



FEMA

US&R PROGRAM DIRECTIVE – 2013-015

October 23, 2013

FOR: National Urban Search & Rescue Response System
Task Force Representatives

FROM: Fred Endrikat, Chief
Urban Search and Rescue Branch

SUBJECT: US&R Program Directive 2013-015 – OREEP – Phase III Implementation

The purpose of this National Urban Search & Rescue (US&R) Response System (the System) Program Directive is to implement Phase III of the System's Readiness Assessment Program (RAP), known as the Operational Readiness Exercise and Evaluation Program (OREEP).

The System's Strategic Plan highlights specific goals and objectives for operational readiness exercises to shift the emphasis from validating training attendance to emphasizing training performance and integrating Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) concepts and guidelines into System exercises and evaluations.

The System began to employ the RAP in 2007 to establish standards and assess the operational, logistical, and management readiness of the 28 System task forces. Phase I consists of an annual readiness self-evaluation being conducted by all task forces. Phase II consists of an on-site Administrative Readiness Evaluation (ARE), conducted by US&R Branch staff and System peers, to validate the task forces' self-evaluation scoring. The goal of Phase II is to conduct one ARE for each of the 28 task forces over a three-year cycle.

Since 1992, System task forces have conducted individual preparedness exercises. These exercises have ranged from skillset based, modular type exercises with a limited number of personnel and activities, to conducting full-scale Type I task force mobilization exercises. The US&R Readiness Cooperative Agreement *Statement of Work* states in Section VIII. B. 2. - 2.: "As funding permits, conduct at least one task force mobilization or deployment exercise during the Cooperative Agreement period of performance. The task force is encouraged to exercise as many task force members as possible during this cooperative agreement."

Currently, there is no System exercise program utilizing the HSEEP concepts to objectively evaluate task force operational readiness. Therefore, the US&R Branch is providing guidance to implement the OREEP including procedures and documents for the US&R task forces to successfully plan, coordinate, and deliver an exercise following the HSEEP concepts. The US&R Branch shall administer the OREEP through the System task forces with assistance of task force peer personnel. The goal is to have each task force evaluated at least once every three years.

REQUIRED ACTIONS

The National US&R Response System shall implement the Phase III – Operational Readiness Exercise and Evaluation Process (OREEP) within the individual task force organizations. The OREEP document attached shall be included in the System’s Readiness Assessment Program (RAP) Manual (under development) that will include all phases of evaluation.

When conducting an OREEP exercise, a task force will be evaluated on five modules:

- Mobilization
- Transportation of personnel and cache
- Establishing a Base of Operations (BoO)
- Onsite Operations
- Demobilization

Each System task force shall develop a three-year Training and Exercise Plan (TEP) (*updated annually and submitted to the US&R Branch Training Coordinator*), using HSEEP principles adhering to the following guidelines:

- Shall be submitted to the US&R Branch with the annual task force self-evaluation.
- Include all five modules over the three years:
 - Anticipated to be one or more modules per year; or
 - Complete all modules during a Deployment Exercise to meet the recommendation in one calendar year.
- An annual report will be provided to the US&R Branch on TEP progress.
- A no-notice activation of a task force will not take the place of an OREEP requirement; however an outside evaluation completed during a “notice” activation, such as a National Level Exercise (NLE), is acceptable.
- The scheduling, duration, and location of an exercise will be at the task force’s discretion.
- The task force shall identify outside observer(s) from within the System (peer personnel) to be present and to evaluate the exercise.
- The type of exercise selected by the task force should be consistent with its TEP.
- The scenarios used in the exercise must be tailored toward validating capabilities, and should be based on the task force’s risk/vulnerability assessment.
- After Action Reports/Improvement Plans (AAR/IPs) created for exercises must conform to the System’s template.
- Draft AAR/IP must be developed based on information from the US&R OREEP Toolkit.
- Corrective actions shall be developed from AAR/IP recommendations.
- All AAR/IP’s shall be submitted to and will be maintained by the US&R Branch.
- The US&R Branch will retain the right to attend and participate in the evaluation of exercises.

The OREEP Toolkit can be accessed at the following link:

http://usarcd.org/oreep_templates.php.

APPROVAL

Issue is approved for FEMA National US&R Response System implementation:

Signed:

Fred Endrikat, Chief, Urban Search and Rescue Branch

October 23, 2013

Date

Implementation Date: Immediate

Re-issue / Expiration Date: October 23, 2016

Attachments:

PHASE III – OREEP (07-26-2013)

cc:

US&R Strategic Group
US&R Operations Group
US&R Branch Staff
FEMA Regional ESF #9 Representatives