

Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program

Incident Support Team Policy & Procedure Manual

A. OVERVIEW

Search and Rescue incidents are by nature complex and technically difficult. Urban Search and Rescue (US & R) incidents are at the apex of search and rescue incidents, thereby magnifying the scale of a normal search and rescue incident. Due to this fact, US & R task forces require internal management at both the tactical and operational level.

Internal management is provided at the tactical level by a task force management team consisting of a Task Force Leader, Safety Officer, Rescue Manager, Plans Manager, and Logistics Manager. Operational management is normally provided to a US & R task force by an Incident Support Team (IST). These teams may be organized in various configurations, but those configurations generally follow the standard Incident Command System command and general staff positions.

B. DEFINITIONS

Enabling Agency – an agency designated by an authority having jurisdiction to represent that authority during urban search and rescue activities. In the case of Louisiana the Enabling Agency is the Louisiana State Fire Marshal’s Office.

Incident Support Team (IST) – an organization, activated during or prior to an incident, tasked with providing organizational direction and support to US & R task forces assigned to it by an authority having jurisdiction over that incident.

Louisiana State Urban Search and Rescue Position Descriptions – a document, generated by the Enabling Agency, that states what is required from a Participating Individual, in knowledge, skills, and abilities, to fill each individual position within the Louisiana State Urban Search and Rescue Task Force.

Louisiana State Urban Search and Rescue Program – the vehicle used by the Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Enabling Agency to develop, coordinate, and maintain the urban search and rescue capability in the State of Louisiana.

Louisiana State Urban Search and Rescue Task Force – the organization that the Louisiana Enabling Agency utilizes to carry out Urban Search and Rescue activities.

Louisiana State Urban Search and Rescue Training Matrix – a document, generated by the Enabling Agency, that condenses into easily readable form, the certification requirements outlined for each individual position within the Louisiana State US & R Task Force in the LA US & R Position Descriptions.

Participating Agency – an agency providing Participating Individuals or items of equipment to the Louisiana State Urban Search and Rescue Program.

Participating Individual – a rostered member of the Louisiana State Urban Search and Rescue Program.

Sponsoring Agency – an Agency that has signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Enabling Agency to support the Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program.

Urban Search and Rescue (US & R) – a discipline of search and rescue that combines multiple skills, positions, and responsibilities to carry out large, complex, and technically difficult search and rescue operations.

C. COMPOSITION and FUNCTIONS

The LA IST is structured to safely operate continuously for 12 to 24 hour operational periods and be self-sufficient for a minimum of 72 Hours. Primarily, it provides operational, and if needed strategic, direction and support for any task force assigned to it by the authority having jurisdiction over an assigned incident.

1. Command Staff

Composition: IST Command

IST Public Information Officer

IST Safety Officer

Function; to provide direction and responsibility for all IST actions.

2. General Staff

Composition: **Operations Section**

IST Operations Section Chief

IST Division Supervisor

IST UAV Manager

IST Canine Manager

Function: Provides operational direction, coordination, and support to assigned task forces.

Plans Section

IST Plans Section Chief

GOHSEP Liaison Officer

IST IT Manager

IST Structures Specialists

IST Document Unit Leader

IST Situation Unit Leader

IST Resource Unit Leader

IST US & R Specialists

Function: Provides tracking and documentation of task force operations during an incident. Prepares Incident Action Plans.

Logistics Section

IST Logistics Section Chief

IST Communications Unit Leader

IST Communications Technician

IST Medical Unit Leader

IST Transportation Unit Leader

IST POD/POA Manager

IST Food Unit Leader

IST Ground Support Unit Leader

IST Facilities Unit Leader

IST Support Unit Leader

IST Ordering Manager

IST Cache Manager

IST Cache Technician

Function: Provides operational and strategic logistical support to assigned task forces during an incident.

Finance/Administration Section

IST Finance/Administration Section Chief

IST Procurement Manager

Function: Procures major end items, large bulk items for, and provides documentary support of these activities to assigned task forces during an incident.

D. CORE CAPABILITIES

The Incident Support Team manages task forces in support of the National Preparation Goal.

The IST conducts the following NIMS core capabilities;

- Planning
- Operational coordination
- Intelligence and Information sharing
- Operational communications
- Situational assessment

The IST will conduct the following operations in support of the mission and core capabilities;

- Heavy equipment procurement
- Structural integrity assessments
- Advanced life support level medical support
- Hazardous materials assessment (to include WMD)
- On and off-site communications
- Resource accountability, maintenance, and equipment procurement
- Documentation
- Public Information management

E. INCIDENT SUPPORT TEAM ACTIVATION

The LA IST shall maintain a written comprehensive activation Standard Operating Guideline. The procedures that allow the team to meet the 6-hour mobilization requirement are documented in the activation SOG.

The activation plan shall address, at a minimum, the following areas:

- 24-hour Emergency contact point for the task force
- Request for Response
- Procedure for mission notification
- A personnel call-out method for activating the team members
- Backup notification process for alerts & activations
- Initial Operational Planning to include an initial Incident Action Plan
- Canine waiver and health certificates
- Point of Departure (POD) procedures for in state US & R task forces
- Point of Arrival (POA) procedures for out-of-state US & R task forces
- Base of Operations (BOO) set-up procedures
- Demobilization procedures

F. US&R RESOURCES LIST

The IST shall maintain a list of all outside resources with which it has an agreement for service through a MOA or MOU. The list shall include the following information at a minimum:

- Name of resource provider
- Type of resource(s) provided
- 24-hour contact names and phone numbers

The IST shall maintain electronic and hard copies of all MOAs and MOUs with outside resources.

G. STAFFING and TEAM STRUCTURE

The IST shall maintain a documented organizational structure. This structure shall conform as much as possible to the federal guidelines prescribed by FEMA and/or NIMS. The IST may, however deviate from those guidelines when it is determined that to do so would increase the efficiency and/or safety of operations.

H. OPERATIONS

The IST shall maintain an Operations Standard Operating Guideline. The Guideline shall describe the basic Task Force procedures during operational periods. This document shall contain the following information at a minimum:

- Responsibilities of IST duty positions during operational periods
- Incident tracking procedures
- Operational planning procedures

- Task organizing tactical assets
- Safety monitoring procedures
- Public information dissemination procedures
- Documentation procedures

I. APPLICATION & MEMBERSHIP

The Louisiana Incident Support Team shall maintain a standard application form that shall be provided to any individual that wishes to become a member of the Team. Applicants shall be required to fill this document out completely prior to admission to the Team. A copy of the members completed application shall be maintained in both electronic and hard copy form.

LA IST applicants shall return the completed application, along with all pertinent documentation required by the Task Force for enrollment. These documents shall be reviewed by the LA IST Selection Board prior to the applicant being accepted onto the Team.

Any member may be dismissed from the LA IST by the State US & R Coordinator or Task Force Leader for misconduct, poor performance, unsafe acts, lack of participation, or other violations as established by the LA IST rules and regulations. Removal of members shall only occur based on just cause and after a hearing by a committee of three personnel selected by the State US & R Steering Committee.

The LA IST shall maintain documentation describing the training and position specific requirements for each duty position staffed by the Incident Support Team. Members must be assigned to a specific position and have the required training in order to be deployable.

J. LOGISTICS

The Incident Support Team shall maintain a Logistics Standard Operating Guide. This document shall describe the duties of Task Force personnel in the Logistics Section before, during, and after deployments and shall contain the following information at a minimum:

- The responsibilities of IST Logistics personnel
- Safety procedures
- Maintenance procedures
- Consumables and expendables procedures
- Logistics documentation
- Cache Readiness Plan
- Accountability and Tracking Plan

K. PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program has various continuing public relations programs, which use multiple channels of communication, including the mass media, to provide needed and desired information about local government activities and services to the general public.

In major emergency or disaster situations, there may be large numbers of media representatives seeking information about the situation and about response actions. It is the policy of Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program to cooperate fully with the media in all phases of Emergency Management, but acting in conjunction with the authority having jurisdiction's media policies. This action shall be handled through the IST Public Information Officer.

L. FUNDING REQUEST, RECEIPT, AND MANAGEMENT

The Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program has a designated yearly budgeted amount for the operational, management, and logistics of the Incident Support Team. The Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program utilizes general accounting, business, and donation management practices in its financial management. The Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program shall utilize the current Louisiana State Fire Marshal's Office procedures when requesting funding from those agencies.

M. FAMILY SUPPORT

The IST Public Information Officer shall provide current, accurate information to families of deployed members, as well as a peer and/or Critical Incident Management support network. In addition, the designated Family Support unit or personnel shall provide assistance as necessary to families of deployed members in areas such as child care, emergency home/auto repair, etc.

N. WORKERS COMPENSATION

The IST GOHSEP Liaison Officer shall provide current, accurate information regarding Workers Compensation for any members of the Incident Support Team. In addition, the Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program adheres to all Louisiana state and federal requirements for workers' compensation. The Sponsoring or Participating Agency shall be responsible for their Participating Individual's insurance and workers compensation coverage.

O. TRAINING

The Incident Support Team shall maintain a Training Program Administrative Manual. This document shall describe the Incident Support Team's training program:

- General training requirements for all IST personnel
- Duty specific training requirements
- Refresher training requirements
- The Annual Training Program requirements
- Training documentation

P. PERSONNEL RECORD MAINTENANCE

The Louisiana State Urban Search and Rescue Coordinator or designee shall be responsible for the maintenance of all personnel files for all members. Personnel files for members are located in the Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program office. All files shall be regulated by all city, state, and federal employment record laws.

To ensure confidentiality of personnel information, access to an IST member's files is restricted to the IST member or an authorized agent. An IST member's medical and benefits records file is maintained separately from the personnel file in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Supervisors generally may not be provided with medical information about IST members. A supervisor is entitled to know any necessary restrictions on an IST member's duties and the information necessary to make reasonable accommodations.

Each IST member shall have the right, by appointment, to review and copy, but not remove, the contents of his/her own official personnel file, excluding references. A reasonable charge, not to exceed the actual cost, shall be made for copies made for IST members. All materials in the personnel file shall be signed and dated by the person creating such material. An IST member may respond to or answer any document in the file. The response shall be placed therein and attached to the document to which it is related. Within reason, the Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program shall place materials pertinent to the IST member's professional career, performance and qualifications into the personnel file. Anonymous materials shall not be placed in official personnel files.

Only one official hard copy and one official electronic copy personnel file shall be maintained by the Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program and is to be kept in the Office of Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program. Supervisors shall not keep informal personnel files on IST members.

Personnel file information is confidential and shall not be released to prospective employers or outside of the Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program Program, the Louisiana State Fire Marshal's Office, or the Participating Individual's home department/agency or any other outside source without the IST member's written approval.

IST members have the responsibility to notify the State Urban Search and Rescue Coordinator in writing of the following changes: Name, address, phone number, beneficiaries, and emergency contact.

Q. ROSTERING

The Incident Support Team shall maintain a roster of fully qualified personnel that is two deep in each functional position in accordance with the appropriate position descriptions as outlined by the NIMS Resource Typing Library Tool (RTLTL). All personnel shall meet the qualifications as outlined for their specific position. Personnel may also exceed the minimal qualification as outlined by the RTLTL.

R. AFTER ACTION REPORTS

The Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program is involved in a cycle of outreach, planning, capability development, training, exercising, evaluation, and improvement. Successful operations lead to an ongoing program of process improvements. The after action report is intended to assist Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program to strive for a preparedness and response excellence by analyzing incident or exercise results and:

- Identifying strengths to be maintained and built upon.
- Identifying potential areas for further improvement.
- Recommending follow-up actions.

The suggested actions in this report should be viewed as recommendations only. In some cases, the Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program may determine that the benefits of implementation are insufficient to outweigh the costs. In other cases, the Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program may identify alternative solutions that are more effective or efficient. The Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program should review the recommendations and determine the most appropriate action and the resources needed (time, staff, funds) for implementation. The after action report shall be submitted to the agency/department having authority within 45 days after a deployment, exercise, event, and/or special training.

S. ETHICS

Given its mission, the Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program has adopted a Code of Conduct to guide its members in their actions when acting on behalf of the Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program. The Code contains broad principles reflecting the types of behavior the Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program expects towards constituents, donors, Task Force members, peers and the public.

This policy is not intended as a stand-alone policy. It does not embody the totality of the Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program ethical standards, nor does it answer every ethical question or issue that might arise. Rather, it is one element of a broader effort to create and maintain a quality organization that gives ethical conduct the highest priority. This Code shall be reviewed annually.

The Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program management is responsible for communicating this Code of Conduct to all members, standing committee members, as well as staff, staff interns and staff volunteers and for ensuring its adherence at all times.

T. TRAVEL

Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program personnel shall not travel to or from a non-operational mission or a training function with the expectance of reimbursement without first receiving clearance from the State Urban Search and Rescue Coordinator to do so.

Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program travel and the expenses associated with it, shall be authorized only in circumstances which are clearly consistent with the mission of the Enabling Agency. It shall be the responsibility of the Participating Individual and the State US & R Coordinator to ensure that all travel meets this objective and that reimbursement made only for actual, reasonable business expenses in connection with authorized travel as defined in the most recent Louisiana State Travel Guide. In order to maintain control over expenditures, any expense submitted which does not comply with the guidelines of this procedure shall not

be reimbursed, unless accompanied by a valid exception by management. Expense reports must be submitted within the current Louisiana State billing cycle. If members are going to be driving, they should adhere to Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program's policy on Work-Rest Ratio and the minimal hours of sleep required before driving.

U. REIMBURSEMENT

The Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program recognizes that Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program members shall incur expenses on behalf of the Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program. It is the Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program's policy to reimburse reasonable and necessary expenses actually incurred by its members. Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program members shall follow Louisiana State spending guidelines when applying for reimbursement for expenditures incurred when operating for the Program.

When incurring business expenses, Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program members should:

- Exercise discretion and good business judgment.
- Be cost conscious and spend money carefully. Remember that you are spending Louisiana citizen taxpayer money.
- Submit expenses with documentation.

V. UNIFORMS

The Louisiana Incident Support Team uniform shall consist of BDU pants, black foot gear, and a polo shirt designed by the IST Command. The IST uniform shall only be worn to scheduled training events and missions. Any IST member who wishes to wear his/her uniform to an outside event must get permission in writing from the Louisiana State US & R Coordinator.

H. "Butch" Browning

Louisiana State Fire Marshal