

Course Overview

This course provides an introduction to the National Response Framework. The course is divided into four lessons.

To help you keep track of your place in the course, the current lesson title will be displayed in the center of the screen under the course title. In addition, a Lesson List will be presented at the beginning and end of each lesson.

Each lesson overview will state the approximate length of the lesson.

Introducing the National Response Framework - Transcript

In recent years, our nation has faced an unprecedented series of disasters and emergencies. As a result, our national response structures have evolved and improved to meet these threats.

The National Response Framework is one of five national frameworks within the National Preparedness System. The national frameworks describe how we build, sustain, and deliver core capabilities in five mission areas – Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery. As such, the National Response Framework explains how, at all levels, the nation effectively manages all-hazards response. It provides a road map for all types of disasters and emergencies – from the smallest incident to the largest catastrophe.

Building on the National Incident Management System, the Framework describes principles, roles and responsibilities, and coordinating structures for delivering the core capabilities required to respond to an incident. The approaches and structures described in the Framework foster response partnerships across the whole community, including all levels of government, nongovernmental organizations, the private sector, and individuals and households. Given its flexibility and scalability, the National Response Framework is always in effect, and elements can be implemented at any level and at any time according to the unique needs, capabilities, demographics, and governing structures of the jurisdiction. The Framework establishes a response vision through five key principles.

The first principle, Engaged Partnership, means that leaders at all levels support engagement of the whole community by developing shared goals and aligning capabilities so that no one is overwhelmed in times of crisis.

The next principle is Tiered Response. Incidents must be managed at the lowest possible jurisdictional level and supported by additional capabilities when needed.

The third principle is Scalable, Flexible, and Adaptable Operational Capabilities. As incidents change in size, scope, and complexity, the response must adapt to meet requirements.

The fourth principle is Unity of Effort Through Unified Command. Unity of effort respects the chain of command and each participating organization while ensuring (harnessing) seamless coordination across jurisdictions in support of common objectives.

The last principle is Readiness To Act. It is our collective duty to provide the best response possible. From individuals, households, and communities to local, tribal, state, territorial, insular-area, and Federal governments, national response depends on our readiness to act.

The National Response Framework strives to improve coordination among all response partners, and through these partnerships, we can work together to help save lives and protect America's communities.

Purpose

The National Response Framework (NRF) is a guide to how the nation responds to all types of disasters and emergencies.

The National Response Framework is built on scalable, flexible, and adaptable concepts identified in the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

The term "response" as used in the National Response Framework includes:

- Actions to save lives, protect property and the environment, stabilize the incident, and meet basic human needs following an incident
- The execution of emergency plans and actions to enable recovery

[Select this link to access a copy of the National Response Framework.](http://www.fema.gov/national-planning-frameworks) (<http://www.fema.gov/national-planning-frameworks>)

Course Goal

The goal of this course is to familiarize you with the National Response Framework and the ways it is applied in actual response situations.

The National Response Framework explains how, at all levels, the nation effectively manages all-hazards response. It describes specific authorities and best practices for managing all types of disasters and emergencies, from the smallest incident to the largest catastrophe.

Course Objectives

Terminal Objective

At the end of this course, the students will be able to describe how the National Response Framework is applied to manage all-hazards response.

Enabling Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe the purpose, scope, organization, and underlying doctrine of the National Response Framework.
- Describe the roles and responsibilities of response partners.
- Describe core capabilities for response and actions required to deliver those capabilities.
- Describe coordinating structures and operational planning used to support emergency response.
- Describe how the stabilization of the seven Community Lifelines reduces threats to public health and safety, or economic security.

Relationship to NIMS

The response protocols and structures described in the National Response Framework align with the National Incident Management System (NIMS). All of the components of the NIMS support response—including resource management, command and coordination*, communications and information management.

Standardizing national response doctrine with NIMS provides a consistent, nationwide template to enable the whole community to work together to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from the effects of incidents regardless of their cause, size, location, or complexity.

*The NRF incorrectly uses the term "management and coordination".

[View the National Incident Management System \(NIMS\) document](https://www.fema.gov/national-incident-management-system) (https://www.fema.gov/national-incident-management-system).

Intended Audience

The National Response Framework is intended to provide guidance for the whole community. Within this broad audience, the National Response Framework focuses especially on those who are involved in delivering and applying the response core capabilities, including:

- Private sector partners
- Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
- Government officials
- Community leaders
- Emergency management practitioners
- First responders

Government resources alone cannot meet the needs of those affected by major disasters. All elements of the community must be activated, engaged, and integrated to respond to a major or catastrophic incident.

By providing equal access to acquire and use the necessary knowledge and skills, this Framework is intended to enable the whole community to contribute to and benefit from national preparedness. This includes:

- Children
- Older adults
- Individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs
- Those from religiously, racially, and ethnically diverse backgrounds
- People with limited English proficiency
- Owners of animals, including household pets and service and assistance animals

Scope

The Response mission area focuses on ensuring that the nation is able to respond effectively to all types of incidents, ranging from those that are adequately handled with local assets to those that are of catastrophic proportions and require marshaling the capabilities of the entire nation.

The National Response Framework describes the principles, roles and responsibilities, and coordinating structures for delivering the core capabilities required to stabilize community lifelines; it further describes how response efforts integrate with those of the other mission areas.

[Select this link to review the full text of the Scope section of the NRF.](#)

Scope

The National Response Framework describes structures for implementing nationwide response policy and operational coordination for all types of domestic incidents. This section describes the scope of the Response mission area, the guiding principles of response doctrine and the application of those principles, and the ways in which risk informs response planning.

The Response mission area focuses on ensuring that the nation is able to respond effectively to all types of incidents, ranging from those that are adequately handled with Local assets to those of catastrophic proportions that require marshaling the capabilities of the entire nation. The objectives of the Response mission area define the capabilities necessary to save lives, protect property and the environment, meet basic human needs, stabilize the incident, restore basic services and community functionality, and establish a safe and secure environment moving toward recovery. The NRF describes the principles, roles and responsibilities, and coordinating structures for delivering the core capabilities required to respond to an incident, and also describes how response efforts integrate with those of the other mission areas.

The NRF is always in effect, and elements can be implemented at any time. The structures, roles, and responsibilities described in the NRF can be partially or fully implemented in the context of a threat or hazard, in anticipation of a significant event, or in response to an incident. Selective implementation of NRF structures and procedures allows for a scaled response, delivery of the specific resources and capabilities, and a level of coordination appropriate to each incident.

In this Framework, the term "incident" includes actual or potential emergencies and disasters resulting from all types of threats and hazards, ranging from accidents and natural disasters to cyber intrusions and terrorist attacks. The NRF's structures and procedures address incidents

involving Federal support to local, state, tribal, territorial, and insular-area governments.

Nothing in the National Response Framework is intended to alter or impede the ability of any local, state, tribal, territorial, insular-area, or Federal government department or agency to carry out its authorities or meet its responsibilities under applicable laws, Executive Orders, and directives.

Why the Framework is Always in Effect

NRF elements can be implemented at any time for any hazard, including the employment of [Emergency Support Function \(ESF\)](#) mechanisms.

The structures, roles, and responsibilities described herein can be partially or fully implemented in the context of a threat or hazard, in anticipation of a significant event, or in response to an incident.

Implementation of NRF structures and procedures allows for a scaled response, delivery of the specific resources and capabilities, and a level of coordination appropriate to each incident.

ESF Definition

Coordination of Federal incident response is accomplished through Emergency Support Functions (ESFs). ESFs are organized groups of government and private-sector entities that provide personnel, supplies, facilities, and equipment.

Federal ESFs bring together the capabilities of Federal departments and agencies and other national-level assets that work together to deliver core capabilities and support an effective response.

Communities, states, tribal governments, regions, and other Federal departments and agencies may also use the ESF structure, and they are encouraged to work closely with Federal ESFs at the incident, regional, or Headquarters levels if they are activated.

ESFs are covered later in this course.

Part of a Broader Strategy

To better understand how the National Response Framework fits into the overall national preparedness efforts, we need to look at the National Preparedness System (NPS) and the National Preparedness Goal. The NPS was developed to provide the approach, resources, and tools to aid the whole community in its preparedness activities to achieve the National Preparedness Goal. Part of this system involves determining what capabilities are needed, how they should be developed and sustained, and how they should be delivered.

National Preparedness Goal

The National Preparedness Goal presents an integrated, layered, and whole community approach to preparedness. The Goal itself is a result of contributions from the whole community. It recognizes that everyone can contribute to and benefit from national preparedness efforts.

Mission Areas and Capabilities (1 of 3)

The National Preparedness Goal defines what it means for the whole community to be prepared for all types of disasters and emergencies. The goal is:

"A secure and resilient nation with the capabilities required across the whole community to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk."

This goal sets the vision for preparedness nationwide and identifies the core capabilities necessary to achieve that vision across five mission areas: Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery.

Mission Areas and Capabilities (2 of 3)

Keep in mind that these five mission areas aid in organizing our national preparedness activities and enhance coordination of the core capabilities within each mission area.

Successful achievement of the National Preparedness Goal will result in **a secure and resilient nation** with the capabilities required across the whole community to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk.

[Select this link to learn more about the National Preparedness Goal](https://www.fema.gov/national-preparedness-goal) (<https://www.fema.gov/national-preparedness-goal>)

Mission Areas and Capabilities (3 of 3)

Let's take a closer look at the mission areas. Each mission area is comprised of the capabilities required for accomplishing the mission or function at any time (before, during, or after an incident) and across all threats and hazards. The mission areas are not sequential; activities from multiple mission areas can occur simultaneously.

1. [Prevention](#)
2. [Protection](#)
3. [Mitigation](#)
4. [Response](#)
5. [Recovery](#)

[Select this link to access a copy of the National Response Framework.](http://www.fema.gov/national-planning-frameworks) (<http://www.fema.gov/national-planning-frameworks>)

Prevention:

The term "prevention" refers to those capabilities necessary to avoid, prevent, or stop a threatened or actual act of terrorism. Prevention capabilities include but are not limited to: information sharing and warning; domestic counterterrorism; and preventing the acquisition or use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

Protection:

The term "protection" refers to those capabilities necessary to secure the homeland against terrorism and manmade or natural disasters. Protection capabilities include but are not limited to: defense against weapons of mass destruction (WMD) threats; defense of agriculture and food; critical infrastructure protection; protection of key leadership and events; border security; maritime security; transportation security; immigration security; and cybersecurity.

Mitigation:

The term "mitigation" refers to those capabilities necessary to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters. Mitigation capabilities include but are not limited to: community-wide risk reduction projects; efforts to improve the resilience of critical infrastructure and key resource lifelines; risk reduction for specific vulnerabilities from natural hazards or acts of terrorism; and initiatives to reduce future risks after a disaster has occurred.

Response:

The term "response" refers to those capabilities necessary to save lives, protect property and the environment, and meet basic human needs after an incident has occurred.

Recovery:

The term "recovery" refers to those capabilities necessary to assist communities affected by an incident to recover effectively, including but not limited to: rebuilding infrastructure systems; providing adequate interim and long-term housing for survivors; restoring health, social, and community services; promoting economic development; and restoring natural and cultural resources.

Core Capabilities (1 of 2)

Both the National Preparedness System and the National Preparedness Goal discuss the development of capabilities needed to ensure a secure and resilient nation. These core capabilities are the way we can measure, describe, and implement our security and resilience techniques.

The National Planning Frameworks, one framework for each mission area, discuss how whole community efforts build, sustain, and deliver these core capabilities.

Throughout this course, we will focus specifically on the Response core capabilities. These capabilities are discussed in detail in Lesson 3: Core Capabilities.

Core Capabilities (2 of 2)

Under all five mission areas (Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery) there are a combined total of 32 core capabilities. These capabilities are highly interdependent and require us to use existing preparedness networks and activities, to coordinate and unify efforts, to improve training and exercise programs, to promote innovation, and to ensure that the administrative, finance, and logistics systems are in place to build, sustain, and deliver the capabilities. There are a number of key characteristics of these capabilities that you should remember.

The core capabilities:

- Are distinct critical elements necessary to meet the National Preparedness Goal
- Are essential for the execution of each mission area: Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery
- Provide a common language for preparedness across the whole community
- Are not exclusive to any single level of government or organization and encompass the whole community

More information regarding the National Preparedness System, the National Preparedness Goal, and Core Capabilities can be found in [IS-2000: National Preparedness Goal and System: Overview](https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-2000) (<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-2000>).

Whole Community Preparedness

Preparedness depends on efforts at all levels, including individuals and communities, the private and nonprofit sectors, faith-based organizations, and all levels of government (local, regional/metropolitan, state, tribal, territorial, insular-area, and Federal). The contributions of all must be integrated into preparedness efforts, and the needs of all must be addressed in planning for the development of response capabilities.

Whole community includes:

- Individuals and families, including those with access and functional needs
- Businesses
- Faith-based and community organizations

- Nonprofit groups
- Schools and academia
- Media outlets
- All levels of government, including state, local, tribal, territorial, and federal partners

More information about whole community preparedness can be found in

[A Whole Community Approach to Emergency Management: Principles, Themes, and Pathways for Action](https://www.fema.gov/whole-community) (<https://www.fema.gov/whole-community>).

National Preparedness System

The National Preparedness System is an integrated set of guidance, concepts, processes, and tools that enable the whole community to meet the National Preparedness Goal.

The system is made up of the six components shown in the graphic on the right. More information is available on the website for the [National Preparedness System](https://www.fema.gov/national-preparedness-system) (<https://www.fema.gov/national-preparedness-system>).

Whole Community Preparedness Example

Experience shows one of the best things the whole community can do to be prepared is provide universal accessibility. This simply means planning to meet the needs of the whole community by providing physical access, communication access, or access to disaster or emergency programs. In addition, there are legal requirements that dictate the inclusion of persons with disabilities during whole community preparedness efforts.

One way to ensure this example is incorporated into planning is to establish a Core Advisory Group (CAG). CAGs consist of people with cross-disabilities who advise emergency managers. They provide input on inclusive emergency operations plans, including:

- Local, jurisdictional, or state accessible evacuation plans
- Temporary accessible housing plans
- Accessibility to, of, and in shelters

The National Response Framework

To assist response partners in effectively carrying out the Response mission, the National Response Framework:

- Identifies capabilities that are essential for response and community lifelines stabilization
- Indicates the actions necessary to build and deliver the required capabilities
- Describes key roles and responsibilities for integrating capabilities across the whole community
- Outlines how the Response mission area relates to other mission areas

Response Federal Interagency Operational Plan

At the Federal level, the National Response Framework is supported by the Response Federal Interagency Operational Plan (FIOP). The Response FIOP further defines the concepts, principles, structures, and actions introduced in the National Response Framework, with a focus on the Federal level.

The Response FIOP goes into more depth than the National Response Framework on how Federal agencies work together on Response and how they support or complement activities that take place in the private sector and at other levels of government.

The intent of the FIOP is to support local, state, tribal, territorial, insular-area, and Federal government plans to ensure a common operational focus.

Each mission area has their own FIOP that describes how the federal government aligns resources and delivers that mission's core capabilities. More information can be found at, <https://www.fema.gov/federal-interagency-operational-plans>

Guiding Principles for Response

Now that you have a general understanding of National Preparedness doctrine and the context it provides for the Response mission area, let's take a closer look at the principles on which Response doctrine is based.

Response doctrine defines basic roles, responsibilities, and operational concepts for Response across all levels of government and with the private sector and nongovernmental organizations.

It is important to remember that the overarching objective of Response activities is ensuring life safety, protecting property and the environment, stabilizing the incident, and providing for basic human needs. Stabilization of the seven Community Lifelines reduces threats to public health and safety, or economic security.

Let's review the five guiding principles that establish fundamental doctrine for the Response mission area:

- Engaged Partnership
- Tiered Response
- Scalable, Flexible, and Adaptable Operational Capabilities

- Unity of Effort Through Unified Command
- Readiness to Act

Engaged Partnership

Effective partnership relies on engaging the whole community in preparing for and responding to disasters in order to manage risk to communities and infrastructure.

Those who lead emergency response efforts must communicate and support engagement with the whole community by developing shared goals and aligning capabilities to reduce the risk of any jurisdiction being overwhelmed in times of crisis. Layered mutually supporting capabilities of individuals, communities, the private sector, NGOs, and governments at all levels allow for coordinated planning in times of calm and effective response in times of crisis.

Now let's look at an example that demonstrates the concept of engaged partnership.

Engaged Partnership Example

In the wake of the tornado that hit Joplin, Missouri in May 2011, every available agency and resource was deployed to assist in response and recovery from the devastating event. A wide array of private businesses participated in that effort:

- Home improvement stores delivered relief and cleanup supplies that were contributed by other private-sector suppliers. These businesses also partnered with a commercial airline to fly in volunteers.
- Utility companies teamed up to restore power more quickly to the area.
- A telecommunications company provided wireless equipment to local emergency officials.
- A development firm worked with the Joplin City Council to attract private investors for reconstruction projects.

Through this whole community approach, government and businesses coordinated their efforts to begin the response and rebuilding process in Joplin.

Tiered Response

A basic premise of the National Response Framework is that incidents are generally handled at the lowest jurisdictional level possible. Incidents begin and end locally, and most are managed at that level as well.

Many incidents require unified response from local agencies, the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations. Other incidents may require additional support from neighboring jurisdictions or the state.

A small number require Federal support. National response protocols recognize this and are structured to provide additional, tiered levels of support.

When all levels of government become engaged, a response is federally supported, state managed, and locally executed, with tribes, territories, and insular area governments often managing the response, as well.

[Select this link for an example of tiered response.](#)

Tiered Response

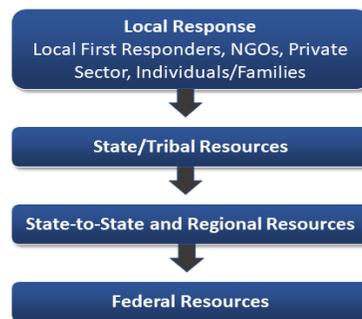
Let's look at how the principle of tiered response applies to a scenario. A fast-moving front caused flash flooding. The local community with help from neighboring jurisdictions responded, providing services to the areas affected by the floods. The community was on its way to recovering when heavy rains began to fall over most of the region. Responding to this expanding incident required a tiered response.

Local response. Local first responders rescued stranded residents, and neighboring jurisdictions contributed personnel and equipment to the effort. Neighbors helped neighbors salvage their belongings, and a temporary shelter was opened in a local school to house displaced residents until they could return home or find accommodations with friends and family. Food and other types of assistance were provided by nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector donated supplies for cleanup and repair.

State resources. As the rains continued, the flooded areas expanded. Greater numbers of families were displaced, and more communities along the river were affected. There were widespread power outages, and neighboring jurisdictions were no longer able to contribute assistance because they had similar needs close to home. Local response agencies' resources were overwhelmed, and assistance from the State was requested.

State-to-State assistance. In the wake of continuing severe weather, a levee upstream gave way, and the flooding quickly expanded, affecting a huge area. When the State's resources were no longer adequate to address the needs of such a large area, State-to-State assistance is provided through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (or EMAC, which will be discussed later in this course).

Federal assistance. Finally, the State's ability to manage the expanding incident was overcome, and they requested Federal assistance to provide additional resources and help coordinate the response. The flexibility of tiered response made it possible to respond at the lowest possible jurisdictional level and expand the response effort as the needs of the incident require. Later in the course, we will take a closer look at the mechanisms through which a tiered response such as this is implemented.



Tiered Response Example

In Illinois, mutual aid for multiagency or multi-jurisdictional response is provided through the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS). Equipment, personnel, or services that are provided under the MABAS agreement are shared between municipalities at no cost. In the event there are expenses recovered from the responsible party, those funds are equitably distributed. In addition, emergency personnel who respond to the emergency remain employees of their initial department or agency.

MABAS may be activated for larger incidents under the Illinois Emergency Management Agency's statewide mutual aid plan. The statewide plan allows for resource deployment to a stricken area while leaving at least 80 percent of local resources in place to respond to ongoing, routine local emergencies.

The MABAS system is organized in divisions, roughly along county lines, and the vast majority of firefighters in Illinois participate in the system. Several surrounding States—Wisconsin, Iowa, and others—also use MABAS, and the groundwork is being laid throughout the Great Lakes region to establish a compatible mutual aid system modeled after MABAS.

Scalable, Flexible, and Adaptable Operational Capabilities

As incidents change in size, scope, and complexity, response efforts must adapt to meet evolving requirements. The number, type, and sources of resources must be able to expand rapidly to meet the changing needs associated with a given incident and its cascading effects. The National Incident Management System (NIMS) concepts and principles add this flexibility when dealing with an incident.

As needs grow and change, response processes must remain nimble and adaptable. The structures and processes described in the NRF must be able to surge resources from the whole community.

As incidents stabilize, response efforts must be flexible in order to move toward recovery outcomes.

Scalable, Flexible, and Adaptable Operational Capabilities Example

Based on lessons learned from the 9/11 attacks, the New York City Fire Department (FDNY) established and trained Incident Management Teams (IMTs).

The IMTs are designed to provide operational capabilities to ensure that the Department has continuous coverage during prolonged incidents. Each team member is trained and credentialed to assume specific Incident Command System (ICS) functions.

When Hurricane Katrina made landfall in August 2005 in Louisiana and Mississippi, FDNY had enough trained personnel to deploy a full IMT to assist in the response. During Hurricane Sandy in 2012, with the crisis closer to home, an IMT oversaw the response during and after the storm.

The FDNY IMTs demonstrated scalable, flexible, and adaptable capabilities by responding to incidents of different size, location, and complexity.

Unity of Effort Through Unified Command

Success requires unity of effort, which respects the chain of command of each participating organization while ensuring seamless coordination across jurisdictions in support of common objectives.

As a team effort, Unified Command allows all agencies with jurisdictional authority and/or functional responsibility for the incident to provide joint support through mutually developed incident objectives and strategies. Each participating agency maintains its own authority, responsibility, and accountability.

[Select this link to learn more about Unified Command.](#)

Unified Command: Additional Information

Unified command is an Incident Command System (ICS) application used when more than one agency has jurisdiction or when incidents cross political jurisdictions. Agencies work together through the designated members of the unified command to establish a common set of objectives and strategies and a single Incident Action Plan.

As a team effort, unified command allows all agencies with jurisdictional authority and/or functional responsibility for the incident to provide joint support through mutually developed incident objectives and strategies established at the command level. Each participating agency maintains its own authority, responsibility, and accountability.

Unity of Effort Through Unified Command Example

Planned events in Boston can attract crowds of 1 million or more participants and spectators, providing an optimal environment to test and improve disaster plans.

Medical planners, led by Boston Emergency Medical Services, began treating special events as "planned disasters" during preparations for events such as the Boston Marathon.

Agencies and organizations involved adopted the Incident Command System, conducted planning and operations using unified command, and integrated aspects of the Region's disaster plans into the event's operations plan.

These preparations proved vital when bomb blasts ripped through the crowd at the 2013 Boston Marathon. Lives were saved that day through the united efforts of diverse agencies, medical services, and individual community members.

Readiness To Act

Effective response requires a readiness to act that is balanced with an understanding of the risks and hazards responders face. From individuals and communities to the private and nonprofit sectors, faith-based organizations, and all levels of government, national response depends on the ability to act decisively.

Decisive action is often required to save lives and protect property and the environment. Although some risk to responders may be unavoidable, all response personnel are responsible for anticipating and managing risk through proper planning, organizing, equipping, training, and exercising.

Readiness To Act Example

FEMA's Incident Management Assistance Teams (IMATs) are rapidly deployable emergency response teams—full time, rapid response teams that can arrive at an incident within 12 hours from deployment notification to support the State and Federal Coordinating Officers in establishing the Incident Action Planning (IAP) process and Initial Operating Facility (IOF).

IMAT teams:

- Support the initial establishment of a Unified Command
- Provide situational awareness for Federal and state decision-makers, enabling them to determine the level and type of immediate Federal support that may be required

[Select this link to access additional information about IMATs](http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1440617086827-f6489d2de59dddeba8bebc9b4d419009/IMAT_July_2015.pdf) (http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1440617086827-f6489d2de59dddeba8bebc9b4d419009/IMAT_July_2015.pdf)

Lesson Summary

In this lesson, you reviewed National Response Framework that includes the purpose, audience, scope, organization, and relationship to the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

In addition, you learned the National preparedness doctrine and the Guiding Principles doctrine.

The next lesson defines the response roles and responsibilities of the Response mission area.

Lesson Overview

This lesson provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities of key partners across the whole community who implement the National Response Framework. This includes important roles for all levels of government as well as the private sector, nongovernmental organizations, and individuals, families, and households.

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to describe the response roles and responsibilities of all elements of the whole community.

Response Partnerships

An effective, unified national response requires layered, mutually supporting capabilities. Individuals and communities, the private and nonprofit sectors, faith-based organizations, and all levels of government should understand their respective roles and responsibilities and how to complement each other in achieving shared goals. The video below provides more information on effective response partnerships.

Roles and Responsibilities Video Transcript

Effective response requires partnerships among the whole community, including all levels of government, the private sector, nongovernmental organizations, communities, and individuals, families, and households. The following scenario illustrates how the whole community and all response partners work together within the National Response Framework.

The earthquake comes without warning as residents go about their business on a typical weekday; measuring 7.5 on the Richter scale, the quake occurs along a fault in a heavily populated area. Ninety minutes later, an 8.0-magnitude aftershock occurs along a second fault line to the east. The effects of the two shocks are profound—10 times more powerful than the 1989 Loma Prieta quake. More than 100,000 people are injured and thousands more are missing. Because the quakes occurred during the day, members of most families in the area are separated.

Damage to bridges and public transportation systems essentially severs access to the hardest-hit areas. More than 46,000 buildings, including 37 percent of area homes, have been destroyed. The magnitude of this incident results in a nationwide response. As soon as they are able, neighbors rush to help neighbors, and office workers guide their colleagues to safety from unstable buildings. Under the direction of Incident Commanders, first responders begin critical lifesaving operations, while the local Emergency Operations Center, or EOC, provides support by assessing damage reports and obtaining needed resources.

The Mayor's Policy Group is stood up. As representatives of the city's response agencies, this group ensures coordination of response efforts across departments. The Mayor asks the Governor to declare a state of emergency. At first report of the earthquake, the Governor and emergency management staff had already begun activating state response plans. While the Mayor leads the local response, the Governor has overall responsibility for the public safety and welfare of the residents and provides needed resources and capabilities.

Despite preparedness for earthquakes, the scale of this disaster clearly exceeds the capability of local responders and the state government. The Governor activates existing mutual aid agreements with other states. The Governor also requests a Presidential disaster declaration.

The Secretary of Homeland Security, as the principal Federal official for domestic incident management, immediately begins to coordinate supporting Federal operations. As the state begins to identify the range of its requirements for support, Federal departments and agencies activate their emergency response plans, surge their operations centers, and coordinate their activities through the regional and national coordination centers. FEMA deploys an Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT) to the state EOC and begins establishing the field structures that will ultimately become the Joint Field Office and will coordinate Federal response efforts in the field.

All aspects of the Federal response are organized using the principle of Unified Command, allowing various Federal departments and agencies to support state and local responders in a coordinated and unified manner. The President responds quickly to the Governor's request and issues a major disaster declaration under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief Act. In the declaration, the President designates a Federal Coordinating Officer and provides Federal resources and funds to help support the response and recovery.

The private sector plays many important roles during the response. Activating their emergency plans, businesses begin contacting employees to ensure their well-being. Next, the private sector assesses the damage and begins working to restore essential community services, with priority given to restoring infrastructure and providing key resources.

Voluntary and nongovernmental organizations activate their response plans and mobilize their networks to provide requested assistance through the emergency management structures. By integrating themselves into the response structures, these groups provide invaluable capabilities and resources to support the response.

Individuals, households, and families do their part by being prepared—reducing hazards in their homes; developing plans for care of family members, animals, and neighbors during an emergency; and volunteering with emergency organizations.

During an emergency, they monitor emergency communications and follow guidance and instructions provided by local authorities.

Although just a scenario, this disaster is, unfortunately, all too plausible. The National Response Framework clearly defines the roles of response partners so that we can work together effectively to meet these challenges.

Communities

Communities are groups that share goals, values, and institutions, but are not always bound by geographic boundaries or political divisions.

They may be:

- Private sector
- Individuals and families
- Health and medical
- NGOs
- Faith-based organizations
- Neighborhood partnerships
- Advocacy groups
- Academia
- Social and community groups associations

Communities provide opportunities for sharing information and promoting collective action. Engaging these communities in preparedness efforts is important to identifying their needs and taking advantage of their potential contributions.

You can learn more about strategies for community preparedness by completing [IS-909 Community Preparedness: Implementing Simple Activities for Everyone](https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-909) (<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-909>).

Community Involvement Example

A Core Advisory Group (CAG) consists of people with cross-disabilities who advise emergency managers about accessibility. During a 2015 disaster response to a U.S. territory, there was no pre-existing CAG. Responders had to learn what sign languages were used; how many sign language interpreters were in the territory; whether congregate living existed; which local support, service, and advocacy entities existed; whether auxiliary aids existed in the territory; and what devices and equipment were present.

As events were unfolding during disaster response, there were rumors that needed to be verified regarding people with disabilities who lacked services and were unsafe. Rumors were verified and people were transitioned to appropriate temporary shelters. CAG members now serve in the EOC to help facilitate information and develop courses of action to meet the needs of citizens with disabilities and those of older individuals.

The Private Sector

Private sector organizations engage in incident response through their own internal response and continuity actions, the commodities they provide, their partnerships with each level of government, and their roles within the supply chain. Elements of the private sector are most often the providers of community lifeline services and have a key interest in the stabilization and restoration of their own operations and those of other infrastructure systems.

The private sector, comprised of small, medium, and large businesses, spans nationally significant infrastructure to locally owned and operated businesses that, while small, are staples of the community. The private sector includes commerce; healthcare; private, cultural, and educational institutions; and industry, as well as public/private partnerships that have been established specifically for emergency management purposes.

Refer to page 26 of the National Response Framework for additional information.

Individuals, Families, and Households

Individuals, families, and households play an important role in emergency preparedness and response. You can contribute by:

- Reducing hazards in and around your home
- Preparing an emergency supply kit and household emergency plan
- Monitoring emergency communications carefully
- Volunteering with an established organization
- Enrolling in emergency response training courses

Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs)

NGOs play vital roles at the local, state, tribal, territorial, insular-area, and Federal levels in delivering important services, including those associated with the response core capabilities:

- Identifying sheltering locations, ensuring access to those facilities, and communicating their locations to the whole community;
- Providing emergency commodities and services, such as water, food, shelter, assistance with family reunification, clothing, and supplies for post-emergency cleanup;
- Supporting the evacuation, rescue, care, and sheltering of animals displaced by the incident;
- Supporting search and rescue, transportation, and logistics services;
- Identifying and supporting the health, medical, mental health, and behavior health resources of the impacted community; and
- Supporting disaster survivors, identifying unmet needs, and developing individual recovery plans.

Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs), Continued

Some NGOs are officially designated as support elements to national response capabilities:

- **The American Red Cross** is chartered by Congress to provide relief to survivors of disasters and help people prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies.
- **National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (National VOAD)** is an association of organizations that mitigates and alleviates the impact of disasters; provides a forum promoting cooperation, communication, coordination and collaboration; and fosters more effective delivery of services to communities impacted by a disaster. National VOAD is a consortium of over 70 national organizations and 56 territorial and state equivalents.
- **National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC):** Within the NCMEC, the National Emergency Child Locator Center (NECLC) facilitates the expeditious identification of children and their reunification with their families.

[Select this link to review the Volunteer and Donations Management Support Annex.](https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/32282) (https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/32282)

Local Government

The responsibility for responding to natural and human-caused incidents that have recognizable geographic boundaries generally begins at the local level.

Local police, fire, emergency medical services, public health and medical providers, emergency management, public works, environmental response professionals, and other local responders are often the first to detect a threat or hazard or respond to an incident, and frequently they are the last to leave an incident site.

Local governments manage the vast majority of incidents that occur each day.

Local key players include (click on each photo to see the key player's roles and responsibilities):



Chief Elected or Appointed Official



Emergency Manager



Department and Agency Heads

[Select this link to access all information presented.](#)

Local Key Players

Chief Elected or Appointed Official

Role: Jurisdictional chief executives are responsible for the public safety and welfare of the people of their jurisdiction. Officials provide strategic guidance and resources across all five mission areas. Chief elected or appointed officials must have a clear understanding of their emergency management roles and responsibilities and how to apply the response core capabilities because they may need to make decisions regarding resources and operations during an incident to stabilize community lifelines. Lives may depend on their decisions. Elected and appointed officials

also routinely shape or modify laws, policies, and budgets to aid preparedness efforts and improve emergency management and response capabilities. The local chief executive's response duties may include the following:

- Obtaining assistance from other governmental agencies,
- Providing direction for response activities, and
- Ensuring appropriate information is provided to the public.

Local Emergency Manager

Role: The jurisdiction's emergency manager oversees the day-to-day emergency management programs and activities. The emergency manager works with chief elected and appointed officials to establish unified objectives regarding the jurisdiction's emergency plans and activities. This role entails coordinating and integrating all elements of the community. The emergency manager coordinates the local emergency management program. This includes assessing the capacity and readiness to deliver the capabilities most likely required to stabilize community lifelines during an incident and identifying and correcting shortfalls. The local emergency manager's duties often include the following:

- Advising elected and appointed officials during a response;
- Conducting response operations in accordance with the NIMS;
- Coordinating the functions of local agencies;
- Coordinating the development of plans, and working cooperatively with other local agencies, community organizations, private sector businesses, and NGOs;
- Developing and maintaining mutual aid and assistance agreements;
- Coordinating resource requests during an incident through the management of an emergency operations center;
- Coordinating damage assessments during an incident;
- Advising and informing local officials and the public about emergency management activities during an incident to facilitate response operations such as sheltering, avoiding, evacuating, and resupply of food and water;
- Developing and executing accessible public awareness and education programs;
- Conducting exercises to rehearse response activities; test personnel, plans and systems; and identify areas for improvement;
- Coordinating integration of individuals with disabilities, individuals from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds, and others with access and functional needs into emergency planning and response; and
- Helping to ensure the continuation of essential services and functions through the development and implementation of continuity of operations plans.

Department and Agency Heads

Role: Local government department and agency heads collaborate with the emergency manager during development of local emergency plans and provide key response resources.

Responsibilities: Participation in the planning process helps to ensure that specific capabilities are integrated into a workable plan to safeguard the community. The department and agency heads and their staffs develop, plan, and train on internal policies and procedures to meet response needs safely, and they participate in interagency training and exercises to develop and maintain necessary capabilities.

State, Tribal, Territorial, and Insular Area Governments

State, tribal, territorial, and insular-area governments are responsible for the health and welfare of their residents, communities, lands, and cultural heritage.

State Governments

When an incident expands or has the potential to expand beyond the capability of a local jurisdiction and responders cannot meet the needs with mutual aid and assistance resources, local officials contact the state.

State governments supplement local efforts by applying in-state resources first. If additional resources are required, states can request assistance from other states through interstate mutual aid and assistance agreements such as the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC). If a state anticipates that its resources may be exceeded, the governor may request assistance from the Federal Government through a Stafford Act declaration.

EMAC is:

- Administered by the National Emergency Management Association
- An interstate mutual aid agreement
- A way to streamline the interstate mutual aid and assistance process

[Select this link to access the EMAC Website](https://www.emacweb.org/) (https://www.emacweb.org/)

Governor

The public safety and welfare of a state's residents are the fundamental responsibilities of every Governor. The Governor coordinates state resources and provides the strategic guidance for response to all types of incidents. This includes supporting local governments as needed and coordinating assistance with other states and the Federal Government. A Governor also does the following during a response:

- In accordance with state law, may make, amend, or suspend certain orders or regulations associated with response efforts;
- Communicates to the public in an accessible manner (i.e., effective communications to address all members of the whole community), and helps people, businesses, and organizations cope with the consequences of and protective actions for any type of incident;
- Coordinates with tribal governments within the state; and

- Commands the state military forces (National Guard personnel not in federal service and state defense forces).

State Emergency Management Agency Director

The director of the state Emergency Management Agency is responsible for ensuring that the state is prepared to deal with large-scale emergencies and for coordinating the statewide response to any such incident.

This includes supporting local and tribal governments, coordinating assistance with other states and the Federal Government, and with NGOs and private-sector organizations.

The state Emergency Management Agency may dispatch personnel to assist in the response and recovery effort.

State Homeland Security Advisor

Many states have designated Homeland Security Advisors who serve as counsel to the governor on homeland security issues and may serve as a liaison between the governor's office, the state homeland security structure, and other organizations both inside and outside the state. The advisor often chairs a committee composed of representatives of relevant state agencies, including public safety, the National Guard, emergency management, public health, environment, agriculture, and others charged with developing prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery strategies.

National Guard

The National Guard is an important state and Federal resource available for planning, preparing, and responding to natural or manmade incidents. National Guard members have expertise in critical areas, such as emergency medical response; communications; logistics; search and rescue; civil engineering; chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear response and planning; and decontamination.

The governor may activate elements of the National Guard to support state domestic civil functions and activities. The state Adjutant General may assign members of the Guard to assist with state, regional, and Federal civil support plans.

Other State Departments and Agencies

State department and agency heads and their staffs develop, plan, and train on internal policies and procedures to meet response and recovery needs.

They also participate in interagency training and exercises to develop and maintain the necessary capabilities. They are vital to the state's overall emergency management program, as they bring expertise spanning various response functions and serve as core members of the state Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and Incident Command Posts (ICPs).

Tribal Governments

The United States has a trust relationship with federally recognized Indian tribes and recognizes tribes as sovereign nations. Under the Stafford Act, federally recognized Indian tribes can directly request their own emergency declaration and major disaster declaration, or they can request assistance under a state request.

The Chief Executive is responsible for public safety and welfare:

- Coordinates resources needed to respond to incidents of all types
- Makes, amends, or suspends certain orders or regulations associated with the response in accordance with the law
- Communicates with the public in an accessible manner and helps people, businesses, and organizations cope with the consequences of any type of incident
- Negotiates mutual aid and assistance agreements with other local jurisdiction, state, tribal, territorial, and insular-area governments
- Requests Federal assistance

[Select this link to access the Tribal Coordination Support Annex](https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/32279) (https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/32279)

Territory and Insular Area Governments

Territorial and insular area governments are responsible for coordinating resources to address actual or potential incidents and have many of the same functions states have, as previously listed in this section. Because of their remote locations, territorial and insular area governments often face unique challenges in receiving assistance from outside the jurisdiction quickly and often request assistance from neighboring islands, other nearby countries, states, the private sector or NGO resources, or the Federal Government.

Additionally, there are language and cultural differences that must be considered, as well as the potential for authorities that overlap with federal authorities.

Federal Government

The Federal Government maintains a wide range of capabilities and resources that may be required to deal with domestic incidents in order to save lives and protect property and the environment while ensuring the protection of privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties.

The Federal Government becomes involved with a response when Federal interests are involved; when state, local, tribal, or territorial governments request assistance; or as authorized or required by statute, regulation, or policy.

[Federal Response Key Players](#)

[For more information click this link to refer to page 34 of the NRF \(https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/117791\)](https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/117791)

Secretary of Homeland Security

The Secretary of Homeland Security coordinates preparedness activities within the United States to respond to and recover from terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies. The Secretary coordinates with Federal entities to provide for unity of Federal efforts for domestic incident management. As part of these responsibilities, the Secretary of Homeland Security provides the Executive Branch with an overall architecture for domestic incident management. The Secretary also coordinates Federal incident response, as required.

Unity of effort differs from unity of command. Various Federal departments and agencies may have statutory responsibilities and lead roles based upon the unique circumstances of the incident. Unity of effort provides coordination through cooperation and common interests and does not interfere with Federal departments' and agencies' supervisory, command, or statutory authorities. The Secretary ensures that overall Federal actions are unified, complete, and synchronized to prevent unfilled gaps or seams in the Federal Government's overarching effort. This coordinated approach ensures that the Federal actions undertaken by DHS and other departments and agencies are harmonized and mutually supportive. The Secretary maintains a robust response capability and emergency management expertise to support lead Federal agencies during a domestic incident response and to support a lead Federal agency in managing an incident when requested by the lead agency or directed by the President.

The Secretary's responsibilities also include management of the broad "emergency management" and "response" authorities of FEMA and other DHS component heads; FEMA and other DHS components may have lead response roles or other significant roles, depending on the type and severity of the incident. For example, the U.S. Secret Service is the lead agency for security design, planning, and implementation of National Special Security Events (NSSEs), while the Assistant Secretary for Cybersecurity and Communications coordinates the response to significant cyber incidents.

FEMA Administrator

The Administrator is the principal advisor to the President, the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Homeland Security Council regarding emergency management. The FEMA Administrator's duties include assisting the President through the Secretary in providing the Federal Government's response to terrorist attacks and major disasters, including managing the operation of the National Response Coordination Center (NRCC), the effective support of all Emergency Support Functions (ESFs), and more generally, preparing for, protecting against, responding to, and recovering from all-hazards incidents. Reporting to the Secretary of Homeland Security, the FEMA Administrator is also responsible for managing the core DHS grant programs supporting homeland security activities.

Attorney General

Like other Executive Branch departments and agencies, the Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) will endeavor to coordinate their activities with other members of the law enforcement community, and with members of the Intelligence Community, to achieve maximum cooperation consistent with the law and operational necessity.

The Attorney General has lead responsibility for criminal investigations of terrorist acts or terrorist threats by individuals or groups inside the United States, or directed at United States citizens or institutions abroad, where such acts are within the Federal criminal jurisdiction of the United States, as well as having responsibility for related intelligence collection activities within the United States, subject to the National Security Act of 1947 (as amended) and other applicable law, Executive Order 12333 (as amended), and Attorney General-approved procedures pursuant to that Executive Order.

Generally acting through the FBI, the Attorney General, in cooperation with other Federal departments and agencies engaged in activities to protect our national security, also coordinates the activities of the other members of the law enforcement community to detect, prevent, preempt, and disrupt terrorist attacks against the United States. In addition, the Attorney General, generally acting through the FBI Director, has primary responsibility for searching for, finding, and neutralizing WMD within the United States.

The Attorney General approves requests submitted by state governors pursuant to the Emergency Federal Law Enforcement Assistance Act for personnel and other Federal law enforcement support during incidents. The Attorney General also enforces Federal civil rights laws, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Further information on the Attorney General's role is provided in the National Prevention Framework and Prevention FIOP.

Secretary of Defense

The Secretary of Defense has authority, direction, and control over the Department of Defense (DoD). DoD resources may be committed when requested by another Federal agency and approved by the Secretary of Defense, or when directed by the President. However, certain DoD officials and organizations may provide support under the immediate response authority, a mutual aid agreement with the local community, or pursuant to independent authorities or agreements. When DoD resources are authorized to support civil authorities, command of those forces remains with the Secretary of Defense. DoD elements in the incident area of operations coordinate closely with response organizations at all levels.

Secretary of State

A domestic incident may have international and diplomatic implications that call for coordination and consultation with foreign governments and international organizations. The Secretary of State is responsible for all communication and coordination between the U.S. Government and other nations regarding the response to a domestic crisis. The Department of State also coordinates international offers of assistance and formally accepts or declines these offers on behalf of the U.S. Government, based on needs conveyed by Federal departments and agencies, as stated in the International Coordination Support Annex. Some types of international assistance are pre-identified and bilateral agreements are already established. For example, the USDA/Forest Service and Department of the Interior have joint bilateral agreements with several countries for wildland firefighting support.

Director of National Intelligence

The Director of National Intelligence serves as the head of the Intelligence Community, acts as the principal advisor to the President for intelligence matters relating to national security, and oversees and directs implementation of the National Intelligence Program. The Intelligence Community, comprising 17 elements across the Federal Government, functions consistent with laws, Executive Orders, regulations, and policies to support the national-security-related missions of the U.S. Government. It provides a range of analytic products, including those that assess threats to the homeland and inform planning, capability development, and operational activities of homeland security enterprise partners and stakeholders. In addition to Intelligence Community elements with specific homeland security missions, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence maintains a number of mission and support centers that provide unique capabilities for homeland security partners.

Other Department and Agency Heads

Various Federal departments or agencies play primary, coordinating, or support roles in delivering response core capabilities. In some circumstances, other Federal agencies may have a lead or support role in coordinating operations, or elements of operations, consistent with applicable legal authorities or the Presidential designation as lead Federal agency. Nothing in the National Response Framework precludes any Federal department or agency from executing its existing authorities. For all incidents, Federal department and agency heads serve as advisors for the Executive Branch relative to their areas of responsibility.

Federal departments and agencies may coordinate Federal operations under their own statutory authorities, or as designated by the President, and may activate response structures applicable to those authorities. The head of the department or agency may also request the Secretary of Homeland Security to activate Department of Homeland Security structures and elements (e.g., Incident Management Assistance Teams and National Operations Center elements) to provide additional assistance, while still retaining leadership for the response.

Several Federal departments and agencies have authorities to respond to and declare specific types of disasters or emergencies. These authorities may be exercised independently of or concurrently with, or become part of, a Federal response coordinated by the Secretary of Homeland Security, pursuant to Presidential directive. Federal departments and agencies carry out their response authorities and responsibilities within the NRF's overarching construct or under supplementary or complementary operational plans. Table 1 below provides examples of scenarios in which specific Federal departments and agencies have the responsibility for coordinating response activities. This is not an all-inclusive list.

When a Federal department, agency, or component of DHS has responsibility for directing or managing a major aspect of a response coordinated by the Secretary of Homeland Security, that organization is part of the national leadership for the incident and is represented in field, regional, and Headquarters unified command and coordination organizations.

Types of Federal Aid (1 of 2)

Federal Response and Assistance Available Without a Stafford Act Declaration

The National Response Framework covers the full range of complex and constantly changing requirements in anticipation of, or in response to, threats or actual incidents. In addition to Stafford Act support, the National Response Framework or other supplementary or complementary operational plans may be applied to respond or provide other forms of support.

Immediate lifesaving assistance to states and other types of assistance, such as wildland firefighting support or response to an agricultural disease or cybersecurity incident, are performed by Federal departments or agencies under their own authorities and funding or through reciprocal mutual assistance agreements.

Federal-to-Federal Support

A Federal department or agency responding to an incident under its own authorities may also request support from the Secretary of Homeland Security in obtaining and coordinating additional Federal assistance.

Federal departments and agencies may execute interagency or intra-agency reimbursable agreements in accordance with the Economy Act or other applicable authorities.

Types of Federal Aid (2 of 2)

Federal Response and Assistance Under the Stafford Act Declaration

Federal support to States, Tribal nations, territories and insular areas, and local jurisdictions takes many forms. The most widely known authority under which assistance is provided for major incidents is the Stafford Act.

Requesting Federal Assistance Video Transcript

The Federal Government maintains a wide array of capabilities and resources. Perhaps the most widely known authority under which Federal assistance is provided for major incidents is the Stafford Act. In fact, Federal disaster assistance is often thought of as synonymous with Presidential declarations and the Stafford Act.

However, Federal assistance under the Stafford Act is only available when the incident exceeds State, Tribal, and local resources. In those circumstances, a Governor, or Tribal Chief Executive, may ask the President to declare an emergency or major disaster.

Before a declaration request is made, the State or Tribal emergency plan must be activated and all appropriate State, Tribal, and local actions must have been taken or initiated.

Examples of these actions include surveying the affected areas to determine the extent of private and public damage, and conducting joint Preliminary Damage Assessments with FEMA officials to estimate the types and extent of Federal disaster assistance required.

The declaration request is made through the FEMA Regional Administrator and includes:

- Information on the extent and nature of State or Tribal resources that have been or will be used;
- A certification by the Governor or Tribal Chief Executive that State, Tribal, and local governments will assume all applicable non-Federal costs required by the Stafford Act;
- An estimate of the types and amounts of supplementary Federal assistance required; and
- For State requests, designation of the State Coordinating Officer.

The FEMA Regional Administrator evaluates the damage and requirements for Federal assistance and makes a recommendation to the FEMA Administrator. The FEMA Administrator, acting through the Secretary of Homeland Security, then recommends a course of action to the President. In extraordinary circumstances, the President may unilaterally make such a declaration to expedite the delivery of lifesaving assistance. Under the Stafford Act (Title III, 42 USC 5143), following a Presidential declaration, the President appoints a Federal Coordinating Officer to execute Stafford Act authorities. The Federal Coordinating Officer represents the President in the field and uses the structures and process specified in the National Response Framework to manage the response.

While the Stafford Act may be the most familiar mechanism for Federal support, it is not the only one. Often, Federal assistance does not require coordination by the Department of Homeland Security and can be provided without a Presidential emergency or major disaster declaration. In these instances, Federal departments and agencies provide assistance to States, as well as directly to tribes and local jurisdictions, consistent with their own authorities.

It is important to note that the National Response Framework does not alter or impede the ability of Federal departments and agencies to carry out their specific response authorities. For example, local and Tribal governments can request assistance directly from the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Coast Guard under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act.

In addition, Federal departments and agencies routinely manage the response to incidents under their statutory or executive authorities. An example of such an authority is the wildland firefighting support provided by the U.S. Forest Service. When assistance is being coordinated by a Federal agency with primary jurisdiction, the Department of Homeland Security may activate Framework mechanisms to support the response without assuming overall leadership for the incident.

In addition to providing assistance to local, Tribal, and State governments, the National Response Framework allows for Federal-to-Federal support. A Federal entity with primary responsibility and authority for handling an incident may request Federal assistance under the National Response Framework. In these circumstances, the Department of Homeland Security coordinates the response using multiagency coordination structures established in the Framework.

The National Response Framework provides structures for implementing nationwide response policy and operational coordination for all types of domestic incidents. Given its flexibility and scalability, the Framework can be implemented to deliver the resources at the needed level of coordination across a wide range of authorities.

Lesson Summary

In this lesson, you learned how the National Response Framework defines the response roles and responsibilities of all elements of the whole community.

The next lesson presents the core capabilities for the Response mission area and the actions required to build and deliver these capabilities.

Lesson Overview

The National Response Framework is intended to strengthen, organize, and coordinate response actions across the entire response community as a means of delivering the core response capabilities in order to stabilize the community lifelines. This lesson describes community lifelines and the core capabilities for response.

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to identify core capabilities for response and how they are used to stabilize community lifelines.

Community Lifelines

A community lifeline enables the continuous operation of **critical government and business functions** and is **essential to human health and safety or economic security**.

The seven community lifelines represent only the most basic services a community relies on and which, when stable, enable all other activity within a community.

Stabilizing community lifelines is the primary effort during response to lessen threats and hazards to public health and safety, the economy, and security.

Community Lifelines, Continued

1. [Safety and Security](#)
2. [Food, Water, and Sheltering](#)
3. [Health and Medical](#)
4. [Energy \(Power and Fuel\)](#)
5. [Communications](#)
6. [Transportation](#)
7. [Hazardous Material](#)

- Community lifelines rely on multiple government entities, business, and infrastructure sectors to function.
- Because the community lifelines are interdependent, failures in one will often cascade across to others.
- The seven community lifelines are listed below. For more information on community lifelines go to, <https://www.fema.gov/lifelines>

Click on the links to the left to learn more about each of the seven community lifelines

Safety and Security

Law enforcement and government services, as well as the associated assets that maintain communal security, provide search and rescue, evacuation, and firefighting capabilities, and promote responder safety.

Food, Water, Shelter

Support systems that enable the sustainment of life, such as water treatment, transmission, and distribution systems; food retail and distribution networks; wastewater collection and treatment systems; as well as sheltering and agriculture.

Health and Medical

Infrastructure and service providers for medical care, public health, patient movement, fatality management, behavioral health, veterinary support, and health or medical supply chains.

Energy

Service providers for electric power infrastructure, composed of generation, transmission, and distribution systems. Disruptions can have a limiting effect on the functionality of other community lifelines.

Communications

Infrastructure owners and operators of broadband internet, cellular networks, landline telephony, cable services (to include undersea cable), satellite communications services, and broadcast networks (radio and television). Communication systems encompass a large set of diverse modes of delivery and technologies, often intertwined but largely operating independently. Services include elements such as alerts, warnings, and messages, as well as 911 and dispatch. Also includes accessibility of financial services.

Transportation

Multiple modes of transportation that often serve complementary functions and create redundancy, adding to the inherent resilience in overall transportation networks. Transportation infrastructure generally includes highways/roadways, mass transit, railway aviation, maritime, pipeline, and intermodal systems.

Hazardous Material

Systems that mitigate threats to public health/welfare and the environment. This includes assessment of facilities that use, generate, and store hazardous substances, as well as specialized conveyance assets and efforts to identify, contain, and remove incident debris, pollution contaminants, oil or other hazardous substances.

Lifelines Drive Response

- Community lifelines can be used by all levels of government, the private sector, and other partners to facilitate operational coordination and drive outcome-based response.
- Community lifelines are assessed and reassessed throughout an incident and help to identify required response actions each operational period until stabilization is achieved.

Lifelines Drive Response Image Description

A diagram showing actions during the pre-incident phase, the incident, the incident response, and the stabilization phase. Development of deliberate plans with stabilization targets occurs during the Pre-Incident phase. The Incident causes disruption to critical services, which leads directly to the Incident Response phase. The first step in the Incident Response is to assess initial lifeline and lifeline component status and adjust stabilization targets for each lifeline. Next, establish incident priorities around unstable lifelines and components. Next, organize response actions around lines of effort to accomplish incident priorities and respond. Next, establish logistics and resource requirements. Next, if needed, reassess lifeline status, which will lead back to establish incident priorities around unstable lifelines and components, and repeat the cycle during the incident response. Once in the stabilization phase, the final step is to stabilize all lifelines.

Examples: Lifelines and their impacts on other aspects of a community

The community lifelines do not directly cover all important aspects of community life that can be affected by an incident, but are often the root cause of impacts to other services.

Example of Impacts on Financial Services After a Community Lifeline Disruption

A tornado has caused massive devastation in a rural town. Among the major impacts to community lifelines is the community's inability to access money.

- Power outages have kept several bank branches closed and automated teller machines (ATM) inoperable, and merchants who are open despite the power outages are only able to accept cash transactions.
- Some merchants, ATMs, and bank branches are already open and have been energized through grid or generator power. However, communications outages prevent them from accessing systems to process an electronic transaction.
- Transportation issues (road closures and blockages) limit survivors' ability to travel to the limited merchants, ATM locations, and bank branches in the area, as well as responders' ability to provide assets to stabilize critical infrastructure.

These cumulative effects, while incredibly disruptive to the community are caused by a confluence of impacts to specific lifelines. By using the community lifelines construct and root cause analysis, emergency managers can assess that the major limiting factors restricting community access to money are through the power, transportation, and communications lifelines. Accordingly, a local emergency manager may alleviate the situation by considering options, such as prioritized route clearance for emergency access by power and communications crews, generators for temporary power, or deployment of mobile cell towers, for establishing connectivity until other infrastructure is restored.

Core Capabilities

Response core capabilities are the functions or activities that generally must be accomplished in incident response regardless of which levels of government are involved.

Using and implementing core capabilities is what we as a nation require in order to deal with the risks we face.

As we look at the Response core capabilities, you'll notice that three core capabilities span all five mission areas: Planning, Public Information and Warning, and Operational Coordination. These help to unify the mission areas and in many ways are necessary for the success of the remaining core capabilities.

[Select this link to view the 32 core capabilities.](#)

Core Capabilities

Prevention	Protection	Mitigation	Response	Recovery
Planning				
Public Information and Warning				
Operational Coordination				
Intelligence and Information Sharing		Community Resilience	Infrastructure Systems	
Interdiction and Disruption		Long-Term Vulnerability Reduction	Critical Transportation	Economic Recovery
Screening, Search, and Detection		Risk and Disaster Resilience Assessment	Environmental Response/Health and Safety	Health and Social Services
		Threats and Hazards Identification	Fatality Management Services	Housing
Forensics and Attribution	Access Control and Identity Verification		Fire Management and Suppression	Natural and Cultural Resources
	Cybersecurity		Logistics and Supply Chain Management	
	Physical Protective Measures		Mass Care Services	
	Risk Management for Protection Programs and Activities		Mass Search and Rescue Operations	
	Supply Chain Integrity and Security		On-Scene Security, Protection, and Law Enforcement	
			Operational Communications	
			Public Health, Healthcare, and Emergency Medical Services	
			Situational Assessment	

Cross Cutting Capabilities

Three response core capabilities span across all five mission areas. Click on each core capability to learn more:



The cross-cutting core capabilities are essential to the success of the other core capabilities. They help unify the five mission areas and establish unity of effort among all those involved in the Response mission area. [Click here for an example of Cross-Cutting Capabilities.](#)

Planning



Planning

Objective: Conduct a systematic process engaging the whole community as appropriate in the development of executable strategic, operational, and/or tactical-level approaches to meet defined objectives.

Critical Tasks: Develop operational plans that adequately identify critical objectives based on the planning requirement, provide a complete and integrated picture of the sequence and scope of the tasks to achieve the objectives, and are implementable within the time frame contemplated in the plan using available resources.

Planning makes it possible to manage the life cycle of a potential crisis, determine capability requirements, and help stakeholders learn their roles. Planning includes:

- Collection, analysis, and dissemination of risk assessment data.
- Development of plans, procedures, mutual aid and assistance agreements, strategies, and other arrangements to perform specific missions and tasks.

Governments at all levels have a responsibility to develop all-threats/hazards response plans before and during an incident.

Public Information and Warning



Public Information and Warning

Objective: Deliver coordinated, prompt, reliable, and actionable information to the whole community through the use of clear, consistent, accessible, and culturally and linguistically appropriate methods to effectively relay information regarding any threat or hazard and, as appropriate, the actions being taken and the assistance being made available.

Critical Tasks: Inform all affected segments of society by all means necessary, including accessible tools, of critical lifesaving and life-sustaining information to expedite the delivery of emergency services and aid the public to take protective actions. Deliver credible and actionable messages to inform ongoing emergency services and the public about protective measures and other life-sustaining actions and facilitate the transition to recovery.

For an effective response, information must be provided to decision makers and the public efficiently, effectively, and in an accessible manner. This includes:

- Developing accessible message content, such as incident facts, health risk warnings, pre-incident recommendations, evacuation guidance, and other protective measures.
- Developing strategies for when, where, how, and by whom information will be delivered.
- Ensuring that all levels of government agree on unified messages.

Effective public information and warning is particularly important in dealing with incidents that start small but may evolve to have greater consequences.

Operational Coordination



Operational Coordination

Objective: Establish and maintain a unified and coordinated operational structure and process that appropriately integrates all critical stakeholders and supports the execution of core capabilities.

Critical Tasks: Mobilize all critical resources and establish command, control, and coordination structures within the affected community and other coordinating bodies in surrounding communities and across the Nation and maintain as needed throughout the duration of an incident. Enhance and maintain command, control, and coordination structures, consistent with the National Incident Management System (NIMS), to meet basic human needs, stabilize the incident, and transition to recovery.

Coordination of operations must occur both among those delivering the Response core capabilities and with those working in other mission areas. Specific actions to achieve this core capability may include:

- Coordinating initial actions
- Managing Emergency Support Functions (ESFs)
- Coordinating requests for additional support
- Identifying and integrating resources and capabilities

Coordination occurs through response structures based on clearly established roles, responsibilities, and reporting protocols. Using NIMS enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of response.

Cross-Cutting Capabilities Example

Since Core Advisory Groups (CAGs) align with the Incident Command System (ICS), fitting CAGs into core capabilities is simple. As local and state jurisdictions develop CAGs, they are including the whole-community focus across the spectrum of Planning, Public Information and Warning, and Operational Coordination.

During a disaster response, when faced with lack of electronic communications capabilities, local disability service and support providers created a hybrid approach to disseminate disaster information by combining elements of a “call-down roster” and use of couriers to notify all their consumers of important disaster information.

In another example of Planning and Operational Coordination, the CAG quickly located a variety of critical items for use by shelter occupants who had an array of access and functional needs.

Items included simple accessibility aids like shower chairs and non-slip mats. Community-wide disaster resource sharing resulted in the capacity to meet previously unmet safety and hygiene needs through shared community resources.

Similar stories have occurred in a number of disaster responses across the U.S. during 2015 and in other years. Since the CAG fits neatly into NIMS and the Incident Command System (ICS) under the Disability Integration Advisor, the information collected, analyzed, and reported is an integral part of a system already in place.

Use of CAGs is outlined in Response and Recovery FIOPs and Frameworks, and CAG development is part of the annual performance plan of disability integration cadre members at FEMA HQ and of regional disability integration specialists in each FEMA Region.

Capability, Objectives, and Critical Tasks

Twelve additional core capabilities are specific to Response. Click on each of the Response Core Capabilities to learn more.

 Critical Transportation	 Mass Search and Rescue Operations
 Environmental Response/Health and Safety	 On-Scene Security, Protection, and Law Enforcement
 Fatality Management Services	 Operational Communications
 Fire Management Services	 Logistics and Supply Chain Management
 Infrastructure Systems	 Public Health, Healthcare, and Emergency Medical Services
 Mass Care Services	 Situational Assessment

Capability, Objectives, and Critical Tasks



Critical Transportation

Objective: Provide transportation (including infrastructure access and accessible transportation services) for response priority objectives, including the evacuation of people and animals, and the delivery of vital response personnel, equipment, and services into the affected areas.

Critical Tasks:

1. Establish physical access through appropriate transportation corridors and deliver required resources to save lives and to meet the needs of disaster survivors.
2. Ensure basic human needs are met, stabilize the incident, transition into recovery for an affected area, and restore basic services and community functionality.
3. Clear debris from any route type, (i.e., road, rail, airfield, port facility, waterway) to facilitate response operations.

Capability, Objectives, and Critical Tasks



Environmental Response/Health and Safety

Objective: Conduct appropriate measures to ensure the protection of the health and safety of the public and workers, as well as the environment, from all-hazards in support of responder operations and the affected communities.

Critical Tasks:

1. Identify, assess, and mitigate worker health and safety hazards and disseminate health and safety guidance and resources to response and recovery workers.
2. Minimize public exposure to environmental hazards through assessment of the hazards and implementation of public protective actions.
3. Detect, assess, stabilize, and clean up releases of oil and hazardous materials into the environment, including buildings/structures, and properly manage waste.
4. Identify, evaluate, and implement measures to prevent and minimize impacts to the environment, natural and cultural resources, and historic properties from all-hazard emergencies and response operations.

Capability, Objectives, and Critical Tasks



Fatality Management Services

Objective: Provide fatality management services, including decedent remains recovery and victim identification, working with local, state, tribal, territorial, insular area, and Federal authorities to provide mortuary processes, temporary storage or permanent interment solutions, sharing information with mass care services for the purpose of reunifying family members and caregivers with missing persons/remains, and providing counseling to the bereaved.

Critical Tasks:

1. Establish and maintain operations to recover a significant number of fatalities over a geographically dispersed area.

Capability, Objectives, and Critical Tasks



Fire Management and Suppression

Objective: Provide structural, wildland, and specialized firefighting capabilities to manage and suppress fires of all types, kinds, and complexities while protecting the lives, property, and the environment in the affected area.

Critical Tasks:

1. Provide traditional first response or initial attack firefighting services.
2. Conduct expanded or extended attack firefighting and support operations through coordinated response of fire management and specialized fire suppression resources.
3. Ensure the coordinated deployment of appropriate local, regional, national, and international fire management and fire suppression resources to reinforce firefighting efforts and maintain an appropriate level of protection for subsequent fires.

Capability, Objectives, and Critical Tasks



Infrastructure Systems

Objective: Stabilize critical infrastructure functions, minimize health and safety threats, and efficiently restore and revitalize systems and services to support a viable, resilient community.

Critical Tasks:

1. Decrease and stabilize immediate infrastructure threats to the affected population, to include survivors in the heavily-damaged zone, nearby communities that may be affected by cascading effects, and mass care support facilities and evacuation processing centers with a focus on life-sustainment and congregate care services.
2. Re-establish critical infrastructure within the affected areas to support ongoing emergency response operations, life sustainment, community functionality, and a transition to recovery.
3. Provide for the clearance, removal, and disposal of debris.
4. Formalize partnerships with governmental and private sector cyber incident or emergency response teams to accept, triage, and collaboratively respond to cascading impacts in an efficient manner.

Capability, Objectives, and Critical Tasks



Mass-Care Services

Objective: Provide life-sustaining and human services to the affected population, to include hydration, feeding, sheltering, temporary housing, evacuee support, reunification, and distribution of emergency supplies.

Critical Tasks:

1. Move and deliver resources and capabilities to meet the needs of disaster survivors, including individuals with access and functional needs.
2. Establish, staff, and equip emergency shelters and other temporary housing options (including accessible housing) for the affected population.
3. Move from congregate care to non-congregate care alternatives and provide relocation assistance or interim housing solutions for families unable to return to their pre-disaster homes.

Capability, Objectives, and Critical Tasks



Mass Search and Rescue Operations

Objective: Deliver traditional and atypical search and rescue capabilities, including personnel, services, animals, and assets to survivors in need, with the goal of saving the greatest number of endangered lives in the shortest time possible.

Critical Tasks:

1. Conduct search and rescue operations to locate and rescue persons in distress.
2. Initiate community-based search and rescue support operations across a wide geographically dispersed area.
3. Ensure the synchronized deployment of local, regional, national, and international teams to reinforce ongoing search and rescue efforts and transition to recovery.

Capability, Objectives, and Critical Tasks



On-Scene Security, Protection, and Law Enforcement

Objective: Ensure a safe and secure environment through law enforcement and related security and protection operations for people and communities located within affected areas and also for response personnel engaged in lifesaving and life-sustaining operations.

Critical Tasks:

1. Establish a safe and secure environment in an affected area.
2. Provide and maintain on-scene security and meet the protection needs of the affected population over a geographically dispersed area while eliminating or mitigating the risk of further damage to persons, property, and the environment.

Capability, Objectives, and Critical Tasks



Operational Communications

Objective: Ensure the capacity for timely communications in support of security, situational awareness, and operations by any and all means available, among and between affected communities in the impact area and all response forces.

Critical Tasks:

1. Ensure the capacity to communicate with both the emergency response community and the affected populations and establish interoperable voice and data communications between Federal, tribal, state, and local first responders.
2. Re-establish sufficient communications infrastructure within the affected areas to support ongoing life-sustaining activities, provide basic human needs, and transition to recovery.
3. Re-establish critical information networks, including cybersecurity information sharing networks, in order to inform situational awareness, enable incident response, and support the resiliency of key systems.

Capability, Objectives, and Critical Tasks



Logistics and Supply Chain Management

Objective: Deliver essential commodities, equipment, and services in support of impacted communities and survivors, to include emergency power and fuel support, as well as the coordination of access to community staples. Synchronize logistics capabilities and enable the restoration of impacted supply chains.

Critical Tasks:

1. Mobilize and deliver governmental, nongovernmental, and private sector resources to save lives, sustain lives, meet basic human needs, stabilize the incident, and transition to recovery, to include moving and delivering resources and services to meet the needs of disaster survivors.
2. Enhance public and private resource and services support for an affected area.

Capability, Objectives, and Critical Tasks



Public Health, Healthcare, and Emergency Medical Services

Objective: Provide lifesaving medical treatment via Emergency Medical Services and related operations and avoid additional disease and injury by providing targeted public health, medical, and behavioral health support, and products to all affected populations.

Critical Tasks:

1. Deliver medical countermeasures to exposed populations.
2. Complete triage and initial stabilization of casualties and begin definitive care for those likely to survive their injuries and illness.
3. Return medical surge resources to pre-incident levels, complete health assessments, and identify recovery processes.

Capability, Objectives, and Critical Tasks



Situational Assessment

Objective: Provide all decision makers with decision-relevant information regarding the nature and extent of the hazard, any cascading effects, and the status of the response.

Critical Tasks:

1. Deliver information sufficient to inform decision making regarding immediate lifesaving and life-sustaining activities and engage governmental, private, and civic sector resources within and outside of the affected area to meet basic human needs and stabilize the incident.
2. Deliver enhanced information to reinforce ongoing lifesaving and life-sustaining activities, and engage governmental, private, and civic sector resources within and outside of the affected area to meet basic human needs, stabilize the incident, and transition to recovery.

Integration: Response Core Capabilities and Mission Areas

The core capabilities depend on each other to succeed. Let's review some examples to explain how:

- Organizations involved in providing Mass-Care Services often rely on resources and functions from organizations that provide Critical Transportation or Logistics and Supply Chain Management for commodities distribution.
- Public Information and Warning provides for messaging, translators, and interpreters, as well as Operational Communications for reporting and communication that allows shelters to stay in touch with operations centers.

Also, there are points where the response mission area crosses with other mission areas including:

- [Prevention](#)
- [Protection](#)
- [Mitigation](#)
- [Recovery](#)

[Select this link to view the National Planning Frameworks.](http://www.fema.gov/national-planning-frameworks) (www.fema.gov/national-planning-frameworks)

The Response mission area does not exist in a vacuum. For emergency management to be effective, all five mission areas must work together in an integrated fashion to achieve the goal of a safe, resilient Nation.

Now that you are familiar with the key coordination and operations support structures for response, let's look at how the Response mission area integrates with the other mission areas.

Effective emergency response requires that the coordinating structures for response be able to link to and share information with those in the other mission areas.

Establishing close working relationships, lines of communication, and coordination protocols between Protection, Prevention, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery organizations facilitates this process.

Prevention

Response organizations coordinate with those responsible for preventing imminent acts of terrorism or an attack (e.g., a significant cyber incident causing cascading and/or physical impacts) to understand both potential and specific threats and to prepare accordingly by creating plans for general threats and crisis action plans for credible threats.

- When an incident may have been caused by an intentional act, response organizations coordinate closely with law enforcement agencies to attribute the cause and prevent additional follow-on instances.
- Response agencies coordinate with law enforcement agencies to enable themselves to prepare, train, stage, and plan for the delivery of consequence management capabilities.
- Response agencies must coordinate with the owners of properties impacted by a particular incident who have the first responsibility for prevention, protection, and response.

Protection

Protection of critical infrastructure systems and implementation of plans for the rapid restoration of commercial activities and critical infrastructure operations are crucial aspects of the protection mission area. Many of the 16 critical infrastructure sectors¹⁹ within the protection mission area are also represented in the response mission area. The existing infrastructure plans and coordination mechanisms (e.g., sector-specific agencies and councils) provide strong foundations for strengthening incident response plans and capabilities. As part of the National Infrastructure Protection Plan, public and private sector partners in each of the 16 critical infrastructure sectors and agencies at all levels of government have developed and maintain sector-specific plans that focus on the unique operating conditions and risk landscape within that sector.

- Response agencies should utilize the sector coordination constructs (e.g., sector-specific agencies or sector coordinating councils) to elicit advice and recommendations regarding systemic vulnerabilities, cross-sector interdependencies, and sector-level challenges that could hinder restoration.
- Impacts to infrastructure may result in the need for consequence management (e.g., cyberattacks).

Mitigation

Effective mitigation efforts directly limit the impact of an emergency, disaster, or attack on community lifelines and systems, thereby reducing the required scale of response capabilities needed for an incident. The National Mitigation Investment Strategy recommends actions for all national stakeholders involved in disaster resilience to reduce risks to and impacts on lifelines, buildings, infrastructure, ecosystems, and cultural, historic, and natural resources. Planning, response, and regulatory organizations coordinate to reduce risks to critical infrastructure by evaluating potential threats, encouraging resiliency in infrastructure, and planning for redundancy in services. These organizations often have information and the data about hazards and risks that can be shared with response personnel to improve response planning and execution.

- Response operations should leverage those organizations with relevant risk management equities to ascertain threats and hazards, understand vulnerabilities, and predict lifeline and survivor impacts or needs to enable more expedient response operations.
- Opportunities to lessen the risks of future hazards are an important element to building national resilience.

Recovery

As response activities are underway, recovery operations must begin. Applying the community lifelines construct enables response officials to more effectively identify the requirements and sequence steps in the recovery process, including activities that support the economy, by focusing them on vital areas of community support. This includes providing essential public health and safety services; restoring interrupted utility and other essential services; reestablishing transportation routes and other infrastructure (e.g., agriculture), providing food, water, and shelter for those displaced by an incident; protecting natural and cultural resources and ensuring environmental compliance; ensuring equal access to services in accordance with applicable laws; reunifying children, adults, and household pets who have been separated from their families/guardians; and reopening schools and child care centers.

- Response organizations are responsible for setting the conditions that foster a quick and seamless integration of recovery operations and establish conditions that enable a community's recovery.
- Effective recovery support also depends on successful information sharing between the ESFs and the six Recovery Support Functions (RSF) under the National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF).
- Recovery programs—including sheltering and housing, volunteer organization coordination, donations management, small business and agriculture assistance or loans, as well as other disaster assistance—often support response and recovery objectives.

Relationship to the Core Capabilities

So, how do Core Capabilities relate to community lifelines?

Think of it this way:

Lifelines = Ends (the results that Responders are trying to accomplish)

Core Capabilities = Ways (methods that the Responders will use to achieve the ends)

To state it another way, Responders deliver the Response Core Capabilities in order to stabilize the community lifelines. Unit 4 will discuss Emergency Support Functions (**ESFs**) and other constructs as the **Means** (source of resources) to deliver the core capabilities.

The table below shows which of the core capabilities are related to each of community lifelines.

Safety and Security	Food, Water, Shelter	Energy (Power and Fuel)	Health and Medical	Communications	Transportation	Hazardous Materials
Related Core Capabilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Public Information and Warning • Operational Coordination • Situational Assessment • Environmental Response/Health • Fire Management and Suppression • On-Scene Security, Protection, and Law Enforcement • Mass Search and Rescue Operations • Public Health, Healthcare, and Emergency Medical Services 	Related Core Capabilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Public Information and Warning • Operational Coordination • Situational Assessment • Logistics and Supply Chain Management • Mass Care Services 	Related Core Capabilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Public Information and Warning • Operational Coordination • Situational Assessment • Logistics and Supply Chain Management 	Related Core Capabilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Public Information and Warning • Operational Coordination • Situational Assessment • Fatality Management Services • Environmental Response/Health • Logistics and Supply Chain Management • Mass Care Services • Public Health, Healthcare, and Emergency Medical Services 	Related Core Capabilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Public Information and Warning • Operational Coordination • Situational Assessment • Operational Communications 	Related Core Capabilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Public Information and Warning • Operational Coordination • Situational Assessment • Infrastructure Systems • Critical Transportation 	Related Core Capabilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Public Information and Warning • Operational Coordination • Situational Assessment • Environmental Response

Learning More About Lifelines

To learn more about the community lifelines and their application in response operations and planning, please visit [fema.gov/lifelines](https://www.fema.gov/lifelines).

Lesson Summary

In this lesson, you've learned about how the National Response Framework strengthens, organizes, and coordinates response actions across the entire response community as a means of delivering the core response capabilities to stabilize community lifelines.

The next lesson presents coordinating structures used in nationwide response.

Lesson Overview

This lesson explains the coordinating structures used to organize and implement response actions.

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to describe the coordinating structures and operational planning used to support emergencies across different government levels. In addition, describe how the 7 Community Lifelines reduces threats to public health and safety, or economic security.

Purpose of Coordinating Structures

Operational coordination occurs across various government levels and consists of actions and activities that enable decision makers to determine appropriate courses of action and provide oversight for all types of incidents, including complex homeland security operations, to achieve unity of effort and effective outcomes.

Coordinating structures help organize and measure the whole community's capabilities in order to:

- Address the requirements of the Response mission area
- Facilitate problem solving
- Improve access to response resources
- Foster coordination prior to and following an incident

The coordinating structures used to organize response efforts must be scalable, flexible, and adaptable so they can be partially or fully implemented to allow for delivery of the exact resources that are needed, and with a level of coordination appropriate to each incident.

Private Sector Coordinating Structures and Operational Planning

When catastrophic incidents put a premium on the restoration of complex supply chains (especially for essential products and services needed for response efforts and stabilization of the economy), private sector coordination and assets are vital for public health and safety, the economy, and national security. The private sector can also help government agencies prioritize support missions (e.g., debris removal) to facilitate business and infrastructure response operations.

Private-Sector Coordinating Structures

For the private sector, coordinating structures may be an outgrowth of business organizations based on shared geography or common function, such as banking, supply chain management, transportation, or venue management. Examples of such coordinating structures include:

- Business Emergency Operations Centers
- Industry trade groups
- Private-sector information and intelligence centers

These organizations support collaboration within the private sector, coordinate with NGOs, and may serve as a conduit to local, state, and tribal government coordinating structures.

Local Coordinating Structures and Operational Planning

At the local level, coordinating structures are usually composed of entities within specific functional areas, such as public works, law enforcement, emergency medical services, and fire departments. On-scene integration among these structures may occur at incident command posts (ICPs) and more frequently at one or more local EOCs.

Emergency responders at all levels of government use NIMS and ICS structures to manage and support response operations.

Local Coordinating Structure Audio Transcript

Local jurisdictions employ a variety of coordinating structures to help identify risks, establish relationships, organize, and build capabilities.

These structures organize and integrate their capabilities and resources with neighboring jurisdictions, the state, the private sector, and Nongovernmental Organizations or NGOs.

Because of local differences, the coordinating structures at this level vary. Examples of local response coordinating structures include local planning committees, community emergency response teams, and local chapters of national associations.

Local Emergency Operations Center

If the local Incident Commander determines that additional resources or capabilities are needed, requirements are relayed to the local emergency operations center (EOC)—the physical location where multiagency coordination typically occurs and where a variety of local coordinating structures come together to solve problems.

The EOC:

- Helps form shared situational awareness of the incident
- Relieves on-scene command of the burden of external coordination
- Secures additional resources to help meet response requirements

At the local level, Incident Management coordination also includes Multiagency Coordination Groups (MAC Groups).

[Click here for more information on EOCs.](#)

[Click here for more information on MAC Groups.](#)

Multiagency coordination in EOCs is not limited to government employee participants. The EOC can encourage participation by many elements of the community including:

- The private sector
- NGOs
- Academia
- Associations
- Racial and ethnic organizations
- Access and functional needs experts

These community elements, in turn, often maintain their own structures, such as nongovernmental or private sector EOCs.

Multiagency Coordination Groups

Incident management may also involve Multiagency Coordination Groups (MAC Groups).

- A MAC Group is composed of senior officials, such as agency administrators, executives, or their designees, who are authorized to represent or commit agency resources and funds in support of incident activities.
- A MAC Group acts as an executive or policy-level body during incidents, supporting resource prioritization and allocation, and enabling decision making among elected and appointed officials and those responsible for managing the incident.
- In some communities and jurisdictions, MAC Groups are located at or near EOCs in order to authorize additional resources, approve emergency authorities, and provide guidance on emerging issues.

State Coordinating Structures and Operational Planning

While the local incident command structure directs on-scene incident management activities and maintains command and control of on-scene incident operations, state EOCs are activated as necessary to support local EOCs and to help ensure that responders have the resources they need to conduct response activities.

State, tribal, territorial, and insular area EOCs also provide a common location for coordination of state/tribal/territorial/insular area—and in some cases, federal—support to local EOCs and/or incident personnel.

The Tribal Assistance Coordination Group (TAC-G) is a MAC Group that assists federally recognized tribes during emergencies and disasters and provides information and technical assistance for tribal emergency management programs in coordination with federal partners.

State, Tribal, and Territorial Coordinating Structures

The coordinating structures at the state, tribal, and territorial levels also vary, depending on factors such as geography, population, industry, and the capabilities of the local jurisdictions.

The coordinating structures are designed to build on the capabilities and resources of partners from across the whole community—some of whom may also participate in local or regional coordinating structures. Many states create independent committees or councils focused on specific functions.

Introduction to Federal Operations Centers

When an incident occurs that exceeds, or is anticipated to exceed, local or state resources—or when an incident is managed by Federal departments or agencies acting under their own authorities—the Federal Government may use the management structures described within the National Response Framework.

Additionally, the Federal Government may use supplementary or complementary plans to involve all necessary department and agency resources to organize the Federal response and ensure coordination among all response partners.

Many of the arrangements by which departments and agencies participate are defined in the ESF Annexes, coordinated through prescribed mission assignments in a Stafford Act response, formalized in interagency agreements, or described in the National Response Framework supplementary plans.

The following sections describe Federal support operations center.

Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) Integrated Operations Coordination Center (CIOCC)

The CIOCC is composed of the National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center, the National Infrastructure Coordinating Center, and the National Coordinating Center for Communications. It is the focal point for federal partners, the private sector, and local, state, tribal, and territorial governments to obtain situational awareness, technical assistance, and integrated, actionable information to secure and defend the Nation's cyber, physical, and communications infrastructure. The CIOCC operates around the clock to integrate, coordinate, and share risk and threat information with the critical infrastructure community, perform consequences analyses of incidents affecting critical infrastructure, inform decision making, provide technical expertise to address cyber threats and communications outages, and coordinate infrastructure-related support for broader federal response efforts.

National Operations Center

Most Cabinet-level departments and agencies have at least one Headquarters-level operations center.

A wide range of such centers maintain situational awareness within their functional areas and provide relevant information to the DHS National Operations Center (NOC).

[Select this link for more information about the NOC.](#)

National Response Coordination Center

One key component of the National Operations Center is the National Response Coordination Center (NRCC). The NRCC:

- Is FEMA's focal point for national resource coordination
- Provides overall emergency management coordination
- Conducts operational planning
- Deploys national-level teams
- Builds and maintains a common operating picture

[Select this link for additional information about the NRCC.](#)

Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC)

Each of FEMA's 10 regional offices maintains a Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC). An RRCC is a coordination center that expands to become an interagency facility in anticipation of a serious incident or immediately following an incident.

When activated, RRCCs are multiagency coordination centers primarily staffed with FEMA Regional staff and supported by activated ESFs.

Operating under the direction of the FEMA Regional Administrator, the staff within the RRCCs coordinates Federal Regional Response efforts and maintains connectivity with FEMA Headquarters and with state EOCs, state and major urban-area fusion centers, Federal Executive Boards, tribal governments and other Federal, tribal, and state operations and coordination centers that could contribute to the development of situational awareness.

Joint Field Office

Unified Coordination is typically directed from a Joint Field Office, or JFO.

A JFO is a temporary Federal facility that provides a central location for coordination of response efforts by the private sector, NGOs, and all levels of government.

Although the JFO uses an ICS structure, it does not manage on-scene operations. Rather, the JFO provides support to on-scene efforts.

The JFO provides a central location for the coordination of Federal, state, tribal, and local governments and private-sector and nongovernmental organizations with primary responsibility for Response and Recovery.

Federal Regional Facilities

Most Federal departments and agencies have regional or field offices that may participate with state and local governments in planning for incidents and provide response assets when an incident occurs in their jurisdiction.

In larger-scale incidents, these regional and field offices may provide the initial response assets with additional support being provided from other department and agency offices across the Nation.

Coordinating Structures in Support of Emergency Response Example

Regional Disability Integration Specialists (RDISs) provide technical training and assistance in non-Stafford Act events like papal visits, Super Bowl games, etc. Disability Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) advise about physical access in paths of travel, accessible egress for rapid evacuation, appropriate signage to alert people with disabilities to announcements, captioning, and American Sign Language interpreters to help make sure all citizens have equal access and equal participation.

Operations support and coordination help make sure that people controlling the event or incident have all the tools they need. RDISs will know about resources in their regions, in other regions, and throughout the nation, through tribal, local, regional, and statewide Core Advisory Group (CAG) networks and national disability partner organizations.

FEMA has the latitude to access any resources within the Federal Government under certain conditions and specific circumstances. Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) activities would be one example. Even in cases in which FEMA may not have authority to access resources directly, they may have awareness and be able to refer people in an operational coordination role to an entity that does have needed resources. An example could be air support for a state or Federal police operation.

Strategic Information and Operations Center (SIOC)

The SIOC acts as the FBI's worldwide Emergency Operations Center. The SIOC:

- Maintains situational awareness of criminal or terrorist threats, critical incidents, and crises--both foreign and domestic--regardless of cause or origin
- Provides FBI Headquarters executives, domestic field offices, and overseas legal attachés with timely notification and dissemination of strategic information

- Shares information and intelligence with other EOCs at all levels of government
- Provides a secure venue to support crisis management, special event monitoring, and significant operations
- Provides command, control, communications connectivity, and a common operating picture for managing FBI operational responses and assets anywhere in the world

In the event of a crisis, the SIOC establishes the Headquarters Command Post and develops connectivity to Field Command Posts and Joint Operations Centers.

Joint Operations Center (JOC)

In response to significant threats or incidents involving Federal crimes under the criminal jurisdiction of the United States, the FBI may establish a JOC, a regional multijurisdictional interagency investigative, intelligence, and operations center to lead and coordinate the law enforcement response, investigative operations, and related intelligence activities.

The JOC is led by an FBI On-Scene Commander and is supported by a Federal, state, local, territorial, and tribal command group and a consequence management group, as appropriate.

The JOC is the place from which the FBI leads and coordinates the law enforcement operational response, on-scene law enforcement, and related investigative and intelligence activities.

[Select this link for additional information about the JOC.](#)

Joint Operations Center (JOC)

Joint Operations Center (JOC). In response to terrorist threats, FBI will establish a Joint Operations Center for the purpose of managing the investigation and coordinating the law enforcement response to resolve terrorist threats or incidents. If the threat involves potential attacks in, or threats spanning, multiple geographic areas, then multiple JOCs may be established. The JOC is established by the FBI under the operational control of the Operations Section Chief (OSC) and acts as the focal point for the strategic management and direction of on-site activities, identification of state and local requirements and priorities, and coordination of the Federal counterterrorism response.

Additionally, the JOC will be augmented by outside agencies, including representatives from the Domestic Emergency Support Team (DEST), if deployed, who provide interagency technical expertise. The JOC is established to ensure inter-incident coordination and to organize multiple agencies and jurisdictions within an overall command and coordination structure. Representation within the JOC includes officials from local, state, and Federal agencies with specific roles in counterterrorism and consequence management.

National Military Command Center (NMCC)

The Department of Defense NMCC is the nation's focal point for continuous monitoring and coordination of worldwide military operations. It directly supports combatant commanders, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of Defense, and the President in the command of U.S. Armed Forces in peacetime contingencies and war.

The NMCC participates in a wide variety of activities, ranging from missile warning and attack assessment to management of peacetime operations such as Defense Support of Civil Authorities during national emergencies.

National Policy—The National Security Council

The National Security Council is the principal policy body for consideration of national security policy issues requiring Presidential determination. The National Security Council:

- Advises and assists the President in integrating all aspects of national security policy as it affects the United States.
- Is the President's principal means for coordinating Executive Branch departments and agencies in the development and implementation of national security policy.

Unified Coordination

Unified coordination is the term used to describe the primary state/tribal/territorial/insular area/federal incident management activities conducted at the incident level. Unified coordination is typically directed from a Joint Field Office (JFO), a temporary federal facility that provides a central location for coordination of response efforts.

The Unified Coordination Group (UCG) is composed of senior leaders representing state, tribal, territorial, insular area and federal interests and, in certain circumstances, local jurisdictions, the private sector, and NGOs.

Federal Interagency Operational Plans (FIOPs) describe how the Federal government aligns resources and delivers core capabilities to reach our shared National Preparedness Goal.

[Use this link to find out more about the Response FIOP.](#)

Federal Planning

These plans (one for each mission area) describe the concept of operations to integrate and synchronize existing national-level Federal capabilities to support local, state, tribal, territorial, insular-area, and Federal plans. Federal departments, agencies, coordinating structures, and

interagency partnerships should use the FIOPs as a guide for operational planning.

Planning Assumptions

The detailed planning factors for the Response FIOP focus on the impacts associated with a large-scale emergency or disaster that could occur anywhere within the United States, its territories, or insular areas, and that could result in a substantial number of fatalities and injuries, widespread property loss, and disruption of essential services across a large geographic area.

While the Response FIOP contains assumptions for each of the Response Core Capabilities, some of the overarching assumptions include the following:

- Multiple catastrophic incidents or attacks will occur with little or no warning.
- Incidents are typically managed at the lowest possible geographic, organizational, and jurisdictional levels.
- Incident management activities will be initiated and conducted using the principles contained in NIMS.
- The combined expertise and capabilities of government at all levels, the private sector, and NGOs will be required to respond to a catastrophic incident.

Operational Planning takes the operation from where it is with situational assessments to where it needs to go, according to the senior area official and/or the FCO. FEMA planners are a wealth of knowledge about local-area, national, and even international resources. FIOPs deal with Federal interagency planning, enabling FEMA to help jurisdictions identify supporting resources over which FEMA may not have control but which—through FEMA—jurisdictions may be able to access from other Federal agencies. In a recent disaster at a remote location, the area of impact was a small island that had limited resources. Using a concentric-circles approach, resources were identified on islands in successively broadening circles in the general direction of the U.S. mainland. This process enabled the needs to be met “locally,” resulting in significant savings to the federal, territorial, and local governments.

Unified Coordination Group

The Unified Coordination Group provides leadership within the Joint Field Office.

This group is comprised of senior leaders representing State and Federal interests, and in certain circumstances Tribal governments, Local jurisdictions, the private sector, or nongovernmental organizations.

This group also applies Unified Command principles to coordinating assistance being provided to support the Local, Tribal, and State Response.

ESF Definitions

Coordination of Federal incident response is accomplished through Emergency Support Functions (ESFs). ESFs are organized groups of government and private-sector entities that provide personnel, supplies, facilities, and equipment.

Federal ESFs bring together the capabilities of Federal departments and agencies and other national-level assets that work together to deliver core capabilities and support an effective response.

Communities, states, tribal governments, regions, and other Federal departments and agencies may also use the ESF structure, and they are encouraged to work closely with Federal ESFs at the incident, regional, or Headquarters levels if they are activated.

Watch the following video to learn more about ESFs.

Emergency Support Functions: Overview

Emergency Support Functions, or ESFs, are used by the Federal Government and many States as the primary coordinating structures for building, sustaining, and delivering the response core capabilities.

ESFs are not based on the capabilities of a single department or agency, and the functions for which they are responsible cannot be accomplished by any single department or agency. Rather, Federal ESFs bring together the capabilities of Federal departments and agencies and other national-level assets that work together to deliver core capabilities and support an effective response.

ESFs are organized into fourteen functional areas such as transportation, public works and engineering, firefighting, search and rescue, public health and medical services, agriculture and natural resources, and many more. ESFs may be selectively activated for both Stafford Act and non-Stafford Act incidents and are assigned to support headquarters, regional, and field activities.

Communities, States, tribal governments, regions, and other Federal departments and agencies may use the ESF structure, or they may employ other coordinating structures or partners appropriate to their location, threats, or authorities. Whatever structures are used, they are encouraged to work closely with Federal ESFs at the incident, regional, or headquarters levels if they are activated.

The ESF Annexes to the NRF describe the scope, policies, and concept of operations of each ESF. In addition, these annexes identify ESF coordinators, primary agencies, and support agencies. Let's take a closer look at each of these roles.

An ESF coordinator oversees the preparedness activities for a particular ESF and coordinates with its primary and support agencies.

An ESF primary agency is a Federal agency with significant authorities, roles, resources, or capabilities for a particular function within an ESF. During a Stafford Act incident, the ESF primary agency serves as a Federal executive agent under the Federal Coordinating Officer.

ESF support agencies are those entities with specific capabilities or resources that assist the primary agency in executing the mission of the ESF.

The Emergency Support Function Leaders Group, led by FEMA, is comprised of the Federal departments and agencies that are designated as coordinators for ESFs or coordinating agencies for other NRF annexes.

Throughout the year, ESFs plan and prepare with all participating organizations and form partnerships with the private sector and nongovernmental organizations. In doing so, Emergency Support Functions are a key element for building our national response capability.

ESF List

ESFs are not solely attributed to any one organization, nor are they mechanisms for executing an agency's statutory authorities.

Below is a list of Emergency Support Functions:

[ESF #1 Transportation](#)

[ESF #9 Search & Rescue](#)

[ESF #2 Communications](#)

[ESF #10 Oil & Hazardous Materials Response](#)

[ESF #3 Public Works & Engineering](#)

[ESF #11 Agriculture & Natural Resources](#)

[ESF #4 Firefighting](#)

[ESF #12 Energy](#)

[ESF #5 Information & Planning](#)

[ESF #13 Public Safety & Security](#)

[ESF #6 Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Temporary Housing & Human Assistance](#)

[ESF #14 Cross-Sector Business and Infrastructure](#)

[ESF #7 Logistics](#)

[ESF #15 External Affairs](#)

[ESF #8 Public Health & Medical Services](#)

ESF #1 Transportation

ESF Coordinator: Department of Transportation

Coordinates the support of management of transportation systems and infrastructure, the regulation of transportation, management of the Nation's airspace, and ensuring the safety and security of the national transportation system. Functions include but are not limited to the following:

- Transportation modes management and control;
- Transportation safety;
- Stabilization and reestablishment of transportation infrastructure;
- Movement restrictions; and
- Damage and impact assessment.

ESF #2 - Communications

ESF Coordinator: DHS/Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency

Coordinates government and industry efforts for the reestablishment and provision of critical communications infrastructure and services, facilitates the stabilization of systems and applications from malicious activity (e.g., cyber), and coordinates communications support to response efforts (e.g., emergency communication services and emergency alerts and telecommunications). Functions include but are not limited to the following:

- Coordination with telecommunications and information technology industries;
- Coordination of the reestablishment and provision of critical communications infrastructure;
- Protection, reestablishment, and sustainment of national cyber and information technology resources;
- Oversight of communications within the federal response structures; and
- Facilitation of the stabilization of systems and applications from cyber events.

ESF #3 - Public Works and Engineering

ESF Coordinator: DOD/U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Coordinates the capabilities and resources to facilitate the delivery of services, technical assistance, engineering expertise, construction management, and other support to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a disaster or an incident. Functions include but are not limited to the following: □

- Infrastructure protection and emergency repair; □
- Critical infrastructure reestablishment; □
- Engineering services and construction management; and □
- Emergency contracting support for life-saving and life-sustaining services.

ESF #4 - Firefighting

ESF Coordinator: USDA/U.S. Forest Service and DHS/FEMA/U.S. Fire Administration

Coordinates the support for the detection and suppression of fires. Functions include but are not limited to supporting wildland, rural, and urban firefighting operations.

ESF #5 - Information and Planning

ESF Coordinator: DHS/FEMA

Supports and facilitates multiagency planning and coordination for operations involving incidents requiring federal coordination. Functions include but are not limited to the following: □

- Deliberate and crisis action planning; and □
- Information collection, analysis, visualization and dissemination.

ESF #6 - Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Temporary Housing, and Human Services

ESF Coordinator: DHS/FEMA

Coordinates the delivery of mass care and emergency assistance. Functions include but are not limited to the following: □

- Mass care; □
- Emergency assistance; □
- Temporary housing; and □
- Human services.

ESF #7 - Logistics

ESF Coordinator: General Services Administration and DHS/FEMA

Coordinates comprehensive incident resource planning, management, and sustainment capability to meet the needs of disaster survivors and responders. Functions include but are not limited to the following: □

- Comprehensive national incident logistics planning, management, and sustainment capability; and □
- Resource support (e.g., facility space, office equipment and supplies, and contracting services).

ESF #8 - Public Health and Medical Services

ESF Coordinator: Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

Coordinates the mechanisms for assistance in response to an actual or potential public health and medical disaster or incident. Functions include but are not limited to the following: □ Public health; □

- Medical surge support, including patient movement; □
- Behavioral health services; □
- Mass fatality management; and □
- Veterinary, medical, and public health services

ESF #9 - Search and Rescue

ESF Coordinator: DHS/FEMA

Coordinates the rapid deployment of search and rescue resources to provide specialized life-saving assistance. Functions include but are not limited to the following:

- Structural collapse (urban) search and rescue;
- Maritime/coastal/waterborne search and rescue; and
- Land search and rescue.

ESF #10 - Oil and Hazardous Materials Response

ESF Coordinator: Environmental Protection Agency

Coordinates support in response to an actual or potential discharge and/or release of oil or hazardous materials. Functions include but are not limited to the following:

- Environmental assessment of the nature and extent of oil and hazardous materials contamination; and
- Environmental decontamination and cleanup, including buildings/structures and management of contaminated waste.

ESF #11 - Agriculture and Natural Resources

ESF Coordinator: Department of Agriculture

Coordinates a variety of functions designed to protect the Nation's food supply, respond to pest and disease incidents impacting agriculture, and protect natural and cultural resources. Functions include but are not limited to the following:

- Nutrition assistance;
- Agricultural disease and pest response;
- Technical expertise, coordination, and support of animal and agricultural emergency management;
- Meat, poultry, and processed egg products safety and defense; and
- Natural and cultural resources and historic properties protection.

ESF #12 - Energy

ESF Coordinator: Department of Energy

Facilitates the reestablishment of damaged energy systems and components, and provides technical expertise during an incident involving radiological/nuclear materials. Functions include but are not limited to the following:

- Energy infrastructure assessment, repair, and reestablishment;
- Energy industry utilities coordination; and
- Energy forecast.

ESF #13 - Public Safety and Security

ESF Coordinator: Department of Justice/Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives

Coordinates the integration of public safety and security capabilities and resources to support the full range of incident management activities. Functions include but are not limited to the following:

- Facility and resource security;
- Security planning and technical resource assistance;
- Public safety and security support; and
- Support to access, traffic, and crowd control.

ESF #14 - Cross-Sector Business and Infrastructure

ESF Coordinator: DHS/Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency

Coordinates cross-sector operations with infrastructure owners and operators, businesses, and their government partners, with particular focus on actions taken by businesses and infrastructure owners and operators in one sector to assist other sectors to better prevent or mitigate cascading failures between them. Focuses particularly on those sectors not currently aligned to other ESFs (e.g., the Financial Services Sector). Functions include but are not limited to the following: □

- Assessment, analysis, and situational awareness of cross-sector challenges; and □
- Facilitates operational coordination with critical infrastructure sectors.

ESF #15 - External Affairs

ESF Coordinator: DHS

Coordinates the release of accurate, coordinated, timely, and accessible public information to affected audiences, including the government, media, NGOs, and the private sector. Works closely with state and local officials to ensure outreach to the whole community. Functions include but are not limited to the following: □

- Public affairs and the Joint Information Center; □
- Intergovernmental (local, state, tribal, territorial, nongovernmental, and private sector) affairs; and □
- Congressional affairs

More Information on ESFs

Emergency Support Function Annexes: Each ESF is described in an annex to the NRF which outlines the ESF's:

- Purpose
- Scope
- Relationship to the whole community
- Core capabilities and actions

Select this link to access the latest copies of the ESF Annexes. (<http://www.fema.gov/national-preparedness-resource-library>)

ESF Member Roles and Responsibilities: Within each ESF, an ESF coordinator, primary agency, and support agencies are designated. Overall leadership is provided by the Emergency Support Function Leaders Group. Select each role to access a description

- ESF coordinator
- Primary agency
- Support agencies
- Emergency Support Function Leaders Group

Select this link to access all information presented.

Federal ESF Activation

Departments and agencies supporting Federal ESFs may be selectively activated to support response activities for both Stafford Act and non-Stafford Act incidents. Not all incidents requiring Federal support result in the activation of ESFs.

When departments and agencies supporting Federal ESFs are activated, they may assign staff at Headquarters, regional, and incident levels.

Activation of the Federal Primary/Lead agencies that perform the emergency support functions are done through a work order called a Mission Assignment. More information on Mission Assignments can be accessed through the FEMA Emergency management Institute's Independent Study Course IS-293: Mission Assignment Overview (<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-293>).

National Response Framework Support Annexes: The National Response Framework Support Annexes describe other mechanisms by which support is organized among private-sector, NGO, and Federal partners. Federal departments and agencies designated as coordinating and cooperating agencies in the National Response Framework support annexes conduct a variety of activities, to include managing specific functions and missions and providing Federal support within their functional areas.

The Support Annexes include:

- Critical Infrastructure and Key Resources
- Financial Management
- International Coordination
- Private-Sector Coordination
- Public Affairs
- Tribal Relations
- Volunteer and Donations Management
- Worker Safety and Health

Federal Coordinating Structures Example

Primary factors for disability integration in national policy include:

- The Rehabilitation Act, which requires physical access, effective communication, and programmatic access to all goods, services, and information (in accessible formats) for all citizens.

- The Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA), which requires people with disabilities to be included in all aspects of emergency preparedness, response, and recovery.

DHS, through FEMA, is assigned disaster preparedness as a matter of national policy. All preparedness is to be disability-inclusive, according to PKEMRA.

The ESFs are outlined in the National Response Framework and contribute to a method of alignment at all levels of emergency management. Disability Core Advisory Groups fit neatly into all Federal coordinating structures and help ensure that the requirements of both the Rehabilitation Act and PKEMRA are met.

The CAG is an ICS-and National Response Framework-compliant methodology of including people with disabilities in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. Developing state and local CAGs and working with FEMA Regional Disability Specialists (RDISs) in regions continue to be the key principles.

ESF support agencies have specific capabilities or resources that support primary agencies in executing the mission of the ESF. The activities of support agencies typically include the following:

- Participating in planning for incident management, short-term recovery operations, transition to long-term recovery support operations, and the development of supporting operational plans, standard operating procedures, checklists, or other job aids;
- Providing input to periodic readiness assessments;
- Maintaining trained personnel to support interagency emergency response and support teams;
- Identifying new equipment or capabilities required to respond to new or emerging threats and hazards or to improve the ability to address existing threats; and
- Coordinating resources resulting from response mission assignments.

ESF primary agencies have significant authorities, roles, resources, and capabilities for a particular function within an ESF. Primary agencies are responsible for the following:

- Orchestrating support and strategy development within their functional area for the appropriate response core capabilities and other ESF missions;
- Notifying and requesting assistance from support agencies;
- Managing mission assignments (in Stafford Act incidents), and coordinating with support agencies, as well as appropriate state officials, operation centers, and other stakeholders;
- Coordinating resources resulting from mission assignments;
- Working with all types of organizations to maximize the use of all available resources;
- Monitoring progress in delivering core capability and other ESF missions, and providing that information as part of situational and periodic readiness or preparedness assessments;
- Planning for incident management, short-term recovery operations, and transition to long-term recovery support operations;
- Maintaining trained personnel to support interagency emergency response and support teams;
- Identifying new equipment or capabilities required to prevent or respond to new or emerging threats and hazards or to validate and improve capabilities to address changing risks; and
- Promoting physical accessibility, programmatic inclusion, and effective communication for the whole community, including individuals with disabilities.

Federal ESF coordinators oversee the preparedness activities for a particular ESF and coordinate with its primary and support agencies. Responsibilities of the ESF coordinator include the following during response:

- Maintaining contact with ESF primary and support agencies through conference calls, meetings, training activities, and exercises;
- Monitoring the ESF's progress in delivering the core capabilities in an effort to stabilize the incident;
- Coordinating efforts with corresponding private sector, NGO, and federal partners;
- Ensuring the ESF is engaged in appropriate planning and preparedness activities;
- Sharing information and coordinating across the spectrum of primary and support agencies.

Community Lifelines Means, Ways, Ends

The interrelationship of Emergency Support Functions (ESF), Core Capabilities, and lifelines can be thought of in terms of means, ways, and ends.

Means: ESFs and other organizing bodies—*the means*—are the way we organize across departments and agencies, community organizations, and industries to enhance coordination and integration to deliver the Response Core Capabilities. Through these ESFs, government and private-sector entities provide the personnel, supplies, facilities, and equipment needed for Response.

Ways: Response Core Capabilities describe the grouping of response actions—*the ways*—that can be taken to stabilize and re-establish the lifelines. FEMA executes Lines of Effort (LOE) to operationalize the Core Capabilities (the ways) for response and recovery planning and operations.

Ends: Lifelines describe the critical services within a community that must be stabilized or re-established—*the ends*—to alleviate threats to life and property.

[Click here for more information on the Lifelines Toolkit.](http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/177222) (www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/177222)

[Click here for more information on integrating Lifelines into Mission Areas.](#)

Integration Among Mission Areas

The Response mission area does not exist in a vacuum. For emergency management to be effective, all five mission areas must work together in an integrated fashion to achieve the goal of a safe, resilient Nation.

Now that you are familiar with the key coordination and operations support structures for response, let's look at how the Response mission area integrates with the other mission areas.

Effective emergency response requires that the coordinating structures for response be able to link to and share information with those in the other mission areas.

Establishing close working relationships, lines of communication, and coordination protocols between Protection, Prevention, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery organizations facilitates this process.

Examples of Response mission-area coordinating structures cooperating with other mission-area assets include:

- Coordinating with Prevention and Protection mission-area structures to share information
- Coordinating with Protection mission-area structures in the wake of an incident to ensure that communities and emergency responders have the protection needed to perform their jobs
- Coordinating anticipatory Response mission-area activities with the Mitigation and Recovery mission activities
- Although they are generally considered to be Prevention- or Protection-focused organizations, the various state and major urban-area fusion centers are examples of coordinating structures whose utility spans mission areas. The collection, analysis, and dissemination of information by the fusion centers can inform response activities through information sharing and operational coordination efforts.

Because of the natural relationship between response and recovery efforts and the fact that response and recovery activities often occur simultaneously, the responsibilities of some ESFs correspond with or transition to the responsibilities of Recovery Support Functions (RSF), the Recovery mission-area coordinating structures defined in the National Disaster Recovery Framework.

The RSFs frequently build on the ESF capabilities and short-term recovery efforts applied by the ESFs to meet basic human needs, in order to integrate short-term recovery efforts with intermediate and long-term recovery needs.

The relationships and integration among the ESFs and the coordinating structures of other mission areas are detailed in the Federal Interagency Operational Plans (FIOPs).



ESF and Community Lifelines

Example actions that an ESF may take in support of stabilizing the Health and Medical Lifeline during incident response operations:

ESF	Example Supporting Actions or Capabilities
ESF #1 Transportation	Coordinate the opening of roads and manage aviation airspace for access to health and medical facilities or services.
ESF #2 Communications	Provide and enable contingency communications required at health and medical facilities.
ESF #3 Public Works & Engineering	Install generators and provide other temporary emergency power sources for health and medical facilities.
ESF #4 Firefighting	Coordinates federal firefighting activities and supports resource requests for public health and medical facilities and teams.
ESF #5 Information & Planning	Develop coordinated interagency crisis action plans addressing health and medical issues.
ESF #6 Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Temporary Housing, & Human Assistance	Integrate voluntary agency and other partner support, including other federal agencies and the private sector, to resource health and medical services and supplies.

ESF #7 Logistics	Provide logistics support for moving meals, water, or other commodities.
ESF #8 Public Health & Medical Services	Provide health and medical support to communities, and coordinate across capabilities of partner agencies.
ESF #9 Search & Rescue	Conduct initial health and medical needs assessments.
ESF #10 Oil & Hazardous Materials Response	Monitor air quality near health and medical facilities in close proximity to the incident area.
ESF #11 Agriculture & Natural Resources	Coordinate with health and medical entities to address incidents of zoonotic disease.
ESF #12 Energy	Coordinate power restoration efforts for health and medical facilities or power-dependent medical populations.
ESF #13 Public Safety & Security	Provide public safety needed security at health and medical facilities or mobile teams delivering services.
ESF #14 Cross-Sector Business and Infrastructure	Be informed of and assess cascading impacts of health or medical infrastructure or service disruptions, and deconflict or prioritize cross-sector requirements.
ESF #15 External Affairs	Conduct public messaging on the status of available health and medical services or public health risks.

Conclusion

The National Response Framework (NRF) provides foundational emergency management doctrine for how the Nation responds to all types of incidents. The NRF is built on scalable, flexible, and adaptable concepts.

The whole community should be engaged in examining and implementing the strategy and doctrine contained in the NRF, considering both current and future requirements in the process. Remember, Whole Community includes: The private sector; NGOs; local, state, tribal, territorial, and insular area governments; and the Federal Government, as well as other response entities.

The whole community remains firm in its commitment to safeguard itself against its greatest risks, now and in the future. Through whole community engagement, the Nation will continue to improve its preparedness to face all emergencies or disaster challenges that may unfold.

[Select this link to access National Preparedness Resource Library.](https://www.fema.gov/national-preparedness-resource-library) (https://www.fema.gov/national-preparedness-resource-library)

Course Completion

You have now completed all of the lessons. Prior to taking the examination, we recommend that you:

1. Access and print a summary of the course contents.
2. Review the [National Response Framework base document](https://www.fema.gov/national-planning-frameworks) (https://www.fema.gov/national-planning-frameworks).

Course Summary

In this course, you've learned that the National Response Framework is a guide that details how the nation conducts all-hazards response and that it:

- Describes how to manage all-hazards responses for all levels.
- Built on scalable, flexible, and adaptable concepts identified in the National Incident Management System (NIMS).
- Describes the actions to save lives, protect property and the environment, stabilize communities, and meet basic human needs following an incident.
- Describes core capabilities for response and actions required to deliver those capabilities.
- Explains how the seven Community Lifelines reduce threats to public health and safety, the economy, and security.