



# GENERAL ORDER

Loudoun County Sheriff's Office

**Chapter:** Operations

**Section:** 406.14

**Subject:** Response to Selected Situations

**Topic:** Disaster Response and Unusual Occurrences

**Enacted:** 07/30/2015

**Last Review:** 07/24/2015

**Review:** 07/30/2016

## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish policies and procedures for response to disasters and other unusual occurrences by employees of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office.

## II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office to respond to unusual occurrences and disaster situations with a coordinated and measured response with the intent of protecting life, property and maintaining order. Since the employment of law enforcement resources in such situations may result in limitations being placed on certain civil liberties and free movement of citizens, it shall be Sheriff's Office policy to remove such controls and restraints at the earliest possible moment.

## III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Unusual Occurrence: Situations, generally of an emergency nature, that result from disasters, both natural and man-made, and civil disturbances. In the category of disasters are floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, explosions, and tornadoes. Civil disturbances include riots, disorders, and violence arising from dissident gatherings and marches, rock concerts, political conventions, and labor disputes.
- B. Emergency Mobilization: To marshal resources for action quickly, in response to a disaster or unusual occurrence.

## IV. PROCEDURES

- A. Response Planning: The Chief Deputy is responsible for planning and response to unusual occurrences for the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office.
- B. Incident Command: The Incident Commander is the person who is in command, and has direct control over all law enforcement resources at the scene of an incident. As specified in the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office Emergency Operations Plan, the Incident Commander delegates specific responsibilities to various Field Commanders while retaining overall management responsibility for the incident.
- C. Emergency Mobilization: Emergency mobilization is the gathering and putting into motion resources necessary for the management and mitigation of disaster or potential disaster situations. Emergency mobilization consists of the following:
  - 1. Communications: Mobile telephone communications and multi-channel radios are issued to sworn operations staff. These radios permit communication between both sheriff's and fire rescue's units and communications centers. In addition, these radios also permit communication with all other agencies within the state

and around the Washington Metropolitan area. During the Alert Phase, an appropriate number of these vehicles will be placed on standby for immediate use. In addition, during the Alert Phase, the Communication Section shall ensure that the standby generators and remote transmitter sites are fueled and ready for operation.

2. Alert Stages: The alert stages are contained in the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office Emergency Operations Plan and consist of: Normal Readiness, Alert, Warning, Response, and Recovery.
3. Assembly Areas: The Sheriff, or his/her designee, before the execution of the emergency recall plan will designate assembly areas. The person executing the emergency recall shall advise recalled personnel of the locations.
4. Equipment Distribution: The distribution of equipment for use in disaster incidents will be accomplished at the direction of command personnel. The locations, types and amounts of equipment available for a multitude of disaster and unusual occurrence situations are contained in Annex A of the Emergency Operations Plan, and on magnetic disk in the Communications Section. Included in the resource files are vehicles that may be used for the distribution of equipment and supplies.
5. Task Force Operations: In certain situations, such as a riot, other civil disorders, martial law, and enemy attack, it may become necessary to begin task force operations. Task force operations are those in which emergency resources are split into working groups that accomplish a multitude of tasks together. An example of task force operations would be if a large civil disturbance existed, a task force might consist of two fire engines, two ambulances, squad truck, five sheriff's units and one command officer. This unit would respond to whatever location designated, be it fire, rescue, or a police emergency and would function as a team. This is primarily done in the interest of safety of the personnel so that once on the scene they are equipped to deal with whatever may occur, without having to call for reinforcements. The decision to begin task force operations shall be made by the senior Sheriff's Office Commander present.
6. Key Personnel Designation: Essential personnel for disaster and unusual occurrence situations are specified in the Emergency Operations Plan. In addition, at the initiation of the Alert Phase, depending on the situation, additional agency key personnel may be designated.
7. Transportation Requirements: Transportation requirements above the use of sheriff's vehicles will be determined at the earliest possible time. Once identified, the resource file in Annex A of the Emergency Operations Plan, or the Master Resource File at Fire/Rescue, shall be utilized to locate and acquire any additional transportation needs.

8. Management Control Measures: In disaster and unusual occurrence situations, the Sheriff's Office utilizes a specific Chain of Command and management practices that are nationally recognized. The Chain of Command for incidents is specified in the Emergency Operations Plan, Annex D. The method of incident management is specified in the Plan under Incident Commander, Field Commanders, Command Post, and Initial Evaluation. In the event of a major occurrence affecting the entire county, management will be accomplished using the Integrated Emergency Management System, as directed, by Sheriff's personnel specifically trained in the system.
  9. Exercises: The Emergency Mobilization Plan and The Emergency Operations Plan shall be exercised at least annually. The degree of the exercises shall be at the discretion of the Sheriff. The purpose of annual drills is to test operational readiness, personnel knowledge of the plans, and identify needs for corrections, additions, or deletions of sections of the plans.
- D. Liaison with the Department of Emergency Services: It is the policy of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office to maintain a close liaison and working relationship with the Virginia State Department of Emergency Services. The local Office of Emergency Services is the agency responsible at the county level for the planning and response to disaster situations in accordance with state directives. The Chief Deputy, or his designee, is the liaison to the local Office of Emergency Services.
- E. Disaster Control Maps: The Loudoun County Sheriff's Office maintains disaster control maps that are used in situation control. These maps are located in the Communications Section. These maps show the entire county, are broken down into grids, and are topographic.
- F. Reviews and Inspections:
1. All unusual occurrence plans and emergency operations plans shall be reviewed and updated at least annually. This review shall be at a time specified by the Chief Deputy and performed by him, or his designee.
  2. Emergency Operations Plans shall be distributed to command personnel so that they may initiate correct procedures upon arrival at incident scenes. It is the responsibility of all supervisors to be familiar with and have the ability to implement any aspect of the Emergency Operations Plan.
  3. Any equipment that is designated for use in unusual occurrence or disaster situations, shall be inspected at least once each month for operational readiness by the personnel assigned as custodian of the equipment. All inspections shall be documented in a log and shall be made available, upon request, to the Chief Deputy, or his designee.

V. LEGAL REFERENCES

Enabling legislation exists that permits responsive and preventative actions by law enforcement authorities during emergencies is contained in Virginia State Codes: 15.2-1727, 15.2-1728, 15.2-1736, and 44-146.13 through 44-146.28.1