

ESF 9. Search and Rescue

1. General Information

1.1 Purpose

To provide for the effective utilization of search and rescue resources and for the control and coordination of various types of search and rescue operations involving persons in distress as the result of a major emergency or disaster.

1.2 Scope

- This Annex addresses wilderness (remote areas) and urban (city buildings) search and rescue operations, and includes search and rescue on the ground, from the air, or in the water.
- Planning for every conceivable search and rescue situation is beyond the scope of this Annex.

2. Policies

- The Coos County Sheriff's Office is responsible for searching for persons lost in remote areas and for Rescue operations (ORS401.560 and 401.573). The Rural Fire Protection Districts are responsible for urban rescue, i.e., building collapse due to natural disasters. The Coos County Public Works Department is the lead agency for the provision of heavy equipment. The State Building Codes, Building Division, is the lead agency for providing technical advice concerning structures.
- While Coos County is the lead agency in Rescue, it is the policy of Coos County that Rescue operations be a team effort of law enforcement, fire services, volunteers, other governmental agencies, and the private sector.

3. Situation

3.1 Emergency/Disaster Conditions and Hazards

Refer to the Coos County Hazard Analysis report.

3.2 Planning Assumptions

- The county Sheriff's Office has a search and rescue program made up of a limited number of regular officers, reserve officers, and trained Search and Rescue volunteers.
- The county cannot provide all necessary equipment and manpower to cope with all types of search and rescue missions. Mobile units which are organized, trained and deployed by the State and Federal government may be called upon for support (i.e., US Coast Guard, National Guard).

- Rescue operations, or water rescue, will be a team effort of law enforcement, fire service, trained search and rescue (SAR) personnel, and other agencies as appropriate under the Incident Command of the appropriate response agency.
- People will become lost, injured, or killed while outdoors, requiring SAR activities.
- An emergency or disaster can cause buildings to collapse or leave people stranded due to rising water, threatening lives and requiring prompt SAR or medical care.
- Large numbers of local residents and volunteers will initiate activities to assist in SAR operations and will require coordination and direction.

4. Concept of Operations

- The Coos County Sheriff's Office is responsible for SAR operations in both incorporated and un-incorporated areas of Coos County and will support SAR operations in cities and towns within Coos County.
- The Coos County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) may be activated to provide coordination, technical and administrative support to SAR operations. Similar provisions may be made from the State Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) to support local efforts.
- Coordination from the incident scene or from the local EOC to the State ECC will be through the normal radio and telephone capabilities, augmented by back-up direction and control systems. Local SAR field operations will utilize whatever communication means necessary to carry out effective SAR operations.
- If additional urban search and rescue capabilities are needed, this may be accomplished through mutual aid with existing jurisdictions which have the capability, or if they are impacted by a major event, through a request to the state for additional resources from the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System.
- The Coos County Sheriff's Office SAR Coordinator or IC (Incident Commander) will obtain a mission number from Oregon Emergency Management, OERS (Oregon Emergency Response System, for SAR missions. Local jurisdictions have the responsibility to establish criteria and standards for emergency workers whom they register. This may include the demonstrated proficiency of the worker to perform emergency activities as indicated by assignment and personnel class.

- Air support or reconnaissance may be requested through Oregon Emergency Management to assist the ground teams, as needed.
- Oregon Emergency Management will issue mission numbers to local authorities in response to downed or missing aircraft for ground search only, and will coordinate these missions with the Division of Aeronautics. The Department of Aviation is not part of ODOT.
- The United States Coast Guard directs all SAR operations on or above navigable waters (waters where the Coast Guard maintains navigational aids and/or where there is commercial shipping and navigation).
- Upon notification of a possible boating accident or possible drowning, the United States Coast Guard will notify the appropriate law enforcement agency and the local fire agency.
- The United States Air Force directs search operations for downed or missing military aircraft, scheduled airlines all aircraft carry people; change to “scheduled airlines” or things of national significance, or aircraft of international origin.
- Upon notification of the possibility of a downed aircraft in Coos County, the SAR Coordinator will coordinate with Oregon Emergency Management to assist with the location of the aircraft. Once located it becomes the Sheriff’s Office responsibility to reach the crash site and take appropriate actions.
- The Sheriff’s Office will request a SAR mission number from Oregon Emergency Management using proper procedures and activate other SAR units, as appropriate, when a possible location is determined.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Local

5.1.1 Sheriff

- Provides direction to SAR operations in cooperation with Emergency Management and is responsible for search and rescue operations.
- Identifies the emergency needs for equipment and supplies and ensures that they are available in convenient locations.
- Maintains a list of SAR personnel.
- Activate mutual aid with neighboring counties for assistance (COR SAR).
- Informs Emergency Management of needed resources to be requested from Oregon Emergency Management.

- Provides manpower for search and rescue activities under the direction and control of the Sheriff's Office.
- Trains and prepares for search and rescue activities through the SAR Coordinator.
- Registers volunteers involved in search and rescue through the SAR Coordinator.

5.1.2 Coos County Sheriff's Office/Dispatch/Emergency Management

- Secures SAR mission numbers from Oregon Emergency Management upon request from the SAR Coordinator, responding deputy, and emergency management. Unless you are assisting another county, in which case you will use their SAR number.
- When assisting another county, Coos County will utilize the existing SAR mission number assigned to the assisted county.
- Maintains SAR mission and training records, and forwards appropriate records reimbursement requests and claims to Oregon Emergency Management.
- Supports SAR operations with resource coordination and activation of the Coos County EOC, if required by the scope of the event.

5.1.3 Public Works

- Provides heavy equipment to support rescue operations.
- Assists with traffic and crowd control.

5.1.4 Rural Fire Protection Districts (RFPDs)

RFPDs conduct rescue operations commensurate with the availability of equipment and the degree of specialized training to include:

- Extricating trapped persons.
- Rendering essential medical aid at time of release and/or prior to removal.
- Accomplish other tasks commensurate with the situation and capabilities.
- Provide Incident Command for Technical Rescue operations.

- Public Safety Answering Point (C911SO) - Support SAR operations with prompt dispatch activities.
- Volunteer Organizations (ARES, etc.) - Establish membership standards in accordance with county and national standards and keep Emergency Management informed of the latest active membership lists and call-out procedures.

5.2 State

5.2.1 Oregon Emergency Management

- Coordinate state and regional SAR resources.
- Requests federal Urban SAR assistance when requested by the county.

5.3 Federal

5.3.1 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

FEMA tasks federal agencies to perform SAR activities under Declaration of Emergency or Major Disaster Declaration by the President.

5.3.2 Air Force Rescue Coordination Center (AFRCC)

AFRCC coordinates federal resources providing SAR assistance to states during non-disaster times (reference “National Search and Rescue Plan”). Contract with the RCC should always be through OEM. While this is true, contact with the RCC should always be through OEM. The RCC will probably not talk to a county from Oregon.

6. Operations by Time Phase

6.1 Before the Disaster

6.1.1 Sheriff

- Assists in recruiting and training volunteers in SAR skills.
- Appoints a SAR Coordinator who will control SAR Field Operations and serve as advisor to local SAR units.
- Assesses equipment and training needs.
- Maintains and distributes call-out list.
- Maintains emergency operating procedures.
- Maintains SAR personnel and equipment resource lists.
- Maintains procedures for implementation of SAR plan.

- Ensures that equipment is in proper working order and response personnel attain and retain proper certification to meet state and local requirements.

6.1.2 Emergency Management

- Maintains an operational EOC and EOC emergency operating procedures.
- Promotes survival and emergency preparedness education programs in consultation with local officials, volunteers, and civic service organizations to help minimize SAR incidents.

6.1.3 All Agencies/Organizations

Maintain appropriate emergency operating plans and procedures.

6.2 During the Disaster

6.2.1 SAR Coordinator

- Reports to an incident site and takes control of field operations or sets up an Incident Command Post, as appropriate.
- Obtains a mission number from Oregon Emergency Management or requests that the Sheriff's Office or Department of Emergency Management obtains the mission number.
- Notifies appropriate SAR units of activation. May request the Department of Emergency Management to assist with this function. Monitor manpower and communication needs and rescue activities.
- Requests additional resources, as needed. Resource requests should be made through the normal emergency management channels.
- Keeps a log of SAR activities during the mission.
- Advise Sheriff and County Road Master when situation warrants notification.
- Make feeding arrangements with Corrections Lieutenant when necessary for filed units.
- Provide rescue, first aid, self-help information to population on self assistance, as necessary.
- Give PIO status reports for press releases as operations continue.
- Prepare for recovery operations, with actions to include estimating capabilities and limitations, and directing the organizations and training of volunteers.

- Direct unit(s) to assist law enforcement services with traffic and crowd control during movement to shelters when requested.
- Searches that last longer than 24 hours, the Incident Command System (ICS) will be implemented. If circumstances warrant, the Incident Commander can implement ICS at any time.

6.2.2 Police Chiefs or Designees

The Police Chiefs will respond in the same manner as the Sheriff in their own political subdivisions. The Police Chief may request the Sheriff take over the SAR operations.

6.2.3 Emergency Management

- Obtains SAR Mission Number from Oregon Emergency Management upon request of the SAR Coordinator.
- Activates the EOC, if appropriate, and/or establishes necessary communications support.
- Coordinate the relocation and allocation of emergency equipment and supplies to key locations.
- Submits requests to Oregon Emergency Management for additional resources when local capabilities are exceeded.
- Supports SAR operations as requested by the Sheriff and/or SAR Coordinator.

6.2.4 SAR Units

Respond, as requested by the SAR Coordinator, Department of Emergency Management, or Coos County Sheriff's Office Dispatch.

6.2.5 Rural Fire Protection Districts

Provide for rescue operations commensurate with the availability of equipment and the degree of specialized training to include extrication of trapped persons or essential medical aid, if appropriate.

6.2.6 All Other Departments/Agencies

Support SAR operations as identified in emergency operating procedures or as requested by the Department of Emergency Management and/or the EOC Staff.

6.3 After the Disaster

6.3.1 SAR Coordinator

- Continues SAR operations until the mission number is terminated.

- Submits appropriate forms and reports to the local Department of Emergency Management within a reasonable amount of time after the operation/mission is terminated.
- Arranges for a critique of the mission, as appropriate, for the purpose of determining strengths and weaknesses in mission response and ways of improving future effectiveness for all responders.
- Notify Sheriff.
- Maintain liaison with appropriate emergency services staff to determine post-disaster environment and requirements for search and rescue assistance.

6.3.2 SAR Units

- Continue SAR mission until subject(s) has been located or the SAR Coordinator terminates the search.
- Submit appropriate forms and reports to the SAR Coordinator within 5 working days of operation/mission termination.
- Restore equipment, vehicles, forms, etc. to a state of operational readiness.
- Attend critique of SAR mission, as requested by the SAR Coordinator.

6.3.3 Emergency Management

- When receiving notification from the SAR Coordinator that the mission is terminated, notifies Oregon Emergency Management to terminate the mission number, allowing adequate time for volunteers to first return home.
- Files SAR Reports with Oregon Emergency Management within a reasonable amount of time after the operation/mission termination.
- Processes compensation claims for emergency workers (volunteers) resulting from SAR missions, as necessary.

7. Annex Development and Maintenance

The Coos Emergency Management department with the assistance of the Coos County Sheriff's Office SAR Coordinator is responsible for the development, exercise, and maintenance of this annex.

8. Sources of Further Information

“National Search and Rescue Plan”

State of Oregon “Emergency Management Plan”