

GEORGIA FORESTRY
COMMISSION



Emergency Support Function 4 (Firefighting) Annex
to Georgia Emergency Operations Plan

2023

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Record of Change

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2	2/8/2020	3.3 Support Agency Georgia Air Operations Branch added with description to reflect Cover Page	2/8/2020	Ken Parker
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Record of Distribution

Plan #	Office/Department	Representative	Signature
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Emergency Support Function (ESF) 4 Firefighting plan is to serve as the mechanism to provide state support to local jurisdictions with fire suppression operations to include rural, wild land and urban fires resulting from incidents occurring in conjunction with or as the cause of activation of the Georgia Emergency Operations Plan (GEOP).

This plan provides guidance to agencies within the State with a general concept of potential emergency assignments before, during, and following emergency situations. It also provides for the systematic integration of emergency resources when activated and does not replace county or local emergency operations plans or procedures.

1.2 Scope

All agencies listed within this ESF annex are expected to manage the State response regarding firefighting operations by coordinating and mobilizing firefighting resources in support of local wild land, rural and urban firefighting agencies. The State of Georgia does not possess nor control significant structural firefighting resources; therefore, most requests for structural firefighting resources are often filled by municipal firefighting organizations from within Georgia or in jurisdictions close to State borders and or other municipal firefighting organizations from neighboring states. In catastrophic disasters or incidents of such significance as to warrant the activation of the GEOP, requests for structural fire suppression support are coordinated through ESF-4 within the State Operations Center (SOC).

2.0 Concept of the Operation

2.1 General

The Primary Coordinator for ESF-4 is the Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC) and is responsible for the development, implementation, and administration of all State programs, as well as mutual aid agreements, State of Emergency, and/or Presidential Declaration assistance. Execution of the Federal/State agreement for fire management is shared with ESF-5 Emergency Management, Information and Planning.

GFC representatives as well as those of support agencies listed within this Annex, recognize the ongoing efforts of established firefighting organizations within Georgia regarding resource capability lists, mutual aid agreements, and mobilization systems. The processes and procedures developed through these efforts will be utilized when applicable in preparedness and response activities coordinated through ESF-4 in the SOC. ESF-4 acknowledges responsibility for situation assessment and determination of resource needs in firefighting activities lies primarily with the local emergency management officials and more importantly on scene Incident Commanders.

2.2 Plan Activation

Local governments are responsible for fire prevention and control within their designated jurisdictions and development of mutual aid agreements. GFC resources located within or assigned to county geographical areas are considered local first response resources for that political jurisdiction or geographical area, though they ultimately remain under the command and control of the GFC.

When local firefighting resources are overwhelmed and official requests for assistance are made of the State, ESF-4 will utilize both interstate and intrastate firefighting assistance and resources through statewide mutual aid agreements and the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC). This is not intended to discourage local counties and municipal fire departments from entering into mutual aid agreements before significant incidents and disasters occur. Incidents requiring firefighting resources are normally quickly changing situations involving life safety and property preservation operations that demand quick action. Mutual aid agreements at the municipal or county level can often facilitate faster responses for requests for fire suppression resources in a more efficient and effective manner.

In incidents calling for the activation of the GEOP, ESF-4 compiles damage assessment reports regarding areas impacted by fire. ESF-4 will also support local GFC Units, municipal, and state firefighting agencies in documenting, collecting, and processing all documents regarding reimbursable costs associated with response activities to natural and human-caused disasters resulting in State of Emergency or Presidential Disaster Declarations.

ESF-4 will report all activities to the ESF-5 Situation Unit for inclusion in the development of Incident Action Plans and Situational Reports. All public information reports regarding ESF-4 activities will be coordinated with ESF-15 External Affairs.

Requests for federal assistance in obtaining firefighting resources for incidents occurring within Georgia are coordinated through ESF-4 and ESF-5 in the SOC to the Regional Response Coordination Center or Joint Field Office. Requests for Georgia Department of Defense resources in support of fire suppression operations are coordinated by ESF-4 through ESF-5 to the Georgia Department of Defense's Joint Operations Center.

3.0 Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

3.1 ESF Coordinator

The GFC serves as the coordinator for ESF-4 and will assume primary responsibility for coordination among ESF-4 Primary and Support agencies.

3.2 Primary Agency Assignment of Responsibilities

Georgia Forestry Commission

- Serve as the coordinator for ESF-4.

- Coordinates all planning, preparedness, response and recovery activities regarding firefighting, and prevention.

3.3 Support Agency Assignment of Responsibilities

Georgia Air Operations Branch

- Coordinates and prioritizes all requests for assistance for fixed or rotary wing aircraft within the state during disasters.
- Establishes Aviation Support Operations Center as an extension of the SOC when relevant in coordination with local, state, and federal partners and in accordance with the Airspace Coordination Plan for Disasters plan.

Georgia Bureau of Investigation

- Investigative expertise and coordination in support of State emergency operations.

Georgia Department of Administrative Services

- Establishes pre-disaster contingency contracts for anticipated critical equipment, supplies and services needed to support State disaster response and recovery operations.
- Conducts emergency renting, purchasing, and contracting for critical equipment, supplies and services to support State response and recovery operations.

Georgia Department of Agriculture

- Provides vehicles, fuel tenders with vehicle dispensing capability, portable administrative office trailers, personnel, food and fuel technical assistance, and fuel to support State emergency operations and other state response and recovery operations.

Georgia Department of Corrections

- Provides staff, inmate labor, vehicles, mobile field kitchens, firefighting and material handling equipment, equipment operators and meal service to support State emergency operations.
- Provide personnel and equipment to support debris clearance when Chainsaw Strike Teams are requested through GEMA/HS.

Georgia Department of Defense

- Provides aircraft, fuel, mobile communications, vehicles, and personnel as needed for response operations.

Georgia Department of Natural Resources

- Provide personnel to support fire suppression activities to include law enforcement personnel for traffic control and security.
- Provide equipment for transportation of fire fighters (to include 4X4 vehicles, boats, etc.).
- Provide aviation assets that may be required to assist with State emergency operations.

- Provide personnel and equipment to support debris clearance when Chainsaw Strike Teams are requested through GEMA/HS.

Georgia Department of Public Safety

- Coordinates and prioritizes all requests for assistance for fixed wing or rotary aircraft within the State during disasters.
- Provides security and traffic control assets to assist with State emergency operations as requested.

Georgia Department of Transportation

- Provides assistance with coordinating the emergency movement of resource shipments to include oversize/overweight vehicles.
- Provides information regarding the condition, accessibility, and suitability of roads and bridges, rail lines and airports that could support State disaster logistics operations.
- Develops and installs temporary signage along roadways showing the location and directions to various temporary field facilities.
- Produces and provides maps (via hardcopy, facsimile, or e-mail) to emergency workers.
- Provides trucks and cargo trailers, truck drivers, portable electronic signs, portable light sets, construction equipment, communications equipment, forklifts, equipment operators to support State emergency operations.

Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency

- Provides communications networks.
- Coordinates emergency response operations among local, state, federal, private sector, and non-governmental entities.

Georgia Public Safety Training Center

- Fire suppression expertise from the Georgia Fire Academy.

Georgia Office of the Commissioner of Insurance and Fire Safety

- Provides Investigators and personnel in support of State firefighting operations.

Local Emergency Management Agencies

- Coordination of Mutual Aid Requests for Fire Resources in support of State emergency operations.

Local Fire Departments

- Equipment.
- Personnel.

Georgia Mutual Aid Group

- Assist in coordinating fire mutual aid requests in support of State emergency operations.

4.0 Direction, Control, and Coordination

4.1 Information Collection and Dissemination

When ESF-4 is activated, GFC, with assistance from supporting departments and agencies, assesses and responds to requests for assistance and planning or technical assistance from impacted local, state, or federal agencies or other ESFs. ESF-4 may also be expected to provide planning and or technical assistance from impacted local, state, or federal agencies or other ESFs.

In addition to the SOC, ESF-4 may provide personnel and/or equipment to field operations established in Georgia, including but not limited to: State Incident Command Posts, State Forward Operating Bases, Joint Field Offices, Disaster Recovery Centers, and any other incident facility established to meet operational demands for each incident requiring the activation of the GEOP.

4.2 Communications and Documentation

ESF-4 will report all activities to the ESF-5 Situation Unit for inclusion in the development of incident action plans and situational reports. All public information reports regarding ESF-4 activities will be coordinated with ESF-15 External Affairs.

The GEMA/HS Planning Section has provided standard operating guide development templates and planning assistance to all ESFs listed in the GEOP. All ESFs will strive to develop operationally ready SOGs for inclusion in the GEOP. ESF-4 will meet as necessary to develop, review and refine SOGs that discuss specific operational processes and procedures.

4.3 Administration, Finance, and Logistics

In conjunction with ESF-7 Logistics, ESF-4 will develop, review, refine and maintain lists of all resources currently available and under the control of the primary or support agencies listed in this plan. The development of these lists may be completed by several organizations and professional groups, which currently operate within this ESF. These resource lists should be compliant with the resource typing standards outlined in the National Incident Management System.

The Emergency Management Assistance Compact is a national mutual aid agreement between the 50 states, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the District of Columbia. It is based on 13 Articles which have been enacted into state law by each state. In Georgia, EMAC is addressed in the O.C.G.A., Title 38, Chapter 3, Article 5.

States may only request assistance via EMAC when their governor has declared a state of emergency. EMAC requires that the state requesting assistance reimburse the state that provides the assistance. The Director of GEMA/HS is the EMAC Authorized Representative (AR) for the State of Georgia. The AR is tasked with the authority to commit and accept resources through EMAC partnerships. The AR may delegate this authority to the Logistics Section Chief, Deputy Logistics Section Chief, and Finance Section Chief of GEMA/HS. The GEMA/HS Logistics Section Chief is the Designated Contact (DC) for EMAC. In the absence of the Logistics Section Chief, the agency has identified alternate Designated Contacts. The DC is commonly referred to as the EMAC

Coordinator. The DC coordinates EMAC operations and prepares the official EMAC Request for Assistance (commonly referred to as the REQ-A). When completed, the REQ-A becomes a contract between the requesting and assisting states for the provision of assistance in accordance with EMAC. When the SOC is activated, the Logistics Section Mutual Aid Unit coordinates and manages EMAC missions. This unit will be initially staffed with GEMA/HS personnel but will likely be augmented by trained EMAC personnel from other states as soon as possible. This unit is also referred to as an EMAC "A" Team.

ESF-4 will coordinate all applicable EMAC requests with the GEMA/HS EMAC DC or the SOC Logistics Section Mutual Aid Unit, when the SOC is activated. No resource (personnel or equipment) may deploy to another state via EMAC until the REQ-A has been approved and signed by the ARs of the requesting and assisting states, and they have been provided a copy of the REQ-A, have been briefed, and are prepared for the mission. To facilitate obtaining any assistance Georgia may need via EMAC, state ESFs should identify their shortfalls in capability and where resources may be obtained to provide this capability.

This may be accomplished via informal coordination with sister agencies in other states to determine if the needed resource is available for potential deployment to Georgia, its location, and the point of contact for the resource. Such information is critical in expediting a request for assistance via EMAC. For more information on EMAC, contact the GEMA/HS EMAC Designated Contact at 404-635-7200.

5.0 Plan Evaluation, Maintenance and Revision

5.1 Evaluation

GEMA/HS conducts all exercises within the structure provided by the Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program (HSEEP). ESF-4 will participate in all exercise activities when applicable and will follow the HSEEP process to include active participation in planning and evaluation meetings, workshops, and conferences.

GEMA/HS systematically coordinates and conducts event debriefings and compiles after action reports for any incident that calls for the activation of all or any portion of the GEOP. ESF-4 shall participate in this process when applicable. After Action Reports will document areas for improvement, resource shortfalls and corrective action planning requirements which will be incorporated into the GEOP, its annexes or ESF SOGs when applicable.

5.2 Maintenance and Revision

This ESF Annex will be reviewed every two years and updated as required. In addition, the document shall be evaluated for recommended revisions and corrective measures as an integral part of the Agency Exercise or Event After Action Reports / Improvement Plans, as well as internal reviews that will follow the issuance of any Governor Executive Order or passage of legislation impacting the Agency.

6.0 Authorities and References

The authority for the Georgia Emergency Operations Plan is based on Official Code of Georgia, Title 38, Section 3, and Articles 1 through 3, known as the Georgia Emergency Management Act of 1981, and is compliant with the National Incident Management System and supports the National Response Framework.

O.C.G.A. § 38-3-1, to § 38-3-10, establishes legal authority for development and maintenance of Georgia's Emergency Management Program and organization, and defines the emergency powers, authorities, and responsibilities of the Governor and Director of GEMA/HS. Moreover, the State's Emergency Services and Disaster Laws require that state and local governments develop and maintain current Emergency Operations Plans to be prepared for a variety of natural and human caused hazards. Executive Orders by the Governor supplement the laws and establish specific planning initiatives and requirements.