

ANNEX F

FIREFIGHTING

Hidalgo County

Jurisdiction

APPROVAL & IMPLEMENTATION

Annex F Firefighting

Signature

Date

Signature

Date

RECORD OF CHANGES

Annex F Firefighting

ANNEX F

FIREFIGHTING

I. AUTHORITY

See Section 1 of the Basic Plan for general authorities.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this annex is to outline operational concepts and organizational arrangements for firefighting during emergency situations in our community. In addition to firefighting, the fire service has the responsibility for rescue, warning, and radiological protection operations as addressed in Annexes R, A, and D, respectively.

III. EXPLANATION OF TERMS

A. Acronyms

CHCFDs	Contracted Municipal and Unincorporated Area Fire Departments (fully paid, paid/volunteer, and fully volunteer)
DDC	Disaster District Committee
EMC	Emergency Management Coordinator
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
IC	Incident Commander
ICP	Incident Command Post
ICS	Incident Command System
JFO	Joint Field Office
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NRP	National Response Plan
RRP	Regional Response Plan
RUC	Regional Unified Command
SOC	State Operations Center
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
TFS	Texas Forest Service
TRRN	Texas Regional Resource Network
VFD	Volunteer Fire Department

B. Definitions

1. Consequence Management. Measures taken to protect public health and safety, restore essential government services, and provide emergency relief to governments, businesses, and individuals affected by the consequences of terrorism. Emergency management agencies normally have the lead role in consequence management. The requirements of crisis management and consequence management are combined in the National Response Plan (NRP).

2. Crisis Management. Measures taken to define the threat and identify terrorist acts, resolve terrorist incidents, investigate such incidents, and apprehend those responsible. Law Enforcement agencies will normally take the lead role in crisis management. The requirements of crisis management and consequence management are combined in the NRP.
3. Expedient Evacuation. Evacuations that must be conducted with little notice, frequently in response to a request from the Incident Commander (IC) at the scene.
4. Hazmat. Hazardous materials. The NRP defines Hazmat as a substance or material, including a hazardous substance, that has been determined by the Secretary of Transportation to be capable of posing an unreasonable risk to health, safety, and property when transported in commerce, and which has been so designated under the provisions of 49 CFR 172.101. The term is also intended to mean hazardous substances, pollutants, and contaminants as defined by the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan.
5. Incident Action Plan. An oral or written plan containing general objectives reflecting the overall strategy for managing an incident. It may include the identification of operational resources and assignments. It may also include attachments that provide direction and important information for management of an incident during one or more operational periods.
6. Terrorist Incident. Under the Homeland Security Act of 2002, terrorism is defined as activity that involves an act dangerous to human life or potentially destructive of critical infrastructure or key resources and is a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any State or other subdivision of the United States in which it occurs and is intended to intimidate or coerce the civilian population or influence a government or affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping. See Section 2 (15), Homeland Security Act of 2002, Pub. L. 107-296, 116 Stat. 213 5 (2002).

IV. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situation

1. This County depends on CHCFD's for fire protection.
2. The challenges of fire prevention and control are exacerbated when other emergency situations occur simultaneously or have already impacted the local area.
3. Uncontrolled fires may reach such proportions as to become a major emergency situation. If not promptly controlled, even small fires can threaten lives and cause significant destruction of property and the environment.
4. Natural hazards and emergencies, such as flash flooding, may necessitate the use of fire service resources.
5. Fire scenes may present problems requiring a response by law enforcement, public works, utilities, public health authorities, and environmental protection agencies. In these

cases, effective interagency coordination using the National Incident Management System (NIMS)/Incident Command System (ICS) is essential.

6. Large-scale emergencies, disasters, and acts of terrorism may adversely impact firefighting personnel, equipment, facilities, and communications systems.

B. Assumptions

1. During emergency situations, we will use our firefighting resources and those available pursuant to inter-local agreements, including [mutual aid plans and agreements with industry.
2. Our resources and those obtained pursuant to regional and inter-local agreements may prove insufficient during a major incident or disaster. State and/or federal resources will be available to augment our firefighting requirements.
3. During major emergency situations, our firefighting resources may be damaged and specialized supplies depleted.

V. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. General

1. The fire service has the primary responsibility for protecting our community from fire hazards, hazmat spills, and radiological incidents. Our firefighting resources include:
 - a. The Municipal Fire Department.
 - b. The Municipal Volunteer Fire Department.
 - c. Unincorporated Volunteer Fire Department.
2. Fire service responsibilities in emergency situations are basically the same as in daily operations. These responsibilities include fire control, hazmat and oil spill response, and radiological protection operations. The fire service is responsible for (all/certain) rescue operations. During emergency situations, fire service teams may also be assigned to perform additional emergency tasks. These tasks may include providing fire protection for temporary shelters, assisting law enforcement personnel in route alerting, or going door-to-door to warn citizens who cannot be reached by primary warning systems.

B. Implementation of NIMS/ICS

1. The first official responder on the scene of an emergency situation should initiate the ICS and establish an Incident Command Post (ICP). As other responders arrive, the individual most qualified to deal with the specific situation present should serve as the IC. For fire, hazmat, and radiological incidents, the senior firefighter will generally assume the role of IC. The IC will direct and control responding resources and designate emergency operating areas. The EOC will generally not be activated.
2. During major emergencies, disasters, or catastrophic incidents, it may be necessary to transition from the normal ICS structure to a Multiagency Coordination System. The EOC is central to this System, and functions as a conduit for coordinating information

and resources. The IC will manage and direct the on-scene response from the ICP. The EOC will mobilize and deploy resources for use by the IC, coordinate external resource and technical support, research problems, provide information to senior managers, disseminate emergency public information, and perform other tasks to support on-scene operations. In the event of a catastrophic incident, considerations will be made for the implementation of the Regional Response Plan (RRP).

C. Protective Action Recommendations

Fire service personnel are generally the most knowledgeable regarding the threats posed by fire, radiological materials, and other hazardous materials. As such, they are responsible for assessing threat hazards and recommending to the IC appropriate protective actions for emergency responders, including requirements for personal protective equipment. Fire service personnel are also responsible for recommending appropriate protective actions to ensure public safety in the immediate vicinity of a threat.

D. Evacuation Operations

1. The IC may direct an expedient evacuation at the incident site, isolation area, or protective action area associated with a fire, hazmat spill, or radiological incident. Fire service and other emergency responders on site will normally initiate the evacuation pending the arrival of follow-on forces.
2. Major fires, hazardous material spills, or a terrorist incident may require a large-scale evacuation. Law enforcement is the lead agency responsible for pre-planning evacuation of known risk areas and carrying out large-scale evacuation operations. During such evacuations, fire service teams may be tasked to:
 - a. Alert residents in the affected area who have not been warned by other means.
 - b. Evacuate individuals who require assistance.

E. Terrorist Incident Response

1. Crisis Management. Law enforcement agencies generally have the lead in terrorism crisis management activities. The fire service will provide support as requested. Refer to Annex V, Terrorist Incident Response, for more information on the response to terrorist threats and activities.
2. Consequence Management. Coordination will be paramount during terrorist incident consequence management activities due to multi-agency involvement and potentially overlapping roles and responsibilities. The ranking official from the agency with primary responsibility for the incident will assume the position of IC. The [Fire Service] will normally have the lead local role in consequence management for terrorist incidents involving conventional explosives, radiological materials, and chemical agents. During consequence management, the IC will coordinate response and recovery operations with law enforcement authorities conducting crisis management operations. Refer to Annex V, Terrorist Incident Response, Section V.B.2, for further information on terrorist incident consequence management.

F. Requesting External Assistance

1. If our local fire resources are inadequate to deal with an emergency situation, the Fire Chief/IC or other authorized official may request additional fire resources pursuant to inter-local (mutual aid) agreements to which local fire departments are a party. The (Fire Chief) may also request assistance from industries and businesses with firefighting resources that have agreed to assist us during emergencies.
2. If our fire service resources and those obtained pursuant to inter-local agreements are insufficient to deal with an emergency situation, statewide mutual aid will be requested in accordance with the *Texas Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Plan* (see *State of Texas Emergency Management Plan*, Annex F, Section IV.H).
3. If the foregoing resources are inadequate to deal with an emergency situation, the County Judge may request state firefighting assistance, in accordance with Section V.F. of the Basic Plan, from the DDC in McAllen.
4. During times of extreme fire danger, the TFS will pre-stage firefighting resources in several parts of the state. The EMC shall make requests for these resources to the DDC. During emergency situations where time is of the essence, the County Judge may make resource requests directly to a TFS Regional Fire Coordinator.

G. Actions by Phases of Emergency Management

1. Prevention
 - a. Enforce fire codes.
 - b. Conduct fire safety education programs for the public.
 - c. Recommend fire prevention activities such as brush clearance, outdoor burning restrictions, and use of fireworks when conditions warrant.
 - d. Maintain current information on the types and quantities of hazardous materials present in local businesses and industrial facilities.
 - e. Maintain current information on known fire hazards present in facilities such as refineries, factories, power plants, and other commercial businesses.
 - f. Operate the local warning system (see Annex A).
2. Preparedness
 - a. Maintain a list of all firefighting resources (see Annex M). In accordance with Section IX.A of the Basic Plan, [city/county] resources are entered into the Texas Regional Resource Network (TRRN), as required, to facilitate assistance pursuant to mutual aid agreements.
 - b. Inspect and maintain all equipment.
 - c. Stockpile specialized supplies.

- d. Ensure all fire service personnel are properly trained on fire control, hazmat response, rescue, and NIMS/ICS. Our emergency response personnel meet the NIMS national qualification and certification standards.
- e. Develop communications procedures to ensure adequate communications between fire units, law enforcement units, and other emergency responders.
- f. Plan and execute NIMS compliant training exercises for all firefighting personnel on a regular basis.
- g. Test, maintain, and repair equipment on a scheduled basis.
- h. Revise and update response plans at regular intervals.

3. Response

- a. Contain, control, and extinguish fires.
- b. Initiate rescue missions, as necessary.
- c. Alert and advise all emergency response personnel and decision-makers to the dangers associated with hazmat and fire during emergency operations.
- d. Control hazmat incidents within departmental capabilities giving priority to public and firefighter safety and protecting property, respectively (see Annex Q).
- e. Conduct radiological monitoring and assessment within departmental capability. Maintain an operational Radiological Protection Program in accordance with state and federal standards (see Annex D). The NRP Nuclear/Radiological Incident Annex addresses the federal response to incidents involving radiological materials.
- f. Initiate evacuation of emergency scenes, if necessary.
- g. Provide fire inspections and fire protection for temporary shelter and mass care facilities.

4. Recovery

- a. Perform fire inspections of restored or reconstructed buildings.
- b. Perform or assist in decontamination and cleanup.
- c. Assess damage to fire equipment and facilities, if necessary.
- d. Recommend condemnation of unsafe buildings.
- e. Review fire codes in relation to an incident or disaster and recommend improvements to County Commissioners.

VI. ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES
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A. General

1. Our normal emergency organization, described in Section VI.A and depicted in Attachment 3 of the Basic Plan, shall coordinate firefighting efforts conducted as part of emergency operations in accordance with NIMS. Most fires can be handled by fire service personnel, with limited support from one or two other emergency services, operating under an IC. The EOC will normally be activated during major emergencies and disasters involving significant fires or fires occurring simultaneously with other hazards. These situations may require the commitment of all emergency services and external assistance. In such incidents, transition to a Multiagency Coordination System is advisable. In the event of a catastrophic incident, considerations will be made for the implementation of RRP.
2. The Fire Marshall shall serve as the Chief Fire Officer and coordinate emergency firefighting operations. A fire officer shall normally serve as the IC for the response to fires, hazmat incidents, oil spills, and radiological incidents.
3. The Commissioner's Court may restrict outdoor burning and use of fireworks if drought conditions are determined to exist by the TFS (see Annex U, Legal).

B. Task Assignments

1. The CHCFD's will:
 - a. Coordinate all fire service activities.
 - b. Provide fire control and protection.
 - c. Assist in warning and operation of warning sirens (see Annex A).
 - d. Provide support for shelter/mass care operations (see Annex C).
 - e. Provide support for radiological protection (see Annex D).
 - f. Provide assistance during evacuations (see Annex E).
 - g. Respond to hazmat accidents/incidents (see Annex Q).
 - h. Enforce fire codes.
 - i. Prepare and execute inter-local agreements.
 - j. Provide support for other public safety operations, as necessary.
 - k. Conduct search and rescue operations (see Annex R).
 - l. Provide qualified individuals to staff the EOC and ICPs when activated.
2. The IC will:
 - a. Establish an ICP and control and direct emergency response resources.

- b. Assess the incident, request any additional resources needed, and provide periodic updates to the EOC, if activated.
- c. Determine and implement initial protective actions for emergency responders and the public in the vicinity of the incident site.
- d. Approve the Incident Action Plan and all requests pertaining to the procurement and release of incident resources.
- e. Establish a specific division of responsibilities between the incident command operation and the EOC, if activated.
- f. During an Incident of National Significance, make a situation assessment and coordinate resource needs, as required, with the NRP, ESF #4. Coordination shall be made through the Regional Unified Command (RUC), DDC, SOC, and TFS to the JFO (See NRP, ESF #4-Fire-fighting Annex).

3. Law Enforcement will:

Upon request of the IC, initiate evacuation actions and provide perimeter access control around incident sites.

4. The Road & Bridge Department will:

Upon request of the IC, provide heavy equipment support for fire control operations.

5. The TFS will:

- a. Detect and/or coordinate response to wildland fires in the state.
- b. Process requests for state firefighting assistance.
- c. Coordinate firefighting ESF group actions to develop and implement mutual aid programs and procedures.
- d. Coordinate firefighting activities and issues involving fire departments.
- e. Within capabilities, provide personnel and equipment to assist local governments and industry in conducting fire suppression operations.
- f. Conduct wildland fire training academies for state and local personnel.

6. The U.S. Forest Service will:

Upon request from the TFS, provide support for local fire control operations when U.S. Forest Service lands are threatened.

7. County Attorney will:

Upon request, assist the Commissioner's Court by drafting legal documents enforcing outdoor burning and/or the use of fireworks (see Annex U).

VII. DIRECTION AND CONTROL

A. General

1. For most emergency situations, an IC will establish an ICP to direct and control fire service operations at the scene from the ICP. The individual most qualified to deal with the specific type of emergency situation present should serve as the IC. This will typically be the senior fire service officer present. All fire service teams will carry out mission tasks assigned by the IC. The IC will be assisted by a staff, determined by the anticipated needs of the situation.
2. In some situations, the EOC may be activated without an incident command operation. This organizational arrangement is most likely when: (a) a hazard threatens, but has not yet impacted the local area (such as the predicted landfall of a hurricane), or (b) when a generalized threat exists and there is no identifiable incident site (as may be the case for a terrorist threat). During these situations, a senior fire service officer will normally report to the EOC to coordinate fire service actions.
3. External response agencies are expected to conform to the general guidance provided by our senior decision-makers and carry out mission assignments directed by the IC or the EOC. However, organized response units will normally work under the immediate control of their own supervisors.
4. In emergency situations where other jurisdictions or state or federal agencies are providing significant response resources or technical assistance, it is generally desirable to transition from the normal ICS structure to a Unified Area Command structure. This arrangement helps to ensure that all participating agencies are involved in developing objectives and strategies to deal with the emergency.

B. Incident Command System – EOC Interface

When both the EOC and an ICP are activated, it is essential to establish a division of responsibilities between the IC and the EOC. A general division of responsibilities is outlined in Section V.D of Annex N, Direction and Control.

C. Line of Succession

The line of succession for the Fire Marshal is:

1. Fire Marshal
2. Chief Deputy Fire Marshal
3. Deputy Fire Marshal

VIII. INCREASED READINESS ACTIONS

A. Readiness Level IV – Normal Conditions

See the mitigation and preparedness activities in paragraphs V.G.1 and V.G.2 above.

B. Readiness Level III – Increased Readiness

1. Monitor the situation and consider situation briefings for senior staff.
2. Alert key personnel, determine personnel availability, and update staff call lists.
3. Check readiness of all equipment and repair or replace as needed.
4. Check status of supply items and restock as needed.
5. Review inter-local agreements for use of firefighting resources operated by other agencies.
6. Review plans and procedures and update them, if necessary.

C. Readiness Level II – High Readiness

1. Alert personnel of possible emergency duty.
2. Place selected personnel and equipment on standby.
3. Identify personnel to staff the EOC and ICP when activated.
4. Prepare to implement inter-local agreements.

D. Readiness Level I– Maximum Readiness

1. Mobilize selected fire service personnel.
2. Consider precautionary deployment of personnel and equipment, if appropriate.
3. Dispatch fire service representative(s) to the EOC when activated.

IX. ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT

A. Reporting

In addition to reports that may be required by their parent organization, fire service departments participating in emergency operations should provide appropriate situation reports to the IC, or if an incident command operation has not been established, to the EOC. The IC will forward periodic reports to the EOC. Pertinent information will be incorporated into the Initial Emergency Report and periodic Situation Reports. The essential elements of information for the Initial Emergency Report and the Situation Report are outlined in Appendices 2 and 3 to Annex N (Direction and Control).

B. Records

1. Activity Logs. The IC and, if activated, the EOC, shall maintain accurate logs recording significant operational activities, the commitment of resources, and other information relating to emergency response and recovery operations. See Section IX.B of Annex N,

Direction and Control, for more information on the types of information that should be recorded in activity logs.

2. Documentation of Costs. Expenses incurred in carrying out emergency response operations for certain hazards, such as radiological accidents or hazmat incidents may be recoverable from the responsible party. Hence, all fire service elements will maintain records of personnel and equipment used and supplies consumed during large-scale emergency operations.

C. Preservation of Records

Vital records should be protected from the effects of a disaster to the maximum extent feasible. Should records be damaged during an emergency situation, professional assistance in preserving and restoring those records should be obtained as soon as possible.

D. Resources

1. A listing of local fire department resources is found in Annex M, Resource Management.
2. Our CHCFD's have implemented a firefighting equipment acquisition program to ensure our equipment complies with the relevant NIMS performance and interoperability standards. Our firefighting resources are categorized by size, capacity, capability, and skill.

E. Communications

The fire service communications network is shown in Appendix 1. The fire service will operate a base station in the EOC communications room during response operations.

F. Post Incident Review

For large-scale emergency operations, the EMC shall organize and conduct an after action critique of emergency operations in accordance with the guidance provided in Section IX.F of the Basic Plan. The After Action Report will serve as the basis for an Improvement Plan.

X. ANNEX DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

- A.** The Fire Marshal is responsible for developing and maintaining this annex.
- B.** This annex will be revised annually and updated in accordance with the schedule outlined in Section X of the Basic Plan.
- C.** Departments and agencies assigned responsibilities in this annex are responsible for developing and maintaining SOPs covering those responsibilities.

XI. REFERENCES

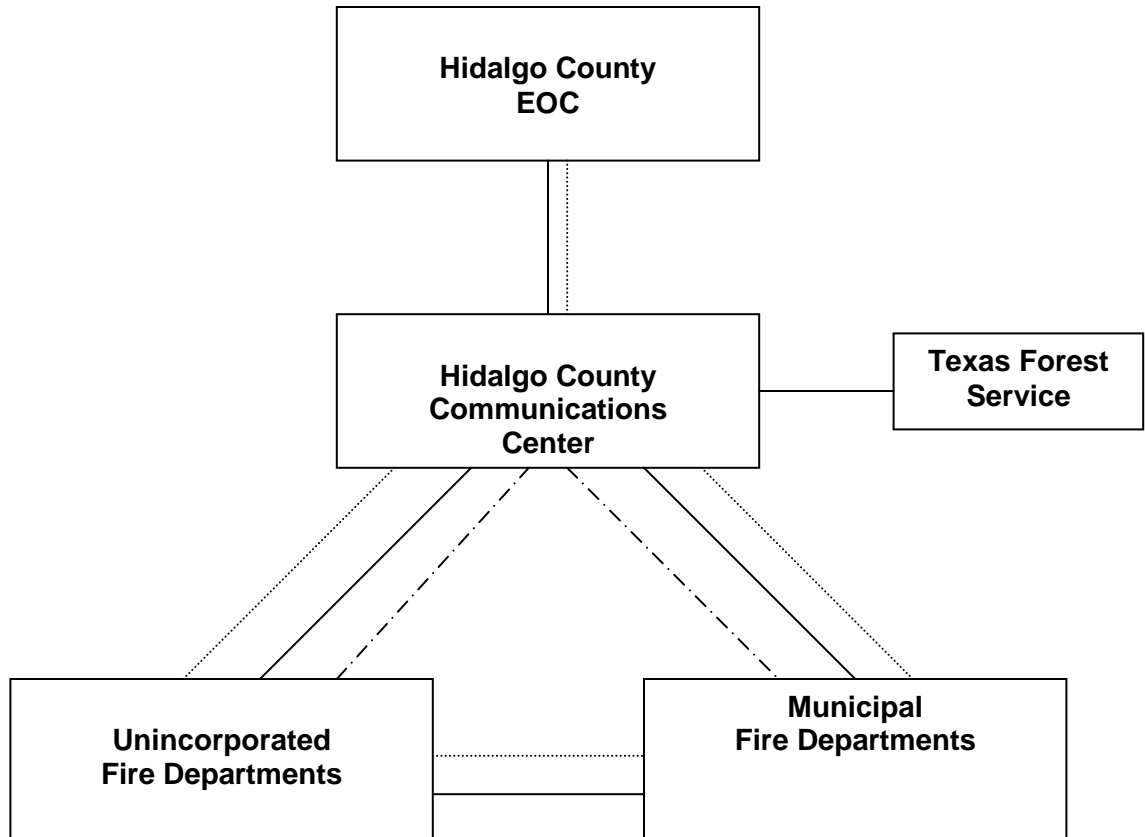
- A.** *State of Texas Emergency Management Plan.*

B. *Texas Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Plan.*

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Fire Service Communications Network

FIRE SERVICE COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK



LEGEND:

- Phone
- VHF Radio
- - - - - Cell Phone