

**DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

NATIONAL URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE RESPONSE SYSTEM

A Component of the National Response Framework
Emergency Support Function 9



PUERTO RICO / U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS RESPONSE ADDENDUM

To the
Response Concept of Operations Annex,
National US&R Response System Operations Manual,

April 2012

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FEMA National US&R Response System – Operations Manual
Response Concept of Operations Annex
Puerto Rico / U.S. Virgin Islands Response Addendum (Apr2012)

Mission Statement

In coordination with the FEMA Regions, to assist state, local, and tribal governments, FEMA Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) resources, complete with the necessary tools, equipment, skills, and techniques, can be activated to respond to areas which have sustained damage from a catastrophic incident. The following actions outline the preparation and response procedures the FEMA National US&R Response System will undertake in order to meet the FEMA mission.

Note

Interpretations and clarifications of this document shall be made by, and any system maintenance issues shall be received by, the FEMA US&R Branch.

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**FEMA National US&R Response System – Operations Manual
Response Concept of Operations Annex
Puerto Rico / U.S. Virgin Islands Response Addendum (Apr2012)**

MISSION STATEMENT 1

NOTE..... 1

INTRODUCTION..... 1

 GENERAL CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS 1

 PURPOSE..... 1

PUERTO RICO/U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS RESPONSE CONSIDERATIONS 3

PRVI OPERATIONAL STAGING AREAS: 4

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INTRODUCTION

General Concept of Operations

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Urban Search & Rescue (US&R) Response System Operations Manual, Response Concept of Operations (CONOP) Annex, and its Puerto Rico / U.S. Virgin Islands (PRVI) Response Addendum are designed to ensure rapid, coordinated, and flexible Federal US&R support in response to all-hazard catastrophic incidents in PRVI. FEMA US&R support will be provided at the request of a state or another Federal agency, at the direction of the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) or at the direction of the President of the United States.

Preparation for, response to, recovery from, and mitigation against catastrophic incidents requires a coordinated response led by FEMA and will involve federal, state, local, and tribal governments, the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in support of FEMA Regional response efforts.

Purpose

This Addendum outlines the FEMA National US&R Response System response actions to be taken in support of a response to PRVI in addition to, or that deviate from, standard procedures as detailed in the National US&R Response System Operations Manual, Response CONOP Annex. These activities as described are for planning purposes and event specific operational requirements may dictate changes during an actual response

- This Addendum is not intended to replace existing documents that already detail FEMA HQ responsibilities (e.g., the National Response Framework [NRF] or Standard Operating Procedures [SOPs]).
- Consistent with the NRF and National Incident Management System (NIMS), FEMA will plan for the worst-case scenario, but will adapt its planning approach and operational response accordingly.
- FEMA coordinates Federal support under the authority of the Stafford Act to states or under the Economy Act to other Federal departments and agencies requesting assistance.
- One or more Federal Coordinating Officers (FCO) will be appointed for a Stafford Act declaration to execute Stafford Act authorities, including commitment of FEMA resources and the mission assignment of other federal departments or agencies.

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Puerto Rico/U.S. Virgin Islands Response Considerations

All Task Forces activated for a potential PRVI response Outside the Continental U. S. (OCONUS) will stage at their continental U.S. (CONUS) Point of Assembly (POA), prepared to deploy via air transportation. The activated IST and all support for task forces will stage in a CONUS location determined by the US&R Branch and the IST in coordination with the affected FEMA Region. The IST cache will deploy from its location either by air (directly to PRVI) or OTR to the IST location as determined appropriate for the event.

PRVI key response support actions include, but are not limited to:

- FEMA Region II – Caribbean Area response plans and timelines will guide planning and response activities;
- Initial contingency planning and teleconference sessions will be held with the Response Directorate, US&R Branch, FEMA Region II, assigned IMAT, IST leadership and Task Forces to address specific requirements for staging, support/mission requirements, and MERS communications support for response to PRVI;
- The assigned IMAT and IST will work with FEMA Region II on any interpreter requirements;
- The assigned IMAT and IST will work with FEMA Region II to insure successful operational integration of Puerto Rico’s in-state US&R capability;
- FEMA Region II, assigned IMAT, and IST leadership will determine if an IST and one (1) US&R Type I Task Force will be deployed to FEMA Region II identified hardened facilities for staging in PRVI; and
- PRVI response requirements for vehicle air transport and/or use will be determined by FEMA Region II, assigned IMAT, and IST leadership to include consideration of alternate load plans and modes of transportation due to air transport and PRVI road conditions.

The US&R resources will remain staged at their CONUS POA until FEMA Region II, assigned IMAT, and IST leadership make final determinations that the threat has passed.

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PRVI Operational Staging Areas:

US&R resources will be assigned to one or more of the following staging locations:

Location	Type of Area	Coordinates	POC
Puerto Rico:			
Jose Apont Airport	Formerly Roosevelt Roads NAS	65.638168 W 18.266932 N	Airport Manager
Camp Santiago	PR NG Armory	67.136520 W 18.027116 N	Armory Manager
Ramey (Aguadilla)	Civil airfield	67.122754 W 18.493238 N	Airport Manager
Ponce	Harbor facilities	66.504177 W 18.014284 N	Harbormaster
St. Thomas:			
Cyril E. King Airport	Civil airfield	64.973360 W 18.337310 N	Airport Manager
Guy Benjamin Elementary School	School yard	64.691390 W 18.332220 N	Principal