



Regional Emergency Support Function #15 Donations and Volunteer Management

Regional Coordinating Organizations

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

Local Coordinating Jurisdictions

Alexandria
Arlington County
Bowie
College Park
District of Columbia
Fairfax
Fairfax County
Falls Church
Frederick County
Gaithersburg
Greenbelt
Loudoun County
Montgomery County
Prince George's County
Prince William County
Rockville
Takoma Park

State Coordinating Agencies

District of Columbia Emergency Management Agency
District of Columbia Commission of National and Community Service
Maryland Emergency Management Agency
Virginia Department of Emergency Management

Federal Coordinating Agencies

Federal Emergency Management Agency Region III–Voluntary Agency Liaison
The American Legion

Regional Coordinating Private and Volunteer Organizations

District of Columbia Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters
Maryland Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters
Virginia Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters
National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters
American Red Cross Washington Metropolitan Consortium
American Red Cross Frederick County Chapter
Greater Washington Board of Trade

I. Introduction

A. Purpose

Regional Emergency Support Function (R-ESF) #15—Donations and Volunteer Management, facilitates the communication and coordination among regional jurisdictions and agencies regarding the need for, and availability of, donations and volunteer services before, during, and after a regional incident or regional emergency.

B. Scope

R-ESF # 15 focuses on activities in response to the disruption of resource availability that would require communication and coordination among regional partners providing donations and/or volunteer support.

1. Communication and coordination concerning donations and volunteer availability and management may be conducted as separate or joint functions, as dictated by the regional incident or regional emergency.
2. R-ESF #15 will work within existing channels of communication to provide an efficient and effective response before, during, and after any regional incident or regional emergency. The system of local volunteer organizations that comprise R-ESF #15 will use existing dissemination methods to inform those involved in the communication and coordination activities. In conjunction with regional agencies and jurisdictions, the lateral communication structure and a series of liaisons will facilitate regional communication and coordination under R-ESF #15.

II. Policies

- A.** R-ESF #15 will not usurp or override the policies of any federal agency, state government, local government, or jurisdiction.
- B.** R-ESF #15 will not usurp or override any memoranda of understanding (MOUs) that exist between an organization and any federal agency, state government, local government, or jurisdiction.
- C.** Jurisdictions will respect existing contractual agreements so that there will not be competition for resources that are already under contract to a jurisdiction.
- D.** The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) will facilitate coordination among member organizations and/or agencies to ensure that R-ESF #15 procedures are maintained and in concert with the stated missions and objectives of the Regional Emergency Coordination Plan (RECP).

- E.** R-ESF #15 will be used to collect information, communicate, and coordinate between regional organizations, agencies, and jurisdictions concerning donations and volunteer management, and to facilitate the coordination of planning, response, and evaluation activities before, during, and after a regional incident or regional emergency.
- F.** The Regional Incident Communication and Coordination System (RICCS) will be used as the communication and coordination system on the regional level among R-ESF #15 members.
- G.** R-ESF #15 organizations, agencies, and jurisdictions will communicate and coordinate information and activities that are within their area of expertise (i.e., unaffiliated volunteers) and within their operational capacity (i.e., warehousing donations).
- H.** Essential Elements of Information (EIs) will be collected by local organizations, agencies, or jurisdictions and reported through the RICCS.
- I.** As needed, R-ESF #15 will provide a liaison to R-ESF #5.
- J.** R-ESF #15 will collect information regarding donation needs and volunteer availability from regional coordinating organizations, agencies, and jurisdictions through the RICCS.
- K.** There will be close communication and coordination between R-ESF #6—Mass Care, R-ESF #11—Food, and R-ESF #15, as dictated by the regional event.
- L.** Before, during, and after a regional incident or regional emergency, R-ESF #15 will communicate with R-ESF #1—Transportation, R-ESF #3—Public Works and Engineering, R-ESF #5—Information Planning, R-ESF #6—Mass Care, R-ESF #7—Resource Support, R-ESF #11—Food, R-ESF #13—Law Enforcement, and R-ESF #14—Media Relations and Community Outreach, as dictated by the regional event.
- M.** Communication with R-ESF #14—Media Relations and Community Outreach will help coordinate public donations in an effort to reduce redundancy and excess from unsolicited donations and provide information to the public on the need for and “collection” stations of affiliated and unaffiliated volunteers. R-ESF #14 will also assist in channeling unsolicited volunteers to best meet, or balance, the needs of the emergency.

III. Situation

A. Regional Emergency Condition

A regional emergency may result from a significant natural or man-made disaster, a technological emergency, power disruptions, or any other regional emergency that causes extensive damage. A regional emergency could create short, or long-term impacts on resource availability throughout the region, placing a significant demand on R-ESF #15 donations and volunteer resources. Regional emergencies may cause the need for long-term donations assistance across the region, while others may require a quick response. Any regional emergency will require communication of donation needs, volunteer service availability, and the coordination of related R-ESF #15 activities to plan for or provide an efficient and effective regional response.

B. Planning Assumptions

1. Regional communication and coordination activities before, during, and after a regional incident or regional emergency will eliminate redundancy and facilitate an efficient and effective response.
2. Agencies and organizations under R-ESF #15 will perform tasks under their own authority, as applicable, and coordinate these tasks under the RECP.
3. R-ESF #15 public and private organizations, agencies, and jurisdictions will focus on the communication and coordination of donations and volunteer management throughout the region to ensure efficient and effective response before, during, and after a regional incident or regional emergency.
4. The following emergency conditions may exist:

- Localized emergency requiring resource supplementation through R-ESF #15;
- Emergency in two or more jurisdictions;
- Region-wide emergency of any scale—short-term or long-term;
- Emergencies specific to certain economic or demographic groups of any scale and of any origin;
- An emergency related to the public or private availability of food, household supplies, clothing, etc.;
- Any other condition that would require the emergency transportation or distribution of donations (i.e., food, household supplies, pet supplies, clothing) and/or volunteer services.

5. The size and scope of a regional incident or regional emergency will dictate the duration of R-ESF #15 activities, the relevant EEIs, and the amount of communication and coordination among regional partners necessary to achieve an efficient and effective response to any regional event.
6. Under R-ESF #15, communication and coordination activities for the management of donations and volunteers may be conducted as separate or joint functions, as dictated by the regional incident or regional emergency.

IV. Concept of Coordination

A. General

1. R-ESF #15 members will engage in planning, training, and evaluation activities (e.g. discussions, focus groups) to develop relationships and analyze potential donations and volunteer management issues and methods before, during, and after a regional incident or regional emergency.
2. Before, during, and after a regional incident or regional emergency, the organizations, agencies and jurisdictions that comprise R-ESF #15 will, while executing their respective responsibilities and authorities within their individual operation plans, communicate and coordinate under the RECP.
3. Information will be collected at the local level through existing channels of communication as determined by standard operating procedures and will be relayed to R-ESF #15 through the RICCS.
4. In order to augment existing communication, R-ESF #15 will collect local information regarding donation needs and volunteer availability, and will provide this information to regional organizations, agencies, and jurisdictions through the RICCS.
5. Before, during, and after a regional incident or emergency, R-ESF #15 will provide information for overall situation assessments in order to facilitate communication and coordination among R-ESFs. R-ESF #15 will provide a liaison to R-ESF #5 as needed.
6. As dictated by the regional incident or regional emergency, R-ESF #15 will coordinate donations and volunteer management functions with other R-ESFs. Coordination may include, but is not limited to:

R-ESF #1—Transportation

- o Coordination of the transportation of donations
- o Coordination of the transportation of volunteers

R-ESF #3—Public Works and Engineering

- o Coordination of providing potable water to volunteers

R-ESF #5—Information Planning

- o Coordination and communication with RICCS

R-ESF #6—Mass Care

- o Coordination of donations for displaced persons within the impacted area
- o Coordination of volunteers, as needed

R-ESF #7—Resource Support

- o Coordination of incoming resources via donations

R-ESF #11—Food

- o Coordination of donated food stuffs for impacted areas
- o Coordination of feeding volunteers

R-ESF #13—Law Enforcement

- o Coordinate security at donations and volunteer management sites

R-ESF #14—Media Relations and Community Outreach

- o Coordination of message to public regarding donations
- o Coordination of message to public regarding volunteers

B. Organization

Communication and coordination activities for a regional event will begin with notification of an actual or possible implementation of the RECP through the RICCS. Local organizations, agencies, and jurisdictions involved in donations and/or volunteer-related response activities that have been activated under their respective operational plans will form R-ESF #15. R-ESF #15 organizations, agencies, and jurisdictions will utilize the appropriate communication and coordination activities as dictated by the regional event. The lead R-ESF #15 member from an affected jurisdiction is responsible for such actions as facilitating any conference calls.

C. Notification

Upon notification by any jurisdiction of a potential or actual regional incident or regional emergency requiring R-ESF #15 support, the RICCS will notify R-ESF #15 regional organizations, agencies, and jurisdictions

and will establish appropriate communication. If R-ESF #15 members are made aware of a potential or actual regional incident or regional emergency through other sources, they will notify the RICCS. The RICCS will be used to notify the organizations, agencies, and jurisdictions that need to supply a liaison. Communications will be made in accordance with RICCS protocols and in cooperation with R-ESF #2—Communications Infrastructure.

V. Responsibilities

A. R-ESF #15 Participating and Supporting Agencies and Organizations

The primary purpose of the R-ESF #15 is to facilitate communication and coordination among jurisdictions and private organizations before, during, and after actual or potential regional emergencies. Local responders are to report emergency events within their jurisdictions to their respective authorities through existing standard operating procedures. Participating R-ESF #15 organizations and/or agencies are responsible for gathering information about where donations and volunteer resources might be needed to supplement a regional emergency response. This information exchange is to be transmitted through the RICCS. EEIs have been determined as the minimum essential information categories to satisfy coordination needs among the R-ESF #15 agencies.

B. Essential Elements of Information

The primary purpose of the RICCS is to facilitate the exchange of information among coordinating agencies during a regional event. EEIs have been determined as the minimum essential elements of information to satisfy coordination needs among the R-ESFs. In the event of a regional incident or regional emergency, R-ESF #15 organizations, agencies, and jurisdictions will be able to exchange EEIs through the RICCS. EEIs include, but are not limited to:

- Status of transportation system and facilities;
- Status of food supply and distribution schedule;
- Location of useable mass care facilities, including shelters and feeding stations;
- Sources of donations;
- Donations needed;
- Availability of medical and first aid support;
- Status of bulk distribution networks;
- Evacuation locations and routes;
- Location of hazardous areas;
- Status of volunteer organizations and health professionals;
- Status of Family Well-Being Inquiry System;

Estimated time for return to normal operations and for people to return home/work;
Status of potable water supply;
Status of communications network;
Location of the incident or regional emergency;
Demographics of the area (language and/or cultural barriers);
Jurisdictions involved;
Socio-economic impacts;
Overall priorities (immediate need);
Status of resources, personnel, and facilities;
Status of efforts under the local, state, or federal emergency operations plans;
Credentials and certifications of affiliated and non-affiliated volunteers;
Volunteer organizations' areas of expertise;
Liability status of active and potential volunteers;
Receiving/collection points;
Security controls;
Logistical problems;
Structural areas impacted or out of commission; and
Prioritization of service/deliveries.

VI. Preparedness Cycle

The Preparedness Cycle is a means of ensuring a high level of readiness for R-ESF #15 and the RECP through continuous improvement in the plans and procedures. The cycle begins with the sound planning practices, followed by training of personnel who will engage in executing those plans. When personnel have been trained, plans and procedures are tested through exercises or simulations designed to check planning assumptions against the scenarios. The performance of the respective organizations is evaluated as a means of refining the plans, and the cycle repeats. R-ESF #15 and COG are responsible for maintaining the preparedness cycle.

A. Planning

The Donations and Volunteer regional clusters, under R-ESF #15, are responsible for coordinating planning under R-ESF #15, including the review and recommending revisions of R-ESF #15. All participating Donations and volunteer management supporting agencies and organizations will contribute, in some capacity, to the planning of R-ESF #15.

B. Training

Ongoing and scheduled training related to RECP and R-ESF #15 responsibilities will be developed and carried out.

C. Exercises

In order for the RECP to be effective, a series of regional simulations and/or exercises will be conducted on a regularly scheduled basis. This exercise series includes of tabletop exercises, functional communications and coordination drills, and field exercises conducted by COG or other organizations.

D. Evaluation

In order to ensure continuous improvement in the coordination of donation supplies and resources, and volunteer availability under R-ESF #15 and the RECP, the plans, policies and procedures that support operational proficiency are evaluated through real-world experience and exercises.

E. Corrective Action

Lessons learned from exercises and real world experiences will be captured in a corrective action system and the issues tracked to ensure that they are resolved and incorporated into plan revisions as appropriate.

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