

# Massachusetts Emergency Support Function 4

## ***FIRE FIGHTING***

### **Responsible Agencies**

#### **State Agencies<sup>1</sup>**

##### ***Primary State Agency***

Department of Fire Services

##### ***Supporting State Agencies***

Department of Conservation & Recreation

#### **Supporting Organizations**

Massachusetts Fire Mobilization Committee

Massachusetts Fire Districts

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<sup>1</sup> The Primary and Supporting State Agencies are designated as Emergency Response Agencies in accordance with Executive Order 144.

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Purpose

The Massachusetts Emergency Support Function 4 (ESF-4) *Fire Fighting* provides a framework for coordination and cooperation across state agencies to provide state support to local governments for detecting and suppressing urban, rural, and wildland fires resulting from, or coincidental with, an emergency or major disaster. These efforts involve the mobilization of fire, rescue and emergency services consisting of personnel and equipment to aid in minimizing injury and loss of life, minimizing property damage, and adverse environmental and economic impacts.

## 1.2 Scope

This annex is applicable to all naturally occurring and/or man-made urban, rural, wildland or any interface between these environments resulting in a fire emergency requiring state level support. This annex provides the basis for state-supported firefighting services when it is anticipated that local, state, and/or tribal resource capabilities are insufficient or exceeded in response to a fire emergency. All agencies and organizations under ESF-4 are expected to support the coordination and management of firefighting operations in conjunction with MEMA/SEOC leadership and local Incident Commander(s).

## 1.3 Policies

- This annex is intended to support, not supplant, existing local, state, or federal plans or policies related to the fire service, including the Statewide Fire and EMS Mobilization Plan.
- Local Incident Commanders will have primary responsibility for situation assessment and determination of resource needs and will have tactical control of on-scene resources.
- State assistance provided to cities and towns may consist of personnel, equipment, facilities, materials, and supplies, and/or subject matter expertise.
- State assistance through ESF-4 will only be provided once a city or town has fully committed all fire service resources available to it, including resources available through existing mutual aid agreements and private-sector resources that the jurisdiction may have contracted.

## **2.0 SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS**

### **2.1. Situation**

The management and coordination of a large firefighting operation is complex and may involve multiple agencies and jurisdictions. Fires that are potentially of disastrous proportion, or which coincide with another disaster situation, will place stress on the resources of local entities. A major disaster or emergency incident may result in numerous urban, rural, and wildland fires. Ignition sources normally of little concern can become more dangerous under a disaster condition. The likelihood of increased instances of hazardous weather (i.e. heat and droughts) due to continued climate change threatens to further exacerbate the potential for fire incidents throughout the Commonwealth.

In disaster conditions, fires can spread rapidly, cause severe damage, and seriously threaten lives and property. Fire departments in the immediate vicinity of the disaster will likely become fully committed and stretched beyond response capacity. Local fire agencies and other firefighting resources will be difficult to obtain, manage, coordinate, and utilize due to the disruption of communication, transportation, utility, and water systems within disaster localities.

### **2.2. Planning Assumptions**

- Local governments have emergency management resources, plans, and procedures already in place.
- Most incidents that require fire service assets are local in scope and can be addressed by local or state agencies as part of their normal day-to-day operations or existing mutual aid systems, using resources that are readily available to them.
- When an incident occurs, local governments will use their own response resources first, supplemented as needed by resources available through mutual aid or private sector contracts.
- Secondary events or disasters will threaten lives and property as well as firefighting personnel.
- Demand for local resources in anticipation of a major threat may outstrip local fire service capabilities.
- In a “no-notice” event, local resources may be damaged and potentially unavailable to support firefighting activities, requiring immediate assistance from outside the jurisdiction.
- Access to impacted areas may be severely limited and only reachable via air, water, or off-road vehicles.
- ESF-4 response agencies have developed internal plans and procedures for implementing response activities in their respective areas of responsibility.

- Maintaining state-level communications capabilities across agencies with responsibilities detailed in this annex will be critical to maintain situational awareness regarding fire conditions and resource needs.
- The state has resources and expertise that can be used to supplement local efforts. Procurement through state vendor contracts, state-to-state mutual aid through EMAC or IEMAC, and/or federal assistance may be requested to support state and local efforts if an incident exceeds state and local capabilities.
- Depending on the magnitude of the incident, resources from other states or the federal government may not be available for deployment to Massachusetts for as long as 72 hours after the incident occurs.

## 3.0. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

### 3.1. General

This annex will be activated at the direction of the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)/State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) Director when there is potential for or an actual disaster situation impacting fire service assets and/or requiring statewide coordination of fire service resources. MEMA will notify the primary agency at the time of SEOC activation to provide overall coordination of ESF-4. All other agencies with responsibilities under ESF-4 will serve as support agencies. The primary agency will provide direction to and work in conjunction with the support agencies to cohesively coordinate the activities of ESF-4.

ESF-4 reports directly to the SEOC Operations Section. Depending on the size, scope, and complexity of the incident, the SEOC organizational chart may be expanded, to ensure proper Span of Control is maintained. To accommodate this, the ESFs may be aligned in appropriate Branches, with similar ESFs grouped together. In this scenario, ESF-4 will be organized under the Emergency Services Branch, together with ESF's 9 and 13.

### 3.2. Organization

- All personnel and activities associated with ESF-4 will operate under the Incident Command System.
- The Department of Fire Services (DFS) has been designated the primary agency for ESF-4.
- ESF-4 supporting agencies have designated a person(s), each of whom can serve on behalf of their representative agency at the SEOC to support ESF-4 activities. Designated agency representatives should have the capability and authority to reach back to their own agency to request resources and obtain necessary information to support the response to the incident.
- While Primary Agencies are designated in advance, this may be subject to change during an SEOC Activation, dependent on the specific circumstances and needs of the incident. Therefore, the most appropriate agency to assume the role of "Primary" will be designated.

### **3.3. Notification**

MEMA will notify the ESF-4 points of contact for each activated organization or agency to report to the State Emergency Operations Center for coordination and implementation of firefighting-related requests for assistance and maintain situational awareness on the status and capacity of firefighting assets. Each ESF-4 organization and agency is responsible for securing sufficient staff on a continuous basis to support and to carry out the activities tasked to their agency.

### **3.4. Activities**

Responsible agencies/organizations for ESF-4 should conduct the following actions:

#### **a. Preparedness Actions**

- Emergency Support Function Team (ESF-4) and/or stakeholders will participate in regular meetings convened by MEMA to encourage the review and update of the ESF-4 annex and standard operating procedures.
- Ensure routine communication and sharing of information regarding updated capabilities, practices, and prevention initiatives across agencies with fire service responsibilities.
- Develop and maintain internal agency operational plans and procedures, resource directories, and emergency contact lists for quick access and notification of personnel in support of ESF-4 activities.
- Ensure that ESF-4 agencies have pre-designated staff available to support SEOC operations.
- Ensure that ESF-4 stakeholders notify MEMA of staff changes.
- Participate in exercises and training in order to test, validate, and provide working experience for ESF-4 liaisons on this annex and related procedures.

#### **b. Response Actions**

##### **Pre-Impact**

Upon receiving notification to report to the SEOC in preparation of an incident, ESF-4 agencies and organizations will complete the following actions commensurate with emergency priorities within the state and based on the availability of resources:

- As requested, provide appropriate representative(s) in person to the SEOC to support ESF-4 pre-incident planning activities.
- Maintain communications with the SEOC, obtain status reports, and keep the SEOC informed of progress of assigned tasks.
- Monitor current and forecast weather conditions for potential impacts to the current incident and response operations. Notify the appropriate points of contact at each

respective agency and organization to pre-position resources and response personnel as needed.

- Review existing plans and procedures.
- Ensure agency decision makers are kept informed of the situation.
- Test communications systems.
- Mobilize and pre-position response resources when it is apparent that state firefighting resources will be required.
- During periods of high fire danger, coordinate resources to support fire patrols and surveillance of forested areas.
- Coordinate with ESF-15 *Public Information and External Affairs*, on messaging to the general public regarding fire safety and fire prevention.

### **Initial Response**

- As requested, provide appropriate representative(s) to the SEOC to support ESF-4 activities.
- Coordinate with appropriate agency field personnel to obtain situational awareness of local incident response capabilities and needs.
- As needed, support the implementation of the Fire and EMS Mobilization Plan and any other fire service mutual aid agreements to facilitate coordination with other interstate, state, and local agencies in support of procuring additional firefighting assets, resources, and transportation capabilities.
- As needed, support the implementation of the Northeastern Forest Fire Protection Compact (NFFPC) to secure additional mutual aid resources and personnel in response to a wildland fire.
- Monitor situation to forecast any staffing/logistical needs for future operational periods and keep the SEOC Operations Section Chief updated.
- Coordinate with the SEOC Operations Section to identify shortfalls and the need to mobilize additional support and resources through ESFs, external mutual aid or federal assistance.
- Coordinate with ESF-8, *Public Health, and Medical Service*, regarding medical assistance and the transportation of victims beyond the established collection sites.
- Coordinate with ESF-9, *Search and Rescue*, regarding urban search and rescue efforts.
- As needed, coordinate with ESF-10, *Hazardous Materials and Environmental Protection*, regarding the need to support a hazardous materials incident response.
- As needed, coordinate with ESF-15, *Public Information and External Affairs* on public messaging regarding fire prevention or fire safety.

## **Expanded Response**

- When appropriate, coordinate and oversee requests for federal fire suppression assistance and other Federal firefighting resources.
- Reassess priorities and strategies according to the most critical fire service needs.
- Track committed firefighting resources and provide regular updates to the SEOC Operations Section on the status of all missions assigned to ESF-4.
- Provide incident action plans (IAPs) to the SEOC Planning Section as needed to update Situational Awareness Statements and SEOC Rosters.
- If aviation assets are necessary to support wildfire suppression efforts and the Air Operations Branch is stood up, collaborate with and assist in the coordination of in-state and/or out-of-state aviation assets with guidance from the Air Operations Plan and Wildfire Aviation Support Annex.
- Reference initial response actions and as needed, maintain communication and coordination with designated ESF partners in support of assigned ESF-4 tasks.
- Coordinate with other ESFs as appropriate to anticipate projected needs and/or coordinate appropriate support efforts.
- Draft recommendations for after-action reports and other reports as needed.

### **c. Recovery Actions**

- Prioritize the assessment of firefighting resources to ensure their appropriate reconstitution, repair, and/or replacement for redeployment as needed.
- As needed, provide subject matter expertise/guidance in support of local or state level fire investigations and/or building inspections.
- Participate in after-action reviews, detailing any identified coordination, response, and/or resource gaps, while providing recommendations for improving ESF-4 response operations.

### **d. Mitigation Actions**

- Identify potential firefighting issues and collaborate to develop or recommend plans, protocols, procedures, and policies to prevent or mitigate their effects.
- As needed, conduct assessments of ESF-4 capabilities to identify potential resource shortfalls.
- As needed, develop plans to mitigate identified shortfalls of resources.

## **3.5. SEOC Demobilization**

ESF agencies can work with the SEOC Planning Section and Operations Section to provide context to demobilization planning, including trends, workloads, upcoming

operations, etc., and receive updates on priorities, objectives, and tasks as operations slow or cease.

- ESF agencies should have pre-established internal demobilization procedures in place to help facilitate the orderly, safe, and efficient return of personnel and resources to their original locations and operating status when their missions supporting SEOC priorities and objectives have concluded. These procedures should take SEOC Demobilization plans into effect to ensure they complement each other.
- Demobilization of rostered and mobilized ESF personnel and resources will be initiated based on operational needs and at the direction of the SEOC director /SEOC Operations Section Chief. It should be noted that ESF agencies may be subject to a rapid recall to partial or full activation based on evolving operational needs.
- ESF agencies must ensure that they have closed out any open and actively ongoing operations in support of the SEOC, reported status updates and demobilization to the SEOC Planning Section Chief, and have coordinated as needed with other ESFs regarding their demobilization status.

## **4.0. RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **4.1. ESF-4 Primary Agency Responsibilities**

- Regularly meet and coordinate with ESF-4 supporting agencies, to:
  - a. Maintain a list of critical contacts, noting any changes to MEMA
  - b. Maintain a list of ESF-specific assets which could be deployed during an emergency
  - c. Report any unmet needs to MEMA
- Maintain Situational Awareness, monitor weather conditions, and ensure a state of readiness for the activation of ESF-4.
- As needed, pre-stage resources to support ESF-4 requirements.
- Identify and coordinate ESF-4 staffing requirements at the SEOC and at - Regional Emergency Operation Centers (REOCs) as the situation may dictate.
- Coordinate with support agencies and MEMA to coordinate firefighting resources and prioritize resource needs according to incident priorities and objectives.
- Support the actions of other ESFs in accordance with established priorities.
- Provide regular updates on ongoing ESF-4 operations to the SEOC Operations.

#### **a. Department of Fire Services**

- Provide situational awareness on status of DFS facilities, assets, and operations.
- Coordinate with DCR for specialized equipment and personnel needs.

- Maintain communication with Incident Commander(s) on scene and provide support for the identification and coordination of resources, equipment, personnel, and implementation of additional support plans to aid fire suppression and response efforts.
- As needed, support coordination and drafting of necessary documentation for implementing existing mutual aid compacts such as the Fire and EMS Mobilization Plan, Cooperative Wildland Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement and the Northeast Forest Fire Protection Compact.
- As needed, propose, develop, and/or aid in the drafting of necessary documentation to facilitate acquisition of additional resources through the use of EMAC and IEMAC systems.
- As needed, support coordination of federal firefighting resources.
- Conduct public education and outreach to the general public on fire prevention and safety.

## **4.2. ESF-4 Supporting Agency Responsibilities**

### **a. Department of Conservation and Recreation**

- Provide situational awareness on status of DCR firefighting assets and operations.
- Provide assets and technical assistance to aid cities and towns with preventing, detecting, and suppressing wildland fires.
- Coordinate resources to support the construction and maintenance of fire breaks and water holes and engage in general fuel reduction activity on state lands and communities across the Commonwealth.
- Coordinate resources to support monitoring of wildland fires across the Commonwealth.
- During periods of high fire danger, coordinate resources to support the conduct of fire patrols of forested areas.
- Coordinate specialized equipment and personnel with DFS.

### **b. Fire Districts**

- Provide situational awareness on status of firefighting assets within the 15 fire districts.
- Coordinate requests from and of fire districts requesting support through the Massachusetts Fire Mobilization Plan.

## **4.3. Other Agencies**

Other agencies not explicitly named in this annex may have authorities, resources, capabilities, or expertise required to support ESF-4 activities. These agencies may be requested to support ESF-4 activities as needed.

## **5.0. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS**

### **5.1. Staffing**

Per Executive Order 144, Emergency Response Agencies <sup>1</sup> must assign a minimum of two persons to act as liaison officers between the respective agency and MEMA.

All Agencies/Organizations activated to the SEOC must be prepared to assign a representative to support ESF activities. Operations may result in assigning an agency representative(s) to be in person for each operational period.

All representatives/liaisons should:

- Be knowledgeable about the resources and capabilities of their respective agencies/organizations.
- Have a thorough knowledge of ESF responsibilities, capabilities, and resources, including locations and availability/lead time.
- Have the authority to commit ESF assets and approve requests for assistance or contact the 24/7 authority to commit assets and approve requests for assistance.

### **5.2. Mutual Aid**

Firefighting mutual aid, both from within Massachusetts and from abutting states, will be governed by applicable mutual aid agreements, to include the Statewide Fire and EMS Mobilization Plan, the Cooperative Wildland Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement and Northeast Forest Fire Protection Compact. The process for requesting mutual aid from other entities outside of Massachusetts not otherwise addressed by these mutual aid agreements is described in the "Mutual Aid" section of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP).

### **5.3. Annex Review and Maintenance**

This annex will be reviewed and revised in accordance with the Emergency Management Program Administrative Policy, by participating agencies and organizations. MEMA's Planning Unit will provide administrative support for the plan review process, including coordinating and facilitating stakeholder meetings, completing, and distributing meeting notes and updating the plan.

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## **6.0. AUTHORITIES, AND REFERENCES**

### **6.1. Authorities**

- Massachusetts Executive Order 144
- Massachusetts Statewide Fire and EMS Mobilization Plan
- Northeastern Forest Fire Protection Compact (NFFPC)
- Cooperative Wildland Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement

### **6.2. References**

- Massachusetts Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP)
- Massachusetts Radiological Emergency Response Plan (RERP)
- SEOC ESF SOP Guide
- Resilient Mass Plan (Massachusetts Integrated State Hazard Mitigation & Climate Adaptation Plan)
- Developing and Maintaining Emergency Operations Plans Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101 September 2021, Version 3.0
- Federal Emergency Management Agency Emergency Support Function -4 Fire Fighting Annex
- Commonwealth of Massachusetts Statewide Evacuation and Shelter-in-Place Coordination Plan
- Large Volume/High Concentration Ethanol Incident Response Plan
- Wildfire Aviation Support Annex
- Air Operations Plan
- Statewide Logistics Plan

## ESF-4 Fire Fighting Addendum A (Support Capabilities)

The following section lists the functional and hazard annexes/plans to the Massachusetts Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) in which ESF-4 has been tasked with supporting. ESF-4 roles and responsibilities for each supporting annex/plan are detailed below.

Functional / Hazard Annex	ESF-4 Roles & Responsibilities
Statewide Evacuation and Shelter-in-Place Coordination Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• As needed, support the implementation of the Fire and EMS Mobilization Plan and any other fire service mutual aid agreements to facilitate coordination with other interstate, state, and local agencies in support of procuring additional firefighting assets, resources, and transportation capabilities.</li><li>• Support the actions of other ESFs engaged in evacuation operations and in accordance with established priorities.</li><li>• Provide the SEOC Operations and Planning sections with regular updates concerning ongoing ESF-4 operations and available resources to assist with evacuation efforts.</li></ul>
Statewide Logistics Annex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide manpower to logistics sites, including warehouses, SSAs, CPODs, and other sites as directed.</li><li>• Provide transportation support to aid in commodity distribution, as available and requested.</li><li>• Provide subject matter expertise surrounding logistics planning.</li><li>• Provide material handling equipment (MHE) as requested if available to support logistics operations.</li></ul>
Large Volume/High Concentration Ethanol Incident Response Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Detects and suppresses fires.</li><li>• Develop strategies for initial response.</li><li>• Coordinates incident management teams to assist in command-and-control operation.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide HazMat support to contain, confine, and control release as requested.</li> <li>• Coordinate response of HMRT (Hazardous Material Response Team) and DPW (Department of Public Works).</li> <li>• Execute site management and site safety functions.</li> </ul>
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