



Emergency Support Function 9 (Search and Rescue) Annex
to Georgia Emergency Operations Plan

2023

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	iii
Record of Change	iv
Record of Distribution.....	v
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Purpose	1
1.2 Scope	1
2.0 Concept of the Operation	2
2.1 General.....	2
2.2 Plan Activation	4
2.3 Support.....	4
2.4 Recovery	5
3.0 Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities	5
3.1 ESF Coordinator	5
3.2 Primary Agency Assignment of Responsibilities	5
3.3 Support Agency Assignment of Responsibilities.....	5
4.0 Direction, Control, and Coordination	7
4.1 Information Collection and Dissemination.....	7
4.2 Communications and Documentation	8
4.3 Administration, Finance, and Logistics	8
5.0 Plan Evaluation, Maintenance and Revision	8
5.1 Evaluation.....	8
5.2 Maintenance and Revision	8
6.0 Authorities and References	8
6.1 Authority	8
6.2 References	9

Record of Distribution

Plan #	Office/Department	Representative	Signature
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

Emergency Support Function (ESF) 9 Search and Rescue (SAR) is responsible for providing the coordination of State SAR resources. The ESF-9 coordinator outlines Georgia's SAR response framework and provides the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA/HS) with the capability to coordinate SAR operations during an emergency or disaster that is beyond the capabilities of local governments. ESF-9 is comprised of primary and support State agencies that each have unique SAR capabilities.

1.2 Scope

SAR operations will be conducted for lost, missing, endangered, sick, injured, or deceased persons; and displaced or abandoned animals. SAR operations within Georgia are categorized into five principal types:

- Structural Collapse or Urban Search and Rescue (USAR)
- Waterborne Search and Rescue (Waterborne SAR)
- Inland or Wilderness Search and Rescue (Wilderness SAR)
- Aeronautical Search and Rescue (Aviation SAR)
- Animal and Human Remains Recovery (Recovery)

USAR operations primarily focus on the location, rescue, and initial stabilization of persons confined within collapsed structures in urban settings. USAR Task Forces also respond to persons trapped in vehicles, mines, collapsed trenches, or similar events.

Waterborne SAR operations focus on the location, rescue, and initial stabilization of persons along coastal areas, in creeks or rivers, and in lakes or reservoirs. Waterborne SAR operations may include an airborne response primarily utilizing helicopters or a maritime response utilizing boats/ships. Waterborne SAR operations are conducted in accordance with the National Search and Rescue Plan.

Inland or wilderness SAR operations focus on the location, rescue, and initial stabilization of persons in rural, remote, backcountry, thickly wooded, highly variable topography, and otherwise difficult to access areas. SAR operations in these areas may require specialized equipment and potentially airborne operations.

Aeronautical SAR operations are an integral component of the three forementioned response areas. Aeronautical SAR operations also include response operations for an aviation-related incident. Aeronautical or Aviation SAR operations will always be coordinated through the Air Operations Branch and / or the Aviation Support Operations Center(s) (ASOC) upon activation of the Georgia Emergency Operations Plan.

Animal and Human Remains Recovery operations will be an integral component in SAR operations. The "no one left behind" philosophy is integrated into the scope of operations. Animal rescue operations are in support of ESF-11 Agriculture and Natural

Resources and human remains recovery operations support ESF-8 Public Health and Medical Services.

2.0 Concept of the Operation

2.1 General

GEMA/HS is the sole coordinating agency for emergency or disaster operations pertaining to Search and Rescue within Georgia. Within the State Operations Center (SOC), the ESF-9 Coordinator will serve as the principle point of contact for operations associated with ESF-9. The scope, scale, and magnitude of the threat/incident will dictate which support agencies will be requested to assign personnel to the SOC.

All SAR operations within Georgia utilize the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Incident Command System. Georgia Search and Rescue (GSAR) Task Forces serve as the primary response entity for USAR operations in Georgia and have been developed and can be organized into NIMS Type I, Type II, Type III, or Type IV Task Forces. All GSAR resources are following the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1006 (individual) standard and the NFPA 1670 (team) standard.

The Georgia SAR response framework utilizes five NIMS incident types that range from single jurisdictional (Type V or Type IV) through catastrophic (Type I). All SAR NIMS incident types are designed to support the local jurisdictional needs for a SAR response.

SAR operations within Georgia will generally fall into two incident scenarios: events with notice and no-notice events. When the event includes ample notices, for example a hurricane, SAR resources will be notified, prepared, and possibly pre-staged to enact the most expeditious response possible. During no-notice events, SAR resources will rally and deploy where needed based on mission prioritization. GSAR Task Forces have been developed and are active in strategic locations throughout Georgia to ensure a timely response – typically within two hours.

For large scale incidents, SAR operations will be comprised of three components:

- SAR Task Forces (Type IV through Type I or a combination of all types depending on the scope and requirements of the response)
- Incident Management Team(s) (IMT)
- Technical specialists.

State-level SAR resources will be sourced from multiple agencies/organizations including GSAR Task Forces. USAR Task Forces may be sourced from other states using the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC). Within the United States., 42 states have similarly trained USAR Task Forces, and each is a member of the Alliance of State Search and Rescue Teams.

The federal Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) USAR Task Forces may be integrated into the disaster response. Both state and federal-level resources procured by EMAC or by Requests for Assistance (RFA) to FEMA are coordinated by ESF-5 Emergency Management, Information and Planning.

When there is a local emergency or disaster, local governments are responsible for the activation of their plans and appropriate use of personnel and equipment for SAR before requesting state assistance. SAR operations that exceed local capabilities will be augmented by state or federal SAR Task Forces.

In general support of an emergency or disaster operations pertaining to SAR, ESF-9 will:

- Develop and maintains Standard Operating Procedures and Standard Operating Guides (SOG) for SAR operations, personnel, and canine teams who may participate in SAR efforts.
- Coordinates state SAR activities. GEMA/HS will integrate personnel and resources available from other state agencies into a disaster response in conjunction with ESF-5 Emergency Management, Information and Planning.
- Utilizes the EMAC, when needed.
- Assists local governments and state agencies in training and certifying personnel, and licensing rescue organizations.
- Ensures adequate levels of training for staff that support ESF-9 and conducts training sessions, workshops, and exercises to assist local communities and support agencies and organizations.
- Participates in regular planning meetings, with primary and support agencies.
- Recruit, train, certify, and license SAR personnel and canine teams, in compliance with standards set forth by the National Integration Center.
- Supports animal rescue missions in conjunction with ESF-11 Agriculture and Natural Resources and human remains recovery missions in conjunction with ESF-8 Public Health and Medical Services.
- Supports SAR requests from local agencies and EMAC requests from other states.
- Develop reporting procedures to reflect local and state assistance and SAR support.
- Maintains financial records on personnel, supplies, and other resources utilized and report expenditures as requested.
- Develops awareness information about SAR protocols and operations and promote them to state and local organizations.
- Promotes a survival education program for the public.
- Coordinate all aviation support operations through the Air Operations Branch of the SOC; further coordination of aviation support operations may be required with supporting ASOC(s) as directed by the Air Operations Branch.
- Coordinates with ESF-15 External Affairs on the establishment of a Joint Information Center (JIC) and promotes the production and dissemination of public awareness statements.
- Maintains situational awareness and provides ESF-5 Emergency Management, Information and Planning, ESF-15 External Affairs, and the Planning Section with regular updates and information to support briefings, Situation Reports, and Incident Action Plans.

2.2 Plan Activation

ESF-9 activates when the GEMA/HS Deputy Director of Emergency Management, or delegated surrogate, issues operational guidance to the ESF-9 Coordinator. SAR resource integration into the local incident response occurs by submission of a RFA or Resource Request to the SOC Communications Center by local Emergency Operations Centers. These requests are made when local resources are exhausted or insufficient to meet operational needs. The ESF-9 Primary Emergency Coordinator will determine operational support requirements in the assemblage of an interagency coordination group.

2.3 Support

USAR:

- USAR operations are primarily conducted by GSAR Task Forces. There are eight Type III GSAR Task Forces – and each is comprised of local response entities. Because the Task Forces are comprised of local resources, impacts to their local areas may preclude their ability to respond to incidents elsewhere in Georgia or abroad.
- State-level USAR support may include the integration of Department of Natural Resources – Wildlife Resources Division (DNR-WRD) Critical Action Teams (CAT) or Department of Public Safety (DPS) Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) teams. Additional non-governmental support for canine teams may be integrated into the response.

Waterborne SAR:

- Waterborne SAR response operations will include DNR-WRD CAT and DNR-WRD Law Enforcement Task Forces. Additional non-governmental support for canine teams may be integrated into the response.

Wilderness SAR:

- Inland or wilderness SAR response operations will include resources from State-level agencies / organizations including DNR-WRD CAT, DNR-WRD Law Enforcement, and DPS SWAT. Additional non-governmental support for canine teams may be integrated into the response.

Aviation SAR:

- Aeronautical SAR response operations will include resources from state-level agencies / organizations including the DPS / Georgia Air Operations Branch, and the DNR-WRD Law Enforcement.

In coastal Georgia, aeronautical SAR response operations will be supported by the ASOC. The ASOC is single controlling / coordinating facility providing forward aviation operations capabilities including, but not limited to, mission assignment and tracking, air-space flight de-confliction, air asset prioritization, and communications support.

2.4 Recovery

The Georgia Bureau of Investigation retains operational control of the Human Remains Recovery Teams that are integrated into SAR operations.

Animal rescue missions are conducted in conjunction with ESF-11 Agriculture and Natural Resources.

3.0 Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

3.1 ESF Coordinator

GEMA/HS is the coordinator for ESF-9 and in partnership with the support agencies listed within this document conducts ESF-9 planning, preparedness, response, and recovery activities.

3.2 Primary Agency Assignment of Responsibilities

Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency:

- Develops further State SAR capabilities by recruiting, organizing, and training additional GSAR Task Forces.
- Pre-stages SAR Task Forces in safe proximity to the projected impact area to enact a rapid response, during events with sufficient notice.
- Coordinates all Aviation SAR operations with the Air Operations Branch and / or ASOC.
- Coordinates additional logistical support needs with ESF-7 Logistics.
- Coordinates the deployment and use of IMTs to support SAR operations.
- Ensures effective coordination of SAR operations between GEMA/HS and local, state, and federal response entities.

3.3 Support Agency Assignment of Responsibilities

Georgia Department of Natural Resources – Wildlife Resources Division / Law Enforcement Division

a. USAR:

- Provides immediate life-saving assistance
- Conducts rapid impact assessments
- Security and containment of the incident scene
- SAR operations
- Logistical support platforms for other responders

b. Waterborne SAR:

- Provides immediate life-saving assistance
- Conducts rapid impact assessments
- Waterborne SAR operational support

- c. Wilderness SAR:
 - Provides immediate life-saving assistance
 - Conducts rapid impact assessments
 - Security and containment of the incident scene
 - Wilderness/rough terrain SAR operations support
- d. Aviation SAR (coordinated through the Air Operations Branch and / or ASOC):
 - Providing immediate life-saving assistance
 - Conducting rapid impact assessments
 - SAR operations
 - Provides waterborne and rough terrain transportation
 - Logistical support platforms for other responders

Georgia Department of Public Safety – Georgia State Patrol

- a. USAR:
 - Perimeter security
 - Community security
 - SAR Task Force security
 - SWAT SAR support
- b. Wilderness SAR:
 - Security and containment of the incident scene
 - Communications support
 - SAR Task Force security
- c. Aviation SAR (coordinated through the Air Operations Branch and / or ASOC):
 - Transport medical support in affected area
 - Transport supplies into affected area
 - Short Haul Rescue
 - Transport-Hoist Rescue (Basket/Litter)
 - Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR)
 - Coordination of aviation assets (Air Operations Branch and / or ASOC)

Georgia Bureau of Investigation

- a. USAR:
 - Canine team support
 - Investigation and crime scene support
- b. Inland or Wilderness SAR:
 - Canine team support
 - Investigation and crime scene support
- c. Recovery:
 - Canine team support

- Human remains recovery team support

Georgia Department of Defense

a. USAR:

- SAR Task Forces and mission capability
- Perimeter security
- Rescued person(s) transport
- Communications support

b. Waterborne SAR:

- Waterborne SAR mission capability

c. Aviation SAR (coordinated through the Air Operations Branch and / or ASOC):

- Aviation transport
- FLIR
- Coordination of aviation assets (Air Operations Branch and / or ASOC)

d. Recovery:

- Human remains recovery mission capability
- Aeronautical SAR (coordinated through the Air Operations Branch and / or ASOC)
- Electronic Locator Transmission support for downed craft location during an aviation incident
- Aerial reconnaissance / photography (coordinated through the Air Operations Branch and / or ASOC)

4.0 Direction, Control, and Coordination

4.1 Information Collection and Dissemination

ESF Coordination within SOC:

- ESF-9 will report all activities to the planning section for inclusion in the development of incident action plans and situational reports. All public information reports regarding ESF-9 activities will be coordinated with ESF-15 External Affairs.
- When ESF-9 is activated, GEMA/HS, with assistance from supporting departments and agencies, assesses and responds to RFA with the management and or maintenance of search and rescue operations and planning or technical assistance from impacted local, state, or federal agencies or other ESFs.
- In addition to the SOC, ESF-9 may provide personnel to field operations established in Georgia, including but not limited to: Joint Field Offices (JFO), Disaster Recovery Centers, JIC and any other incident facility established to meet operational demands for each incident requiring the activation of the GEOP.

4.2 Communications and Documentation

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-9 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-9 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 NIMS.

5.0 Plan Evaluation, Maintenance and Revision

5.1 Evaluation

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-9 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

GEMA/HS conducts all exercises within the structure provided by the Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program (HSEEP). ESF-9 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.

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

6.1 Authority

The authority for the Georgia Emergency Operations Plan is based on Official Code of Georgia, Title 38, Section 3, 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.

6.2 References

- The National Search and Rescue Plan.
- The Land Search and Rescue Addendum to the National Search and Rescue Supplemental.
- The Catastrophic Incident Search and Rescue Addendum to the National Search and Rescue Supplemental.
- The Virginia Search and Rescue Plan.
- FEMA 508-8: Typed Resource Definitions – Search and Rescue.
- FEMA 509-8: Job Titles – Search and Rescue.