



STATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM

PLANNING SECTION (ESF 5) STANDARD OPERATING GUIDE

Revised February, 2016

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I. Introduction

The SERT Planning Section/Emergency Support Function (ESF) 5 is the information gathering, analysis, forecasting, and dissemination section of the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC). The section also provides planning support by consolidating key information to support the action, strategic, transition, and demobilization planning processes.

Planning Section personnel also provide support to field operations such as an Incident Management Team (IMT), Forward State Emergency Response Team (FSERT), or Joint Field Office (JFO).

A. Purpose

This Standard Operating Guide (SOG) standardizes routine procedures for the Planning Section as it applies in all situations, except when modified as necessary by the Planning Section Chief, to use during activations of the SEOC. The SOG is consistent with the ESF 5 Appendix to the State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP). For the purposes of this SOG and its associated attachments and job aids, "Planning Section" will refer to ESF 5 although both terms may be used interchangeably or together.

B. Scope

All members of ESF 5 and supporting agencies will comply with the provisions of this SOG. Subordinate unit Standard Operating Guides and Job Aids will comply with and amplify the provisions of this SOG. **This guide is applicable to Planning Section operations within the SEOC. Users should consult the appropriate guides and procedures for field operations.**

C. Planning Assumptions

1. The emergency or event will dictate the operational response level as each event is unique.
2. This guide assumes all Planning Section personnel have a basic knowledge of the Incident Command System (ICS).
3. This guide assumes all Planning Section personnel have read and understand the content of this SOG.
4. This SOG and all subsequent updates will be consistent with the State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

D. Overview

The Planning Section SOG is divided into three parts: Introduction, Concept of Operations, and Attachments. The Attachments section contains the detailed SOGs and Job Aids for the individual units that comprise the Section.

E. Distribution and Plan Maintenance

This SOG is issued to all Planning Section staff and is made available to all supporting agencies and organizations. The Planning Section Chief is responsible for coordinating the maintenance of this SOG and providing it to supporting elements. This SOG will be reviewed annually and, when deemed necessary, revised based upon lessons learned, changes in procedures, and/or technological advances.

II. Concept of Operations

A. Operational Objectives

1. Maintain situational awareness throughout the course of an incident or event.
2. Document the incident/event response as it unfolds.
3. Develop and disseminate action plans.
4. Develop and maintain briefing displays and materials.
5. Develop and disseminate situational awareness reports.
6. Provide forecasts and recommended planning considerations based upon current situation and intelligence.
7. Maintain “battle rhythm” awareness (See Section H).
8. Assist with after action reporting (for real-world incidents/events).

B. Organizational Structure

1. Planning Section Organization

The Planning Section/ESF 5 is comprised of five units. Unit leaders oversee operations within their respective units. More detailed information relative to each of these units can be found in the unit SOGs:

- **Situation Unit** – Collects, processes, and organizes all incident information as well as coordinates reconnaissance operations. The unit also provides intelligence forecasts and projections of future incident growth based on information received.
- **Documentation Unit** – Develops and maintains incident files

including, but not limited to Situation Reports and Flash Reports. The unit also assists with maintaining battle rhythm awareness, documenting conference calls and meetings, and assisting with after action reporting.

- **Future Planning Unit** – Facilitates the development of action plans for each operational period. The unit also—as required—provides support to the demobilization, transition, and/or strategic planning processes based upon current situation and intelligence forecasts.
- **Technical Services Unit** – Develop and maintain GIS products, web applications, and mission management databases. The unit also provides audio/visual services. Any other specialized planning cells/units developed during the course of a specific incident or event response may be attached to the Technical Services Unit.
- **Meteorology** – Develop and disseminate meteorological forecasts potentially impacting SERT operations as well as monitor severe weather impacting Florida and advising of the likely time of impact and consequences.

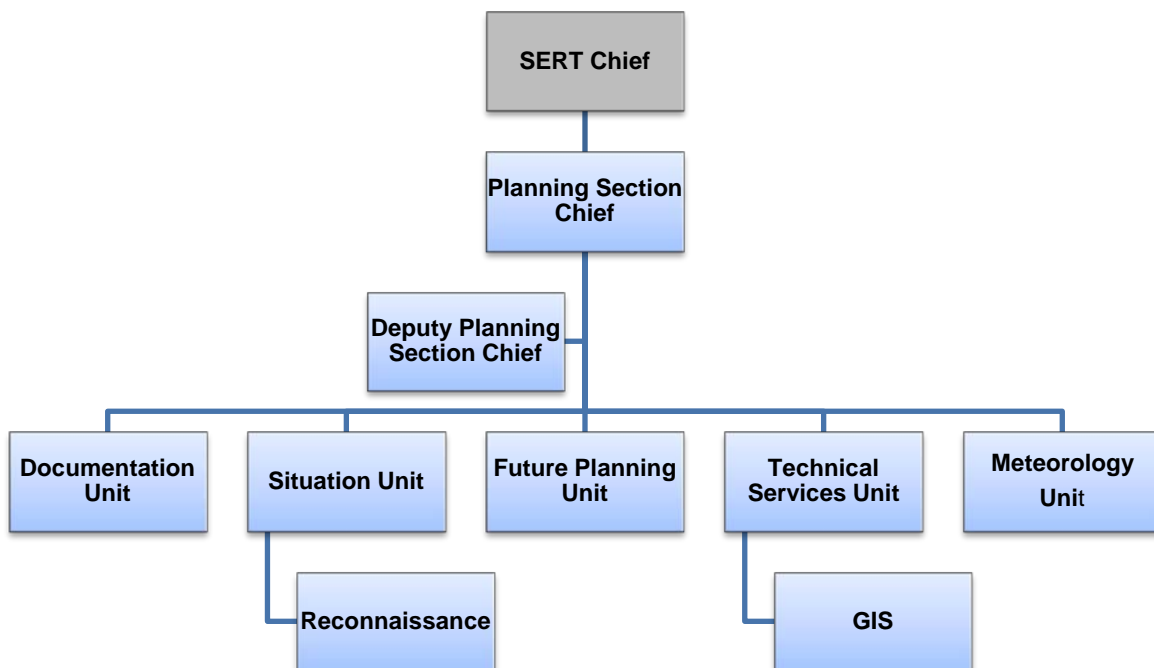
In addition to these four units, there are two sub-units:

- **Reconnaissance (Recon)** – Conducts observations and collects information within an incident area of operations and provides this information to the Situation Unit.
- **Geographic Information Systems (GIS)** – Creates maps, charts, and other visual aids and displays for use by the SERT.

The Planning Section/ESF 5 is led by the Planning Section Chief (PSC). The Planning Section Chief has authority to designate the Deputy Planning Section Chief(s) and Unit Leaders.

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Figure 1 – Planning Section/ESF 5 Organizational Chart



C. Activation Levels and Staffing

There are three levels of activation for the SEOC:

Level 3 – Monitoring (Issues handled through the State Watch Office)

Level 2 – Certain Sections, Branches, and ESFs activated

Level 1 – All Sections, Branches, and ESFs activated

Planning Section staffing patterns will be established in proportion to the event, activation level, and needs of the SERT.

Planning Section personnel may be assigned to locations away from the SEOC - Forward SERT (F-SERT), Incident Management Team (IMT), Area Command, Joint Field Office (JFO), etc. Personnel assigned to locations outside of the SEOC will report directly to the Planning Section Chief (PSC) of that specific location or team. The PSC of that location or team, in turn, will report to the Incident Commander of that specific location or team.

D. Shift Schedule

During a Level 1 Activation, there will be two 12-hour shifts. The “A” (or “Alpha”) shift will be from 0700-1900 hours (7:00 am-7:00 pm) and the “B” (or

“Bravo”) shift will be from 1900-0700 hours (7:00 pm-7:00 am). During a Level 2 Activation, there will be one 12-hour shift. The SEOC hours of operation may be adjusted as necessary by the SERT Chief or State Coordinating Officer, and shift schedules will be adjusted to reflect any changes. Each shift will report for duty 30 minutes prior to the start of their shift and stay until the shift change brief is completed. The Shift Change Briefing will be conducted by the outgoing PSC and Unit Leaders for the PSC and Unit Leaders of the incoming shift. The briefing should cover operations conducted during the previous shift, current conditions, and projections/requirements for the next shift. The Shift Change Briefing is internal to the Planning Section and is conducted apart from the usual evening SEOC Emergency Support Function briefing.

During an event with advance notice of the activation of the SERT, the Planning Section may be required to report to the SEOC in advance of the actual time of SEOC activation to begin conducting information gathering and situational awareness activities. The Planning Section Chief will make the determination as to the time staff should report to the SEOC.

E. Staff Notification

The State Watch Office will notify SERT personnel—including the Planning Section—of activation of the SEOC.

Depending on the level of activation and event intensity, the Planning Section Chief will determine which units will need to report for duty. The Unit Leaders will assist the PSC in determining proper staffing levels needed to ensure that all operational objectives will be accomplished. If additional personnel are needed, the Unit Leaders will make a recommendation to the PSC. Upon agreement by the PSC, the Unit Leaders will then notify their respective units to report to pre-identified work stations in the SEOC. Once activated, staff will continue with operational duties until released by their Unit Leader, with the approval of the PSC. The PSC will monitor and circulate staff to prevent burnout and to ensure adequate staffing. As a general rule no personnel will work longer than 14 consecutive days without a day off.

During the course of a SEOC activation (preferably during the initial phases), it may be necessary to formulate demobilization plans. All demobilization plans must be presented to the Section Chiefs and SERT Chief for concurrence.

F. Planning Section Initial Activation Checklist

The following chart is a guideline for all Planning Section units to follow for an activation of the SEOC. Note that this chart represents actions for a Level 1 Activation and may be adjusted accordingly.

Figure 2 – Planning Section Initial Activation Matrix

Planning Section Chief/Deputy PSC	Future Planning	Documentation	Situation	Technical Services	Meteorology
Notify Unit Leaders of activation	Notification of staff: Confirm contact with all staff, notify Section Chief	Notification of staff: Confirm contact with all staff, notify Section Chief	Notification of staff: Confirm contact with all staff, notify Section Chief	Notification of staff: Confirm contact with all staff, notify Section Chief	Notification of staff: Confirm contact with all staff, notify Section Chief
Brief Unit Leaders	Receive briefing from PSC	Receive briefing from PSC	Receive briefing from PSC	Receive briefing from PSC	Receive briefing from PSC
Develop staffing roster, if not already done	Prepare Unit staffing roster	Prepare Unit staffing roster	Prepare Unit staffing roster	Prepare Unit staffing roster	Prepare Unit staffing roster
Ascertain short term unmet needs for staffing; reassign ESF 5 personnel if necessary; notify SERT Chief if outside staffing augmentation is required	Brief Section Chief on staffing plans and unmet staffing needs for entire unit	Brief Section Chief on staffing plans and unmet staffing needs for entire unit	Brief Section Chief on staffing plans and unmet staffing needs for entire unit	Brief Section Chief on staffing plans and unmet staffing needs for entire unit	Brief Section Chief on staffing plans and unmet staffing needs for entire unit
Establish information reporting timelines	Begin collecting key information and intelligence from Situation Unit, Branches, and Sections	Develop and Distribute Flash Report	Check Essential Elements of Information (EEI) Tool and EMC Info messages for situational awareness from counties	Update website & initiate IT, desktop and Audio/Visual systems checks	Prepare weather briefing for initial SEOC briefing
Determine need to activate Recon	Obtain initial operating objectives from PSC	Prepare initial situation report	Produce initial Intelligence forecast within 2 hours of activation	Prepare Branch and ESF boilerplate slides for initial SERT briefing and subsequent briefings	Set up webinars for 1115 and 1715 and distribute registration information
Begin collecting situational awareness information for initial briefing	Prepare initial EOC Action Plan	Set event timer(s) and SEOC meeting schedule (battle rhythm) in EM Constellation	Coordinate with PSC to notify Recon partner agencies and activate Recon (if required)	Run HAZUS and other forecasting models	Begin providing weather updates and forecasts for situation reports, EOC Action Plans, and other reports/plans/briefings
Acquire conference call bridge from the Operations Section		Create new folders on the network drive for event files		Refine initial spatial products based on event specifics	
Facilitate initial SERT briefing and subsequent SEOC briefings		Post meeting schedule (battle rhythm) on dry erase boards and other specified locations within the SEOC		Contact Additional SMEs and prepare to brief Planning Section Chief	

G. Information Management

Information Management is the collection, organization, and control over the structure, processing, and delivery of information from one or more sources and distribution to one or more audiences who have a stake in that information.

This section is divided into two areas: (1) basic flow of information under normal functioning conditions and (2) information flow in the event of a computer systems shutdown or disruption.

1. Normal Operations

The Planning Section utilizes several computerized systems for information management:

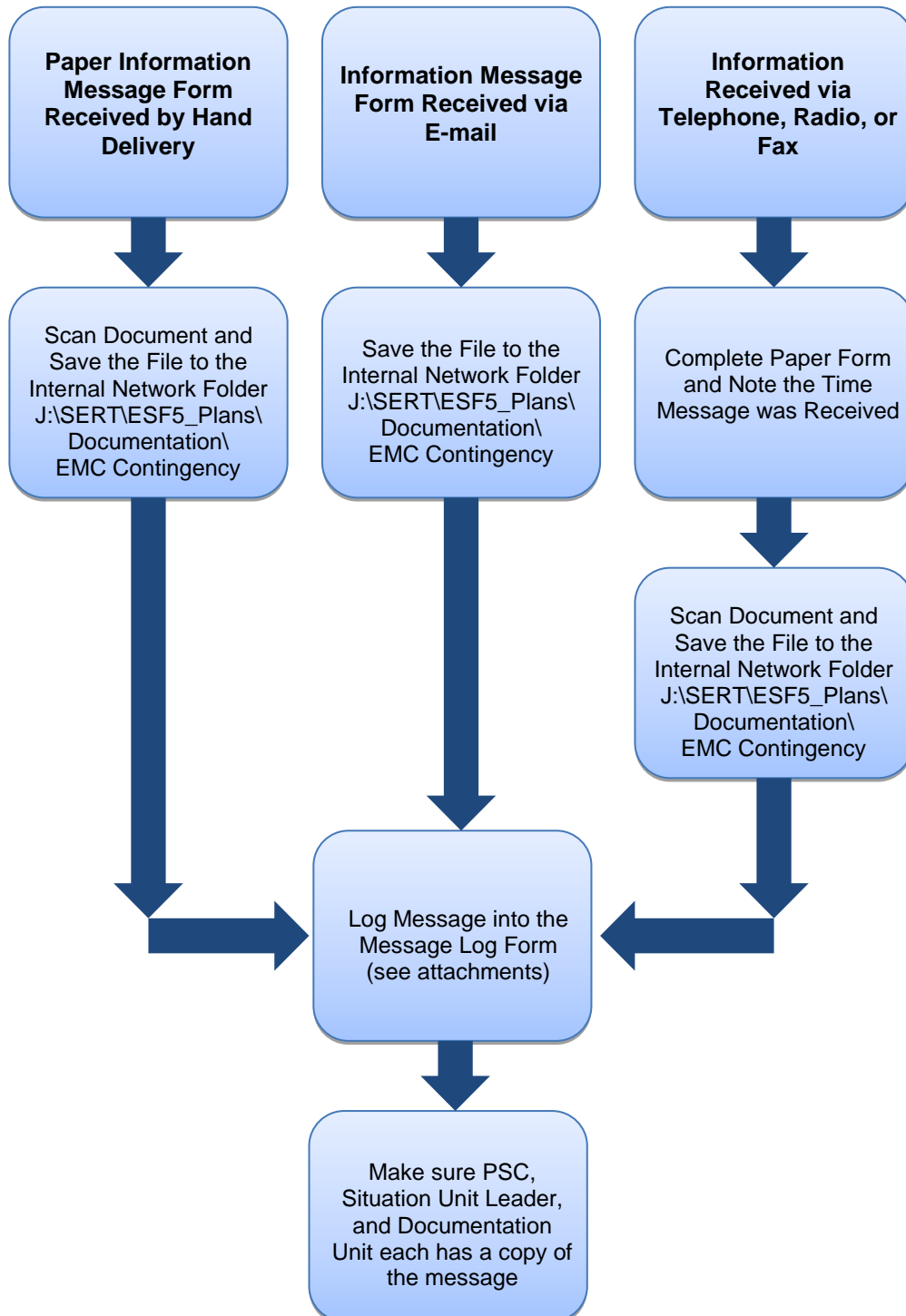
- **EM Constellation** - An online information management tool developed for agencies to share information, request and track resources, and work from a Common Operating Picture. It is a collaborative emergency management solution that gives agencies the ability to ensure they are focused on changing the outcome of a disaster.
- **GATOR (Geospatial Assessment Tool for Operational Response)** A GIS application which shows a variety of information overlaid onto a map. GATOR is the Common Operating Picture utilized by the SERT.
- **EEI (Essential Elements of Information)** – A secure application within EM Constellation that is used to update essential information regarding counties (EOC activation status, local states of emergency, evacuations, etc.). This information is reflected in GATOR.
- **Recon Reporting Site** – A secure online application for Reconnaissance teams to enter information from the field. This information will be triaged and verified by Reconnaissance staff in the SEOC prior to dissemination.
- **Network Drive** – A specified network drive that is used to store documents. The network drive also facilitates easier access to documents and files for all Planning Section personnel. Personnel must be connected to the DEM/SERT network to access any network drives.

2. System Shutdown

In the event of a systems shutdown, the SERT will need to ensure continuous flow of information throughout the SEOC as well as to counties and other SERT partners. The main goal of this process is to ensure that operational activities do not cease. In the event that the issue cannot be quickly resolved, information gathering and dissemination will take place using paper forms. The paper forms can be found in EM Constellation by clicking on the “Mission Forms” link in the “Missions” section.

Within the SEOC, internal message flow is done by the following actions shown in Figure 3 below. Once systems are restored, information will then be placed into EM Constellation at the earliest convenience.

Figure 3 – Message Flow during a System Shutdown



H. “Battle Rhythm” and Reporting Schedules

During the course of an incident response, the battle rhythm is a deliberate, daily cycle of activities which are used to synchronize current and future operations. Responsibility for establishing the SEOC battle rhythm lies with the SERT Chief, with input from the Planning and Operations Section Chiefs. The Planning Section maintains the battle rhythm by keeping the entire SEOC apprised of the time and location of those established activities and ensuring participation. Information reporting schedules for Planning Section products, which will be determined by the PSC at the outset of an incident/event, will be driven by the battle rhythm.

Figure 4 - Standard SEOC Battle Rhythm (may be adjusted as warranted)

Time	Activity	Location
0700	Shift Change	
0730	Leadership Meeting	Command Room
0830	Branch Briefing	SEOC Main Floor
1115	State/County Conference Call	Conference Room 130D
1100	Deadline for Situation Report Information	
1200	State Situation Report Published	
1230	FEMA/State VTC (SERT Leadership Only)	Command Room
1500	Deadline for EOC Action Plan Inputs	
1600	EOC Action Plan Finalization Meeting	Conference Room 130D
1715	State/County Conference Call	Conference Room 130D
1800	ESF Briefing	SEOC Main Floor
1900	Shift Change	

I. Document/Product Development and Process

Refer to the respective unit standard operating guides for information on developing the various documents and products for which the Planning Section is responsible.

J. Resources

Resources required include—at a minimum:

- Laptop computer for each individual
- Printer
- Plotter for larger print jobs (maps)
- Notepads
- Pens
- Binders or folders

Division employees are assigned laptop computers for use during both day-to-day (blue-sky) and EOC (gray-sky) work. Division employees assigned to

ESF 5 must bring their own DEM-issued laptop when reporting to the SEOC. Partner agency personnel must bring their own agency-issued laptop computers when working in the ESF 5 breakout rooms. Laptop computers for National Guard personnel assigned to the Planning Section will be requested through EM Constellation by the Planning Section Chief.

A limited amount of office supplies is located in the ESF 5 breakout rooms and elsewhere in the SEOC. Additional supplies, if needed, will be obtained through EM Constellation mission requests from the PSC.

K. Training Requirements

Planning Section/ESF 5 personnel are required to complete National Incident Management System/Incident Command System training, including the following FEMA Independent Study courses:

- IS-100 (ICS 100) – Introduction to Incident Command System
- IS-200 (ICS 200) – ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents
- IS-700 – National Incident Management System (NIMS), an Introduction
- IS-800 – National Response Framework, an Introduction

Additionally, personnel assigned to the Planning Section/ESF 5 will be required to attend annual orientation and training. ESF 5 supporting agencies will also be allowed the opportunity to participate in such orientations/trainings.

L. Continuity

- Personnel
In the absence of the Planning Section Chief, the Deputy Planning Section Chief will be the lead for the section. In the absence of both the Planning Section Chief and Deputy Planning Section Chief, the Situation Unit Leader will assume the lead for the section until either the Planning Section Chief or Deputy Planning Section Chief arrives. Unit Leaders will designate alternate lead personnel for their respective units.
- Facilities
The SERT will function from an alternate facility if the primary facility is rendered inoperable. The designated alternate facilities have limited workspaces for ESF 5 personnel. Initial staffing for the alternate facilities will consist of the PSC and unit leaders. Rotation of staff will be required in the event of an extended continuity of operations. Additionally, the Planning Section has a “drive away kit” consisting of essential files, documents, equipment, and a limited amount of office supplies. The PSC

will ensure that the kit accompanies the Planning Section to the alternate facility.

III. Attachments

- ❖ Situation Unit Standard Operating Guide
- ❖ Documentation Unit Standard Operating Guide
- ❖ Future Planning Unit Standard Operating Guide
- ❖ Technical Services Unit Standard Operating Guide
- ❖ SEOC Layout and Planning Section Work Locations
- ❖ Information Message Form
- ❖ Information Message Log Form