

EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNCTION 4

FIREFIGHTING

ICS Function: Operations

LEAD: Camano Island Fire and Rescue
North Whidbey Fire and Rescue
Central Whidbey Fire and Rescue
South Whidbey Fire and Rescue
Oak Harbor Fire Department

SUPPORT: Island County DEM
WGH-EMS
ICOM

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose

To provide an organizational framework that will effectively utilize all available fire fighting apparatus and personnel within Island County, control the dispatching of such equipment and manpower to locations where needed, and provide for effective operations at the scene during an emergency/disaster.

B. Scope

This Emergency Support Function (ESF) addresses all firefighting activities including the detection and suppression of wildland, rural, and urban fires occurring separately or coincidentally with a significant natural or technological disaster. The scope of this section will not attempt to address details regarding mutual aid, regional fire mobilization responsibilities, and procedures that are contained in other documents.

II. POLICIES

A. During emergency situations, local fire agencies mobilize all available apparatus and personnel required to cope with the situation. Mutual Aid Agreements (MAA) are activated when initial resources are inadequate for the incident. When mutual aid

and county resources are exhausted, the process and planning for regional and state fire mobilization apply.

- B.** Each local, state or federal agency will assume the full cost of protection of the lands within its respective boundaries unless other arrangements are made. Fire protection agencies should not incur costs in jurisdictions outside their area without reimbursement unless other agreements between those jurisdictions exist.
- C.** Priority shall be given to saving lives and protecting property, in that order.
- D.** All Island County fire and emergency first response organizations have adopted NIMS ICS as the standard incident command system.

III. SITUATION

A. Emergency/Disaster Conditions

Fires generally start without prior warning and can originate or result from many causes. While local fire departments and districts are sized and equipped to handle normally occurring fires, they must be prepared through planning and practice to handle an overload of calls for all services.

B. Planning Assumptions

1. In the event of a large natural disaster, technological (man-caused) disaster, or terrorist act, large, damaging fires could occur in several locations.
2. During and after a disaster, some firefighting equipment will be damaged or not staffed due to firefighters also being victims.
3. Wheeled-vehicle access may be hampered by bridge failures, downed trees, landslides, etc., making road travel to incidents difficult or impossible. Normal water distribution systems may be inoperative or limited in capacity. Aerial attack by air tankers and helicopters should not be assumed.
4. Many first responders in Island County are volunteers. In a major disaster many firefighters and emergency medical technicians (EMT) will not be available.

IV. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. General

Fire suppression is divided into two distinct response categories:

1. Urban/Rural Fires
 - a. Local fire protection districts and municipal fire departments have the primary responsibility for the suppression and control of fires within their respective fire protection jurisdictions. For those incidents requiring additional support, MAA may be executed.
 - b. If local resources are exceeded, the responsible fire district may activate the state fire mobilization plan or after a declaration of emergency by the county, DEM would request resources through the State EOC.
2. Wild Fires
 - a. Local fire departments and districts will provide initial attack as per pre-established agreements with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). If local resources are exceeded, then the responsible fire official may activate the state fire mobilization plan.
 - b. A fire protection district that takes immediate action on DNR (State) protected lands outside of its jurisdictional boundaries, if such response could prevent the spread of the fire onto lands protected by the district, shall be reimbursed by the state agency for its reasonable fire suppression costs incurred until the responsible agency takes charge (per pre-established agreements).

B. Other Functional Capabilities:

1. Fire vehicles are equipped with radio communications between vehicles, stations and the central dispatch center (ICOM). This communications capability is extremely important when telephone communications are inoperable.
2. Fire vehicles, with the use of their sirens and public address systems, can be a valuable resource for disseminating warning and emergency information when not otherwise engaged in fire or medical missions
3. All fire agencies within Island County operate response vehicles, which have basic life support (BLS) equipment and supplies and trained personnel. In addition, many firefighters are trained to the advanced life support (ALS) level but they may not be so equipped. All fire services operate one or more ambulances, which can provide at a minimum BLS and transport.

C. National Incident Management System (NIMS)/Incident Command System (ICS)

1. ICS has been adopted by Island County and all emergency response organizations as the standard incident command system. All response organizations are conducting NIMS/ICS training and institutionalizing it in their operations and training.
2. Fire and other emergency responders normally organize as Type 5 incident command structures. All fire services and other emergency response organizations should be further trained and knowledgeable to organize and operate at the Type 4 level and participate in a Type 3, unified command structure.
3. In severe weather and other multi-incident situations fire districts should be ready to organize and operate as either an “incident complex” or as an area command in their jurisdictional area. If either incident complex or area command is implemented, ICOM and the Island County EOC will provide resource and communications support to the incident commander (IC) or area commander.
4. As resources permit, Central Whidbey Fire and Rescue (CWFR) will be asked provide a fire liaison to the county EOC to provide fire coordination and expertise. If not available from CWFR a liaison will be requested from North Whidbey Fire and Rescue.

5. Fire service ICs may request activation of the Sheriff’s mobile command post (The Bus) for incident support. Amateur radio operators to support extended operations may be requested from the Island County DEM or the Island County EOC, if activated.

D. Organization

Fire Departments and Districts

| District # | Name |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| FD #1 | Camano Island Fire and Rescue |
| FD #2 | North Whidbey Fire and Rescue |
| FD #3 | South Whidbey Fire and Rescue |
| FD #5 | Central Whidbey Fire and Rescue |
| City Fire Departments | Oak Harbor Fire Department |

(See Fire District Boundary Map, TAB A)

V. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Fire Districts and Departments

1. Provide suppression and control of fires within their respective fire protection jurisdictions (including those DNR or government lands that are contracted with the local district), and support other fire protection agencies if signatories to a mutual aid agreement, and support the provisions of both the Island County and Northwest Region Fire Resource Plans.
2. Provide medical response, which includes basic life support (BLS) and advanced life support (ALS).
3. Provide Incident Command (IC) for rescue operations and other non-fire operations as directed.
4. Support warning and evacuation operations if not engaged with primary fire or EMS responsibilities.

5. Act as the basic hazardous materials response IC and provide HAZMAT containment within capability until relieved. Washington State Patrol (WSP) is the designated HAZMAT IC in the unincorporated portions of Island County.

B. Island County DEM

Activate and operate Island County EOC. Serves as liaison between local fire jurisdictions, other response agencies and the state EOC for resource requests when the capabilities of local response agencies are exceeded.

C. Northwest Region Fire Defense Board

Coordinate resource assistance to regional jurisdictions in accordance with the State Mobilization Plan and the Regional Fire Defense Plan (See References D and E).

D. Washington State EMD/EOC

Coordinates assistance to local government for fire activities and mobilization resources under the provisions of the Washington State Fire Services Resource Mobilization Procedures.

VI. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

- A.** Normal emergency fire and EMS operations are handled with the resources of the responding fire agency including requested mutual aid. Initial response resources are centrally dispatched by ICOM according to incident types and prearranged resource packages.
- B.** Each fire service will maintain a resource list type classified by the most current NIMS type definitions. Copies of this list will be provided to ICOM and to the Island County DEM.
- C.** If and when a fire or other emergency requires resources beyond local mutual aid, other resources will be dispatched by ICOM and DEM will be advised that additional resources from outside the county may be required. DEM will either handle the request and coordinate with the state EOC or the EOC may be activated to handle resource requests.
- D.** When the emergency exceeds all available local and adjacent resources, the Washington State Fire Mobilization Plan may be activated.

- E.** In the event of a catastrophic event, each fire service may have to operate independently and rely on their preparedness and on-hand resources for the first 72 hours.
- F.** Department of Natural resources (DNR) and the United State Forest Service (USFS) are responsible for fighting wildland fires in areas under their jurisdiction. Individual fire districts may have separate working and mutual aid agreements with DNR and USFS.
- G.** In Island County, the fire services are equipped and have unique skills for rescue and EMS operations. Rescue operations will not exceed the equipment and training qualifications of the rescue personnel. When required additional outside resources should be requested.
- H.** The fire services of Island County may be asked to assist with warning and evacuation of residents in their jurisdictions when they are not otherwise engaged in fire, EMS, or rescue operations.

VII. RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

The resource requirements for every incident are unique. Fire service equipment inventories are established by the types and number of fires and incidents, types of structures in the area of responsibility, and any special requirements like HAZMAT, special rescue situations, etc. Resource dispatch is the responsibility of central dispatch, ICOM.

VIII REFERENCES

- A.** Washington State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan
- B.** Revised Code of Washington, 39.34.030, 38.54, 76.04, 43.63A, 38.52; and Title 52 and 35 RCW
- C.** Washington State Fire Services Resource Mobilization Plan, March 2005.
- D.** Northwest Region Fire Resource Mobilization Plan, July 2004
- E.** Island County CEMP References

IX. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

- A.** The term “firefighter” is intended to refer to both male and female personnel.
- B.** See CEMP References, Definitions and Acronyms

ESF 4, TAB A

FIRE DISTRICT BOUNDARY MAP

