

Chapter 1—Introduction

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*Chapter 1**Introduction*

INTRODUCTION***Purpose and Focus of the Florida Operations Guide (FOG)***

The purpose of the FOG is to provide guidance and serve as a next step for coordination and command personnel being assigned to a response. It is not intended to provide detailed Incident Command System (ICS) understanding. Persons using this guide are assumed to have completed the appropriate level of National Incident Management System (NIMS) and ICS training to perform their assigned duties and tasks. Reading this guide will provide a refresher on key concepts and ensure understanding of Florida's unique response structure. A review of this document will provide the reader with appropriate ICS to understand their role in the response, what their primary responsibilities encompass and to whom they report.

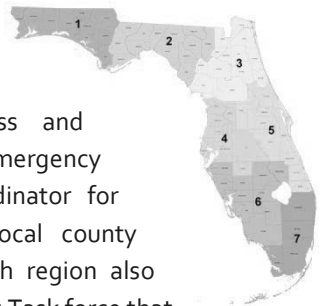
Florida's Structure

Florida uses an "all events are locally managed" approach. Through this concept, the local county Emergency Operations Center (EOC) coordinates and supports all personnel and resources involved in an incident within its County. The County EOC is supported by the State EOC, which has a series of forward elements available to support the local government. Each forward element brings with it more resources, unifies and/or coordinates with earlier forward elements and provides for an increasing presence in the County.

State forward elements include Regional Multi Agency Coordination system (MAC), Regional Task Force, State Management Team, and the Forward State Emergency Response Team.

The State is in turn supported by the Federal response and the Federal response elements are immediately unified with their State counterparts to ensure maximum coordination, which includes the State Coordinating Officer (SCO) and the Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO). This process ensures that the Federal and State coordinators identify resources needed to support the local response. The joining of counterparts reduces time required to collaborate and minimizes the duplication of effort, while increasing overall coordination. The State EOC structure is built around an Emergency Support Function (ESF) based system, with ESFs and Branches formed in the ICS structure.

Florida is divided into seven emergency response regions. Each region has a series of coordination elements to aide in preparedness and response. The Florida Division of Emergency Management has a Regional Coordinator for each Region, to liaise with the local county Emergency Management office. Each region also contains a Regional Domestic Security Task force that assists in coordinating pre-disaster training and equipment, and will take a leading role during a terrorism response.



Florida's Resources

Florida uses several tools to coordinate support to the local county EOC. More information on each of these resources can be found in the Tools, Resources, and Information chapter (10E). These include:

EM Constellation: A Statewide messaging system designed to track local needs, tasking and resource allocations. This software is web based and accessed through the County EOC. The State EOC uses this system to coordinate resources based on EM Constellation messages received.

GATOR: A Statewide situational awareness tool. This web-based tool provides critical information in a visual format that allows for a statewide understanding of the current situation.

Statewide Response Plan: A uniform plan used throughout the State to ensure mutual aid responders are able to integrate into the local response seamlessly.

Florida Statewide Mutual Aid System: Each county in the State is a signatory to the Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement, which allows local jurisdictions to obtain assistance across county lines through a local request. It also facilitates the ability of every county to render assistance through a request from the State EOC. When the State EOC cannot fill requests by utilizing resources within the State, they will frequently use the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) to locate and obtain resources from other States to assist the local response.

USNG: As directed in the Florida Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP), the State of Florida has adopted the

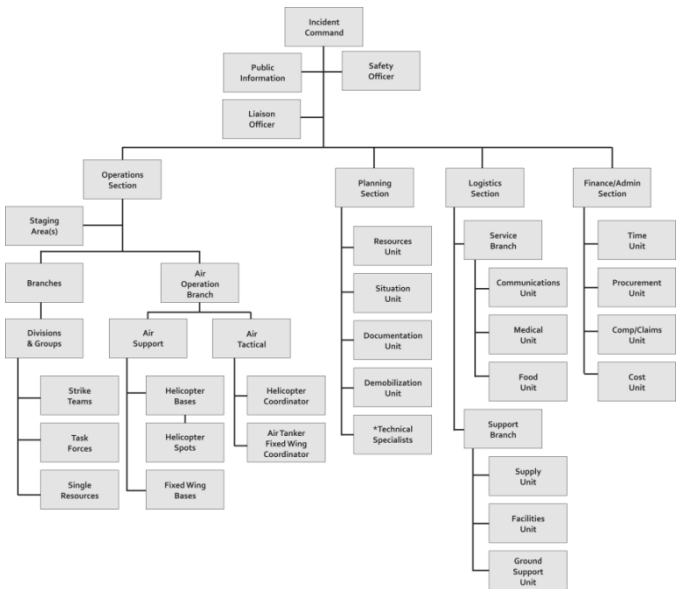
U.S. National Grid (USNG) for use during response and recovery efforts. The USNG is the geographic grid reference system identified by the National Search and Rescue Committee as the primary catastrophic incident search and rescue geo-referencing system that must be used by federal land Search and Rescue (SAR) responders, including the land SAR & aerial SAR interface. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the DoD has directed use of the USNG by the military in support of homeland security and homeland defense in Directive CJCSI 3900.01C.

How to Use This FOG

This document's structure provides a reference to Florida operating procedures and response structures. By reviewing the relevant sections, responders should be able to re-familiarize themselves with the roles and responsibilities they will need to complete assignments. The FOG is not intended to provide a complete documentation of NIMS and the ICS system, which is the foundation of Florida Response, but to provide guidance for recently activated personnel to understand Florida response elements. Responders should refer to the NIMS Emergency Responder Field Operations Guide for a review of NIMS ICS during the management of an incident and event planning. The following organizational chart represents the overall Florida Response Structure; additional elements will fit into or supplement this structure.

The document, when viewed in a digital version, contains links to more detailed procedures, subject area Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and subject-specific Field Operations Guides. Please note some links will require password based access to sensitive response procedures.

Figure 1 – The Florida Response Structure



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