

Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program



Policy & Procedure Manual

A. OVERVIEW

Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) involves determining the location, implementing rescue (extrication), and initial medical stabilization of victims trapped in structural collapses or confined spaces or missing due to weather or human caused disasters.

Urban Search and Rescue is considered a "multi-hazard" discipline, as it may be needed for a wide variety of emergencies or disasters, including earthquakes, hurricanes, storms and tornadoes, floods, sink holes, confined space rescue, industrial accidents, transportation accidents, terrorist activities, and hazardous materials releases. The events may be slow in developing, as in the case of hurricanes, or sudden, as in the case of tornadoes or aircraft disasters.

B. MISSION STATEMENT

The Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program Joint Task Force (The LA US & R JTF) is trained and equipped to respond to all hazards including WMD, terrorist, structural collapse, water rescue, confined space, rope, trench, and vehicle rescue incidents of major proportions. The Task Force shall work to ensure that all emergency response agencies in the State work and train together to enhance the safety of the State of Louisiana's citizens.

C. 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 Joint 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 Joint 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.

D. TASK FORCE COMPOSITION and FUNCTIONS

The LA US & R JTF 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 performs the functions of search, rescue, and medical care for task force members and rescued victims. The individual team components and primary functions are outlined below.

1. Sustainment Team

Composition: Program Manager

Administrative Manager

Training Manager

Logistics Manager

Function: Provides day to day management for the Task Force.

2. Management

Composition: Task Force Leader

Safety Officer

Planning Manager

Search Team Manager

Rescue Team Manager

Logistics Manager

Medical Team Manager

Function: Provides overall management and coordination of task force operations.

3. Search/Rescue

Composition: Canine Search Specialists and Search Canines, Technical Search Specialists, a Heavy Rigging Specialist and Rescue Specialists organized into squads with a leader and rescue specialists

Function: Search for and extricate trapped victims.

4. Medical

Composition: Physicians, nurses, and Medical Specialists at the paramedic or equivalent level

Function: Provide pre-hospital and emergency care for task force members and crush syndrome/confined space medicine for rescued victims.

5. Planning

Composition: Technical Information Specialists, Hazardous Materials Specialists, and Structures Specialists.

Function: Provide support to the overall search and rescue mission to include planning, hazards evaluation, and technical documentation.

6. Logistics

Composition: Logisticians and Communications Specialists,

Function: Provide support to the overall search and rescue mission to include logistical, communications, mobilization and demobilization, transportation, and structural integrity assessments.

E. CORE CAPABILITIES

The Task Force conducts the rescue missions in support of the National Preparation Goal.

The Task Force conducts the following NIMS core capabilities;

- Planning
- Operational coordination
- Intelligence and Information sharing
- Mass search and rescue operations
- Operational communications
- Situational assessment

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

- Physical, canine, robotic, and technical search operations
- Rescue operations in an urban environment
- Water rescue operations
- Heavy equipment operations in rescue efforts
- Structural integrity assessments
- Prehospital medicine at the advanced life support level
- Hazardous materials assessment and mitigation (to include WMD)
- On and off-site communications
- Resource accountability, maintenance, and equipment procurement
- Documentation
- Public Information management

F. TASK FORCE ACTIVATION

The LA US & R JTF shall maintain a written comprehensive activation Standard Operating Guide. The procedures that allow the task force to meet the 6-hour mobilization requirement are documented in the activation SOG.

The activation SOG 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 task force members
- Backup notification process for alerts & activations
- Initial Task Force Planning
- A task force Point of Departure (POD) for deploying members.
- Checklists for minimum PPE and recommended deployment items
- Canine waiver and health certificates
- Point of Arrival (POA)/ Mobilization Site
- Base of Operations (BOO) and Forward Operating Base (FOB) set-up procedures
- Demobilization procedures

The Task Force shall establish a minimum required deployment equipment list. This list shall be disbursed to all Task Force members. The Task Force shall establish procedures to ensure that individual members' deployment kits are maintained in a ready condition.

G. US&R RESOURCES REQUEST

The Task Force shall maintain a list of all outside resources with which it has an agreement for service through MOAs or MOUs. 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 Task Force shall maintain electronic and hard copies of all MOAs and MOUs with outside resources.

H. STAFFING and TEAM STRUCTURE

The Task Force 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 Task Force may, however deviate from those guidelines when it is determined that to do so would increase the efficient and/or safe operation of the Task Force

I. OPERATIONS

The Task Force 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 Task Force duty positions during operational periods
- Reconnaissance procedures
- Tactical planning procedures
- Task organization
- Documentation procedures

J. APPLICATION & MEMBERSHIP

THE LA US & R JTF shall maintain a standard application form that shall be provided to any individual that wishes to become a member of the Task Force. Applicants shall be required to fill this document out completely prior to admission to the Task Force. A copy of the members completed application shall be maintained in both electronic and hard copy form.

LA US & R JTF applicants shall return the completed application, along with all pertinent documentation required by the Task Force for enrolment. These documents shall be reviewed by the the LA US & R JTF Selection Board prior to the applicant being accepted onto the Task Force.

The LA US & R JTF shall require a medical check to ensure that all applicants are physically able to function in the position(s) for which they are applying.

The LA US & R JTF shall require a law enforcement background check on all applicants prior to acceptance onto the Task Force.

No person shall be accepted onto the Task Force that does not meet the minimum requirements for a Task Force position as outlined in the Task Force Position Descriptions.

All applicants shall be maintained in a probationary status for their first six months on the Task Force. During this time the applicants shall complete their general training requirements and attend at least two training sessions at which their performances shall be rated by a Task Force Management Team member. Any probationary Task Force member who does not complete their general training requirements or who gets a substandard performance rating shall be dismissed from the Task Force.

All current application documents shall be maintained in Appendix A of this manual.

Any member may be dismissed from the LA US & R JTF 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 US & R JTF 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 US & R JTF shall maintain documentation describing the training and position specific requirements for each duty position staffed by the Task Force. Members must be assigned to a specific position and have the required training in order to be deployable.

K. LOGISTICS

The Task Force 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 Task Force Logistics personnel
- Safety procedures
- Maintenance procedures
- Consumables and expendables procedures
- Logistics documentation
- Load plans
- Cache Readiness Plan
- Accountability and Tracking Plan

L. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

The Task Force shall maintain an Administrative Manual. This document shall describe the duties of Task Force personnel in the Planning Section before, during, and after deployments and shall contain the following information at a minimum:

- The responsibilities of Task Force Planning personnel
- Financial reimbursement procedures for Task Force personnel

- Financial reimbursement procedures for assisting resources
- Personnel tracking procedures
- Legal documentation
- Human Resources documentation
- Task Force information technology
- Financial Procedures to include:
 1. Accounting Records
 2. Charge card procedure
 3. Reimbursement of expenses
 4. Tracking expenses

M. 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 the 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.

Any Task Force member approached by the media shall refer the media to the Incident Support Team Public Information Officer.

N. FUNDING REQUEST, RECEIPT, & MANAGEMENT

The Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program has a designated yearly budgeted amount for the operational, management, and logistics of the task force. 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.

O. FAMILY SUPPORT

The Program Manager or designated person 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.

P. WORKERS COMPENSATION

The IST GOHSEP Liaison Officer shall provide current, accurate information regarding Workers Compensation for any members of the Task Force. In addition, the Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program 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.

Q. PERSONAL EQUIPMENT AND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

The Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program has adopted the guidelines from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1951 and the 1971 standard, covering protective clothing and equipment used in urban search and rescue incidents including victim search, rescue and body recovery.

R. TRAINING

The Task Force shall maintain a Training Program Administration Manual. This document shall describe the duties of Task Force personnel in the Training Management Section before, during, and after deployments and shall contain the following information at a minimum:

- General training requirements for all Task Force personnel
- Duty specific training requirements
- Refresher training requirements
- The Task Force training program
- Training documentation

S. PERSONNEL RECORD MAINTENANCE

The Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program Coordinator or designed person 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 a Task Force member's files is restricted to the Task Force member, an authorized agent, and the Task Force Program Manager or his/her designee. A Task Force member's medical 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 Task Force members. A supervisor is entitled to know any necessary restrictions on a Task Force member's duties and information necessary to make reasonable accommodations.

Each Task Force 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 by Task Force members. All materials in the personnel file shall be signed and dated by the person creating such material. A Task Force 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 The Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program shall place materials pertinent to the Task Force 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. Supervisors shall not keep informal personnel files on Task Force members.

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

Task Force members have the responsibility to notify the Task Force Leader in writing of the following changes: Name, address, phone number, beneficiaries, and emergency contact.

T. DAY-TO-DAY MANAGEMENT

It is the policy of the Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program to have and maintain a program of day-to-day management as directed by the sponsoring agency. The objective of this program is to ensure compliance with Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program and the Louisiana State Fire Marshal's Office rules, policies, procedures, legislation as it relates to this program. The Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program shall operate the day-to-day management according to standard business ideology, local, state and federal laws. The Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program shall maintain all financial, personal, and any other record as need and/or required.

U. ROSTERING

The Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program shall maintain a roster of fully qualified personnel that is three deep in each functional position in accordance with the appropriate position descriptions as outlined by the NIMS Resource Typing Library Tool (RTLTL) and the Louisiana State US & R Program Position Descriptions. All personnel shall meet the qualifications as outlined for their specific position. This shall be accomplished by the maintenance of three State Sponsored task forces. All persons wishing to staff one of these task forces shall follow the State recruiting program. This program shall include a procedure for proof of qualification for the position the recruit desires to fill.

V. 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 the 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.

W. ETHICS

Given its mission, the Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program has adopted a Code of Conduct to guide its members, committee members and staff 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 periodically.

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.

X. TRAVEL

Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program personnel shall not travel to or from an operational mission or a training function with the expectance of reimbursement without first receiving clearance from the Task Force Leader 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 the Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Program's policy on Work-Rest Ratio and the minimal hours of sleep required before driving.

Y. 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 money that others have voluntarily donated.
- Report expenses with documentation.

Z. UNIFORMS

The Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Task Force uniform shall conform to the current The LA US & R JTF Uniform SOG. The full uniform consisting of BDU shirt and pants, black boots, and t-shirt shall only be worn to scheduled training events and missions. Any Task Force member who wishes to wear his/her uniform to an outside event must get permission in writing from the State US & R Coordinator or Task Force Leader. The Task Force t-shirt may be worn at any time, but it may not be worn with BDU pants when the Task Force member is not at a sanctioned event.

H. "Butch" Browning
Louisiana State Fire Marshal