

PROCEDURE 23 - Emergency Response Agreements

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Synopsis

This procedure provides guidance for the preparation and updating of Emergency Response Agreements (ERA) between the National Weather Service (NWS) and local off-site emergency response organizations. The procedure applies to all NWS facilities, work locations and employees and supports the preparation of a site-specific Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP) (See Procedure 5, Occupant Emergency Plan; Procedure 12, Confined Space Entry; and Procedure 1, Fall Protection).

Initial Implementation Requirements:

- **Analyze Site Operations versus Procedure Requirements**
- **Develop/Obtain Documentation/Information required for Site**
 - Prepare list of Local Response Organizations.(23.3.1)
 - Develop ERAs (if required) (23.3.2)
 - Develop ERA Resources List. (23.3.4c.2)
 - Prepare Site Layout Plan for Local Emergency Response Organizations (23.3.4c.3), as required.
- **Designate Person to Administer ERA Procedure Requirements**

Recurring and Annual Task Requirements:

- **Review/Update Documentation/Information required for Site**
 - Update list of Local Response Organizations.(23.3.1)
 - Update ERAs (if required) (23.3.3)
 - Update ERA Resource List. (23.3.4c.2)
 - Amend Site Layout for Local Emergency Response Organizations, as required. (23.3.4c.3)

Emergency Response Agreements Checklist

Requirements	Reference	YES	NO	N/A	Comments
Is initial and annual review of this procedure conducted and documented?	23.4.2				
Has a list of Local Off-Site Emergency Response Organizations been developed?	23.3.1				
Has a need for Emergency Response Agreements (ERA) with local emergency response organizations been determined?	23.3.2				
Have existing ERAs been evaluated and updated to ensure that they contain the information contained in this procedure?	23.3.3 23.3.4a-e				
Does all ERAs for this facility, contain the purpose of the ERA, the definition of all responsibilities, areas of cooperation, and terms of agreement and approvals?	23.3.4a-e Attachment A				
Are all new and existing ERAs forwarded and reviewed by the appropriate NWS personnel?	23.3.5				
Are the ERAs being maintained at the facility which entered into the agreement?	23.3.8				
Are copies of the ERAs forwarded to the Regional or Operating Unit Safety or Environmental /Safety Coordinator?	23.3.8				

23 EMERGENCY RESPONSE AGREEMENTS

23.1 Purpose and Scope

As part of its goal to provide a safe and healthful workplace, the National Weather Service (NWS) has provided guidance for the preparation and updating of Emergency Response Agreements (ERAs) between the NWS and local off-site emergency response organizations. This procedure should be considered for all NWS facilities and work locations. ERAs are highly recommended for facilities and work locations that are remote, or where unusual or hazardous conditions exist. This procedure will support the preparation of a site-specific OEP. (See Occupational Safety and Health Procedure #5, "Occupant Emergency Plan").

23.2 Definitions

Emergency. Any situation that poses an actual threat to the environment or to the health or safety of workers or the public.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS). The locally operated and dispatched emergency organization that responds with ambulance and rescue equipment to provide first aid and medical supplies at the scene. EMS handles patient stabilization and transportation to a fixed medical facility.

Emergency Response Agreement. A formal or informal agreement between the NWS and a response organization which outlines the basic agreement for cooperation during an emergency situation. This agreement should be in writing if possible. If it is not possible to obtain written agreement, at least a telephone conversation log should be kept on file.

Field Office. A Field Office may include the following: Weather Forecast Office (WFO), River Forecast Center (RFC), Weather Service Office (WSO), and a Data Collection Office (DCO).

Hazardous Incident Response Team (HIRT). The off-site organization responsible for responding to hazardous materials incidents such as chemical spills/releases and fire involving hazardous materials.

Operating Unit. For the purpose of this procedure, Operating Unit includes the National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP), National Data Buoy Center (NDBC), NWS Training Center (NWSTC), National Reconditioning Center (NRC), Radar Operations Center (ROC), or the Sterling Field Support Center (SFSC).

Station Manager. For the purpose of this procedure, the Station Manager shall be either the NWS Regional Director; Directors of Centers under NCEP (Aviation Weather Center, NP6; Storm Prediction Center, NP7; and Tropical Prediction Center, NP8); Directors of the NDBC, NWSTC, and Chiefs of NRC, ROC and SFSC facilities; or Meteorologist in Charge (MIC), Hydrologist in Charge (HIC), or Official in Charge (OIC).

23.3 Procedure

23.3.1 A listing of local off-site emergency response organizations shall be obtained and maintained. This list should include all local organizations that may be contacted to provide emergency assistance to the NWS facility.

23.3.2 As part of the preparation of a site OEP, it is highly recommended that the NWS facility contact local off-site emergency response organization(s) to determine a need for ERA. ERAs may be established with the following community response organizations for coverage of properties, personnel and equipment:

- a. Local fire department(s).
- b. HIRT (where available).
- c. Local police department.
- d. Local county EMS.
- e. Local hospitals or clinics.
- f. Civil Air Patrol.

23.3.3 Existing ERAs should be evaluated and updated to ensure that they contain the information listed in section 23.3.4 of this procedure.

23.3.4 If a new ERA is being prepared, the new document should contain, but is not limited to, the following sections:

- a. **PURPOSE:** This section describes the purpose of the ERA, organization with whom the agreement is made, the NWS facility entering into the agreement, and the address of the facility. This is a standard format and may be taken directly from an existing document, substituting the appropriate organization name. (Attachment A is an example of an ERA.)
- b. **RESPONSIBILITIES:** This section has the following two goals:
 - (1) To define the responsibilities of NWS as related to the agreement with the emergency response organization.
 - (2) To define the responsibilities of the outside organizations responding to the NWS facility in an emergency.
- c. **AREAS OF COOPERATION:** This section has several divisions in a relatively standard format. They are:
 - (1) Notification: This section of the ERA defines how the NWS will notify off-site organizations that their services are needed at the facility. This is usually done through the 911 service in the area. However, some organizations are not dispatched through this service and the notification method should be verified with the organization entering into the agreement.
 - (2) Resources: This section of the ERA lists resources the NWS will make available to the responding organization. This usually includes

equipment, materials and personnel.

- (3) Exercises/Visitation: This section of the ERA sets the groundwork to allow off-site organizations the opportunity to visit the NWS site and become familiar with the operations, layout of the facility, and the personnel with whom they will interact during an emergency. A visit may be especially important when the facility is remote, difficult to find or where unusual or hazardous conditions exist.
 - (4) Other: Additional information (radio communication frequencies, emergency planning information, media relations, etc.) may be appropriate depending on the outside organization.
- d. **TERMS OF AGREEMENT**: This section has a standard format. It states the conditions for continuation and cancellation.
 - e. **APPROVAL**: The completed ERA should be signed by a designated NWS official and the lead official of the off-site organization.

23.3.5 Upon completion of a new draft ERA or upon updating an existing ERA, the ERA should be reviewed by the appropriate NWS personnel for comments or suggestions.

- a. The list of reviewers may include, if appropriate, the following:
 - (1) Safety or Environmental/Safety Focal Point.
 - (2) Station Manager.
 - (3) Regional Maintenance Specialist.
 - (4) Regional or Operating Unit Safety or Environmental/Safety Coordinator.
 - (5) Regional Director, as appropriate.
- b. A meeting with outside organization is suggested to provide a tour of the NWS facility if conditions of the facility or its location may effect the ability of outside organization to respond to an emergency.

23.3.6 The ERA shall be maintained at the facility which entered into the agreement. A copy of the ERA shall be forwarded to the Regional or Operating Unit Safety or Environmental/Safety Coordinator.

23.3.7 Attachment A provides a sample ERA that can be used as a guideline for developing a site-specific ERA.

23.4 Quality Control

23.4.1 Regional or Operating Unit Environmental/Safety Coordinators

- a. Shall perform an annual assessment of the regional headquarters facilities or operating unit to monitor and promote compliance with the requirements of this procedure.

- b. Shall perform assessments or designate personnel to perform assessments of all field offices to monitor and promote compliance with the requirements of this procedure every two years.

23.4.2 Station Manager

Shall review or delegate review of this procedure on an annual basis to ensure that the facility is complying with its requirements. Confirmation of this review shall be forwarded to the Regional or Operating Unit Environmental/Safety Coordinator.

23.4.3 NWS Headquarters (NWSH)

- a. The NWS Safety Office shall perform an annual assessment of the NWSH facilities to ensure that the facilities are in compliance with this procedure.
- b. The NWSH Safety Office shall periodically perform an assessment of the regional headquarters and field offices to ensure compliance with this procedure. The frequency of these regional and field office assessments shall be determined by the NWSH Safety Office.
- c. Requests for clarification concerning this procedure shall be directed to the NWSH Safety Office.

23.5 Responsibilities

23.5.1 Regional or Operating Unit Safety or Environmental/Safety Coordinator*

Shall monitor and coordinate to promote compliance with the requirements of this procedure for the regional headquarters, and field offices or operating units.

23.5.2 Station Manager*

- a. Shall ensure that ERAs are in place, if necessary, to ensure adequate response to on-site emergencies.
- b. Shall review the existing ERAs on an annual basis to determine if the agreement is still fulfilling the needs of the NWS or if any organizational or policy changes have occurred that would affect the existing ERA.

23.5.3 Safety or Environmental/Safety Focal Point*

Shall ensure that any responsibilities delegated to them by the Station Manager are implemented in accordance with the requirements of this procedure.

23.5.4 Employees

- a. Individual employees affected by this procedure are required to read, understand and comply with the requirements of this procedure.
- b. Report unsafe or unhealthful conditions and practices to their supervisor, safety or environmental/safety focal point.

NOTE: * - Reference NWS PD 50-11 for complete list of responsibilities http://www.weather.gov/directives/050/pd05011c.pdf
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23.6 References

Incorporated References. The following reference is incorporated as a whole or in part into this procedure. The reference can provide additional explanation or guidance for the implementation of this procedure.

23.6.1 National Weather Service Occupational Safety and Health Procedure 5, “Occupant Emergency Plan.”

23.7 Attachments

Attachment A. Sample Emergency Response Agreement between the Local County Emergency Medical Service and the National Weather Service.

Attachment B. Emergency Response Agreements (WFO Springfield, MO)

ATTACHMENT A

Sample Emergency Response Agreement between the Local County Emergency Medical Service and the National Weather Service

I. PURPOSE

This emergency response agreement is to establish a framework of cooperation between _____ local Emergency Medical Service (EMS) and the National Weather Service Facility for the purpose of planning, preparedness, and response for emergency situations at _____.

(Type the facility name)

II. RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. Once on site, EMS will report to the NWS Safety or Environmental/Safety Focal Point for specific assistance requests and integration into the response effort at the scene.
- b. EMS will supply medical support on site which will include triage, stabilizing the patient, and transporting the patient from a triage area to a fixed medical facility.
- c. NWS will provide supporting assistance as requested by EMS, if available.

III. AREAS OF COOPERATION

- a. Notification: NWS will notify the Emergency Centralized Communications Organization (911, where applicable) of emergency which requires the assistance of EMS at the NWS facility. The Emergency Centralized Communications Organization will in turn notify the appropriate emergency response organizations, in this case EMS.
- b. NWS Resources: NWS resources are available to EMS upon request in the event of any emergency and may be obtained by contacting the Station Manager.
- c. Visitation: If it is determined that conditions of the NWS facility or the location of the facility may impact the ability of the EMS to deliver emergency response services, the NWS will host a site visit by the EMS during the month of _____. This will allow EMS personnel the opportunity to become familiar with the operation of the facility and personnel working at the NWS facility.
- d. Public Affairs: NWS will conduct all public affairs activities for on-site emergencies. EMS will refer all requests for information to the Station Manager at (____) - - - .

TERMS OF AGREEMENT

This ERA is effective upon signature by both parties and will continue until canceled by either party with a 30-day advanced written notice to the other. Amendments or modifications to this ERA may be made upon written agreement by both parties.

APPROVED FOR _____ COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE

Supervisor, County Emergency Medical Service

Date

APPROVED FOR THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

Station Manager, NWS

Date

ATTACHMENT B
Emergency Response Agreements for WFO Springfield, MO

January 20, 2000

Emergency response services at WFO Springfield are coordinated through Greene County, MO Emergency Services. Response for medical emergency, fire, law enforcement and hazardous material incidents are all handled by Greene County Emergency Services via the 911 system. One Emergency Response Agreement was developed to document the relationship with Greene County Emergency Services.

WFO Springfield has made arrangements for establishing a remote work/communication site should NWS personnel be forced to evacuate the WFO facility. The primary evacuation office is at the Springfield-Branson Regional Airport in space to be provided by the FAA. Should the primary evacuation office be unavailable, two alternate evacuation offices have been arranged. One is located at the Greene County 911 Dispatch Center, and the other at Missouri Highway Patrol, Troop D headquarters. ERAs have been developed to document the evacuation office arrangements with the FAA and the Highway Patrol. The arrangement with Greene County Emergency Services was documented in the ERA for emergency response.

Three ERAs are included in this Attachment:

ERA between Green County, MO Emergency Services and NWS WFO, Springfield, MO

ERA between the FAA and NWS WFO, Springfield, MO

ERA between Missouri Highway Patrol Troop D and NWS WFO, Springfield, MO

The existence of these ERAs and the procedures to implement them are reflected in the Emergency Station Duty Manual Section 4.01, Building Security/Fire/Natural Disaster/Evacuation.

**EMERGENCY RESPONSE AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
GREENE COUNTY, MISSOURI EMERGENCY SERVICES
AND THE
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE,
WEATHER FORECAST OFFICE, SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI**

I. PURPOSE

This Emergency Response Agreement is to establish a framework of cooperation between Greene County, MO Emergency Services and the National Weather Service (NWS), Weather Forecast Office (WFO), Springfield, MO for the purpose of planning, preparedness, and response for off-normal/unusual occurrences and emergency situations at WFO Springfield.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. WFO Springfield shall:

1. Request emergency response through the Greene County 911 system.
2. Provide available supporting assistance as requested by Greene County or responding organizations.
3. Provide available resources, as applicable, for use by responding organizations.
4. Participate in emergency preparedness planning by maintaining active membership in the Greene County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC).

b. Greene County Emergency Services shall:

1. Provide centralized contact and dispatch for emergencies that require response by medical, fire, law enforcement, and hazardous material response organizations.
2. Continue to monitor emergency situations based on updates from WFO Springfield and emergency responders.
3. Provide facilities for WFO Springfield personnel to conduct work should an evacuation of the WFO be necessary and use of the primary backup facility be impossible.

AREAS OF COOPERATION

- a. Notification: WFO Springfield will notify Greene County Emergency Services via the 911 system when an emergency occurs. Greene County Emergency Services will in turn notify and dispatch the appropriate emergency response agencies.

- b. NWS Resources: WFO Springfield resources are available to emergency responders upon request and may be obtained by contacting the Station Manager.
- c. Visitation: WFO Springfield will host a site visit by Greene County Emergency Services and associated emergency response organizations during the month of April 2000. This visit will allow emergency personnel the opportunity to become familiar with the operations and personnel at the facility, independently assess hazards at the site, identify potential resources, form preliminary response strategies, and suggest changes that could improve the safety of the facility.

d. Other:

Once on site, emergency responders will report to the senior NWS official on site for specific assistance requests and integration into the response effort at the scene. This person will be either the Station Manager or Lead Meteorologist.

NWS will conduct all public affairs activities for on-site emergencies. Emergency responders will refer all requests for information to the Station Manager, Bill Davis at (417) 889-5785.

IV. TERMS OF AGREEMENT

This ERA is effective upon signature by both parties and will continue until canceled by either party with a 30-day advanced written notice to the other. Amendments or modifications to this ERA may be made upon written agreement by both parties.

APPROVED FOR GREENE COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES

Supervisor, Greene County Emergency Services

Date

APPROVED FOR THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

Station Manager, WFO Springfield, MO

Date

**EMERGENCY RESPONSE AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION,
SPRINGFIELD-BRANSON REGIONAL AIRPORT
AND THE
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE,
WEATHER FORECAST OFFICE, SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI**

I. PURPOSE

This Emergency Response Agreement is to establish a framework of cooperation between the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) at Springfield-Branson Regional Airport and the National Weather Service (NWS), Weather Forecast Office (WFO), Springfield, MO for the purpose of providing work space and communications should a situation force evacuation of the WFO Springfield facility.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. WFO Springfield shall:

Inform the FAA of facility evacuation and request use of the space identified in this ERA.

b. FAA Springfield-Branson Regional Airport shall:

Provide access to two unused phone jacks and counter space in the FAA Tower while the WFO evacuation is in force.

III. AREAS OF COOPERATION

a. Notification: WFO Springfield will notify the FAA of their intention to use the FAA space by calling the FAA tower at (417) 869-5284 or by dialing "#128" on the phone located at the tower entrance.

b. Visitation: WFO Springfield personnel will visit the FAA tower during the month of April 2000. This visit will allow WFO personnel to become familiar with FAA personnel, the location and use of the tower phone, and provide an opportunity to practice setup of communications using the phone jacks provided by the FAA.

c. Other:

NWS will conduct all public affairs activities for on-site emergencies. FAA personnel will refer all requests for information to the Station Manager, Bill Davis at (417) 889-5785.

IV. TERMS OF AGREEMENT

This ERA is effective upon signature by both parties and will continue until canceled by either party with a 30-day advanced written notice to the other. Amendments or modifications to this ERA may be made upon written agreement by both parties.

APPROVED FOR FAA, SPRINGFIELD-BRANSON REGIONAL AIRPORT

Supervisor, FAA, Springfield-Branson Regional Airport

Date

APPROVED FOR THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

Station Manager, WFO Springfield, MO

Date

**EMERGENCY RESPONSE AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
MISSOURI HIGHWAY PATROL TROOP D
AND THE
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE,
WEATHER FORECAST OFFICE, SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI**

I. PURPOSE

This Emergency Response Agreement is to establish a framework of cooperation between Missouri Highway Patrol Troop D and the National Weather Service (NWS), Weather Forecast Office (WFO), Springfield, MO for the purpose of providing work space and communications should a situation force evacuation of the WFO Springfield facility.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. WFO Springfield shall:

Inform the Highway Patrol of facility evacuation and request use of the space identified in this ERA.

b. Missouri Highway Patrol Troop D shall:

Provide access to workspace and phone lines at Troop D headquarters should an evacuation of WFO Springfield be necessary and use of the primary backup facility be impossible.

III. AREAS OF COOPERATION

a. Notification: WFO Springfield will notify Missouri Highway Patrol Troop D of their intention to use the space at Troop D headquarters by calling (417) 895-6568 when an evacuation occurs.

b. Visitation: WFO Springfield personnel will visit the Troop D headquarters during the month of April 2000. This visit will allow WFO personnel to become familiar with Troop D personnel, the location of the headquarters, and provide an opportunity to practice setup of communications using the phone jacks provided.

c. Other:

NWS will conduct all public affairs activities for on-site emergencies. Highway Patrol personnel will refer all requests for information to the Station Manager, Bill Davis at (417) 889-5785.

IV. TERMS OF AGREEMENT

This ERA is effective upon signature by both parties and will continue until canceled by either party with a 30-day advanced written notice to the other. Amendments or modifications to this ERA may be made upon written agreement by both parties.

APPROVED FOR MISSOURI HIGHWAY PATROL TROOP D

Supervisor, Missouri Highway Patrol

Date

APPROVED FOR THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

Station Manager, WFO Springfield, MO

Date