THE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

A training course for REACT Teams and members

This is a new REACT course designed to give every REACT member a basic understanding of emergency operations plans to guide Team response to major emergencies and disasters. Planning for bad events reduces the stress and confusion of the event and makes the response by your REACT Team, REACT International, or the agencies we support more effective, fulfilling our basic humanitarian responsibility to those in need.

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INTRODUCTION

Why are we offering a course on emergency operations plans? There is an old maxim with considerable truth to it: "Failing to plan is planning to fail." Nowhere is this truer than in planning to respond to a major emergency or disaster. These events generate confusion, incorrect information, personal danger, and high levels of stress for anyone who responds. Having a plan decides in advance the answers to all the routine questions, leaving you free to deal with the event specific and unique events. This course is designed to give every REACT member a basic understanding of emergency operations planning so that you will be able to develop and use an effective Team emergency operations plan.

I. WHAT AND WHY

An Emergency Operations Plan (commonly referred to as an EOP) is one of the most basic documents used by emergency managers to guide protective actions for their state, county, city, etc. These are mandated either by law or as a condition for funding for jurisdiction emergency management programs in every state in the United States. Although nothing requires voluntary organizations to have such plans to guide their operations, almost all of the major organizations do as a best practice.

It is important to understand what an EOP does. There is a common idea that you can't plan for a disaster because every disaster is different. Taken to its logical end this principle says that you can't plan for anything that might be different. If this were true, the armed forces of every nation of any substance would never write war plans or contingency plans. After all, wars are deliberately different.

But the "principle" is not true. Disasters all have a set of common characteristics. They:

(1) based on their type, have common impacts and a predictable extent of disruption.

(2) have impacts that can extend for hours or for decades.

(3) have a sequence of development of favorable conditions, an initiating event, impact, dissipation, and aftermath.

(4) based on historical experience, scientific study, and technological developments can be predicted within a specific (even if long) time period.

(5) have a typical timeline that goes with the sequence.

(6) require actions to protect people, property, society, infrastructure, and government.

(7) require the mobilization of civil government, military, voluntary organization, and business resources for their management.

(8) require coordinated management actions for the efficient use of resources to reduce their impact.

What this means is that the tornado that flattens acres of corn and the family farm's barn is a different tornado from the one that touches down in the city at 29th Street and Z Avenue. But it is a tornado. The impacts of a tornado, the season for tornadoes, the numbers of tornadoes that typically happen, etc. are a knowable thing. An emergency communications organization failing to plan for a tornado response under these conditions is negligent.

What a plan does is important. It achieves three major outcomes for your Team:

(1) because it lays out what you plan to do, you know what training and equipment you will need to do that mission - that is where you spend your time and your money.

(2) it provides a document you can use to coordinate your planning with that of your jurisdiction's emergency management agency and with the organizations you support.

(3) it answers the basic questions about how to respond to the common elements in any disaster response - most importantly allowing you to focus on the questions that are unique to the individual disaster.

How does this play out in practice? Let's say that you understand that there is a need in your community to provide communications between hospitals in the case of a telephone outage. You confirm this with your local emergency manager, offer your help to the hospitals, and everyone says "yes, what a good idea." You develop a draft plan, identify that you need to update your alerting roster, develop a way to assign people to each hospital, identify what equipment you will need, talk with the hospitals to identify where and when they need communicators, etc.

Then you conduct a drill in conjunction with the hospitals to make sure that your plan will work - this can be a tabletop exercise, or a simple deployment drill, or be a part of a larger hospital or community exercise. Based on lessons observed in the drill, make any needed changes to the plan. Then give everyone involved a copy of the plan. And update it any time there need to be changes.

Now when it happens, the emergency manager and the hospitals know who to contact. Your Team leadership knows how to assign members to hospitals, the members know where they are to go and what to take with them. You have even talked to your nearest REACT Teams and/or your Council, and made arrangements for mutual aid should the event continue over an extended period of time.

II. THE PLANNING PROCESS

KNOW WHAT YOU CAN DO

First, understand what the law says you can do. Know what the FCC says you can do with your radio service. Know what state and local laws and ordinances say about the role of volunteers, the protections they have, and their authority (almost universally you have no more authority than any other citizen). Know what state laws say about the types of actions you can take in emergencies and the types of services you can offer. If you are not sure what the law says, consult an attorney.

Do not plan to offer any legally regulated service other than communications. Do not offer security, medical, or firefighting services. These are extensively regulated by state law, require specific training, and are overseen by state authorities.

And make certain that your own internal procedures establish and enforce the clear policy that your members never respond armed. Even if you have legal authority to carry a firearm, the universal standard for disaster volunteers is that we do not carry weapons. If you do, you risk our organization's reputation as a responsible organization, and no one, not REACT, not our insurer, and not the rest of the volunteer community, will stand behind you.

Be realistic. If you have three members, you may be able to reliably generate one radio operator or base station when you are called in the middle of the day on a work day. The 3 to 1 ratio is a good rule of thumb. In the midst of a disaster, the member you have who already works for a public safety service and two other volunteer organizations will not be available. The business owner or key employee will be

called by the employer to help protect the business's assets. The family adult will be taking care of the significant other, the kids, and the house.

Don't plan based on what you might have; plan based on what you have right now. You promise yourself that you will successfully recruit and train 15 new members before the start of tornado season. You write your plan based on the new total of 18. You promise your supported organization that you will show up with 6 radio operators.

How many will you actually have on the day the EF-3 tornado rolls through town? That is right - 1. Recruiting will only add 4, two of them will come to one meeting, never to be seen again. One will quit after the second meeting when he realizes that you are serious about doing training. And the last one will keep promising to be ready, but her 60 hour a week job just does not allow the time.

This is not just a REACT problem - there are too many volunteer opportunities competing for a decreasing percentage of the population willing to do long term, membership-based volunteer work. Be realistic.

IDENTIFY THE HAZARD

In planning for your response, it is important to identify the types of hazards to which you expect to respond. Every state and local jurisdiction has suffered from major emergencies and disasters. These include natural disasters, disasters resulting from infrastructure, industrial, and transportation accidents and failures, epidemics, terrorist events, and riots. Local newspaper records, local histories, information on the types of transportation services and industrial plants, and your local emergency management agency are all good sources of information on what types of disasters and the extent of impacts you can expect to encounter.

For example, if your Team is located in an area subject to flash floods, you can expect rapid onset with limited warning, flooding along major and even minor watercourses, roads and bridges to be washed out, mud and rock slides, homes flooded and people displaced and sheltered. Incidentally, this particular threat is increasing due to rising temperatures allowing the atmosphere to carry more water – rainfall amounts in rainstorms are significantly higher than even a decade ago and are expected to continue to increase.

IDENTIFY YOUR NICHE

REACT is an emergency communications organization. Your Typed Teams can provide fixed base communications or deployable communications teams in the community. You have trained, and been credentialed through our typing process, to provide emergency communications. You have spent a lot of time and effort and money to get to be good as a communicator.

Don't plan to direct traffic, to provide security, to park cars, to provide emergency medical services, to hand out cases of water, or to be a general labor pool. You may not be covered by our insurance, you may do things that you legally are not allowed to do, and your liability may actually increase because we do not provide training or credentialing for these functions.

This is not to say that you should turn down a mission tasking to provide communications linking points of distribution that are handing out cases of water. That is using your communications training and equipment in a way that maximizes their impact and makes the overall disaster response more effective. Look for missions in which your communications increase impact and efficiency, not missions that any community group could do.

There are a number of volunteer organizations that do emergency communications. These include the Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES), the Radio Amateur Radio Emergency Services (RACES), the Military Amateur Radio Service (MARS), the Salvation Army Team Emergency Radio Net (SATERN), and Auxiliary Communications (AUXCOM) groups. In general, each of these organizations operates solely on Amateur or government frequencies and provides internal or agency to agency communications. And some CERTs (Community Emergency Response Teams) have communications capabilities on Amateur Radio, GMRS, or Family Radio Service. Identify which of these are available in your area and identify what functions they typically perform.

REACT's unique niche is that we are the only organization with experience in talking to the general public by radio, and in monitoring emergency frequencies to report emergency incidents. This includes the Citizens Band emergency channel, General Mobile Radio Service commonly accepted emergency and calling channels, Amateur Radio simplex calling frequency, and the suggested Family Radio Service emergency channel.

In addition, REACT Teams have provided communications in a variety of ways, including:

- Deployable communications relay points
- Deployable communications teams
- Hospital communications
- Augmentation to Emergency Operations Center communications centers
- Severe weather reporting, including Skywarn spotting and communications
- Communications for points of distribution
- Observation points for flash flooding or other impacts
- Communications for incoming diaster supply trucks
- Communications for CERT
- Shelter communications
- Disaster social media operations

WHAT ARE YOU SOLVING

Planning can address one problem or be an all-hazards approach. The Federal Emergency Administration approach over the last 30 years has been to develop plans which address all hazards in one document. This approach works well for states and local jurisdictions because it consolidates similar functions, reduces duplication, and updates are restricted to the single document. However, it is labor intensive and results in large documents that require some training to use.

The other approach is either hazard specific with one plan for each type of event or organization specific for a single supported organization. The result is a shorter plan that is easier to use. However, a Team with a number of different taskings will end up with multiple documents to keep track of and update.

If you support one organization with one specific task, your plan can be brief and focused. However, if you support several different organizations and respond to a variety of hazards, you may need a larger all hazards plan.

IDENTIFY A SUPPORTED ORGANIZATION

How do you determine to support? This is a critical decision. Because you are writing a disaster and emergency operations plan, you want to plan to support organizations that disaster and emergency response. There are two obvious candidates:

(1) Your local emergency management agency. The local emergency manager is a logical choice for contact because the emergency management agency typically has limited resources and may well welcome volunteer help to be able to meet one of the niches your Team can fill.

(2) The local affiliate or office of one of the organizations with which REACT already has Memorandums of Understanding:

- National Weather Service
- American Red Cross
- Salvation Army
- American Radio Relay League (specifically the Amateur Radio Emergency Service)

There may be other local organizations that need assistance. Make certain that any organization you agree to support meets the following criteria:

(1) recognized charitable organization with tax-exempt status or a governmental agency.

(2) a mission that includes response to emergencies and disasters.

(3) established in the community with a solid reputation.

(4) appropriate liability and other insurance coverage for its operations.

It may take time to establish a working relationship with an organization that you are interested in supporting. If your organization is new in the community or if you have an undesirable reputation because of the actions of previous officers and members, this may take two or three years of engagement with highly reliable performance on your part.

In addition to identification of the organization you support in your emergency operations plan, it is critical to have a memorandum of understanding (MOU) or agreement (MOA) with that organization. The MOU establishes the conditions under which you will support that organization. The EOP is how you will respond to a request from the supported organization; the MOU establishes the obligation of REACT and the organization to work together.

WHAT ABOUT SEVERAL ORGANIZATIONS?

If you have agreements with several organizations, you have a planning problem. If the big one happens, which organization do you support? Do you commit to the first organization that calls you, or to the first organization with which you signed a memorandum of understanding? Do you prioritize based on the type of event? Regardless of how you make this decision, you need to make sure the organizations you support understand your priority system. Don't be surprised if one does not call you in the big one because they assumed you were working for another agency – and you end up working for no one.

FIND OUT THE NEED

When you discuss the role you will perform with a supported organization, be absolutely certain you are talking the same language. We do emergency communications - to us, that means radios. To others it may mean the types of press releases and media interviews they do during a crisis. This means that you should get a clear understanding of:

(1)   What type of event will the supported organization respond to, when in the continuum of the event, to do what?

(2)   What services does the supported organization need from your Team?

(3)   When will they need your support?

(4)   What resources do they need?

(5)   For how long will your support typically be needed?

(6)   What are the logistical support arrangements?

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO TO MEET THE NEED?

How are you going to meet the need of the organization you support? You need to decide:

(1)   how many Type IV (in 2018), III (2019), II (2020), I (2021) Teams of what kind (deployable Communications Teams, fixed Base Station Teams, or Message Teams) will you be able to reliably supply? As we increase the number of

credentialed operators at each level, you should plan to adjust what you can offer. Note that reliably supply means that you can supply every time you are asked daytime during the workweek, nighttime during the workweek, and on the weekend.

(2)   how soon you can respond, in hours and minutes? Allow sufficient time for alerting, individuals to turn on radio stations, gather equipment, and report to an assembly points.

(3)   what communications services and frequencies will you use?

(4)   where will your team members assemble before deploying?

(5)   what equipment and supplies will your members need to bring? Some of these may be included in the emergency operations plan, or they may be specified in standard operating procedures, or in checklists. Wherever you put the guidance, they must be communicated to the members, and be resources that you actually have as a Team.

WHAT IS THE SEQUENCE?

An orderly response means that you have to do the right thing and in the right order. One way to organize this is to use the REACT alert levels, tailored to the specific actions your Team needs to take:

(1)   Level 4 STANDBY: actions to alert Team members to the development of a situation that may require a response, initiate equipment checks to make sure everything that may be needed is available and ready for use, review plans and standard operating procedures, depending on the event reporting to REACT International is started, and similar actions.

(2)   Level 3 READINESS: actions to take the Team to being ready to respond quickly when tasked, including determining the availability of members, establishing schedules, loading kits, establishing a local standby net, reporting to REACT International is started, and similar actions.

(3)   Level 2 LIMITED ACTIVATION: Base Station teams are activated and establish a schedule to maintain coverage as needed, deployable Communications Teams are ready for immediate deployment and a limited precautionary deployment may be initiated, reporting to supported organizations is started, and similar actions.

(4)   Level 1 FULL ACTIVATION: Base Station teams operate to provide 24 hour coverage as needed, deployable communications teams deploy per your agreements with supported organizations, mutual aid is requested.

IDENTIFY A PLAN FORMAT

In this course we suggest two formats:

- a shorter, simple format if you support only one organization in a relatively limited set of circumstances, and
- a longer, more complicated format for support to multiple organizations or in multiple types of events.

Choose the best format for your Team. You may start with a simple format plan, and as your Team and your experience grows, expand that document into the longer plan to account for more people, more equipment, more capability, and more missions. Or you may choose a completely different format tailored to how your support organization writes its plan or to examples with which you are familiar for other communications organizations.

III. COMPLETING THE PLAN

Included in this document are templates for and examples of the two formats for plans that we recommend. You can use the instructions and examples to write your Team's plan using the templates.

THE SHORT VERSION EOP

These are the instructions for completing the short version emergency operations plan. This is the minimum plan your Team should have for major emergencies and disasters.   A word copy of this template can be requested by e-mail to Training@REACTintl.org.

Insert the team name and the date in the plan title.

1.   This plan is activated for: insert the type of major emergency or disaster.

2.   The Team supports: the name of the agency or agencies you support.

3.   This plan is activated by:

      a. Individuals who may activate the plan: identify the position titles that are authorized to activate the plan, not individual names.

      b. How the plan is activated: who you will notify, how you will notify them.

4.   Succession to command: who assumes command, if that member is not available who takes over, preferably three or four deep - again position titles, not names.

5.   Available resources:

      a. Kinds and Types of Teams: how many of each of the standard types of teams.

      b. Resources: other radio stations, repeaters, vehicles that you can expect to be available.

6.   Alert levels:

      a. Alert Levels are declared by: who has the authority to declare an alert level for the Team. In major events REACT's incident management team may suggest an alert level, but team leadership is responsible for making the decision as to when or if the Team implements it.

      b. Actions taken at each Alert Level: describe in concise and direct language the actions the team will take at:

            (1) Level 4 STANDBY:

            (2) Level 3 READINESS:

            (3) Level 2 LIMITED ACTIVATION:

            (4) Level 1 FULL ACTIVATION:

7.   Radio services and frequencies and their assigned function: list the radio services the team will use along with the specific frequencies, with what each will be used for. For example:

- Citizens Band - Channel 9 - emergency assistance to evacuee motorists
- Family Radio Service - Channel 4 - reports from North Neighborhood CERT

8.   Length of operations Team can support: be realistic; for how many days can you actually maintain 24 hour or even 12 hour operations. If you are in the impact zone, even large Teams will run out of resources in about 72 hours.

9.   Expected duration of operations in power outage: how long can you keep operating with at least one station if you lose power? In other words, how good is your battery supply, or how long can you run your generator?

10.   Activation and deployment options:

        a.   Activate in place at home stations: number of fixed Base Radio stations that can be activated.

        b.   Able to deploy within the jurisdiction (25 miles radius or less): number of Communications Teams that can be activated and possibly deployed.

        c.   Able to deploy beyond 25 mile radius: number of Communications Teams that can be deployed outside the immediate local area.

11.   Request mutual aid: name of other Teams that have mutual aid agreements with your Team, the position of the Council officer to contact for coordination of mutial aid, or the REACT incident management team, or "no" if the Team will not need mutual aid, ever.

12.   Reporting:

        a.   Availability Report (ICS 213C) - current URL: when the report will be first made.

        b.   Situation Report (ICS 213E) - current URL: when the report will be made each day.

TEMPLATE FOR THE SHORT VERSION EOP

(team name) EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN (date)

1. This plan is activated for:
2. The Team supports:
3. This plan is activated by:
   a. Individuals who may activate the plan:
   b. How the plan is activated:
4. Available resources:
   a. Kind and types of teams:
   b. Resources:
5. Alert levels:
   a. Alert levels are declared by:
   b. Actions taken at each Alert Level:
      (1) Level 4 STANDBY:
      (2) Level 3 READINES:
      (3) Level 2 LIMITED ACTIVATION:
      (4) Level 1 FULL ACTIVATION:
6. Radio services and frequencies and their assigned function:
7. Length of operations the Team can support:
8. Expected duration of operations in power outage:
9. Activation and deployment options:
   a. Activate in place at home stations:
   b. Able to deploy within jurisdiction (25 mile radius or less):
   c. Able to deploy beyond 25 mile radius:
10. Request mutual aid:
11. Reporting:
    a. Availability Report (ICS 213C) - http://reactwarning.org/ics213c:
    b. Situation Report (ICS 213E) - http://reactwarning.org/ics213e:

EXAMPLE OF A COMPLETED SHORT VERSION EOP

The following is an example of a completed short version of the emergency operations plan. This is for the REACT Traffic System, not a Team, but the essential form is the same.

REACT TRAFFIC SYSTEM EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN
1 June 2018

1. <u>This plan is activated for</u>: major emergencies and disasters that potentially or actually impact multiple REACT Teams.

2. <u>The Team supports</u>:

- REACT International and its Regions, Councils, and Teams
- Organizations with which REACT International has Memorandums of Understanding
- Radio Relay International

3. <u>This plan is activated by</u>:

    a. <u>Individuals who may activate the plan</u>: Net Manager, duty Watch Officer.

    b. <u>How the plan is activated</u>: radiogram to all Traffic System Stations by Radio Relay International traffic system, Winlink, e-mail, Zello REACT/Traffic System channel.

4. <u>Available resources</u>:

    a. <u>Kind and types of teams</u>: 1 Type IV Message Team

    b. <u>Resources</u>: no additional

5. <u>Alert levels</u>:

    a. <u>Alert levels are declared by</u>: Net Manager, duty Watch Officer.

    b. <u>Actions taken at each Alert Level</u>:

    (1) Level 4 STANDBY: All stations check backup power, Zello application, review standard operating procedures and the Field Operations Guide, and stock of log and message forms; start to gather information on the event.

    (2) Level 3 READINESS: Net Manager develops schedule for staffing operations. Normal administrative net supplemented by daily nets to test

communications circuits as needed. Contact established with Radio Relay International paired Amateur Radio operators. All REACT Teams notified of current state Traffic System contacts.

(3) Level 2 LIMITED ACTIVATION: Staffing plan initiated. Traffic Net staffed for 12 hour shift daily based on the nature of the event.

(4) Level 1 FULL ACTIVATION: Traffic Net staffed for 18 hour a day operations. Standby and Command Nets staffed 0600-1800 EST/EDT if needed.

6. <u>Radio services and frequencies and their assigned function</u>: Primary communications will be conducted using the Zello application. Backup to Zello will be a Team Speak channel.

- Zello REACT/Traffic System channel – operation of the REACT Traffic Net
- Zello REACT/Command Net – operations of the REACT Incident Management Team
- Zello REACT/Standby Net – staging channel for REACT stations in major events

7. <u>Length of operations the Team can support</u>: up to 72 hours.

8. <u>Expected duration of operations in power outage</u>: 48 hours if Internet remains available.

9. <u>Activation and deployment options</u>:

a. <u>Activate in place at home stations</u>: yes with station locations distributed across the United States and in Trinidad and Tobago.

b. <u>Able to deploy within jurisdiction (25 mile radius or less)</u>: no

c. <u>Able to deploy beyond 25 mile radius</u>: no

10. <u>Request mutual aid</u>: through Radio Relay International National Emergency Communications Coordinator.

11. <u>Reporting</u>:

a. <u>Availability Report (ICS 213C)</u> - http://reactwarning.org/ics213c: on Alert Level 4.

b. <u>Situation Report (ICS 213E)</u> - http://reactwarning.org/ics213e: daily by 1800 EDT/EST.

THE STANDARD EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

A Team can write a more sophisticated version of the emergency operations plan. This version is substantially the same as the standard format used by towns, cities, counties, and states to comply with Federal Emergency Management Agency requirements. This format has several advantages:

(1) It can be supplemented with appendices for specific types of disasters, for example, a appendix for earthquake, or tornado, or hurricane response.

(2) It can cover response for more than one supported agency, or for agencies which have significantly different roles and missions, again using appendices.

(3) The format is familiar to local and state emergency managers, increasing our credibility and allowing them to more easily integrate REACT into jurisdiction planning.

The following is an example of the format for the standard long emergency operations plan. Read the example carefully as it includes extensive information on the contents of each item. Modify each paragraph and subparagraph as needed to fit your conditions, resources, and procedures. A Word copy is available from Training@REACTintl.org.

(team name and number)
EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN
(date)

I. Purpose, Scope, Situation, Assumptions

A. **Purpose:** This plan establishes guidance for Team response to natural and man-made disasters and to national security incidents.

B. **Scope:** This plan applies to all members of *(team name and number)*.

C.   **Situation:** The Team serves (description of the area in which the Team is active). Hazards that impact the service area and for which the Team may be activated include *(a brief list of the primary hazards and threats based on disaster history of the area)*.

D.   **Assumptions:**

1.   Sufficient time will be available to conduct an orderly activation of Team resources according to this plan.

2.   Team support will be requested by supported agencies with which the Team has established written memorandums of agreement.

II. Concept of Operations

A.   **Plan Execution:** This plan will be activated to guide response actions on (a) declaration of Activation Level 4 (or its equivalent) or higher by the Team President, Council official, Regional Director, or REACT International, or (b) request for support by a supported organization.

B.   **Team Activation:** Based on threat type, intensity, expected time of onset, and the probability the Team will be tasked by a supported organization, the Team will implement the appropriate activation level.

1.   Activation Level 4 - Standby - the Team will contact its members, review plans, and check equipment and supplies.

2.   Activation Level 3 – Readiness – the Team will determine members' availability and schedules. A Standby Net will be opened.

3.   Activation Level 2 – Limited activation - base Station Teams are activated and a schedule established to maintain coverage as needed. Deployable Communications Teams should be ready to deploy.

4.   Activation Level 1 - Emergency communications are fully operational. Communications Teams are deployed as needed.

C.   Operations:

1.   The Team conducts disaster operations in accordance with memoranda of agreement with supported organizations. Team members will not self-dispatch or freelance.

2.   Team operations will include, as appropriate for the event *(tailor the following to your specific agreements and capabilities)*:

a.   Operation of fixed base radio stations to provide radio coverage of the community to answer calls for assistance, gather information from the public, and transmit any official instructions to the public approved by the appropriate agency.

b.   Deployment of communications teams in the community to assist supported organizations.

c.   Deployment of communications teams outside the community *(to a specific distance or to a specific area)* on request.

d.   Provide mutual aid to other REACT Teams on request *(if appropriate include a distance or specific area in which this can be done)*.

3.   Commitment of Team resources to a disaster task will be made only after an assessment by the responsible leader that the task's difficulty is within the training, physical capability, and equipment of the members, and that hazards involved are understood and can be mitigated.

4.   The Team President or Boss or Leader of a deployed Communications Team should decline any tasking for which members are not trained or physically capable, equipment is inadequate, or the risk is too high.

5.   The use of emergency driving privileges and the carrying of weapons are not authorized under any condition. Members employed by public safety agencies, volunteer emergency medical services agencies, of volunteer fire departments, operate as REACT members when on REACT duty with the same status as any non-public safety volunteer.

III. Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

A.   Organization: The Team will provide the following resources in support of organizations with which it has memoranda of agreement:

> *(list the number, kind, and type of resources, for example:*
> *1 Type IV Communications Team*
> *2 Type IV Base Station Teams)*

B.   Assignment of Responsibilities:

1.   The Team President will serve as the Team's incident commander for the incident, or may designate a member with appropriate training and certification to do so.

2.   The Team officers will serve as a Team incident management team:

   a.   The Team Vice President, or an appropriately qualified individual, will serve as the Teams Operations Section Chief for the incident.

   b.   The Team Secretary, or an appropriately qualified individual, will serve as the Team Plans Section Chief for the incident.

   c.   The Team Treasurer, or an appropriately qualified individual, will serve as the Administration and Finance Section Chief for the incident.

3.   As required, the Team President or Communications Team Leader or Boss will assign a member as liaison with the Incident or Unified Command or the emergency operations center of a supported jurisdiction.

4.   If resources are deployed, the Team President will assign one member to serve as home station point of contact for the deployed resources to confirm safe arrival at the assigned work location, coordinate any needed support, and confirm the safe return of the resources.

C.   Succession of Command: If the Team President is unavailable or incapacitated, the Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer will assume command of the Team in that order, and direct its response actions.

IV. Direction, Control, and Coordination

A.   Authority to Initiate Actions:

1.   The Team President, or an individual designated by the Team President, is responsible for activating the Emergency Operations Plan and directing response actions.

2.   All Team members are responsible for carrying out their assigned emergency communications duties in the execution of this plan.

B.   Command Responsibility for Specific Actions

1.   Overall command of the Team's response will be exercised by the Team's incident management team using the incident command system to manage the Team's response.

2.   Communications Teams deployed to support a specific voluntary organization or government agency will operate under tactical control of that organization for the duration of the assigned task.

3.   Communications Teams deployed to general support of an incident will operate in the Incident Command System under the tactical control of the Incident Commander, as assigned to the appropriate Section, Branch, Group, Division, or Unit.

4.   If the Team's resources are insufficient to respond to a disaster, the Team may request mutual aid assistance through a REACT Team with which it has a mutual aid agreement, State Council, Regional Director, or the REACT Operations Committee incident management team.

V. Information Collection and Dissemination

A.   Initial Disaster Alerting and Warning: The REACT Operations Committee incident management team disseminates warning information for major disaster events when slow onset permits collection and assessment of threat information. Team officers will maintain situation awareness to identify local or rapid onset events posing a threat to the Team's area of operations.

B. **Information from Supported Organizations:** On a request to activate to support a supported organization or agency, the Team officer receiving the request will request the following:

- Capability needed from REACT
- When the resources are needed
- Where they are needed
- To whom they will report, and how and where to contact that individual
- The expected duration of the task
- Any known hazards specific to the task
- Support arrangements – billeting, feeding, fuel, etc.
- Any special instructions

C. **Reporting:** The Team will report Availability on implementation of this Plan to the REACT Operations Committee's incident management team, and forward a daily Situation Report for each day of activation.

VI. Communications

A. **Long-Haul Communications:** Long distance communications will be conducted (1) by e-mail and (2) on the REACT Traffic System net on Zello. If these are unavailable, long-haul communications will be through Radio Relay International's traffic system.

B. **Message Traffic:** All formal, record message traffic will be by radiogram or REACT pre-formatted ICS 213 General Messages.

C. **Monitoring:** The Team will monitor *(insert service and frequency)* for communications with the general public.

D. **Tactical Communications:** The Team will conduct response and liaison with supported organizations on *(insert radio services and frequencies)*.

VII. Administration, Finance, and Logistics

A. **Self-Sufficiency**: To the greatest extent possible the Team will be self-sufficient for 72 hours *(72 hours is a general standard – if not possible identify the period that is possible)* whether deployed or operating in place, including battery requirements, renewable energy sources, or generators.

B.   Logistics Support: Support provided to the Team will be as specified in memorandums of agreement with supported organizations.

C.   Administration: The Team Secretary will provide administrative services using standard Team procedures.

D.   Finance: The Team Treasurer will record expenses, account for funds, and process donations and reimbursements using standard Team procedures.

E.   Agreements: *(List all Memoranda of Understanding or Agreement and mutual aid agreements to which the Team is a signatory.)*

IV. WHAT DO YOU DO WITH THE FINISHED PLAN?

The first step is to distribute copies of the plan to all the Team officers and to all the Team members. Everyone needs to know what the plan is. There is nothing sillier and more unproductive than to have your Team wondering what to do when the big one hits because the one person who had a copy of the plan is on vacation in a National Forest in the Rockies and can't be reached.

The second step is to conduct plan training. Members and officers who are not familiar with the idea of an emergency operations plan will need training to be able to effectively use the plan in an emergency. When the plan is distributed, conduct a seminar exercise. You can do this during a regular Team meeting. The process is:

(1)   distribute copies of the plan to all present,

(2)   review the purpose of the emergency operations plan,

(3)   briefly review the purpose of each numbered section of the plan,

(4)   then pose a scenario of a disaster likely to occur in your community and ask the Team members present to use the plan to activate your response,

(5)   and after that schedule a table top exercise every 6 to 9 months to review the plan.

The third step is to distribute copies of you plan to your local emergency management agency and to the organizations you support. Make sure you also send a copy to your Council or Regional Director. The REACT Operations Committee would also appreciate a copy so that we know how to coordinate any mutual aid assistance with you.

The fourth step is to conduct plan maintenance. After each exercise or actual response, review the plan and make any changes that are needed. When changes are met, distribute copies to everyone you sent the previous edition of the plan.

V.   RELATIONSHIP TO THE IAP

An emergency operations plan is not the same as an Incident Command System incident action plan (IAP). Your Team EOP sets broad guidelines for response and gets your Team out the door in that response. It is prepared well in advance; you may go a year or more without having to activate your EOP. The IAP is the plan prepared by the Incident Command System Plans Section, and carried out by the Operations Section to manage the response actions in a specific 12 hour operational period during an event.

Your Team needs an EOP so that you can mobilize the right resources at the right time to support the right organization in a major emergency or disaster. The IAP determines how the resources and capabilities you mobilize with your plan will be employed on site in a specific major emergency or disaster.

VI. THE LAST CHECK

Before you copy and print your plan, make sure it is neat and professional looking. Proofread it carefully for typos and errors. Remember, you are sending this to other organizations. If it is messy, full of errors, etc., any efforts to be taken seriously will fail.

Do not promise anything that you cannot do. If you promise, are called, and can't perform, do you think you will be called ever again? No, you won't.

Do not advertise services that you legally cannot do or that pose high risk. If our insurance does not cover it, you can't do it. If the service requires you to meet state requirements, and you have not met them and have all appropriate certifications and licenses, you can't do it.

Make sure references to other organizations have been coordinated, and that the organization has seen a draft copy and agrees with it. You never know what issues supported organizations are dealing with and what their internal concerns may be. You can be sure they will not be happy to find that you are claiming a relationship with them that has not been approved at the appropriate level in the organization.

Don't include names and phone numbers in your plan. They belong in your alert roster (and the supported organization should be on distribution for the current alert roster. List the officer or other position, not the person. People change, and you will never be able to keep the plan current.