison activities

The goal of search and rescue operations is to save the lives of people who are unable to ensure their own survival without assistance. Search and rescue activities include, but are not limited to:

- Locating, extricating and providing immediate medical assistance to victims trapped in collapsed or damaged structures
- Locating and assisting missing or trapped persons, vehicles, boats, and downed aircraft

Day-to-day rescue capability within the county and within the incorporated areas of the county will be augmented during natural/technological disasters to the extent necessary to eliminate or minimize the problem at hand. Operations may include the mobilization of medical personnel, building trades, engineering services, heavy equipment operation, aerial reconnaissance and military support.

In the case of a mass casualty incident, the primary directive for search and rescue will be to protect the responder, extract the living and finally, to recover the dead.

### Scope

This ESF Annex is designed to provide a flexible organizational structure capable of meeting the varied requirements of many emergency scenarios with the potential to require activation of the Sumner County Emergency Operations Center (SuCoEOC) and implementation of the Sumner County Emergency Operations Plan (SuCoEOP).

ESF-9 is a functional annex to the SuCoEOP and to the extent possible, information contained in other sections of the EOP will not be repeated in this document.

### Policies

This ESF annex applies to all agencies and organizations with assigned emergency responsibilities as described in the SuCoEOP.

The ESF-9 Coordinator, the Sumner County Fire Chiefs Association and the support agencies are critical members of the EOC Team and will work within the EOC structure described in ESF-5 Emergency Management.

Sumner County Fire Districts and the city fire departments train their personnel in the Incident Command System (ICS) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS) to help ensure coordination during emergency situations.

Many of the agencies with ESF-9 responsibilities have existing emergency plans and procedures. ESF-9 Annex is not designed to take the place of these plans, rather it is designed to complement and support the departmental staffing and procedures already in place.

### Concept of Operations

#### General

Sumner County Emergency Management is the ESF Coordinator for ESF-9 Search and Rescue. Since the responsibilities for Search and Rescue may vary depending on what the type, size, extent and duration of a situation is, all of the emergency response agencies in the county are primary agencies within this ESF.

Specially trained and equipped Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams are maintained by the Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). USAR teams may be deployed to assist local jurisdictions with complex search and rescue operations. The closest USAR Teams to the County are located in Columbia, Missouri and Omaha, Nebraska.

This ESF Annex was developed to complement the National Response Plan (NRP) dated December 2005. Where appropriate, ESF-7 also incorporates the elements of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) to help ensure a coordinated response.

All emergency response personnel are trained in the Incident Command System (ICS) and the NIMS to help ensure coordination during emergency situations and if necessary, the integration of State and Federal resources.

State and Federal search and rescue resources will be requested by the Sumner County EOC through the procedures described in ESF-5 Emergency Management.

As described in existing mutual aid agreements, outside search and rescue resources will remain under the direct control of the sponsoring agency but will be assigned by the Incident Commander and/or the EOC to respond as necessary.

In the event of a downed aircraft, the Federal Aviation Administration is responsible for locating the downed aircraft. Sumner County Emergency Management will coordinate ground rescue and/or recovery operations of victims.

The following specialized capabilities exist with local and/or regional agencies for Search & Rescue:

- Surface water
- High angle
- Aerial
- Collapsed structures
- Missing persons
- Urban

## **Sumner County Emergency Operations Plan**

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Accurate records must be kept to provide information to various agencies and individuals at the completion of search & rescue activities.

The primary Sumner County EMS service will document where injured persons were found, treated, and transported (if applicable) for additional medical care. Law enforcement, under the direction of the Sumner County Coroner, will record where deceased victims were found.

Law enforcement, under the direction of the Sheriff, will account for and secure evidence and personal belongings.

Primary communications are via radio. Alternate communications are either through cellular or public telephones, and pagers.

### **Organization**

Tactical search and rescue operations will be controlled by the Incident Commander(s) at the scene(s) ICS structure. The Incident Commander(s) will assess the need for additional resources and request that the SuCoEOC deploy assets to support field operations.

Outside search and rescue resources will be controlled by the procedures outlined in mutual aid agreements. These agencies will remain under the direct control of the sponsoring agency, but will be assigned by the Incident Commander and/or the EOC to respond as necessary.

The Sumner County Emergency Operations Center (SuCoEOC) will serve as the central location for interagency coordination and executive decision-making, including all activities associated with ESF-9.

The ESF-9 team members are critical members of the EOC Team and will work within the EOC structure as described in ESF-5 Emergency Management.

In events involving search and rescue operations, the Sumner County Emergency Management Department will request that an appropriately trained representative report to the EOC to coordinate ESF-9 activities.

As additional EOC staffing needs become apparent, other agency personnel may be asked to report to the EOC to assist with search and rescue activities. If necessary, State and Federal representatives may be asked to report to the EOC to ensure appropriate coordination.

### **Notifications**

In events involving search and rescue operations, the Sumner County Emergency Management Department will request that an appropriately trained representative report to the EOC to coordinate ESF-9 activities.

As additional EOC staffing needs become apparent, other agency personnel may be asked to report to the EOC to assist with search and rescue activities. If necessary, State and Federal representatives may be asked to report to the EOC to ensure appropriate coordination.

## **Actions**

### **Preparedness**

- Maintain this ESF Annex as well as supporting operating procedures and guidelines
- Ensure personnel receive appropriate emergency operations training
- Ensure mutual aid agreements are in place with surrounding jurisdictions
- Develop and maintain mutual aid agreements with private area resources that could be useful during search and rescue operations
- Participate in Emergency Management training and exercises

### **Response**

- Respond as required on a priority basis
- Activate mutual aid if needed
- Coordinate activities with other responding agencies
- Coordinate with search and rescue elements responding from outside the jurisdiction
- Alert or activate off-duty and auxiliary personnel as required by the emergency
- Conduct other specific response actions as dictated by the situation

### **Recovery**

- Replenish supplies and repair damaged equipment
- Continue all activities in coordination with the EOC based on the requirements of the incident
- Participate in after-action briefings and develop after-action reports
- Make necessary changes in this ESF Annex and supporting plans and procedures

### **Prevention**

- Review the hazards most likely to affect Sumner County and identify potential vulnerabilities in the search and rescue function
- Develop plans to overcome these deficiencies (i.e., new equipment, training, mutual aid procedures)

## **Direction and Control**

The ESF-9 (Search and Rescue) Coordinator will:

- Work with the SuCoEOC Team to rapidly assess the situation and take appropriate actions to support search and rescue operations at the scene(s)
- Assess the need to request specialized search and rescue resources from outside the County
- Serve as the liaison with search and rescue resources from outside Sumner County, including State and Federal agencies
- Work with ESF-3 (Road & Bridge Department) to ensure heavy equipment support to search and rescue operations
- Coordinate with ESF-8 (Health and Medical Services) to help ensure the coordination of emergency medical assistance and victim transport
- Work with the Incident Commander(s) and the SuCoEOC Team to help ensure search and rescue personnel deployed to the disaster scene are appropriately outfitted with and trained to use personal protective equipment required by the presence of any potentially hazardous materials/substances

Responsibilities

**All Tasked Agencies will:**

- Develop applicable standard operating procedures, guidelines and/or checklists detailing the accomplishment of their assigned functions.
- Use "plain text" when communicating by radio transmission during disaster situations.
- Provide ongoing status reports as requested.
- When requested, deploy a representative to the Sumner County EOC to assist with communications activities.
- Maintain updated resource inventories of supplies, equipment, and personnel resources, including possible sources of augmentation or replacement.
- Document all costs and expenses associated with response and recovery activities taking care to clearly segregate disaster related work in the event that reimbursement becomes available from the state and federal government.
- Maintain up-to-date rosters for notifying personnel and 24-hour EOC staffing capabilities.
- Perform other emergency tasks as needed or assigned.

***The Sumner County Rescue Team***

The Sumner County Rescue Team is trained in rope, water and ice rescue and is composed of volunteers from fire, law, EMS and emergency management agencies from inside Sumner County. This unit operates under the direction and control of the Sumner County Emergency Management Agency.

Day-to-day rescue events such as vehicular accidents are the responsibility of the various fire departments throughout Sumner County.

**Specialized rescue events and capabilities within Sumner County include:**

- Surface or Swift flood waters
  - Incidents involving water rescues in flash flood areas are directed to the Sumner County Rescue Team members. The Sumner County Rescue Team is available for all local incidents, but due to the size of the county and the possibility of an event that would affect multiple jurisdictions, a large-scale event would quickly deplete its resources.
- Ice or frozen water surfaces
  - Incidents involving ice water rescues are directed to the Sumner County Rescue Team members. The Sumner County Rescue Team is available for all local incidents, but due to the size of the county and the possibility of an event that would affect multiple jurisdictions, a large-scale event would quickly deplete its resources.
- Deep waters or diving
  - Incidents involving deep water or dive rescues will make it necessary to request aide from outside of the county. The Sumner County Rescue Squad will assist with these actions.
- High angle
  - Incidents involving high angle rescues will make it necessary to request aide from outside of the county. The Sumner County Rescue Squad will assist with these actions.

- Aerial
  - Sumner County can call upon the services of the Wichita Police Department or Kansas Highway Patrol to provide assistance for aerial search and rescue activities.
- Collapsed structures
  - All fire districts/departments in Sumner County are the first line of response for most rescue situations including vehicular extrications, collapsed buildings and trench collapse. The local fire districts/departments provide the initial size up of the situation as well as initial triage. The Fire Officer on scene will assume the role of Incident Commander, direct the response of additional manpower and equipment as needed and direct the shut off of utilities such as gas or power at the scene.
- Urban
  - Cases involving missing persons or fugitives are the responsibility of law enforcement who may call upon the assistance of the Sumner County Rescue Team and/or local fire departments to assist in the search efforts. Search and rescue dogs are available through the Sedgwick County Emergency Management K-9 Unit.

### **Transportation Events:**

Certain disaster/emergency events such as transportation emergencies involving railway or airplanes as well as acts of terrorism would quickly deplete our local resources and capabilities bringing with them particular standards. Among these is the involvement of federal agencies such as the National Transportation Safety Board, the Federal Aviation Authority, Department of Homeland Security or the military. One or more of these agencies would become the lead in the investigation and recovery efforts with Sumner County resources providing supplemental assistance for security, etc.

## **Administration and Support**

### **Support**

Requests for emergency assistance will be resolved at the lowest level direction and control facility with appropriate response resources capabilities. Unresolved assistance requests will normally flow upward from cities to the county, and/or field deployed command posts to the Sumner County EOC, from there they will be requested from responsible representatives in the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC), and as required to other states or the federal government for assistance support.

### **Agreements and Understandings**

All agreements and understandings entered into for the purchase, lease, or otherwise use of equipment and services, will be in accordance with the provision of laws and procedures. The Proclamation of a State of Local Emergency by the Sumner County Board of County Commissioners or a State Disaster issued by the Governor may suspend selected rules and regulations that affect support operations. The primary agency will determine the specific impact of the situation and inform the ESF group members.

**Status Reports**

The Commanding Fire Department or Agency will maintain status of all outstanding assistance requests and unresolved ESF-9 related issues. This information will be summarized into periodic status reports and submitted in accordance with applicable operating procedures.

**Expenditures and Recordkeeping**

Each ESF agency is responsible for establishing administrative controls necessary to manage the expenditure of funds and to provide reasonable accountability and justification for federal reimbursement in accordance with the established guidelines.

The first source of funds for expenditures by agencies in response to an emergency, imminent disaster, or recovery from a catastrophic incident, is to be from local budget funds such as the County General Fund.

**Critiques**

Following the conclusion of any significant emergency event/incident or exercise, the primary agency representative will conduct a critique of the group activities during the event/incident/exercise.

Support agencies will provide written and/or oral inputs for this critique and the primary agency representative will consolidate all inputs into a final report and submit it to the Sumner County Emergency Management Director.