

## **Emergency Support Function – 9 Search and Rescue**



**2025**

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## RECORD OF CHANGES

*Each update or change to the plan should be tracked. The record of changes, usually in table format, contains, at a minimum, a change number, the date of the change, the name of the person who made the change, and a summary of the change. Other relevant information could be considered.*

Change #	Date	Part Affected	Date Posted	Who Posted
1	01/09/25	Updated for 2025	01/09/25	Mathews

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**RECORD OF CHANGES ..... 1**

**RECORD OF DISTRIBUTION ..... 3**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS ..... 5**

**INTRODUCTION..... 6**

    Purpose .....7

    Scope .....7

**CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS ..... 7**

    General .....7

    Preparedness.....7

    Response .....7

    Recovery.....8

    Mitigation .....8

    Organization .....8

    ESF Role Aligned to Core Capabilities.....9

    Responsibilities.....9

## ESF – 9 Search and Rescue

**ESF COORDINATOR:**

City of Pooler Fire Department

**SUPPORT AGENCIES:**

Chatham County Marine Patrol  
Chatham County Mosquito Control  
Chatham County Police Department  
Chatham County Sheriff's Office  
Chatham Emergency Management Agency  
Chatham Fire Department  
City of Bloomingdale Fire Department  
City of Bloomingdale Police Department  
City of Garden City Fire Department  
City of Garden City Police Department  
City of Pooler Police Department  
City of Port Wentworth Fire Department  
City of Port Wentworth Police Department  
City of Savannah Fire Department  
City of Savannah Police Department  
City of Tybee Island Fire Department  
City of Tybee Island Police Department  
Civil Air Patrol  
Georgia Forestry Commission  
Hunter Army Airfield Fire Department  
Hunter Army Airfield Police Department  
Isle of Hope Fire Department  
Marine Rescue Squadron  
Town of Thunderbolt Fire Department  
Town of Thunderbolt Police Department  
United States Coast Guard/Marine Safety Unit  
165<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing Fire Department

## INTRODUCTION

The emergency support function of Search and Rescue services involves direction and coordination, operations, and follow-through during an emergency or disaster.



## **Purpose**

ESF-9 Search and Rescue provides operational guidance to departments/organizations that are assigned to work within this ESF. The mission of ESF-9 is to rapidly deploy local search and rescue components to provide specialized life-saving assistance to municipal authorities during an emergency or disaster event. This however is not a tactical response document. ESF-9 Search and Rescue serves as the mechanism to provide coordination and resource support to local jurisdictions involved in both urban and non-urban search and rescue operations.

## **Scope**

ESF-9 acts to meet the Search/Rescue and essential elements of information needs of operations by establishing a framework for the management and coordination of Search and Rescue resources for locating, extricating and providing medical assistance to individuals in both the urban and non-urban setting.

## **CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS**

### **General**

During an emergency or disaster, ESF-9 may be activated to support operations and assist with the development of a common operating picture. The scope, scale and magnitude of the threat/incident will dictate which support agencies will be requested for the support of ESF-9 Search and Rescue in the EOC.

### **Preparedness**

- a. Maintain a current listing of available resources and trained personnel that could support search and rescue operations and ensure a state of readiness.
- b. Anticipate the mobilization of personnel and equipment during existing or anticipated emergencies and be prepared to stage those resources at assigned locations.
- c. Establish and maintain a liaison with state Urban Search and Rescue assets and anticipate the arrival of external assets in support of operations as appropriate.
- d. Ensure all ESF-9 personnel integrate NIMS principles.

### **Response**

- a. Provide support to local agencies through the provision of necessary and deployment of teams and equipment in support of Search and Rescue operations.
- b. Assume responsibility for the coordination and tracking of all resources committed to a Search and Rescue incident. This may include the placement of personnel at an Incident Command Post and the establishment of staging areas.

- c. Deploy liaison teams to the Incident Command Post or County EOC as necessary to support operations.
- d. Coordinate the utilization of available resources to augment response agencies during search and rescue operations and request state and federal assistance as necessary.
- e. Ensure all emergency Search and Rescue incident information is provided to the EOC to ensure the development of a common operating picture and maintain situational awareness.
- f. Coordinate with ESF-15 External Affairs for the dissemination of information to members of the general public and local media outlets.
- g. Coordinate with ESF-1 Transportation for the utilization of available resources to transport emergency workers, evacuated persons and rescued victims from the emergency scene to an identified safe location or emergency shelter.
- h. Coordinate with ESF-1 Transportation and ESF-8 Health and Medical for the provision of medical assistance and the transportation of victims beyond initial collection points.
- i. Incorporate State and Federal resources in support of Search and Rescue operations as needed.

### **Recovery**

- a. Maintain adequate resources to support local operations and plan for a reduction in resources.
- b. Inventory lost or damaged equipment and record any personnel injuries or equipment accidents.
- c. Conduct reviews of Search and Rescue operations with teams involved to improve future responses.

### **Mitigation**

- a. Support and plan for mitigation measures.

### **Organization**

The County EOC will be activated to coordinate a multijurisdictional level response.

Representatives from the applicable ESF-9 Agencies may be assigned to the EOC or alternate location, as best suited to meet incident needs and coordinate operations.

### ESF Role Aligned to Core Capabilities

The following table lists the response capability that ESF-9 most directly supports, along with the related ESF-9 actions supporting the capability.

Core Capability	ESF-9 Search and Rescue
Mass Search and Rescue Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver traditional and atypical search and rescue capabilities, including personnel, services, animals and assets to survivors in need, with the goal of saving the greatest number of endangered lives in the shortest time possible. This includes but not limited to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urban Search and Rescue</li> <li>Wilderness Search and Rescue</li> <li>Marine Search and Rescue</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Situational Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide all decision makers with decision-relevant information regarding the nature and extent of the hazard, any cascading effects and the status of the response. This includes but not limited to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Size, scope and potential cascading effects</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### Responsibilities

Coordinating Agency	Actions
City of Pooler Fire Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate with each supporting agency through ESF meetings to ensure planning functions are carried out to support this ESF.</li> <li>Develop a listing of available assets to support Search and Rescue operations.</li> </ul>
City of Pooler Fire Department (Continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish procedures for the prioritization of response actions.</li> <li>Conduct a situational assessment to determine the need for Search and Rescue services based upon identified critical needs and available resources.</li> <li>Establish procedures for the incorporation of private sector assets to support operations.</li> <li>Establish procedures for the development and utilization of County search maps in support of operations.</li> <li>Coordinate with ESF-3 Public Works/Engineering for the provision of technical assistance for the completion of structural shoring as required to ensure the safety of Search and Rescue teams.</li> <li>Coordinate with ESF-15 External Affairs for the dissemination of critical public information.</li> </ul>

Coordinating Agency	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure communications with municipal liaison to ensure the collection of critical information and the development of a common operating picture.</li> <li>• Serve as a liaison between the EOC and the State EOC.</li> <li>• Provide technical assistance concerning any potential policy challenges.</li> <li>• Coordinate with ESF-3 Public Works/Engineering for debris removal and/or push back to allow Search and Rescue team movement.</li> <li>• Coordinate with ESF-1 Transportation for the utilization of assets to transport Search and Rescue team personnel.</li> <li>• Provide support staffing to the EOC for the following position: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ ESF-9 Search and Rescue</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Supporting Agency	Actions
All Supporting Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend meetings to ensure planning functions are carried out to support this ESF.</li> <li>• Identify Agency staff representatives to support this ESF and other operational practices during emergency and disaster operations.</li> <li>• Ensure the presence of resources (human and physical) are in sufficient numbers to support the Agency's responsibilities to this ESF.</li> <li>• Conduct recovery and restoration tasks in coordination with the EOC/RCC and federal assistance program guidance.</li> </ul>
All Supporting Agencies (Continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annually evaluate Critical Workforce staffing needs and report sheltering and/or equipment staging locations as requested.</li> <li>• Coordinate pertinent disaster recovery information with the County Joint Information Center (JIC).</li> <li>• Identify damages and/or losses and prepare an action plan for recovery activities.</li> <li>• Maintain records of expenditures and document resources utilized during response and recovery operations.</li> <li>• Develop appropriate Plans, Procedures, Mutual Aid Agreements, Checklists, Go-Kits and other supporting documentation as needed to facilitate execution of the Agency's responsibilities to this ESF.</li> <li>• Prepare to support the EOC as necessary.</li> <li>• Participate in drills, exercises and other preparedness events to evaluate the Agency's readiness to support this ESF.</li> </ul>

Supporting Agency	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure Agency staff maintain NIMS compliance and report compliance measurements annually as requested.</li> </ul>
Chatham County Marine Patrol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide available marine assets to assist with Search and Rescue operations.</li> </ul>
Chatham County Mosquito Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide available aviation assets to assist with Search and Rescue operations.</li> </ul>
Chatham County Police Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide security for Search and Rescue teams and identified search areas.</li> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources in the search for victims.</li> <li>• Provide an Incident Commander during searches for missing persons within assigned jurisdiction.</li> <li>• Provide assistance and security during death investigations.</li> <li>• Provide support staffing to the EOC for the following positions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Public Safety Branch</li> <li>➤ ESF-13 Law Enforcement</li> <li>➤ EOC Security</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Chatham County Sheriff's Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide security for Search and Rescue teams and identified search areas.</li> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources in the search for victims.</li> <li>• Provide assistance and security during death investigations.</li> </ul>
Chatham Emergency Management Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate a situational assessment to determine priorities regarding Search and Rescue operations within the community.</li> <li>• Ensure agencies providing Search and Rescue services have adequate support and all necessary resources are identified.</li> <li>• Provide direction and oversight to the Chatham Emergency Management Agency Search and Rescue Team.</li> <li>• Establish and maintain appropriate volunteer team standard operating procedures.</li> <li>• Implement volunteer Search and Rescue resources as needed.</li> </ul>

Supporting Agency	Actions
Chatham Emergency Fire Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources in the search for victims.</li> <li>• Provide support staffing to the EOC for the following position: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ ESF-4 Firefighting</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
City of Bloomingdale Fire Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources in the search for victims.</li> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources for the treatment of victims in accordance with local protocols.</li> </ul>
City of Bloomingdale Police Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide security for Search and Rescue teams and identified search areas.</li> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources in the search for victims.</li> <li>• Provide an Incident Commander during searches for missing persons within assigned jurisdiction.</li> <li>• Provide assistance and security during death investigations.</li> </ul>
City of Garden City Fire Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources in the search for victims.</li> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources for the treatment of victims in accordance with local protocols.</li> </ul>
City of Garden City Police Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide security for Search and Rescue teams and identified search areas.</li> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources in the search for victims.</li> <li>• Provide an Incident Commander during searches for missing persons within assigned jurisdiction.</li> </ul>
City of Garden City Police Department (Continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide assistance and security during death investigations.</li> </ul>
City of Pooler Police Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide security for Search and Rescue teams and identified search areas.</li> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources in the search for victims.</li> <li>• Provide an Incident Commander during searches for missing persons within assigned jurisdiction.</li> <li>• Provide assistance and security during death investigations.</li> </ul>
City of Port Wentworth Fire Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources in the search for victims.</li> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources for the treatment of victims in accordance with local protocols.</li> </ul>

Supporting Agency	Actions
City of Port Wentworth Police Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide security for Search and Rescue teams and identified search areas.</li> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources in the search for victims.</li> <li>• Provide an Incident Commander during searches for missing persons within assigned jurisdiction.</li> <li>• Provide assistance and security during death investigations.</li> </ul>
City of Savannah Fire Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources in the search for victims.</li> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources for the treatment of victims in accordance with local protocols.</li> <li>• Utilize designated Georgia Search and Rescue Teams to provide technical assistance and aid in identified Search and Rescue requirements.</li> <li>• Provide support staffing to the EOC for the following position: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ ESF-10 Hazmat</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
City of Savannah Police Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide security for Search and Rescue teams and identified search areas.</li> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources in the search for victims.</li> <li>• Provide an Incident Commander during searches for missing persons within assigned jurisdiction.</li> <li>• Provide assistance and security during death investigations.</li> </ul>
City of Tybee Island Fire Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources in the search for victims.</li> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources for the treatment of victims in accordance with local protocols.</li> </ul>
City of Tybee Island Police Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide security for Search and Rescue teams and identified search areas.</li> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources in the search for victims.</li> <li>• Provide an Incident Commander during searches for missing persons within assigned jurisdiction.</li> <li>• Provide assistance and security during death investigations.</li> </ul>

Supporting Agency	Actions
Civil Air Patrol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide available aviation assets to assist with Search and Rescue operations to include the search for downed aircraft.</li> <li>• Establish and maintain communications with the Incident Commander/Search and Rescue Coordinator throughout operations.</li> </ul>
Georgia Forestry Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources in the search for victims.</li> <li>• Provide assistance in the development and utilization of mapping tools to support Search and Rescue operations.</li> <li>• Provide experienced personnel to provide insight and support search operations within a National Forest or Park.</li> </ul>
Hunter Army Airfield Fire Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources in the search for victims.</li> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources for the treatment of victims in accordance with local protocols.</li> </ul>
Hunter Army Airfield Police Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide security for Search and Rescue teams and identified search areas.</li> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources in the search for victims.</li> <li>• Provide an Incident Commander during searches for missing persons within assigned jurisdiction.</li> <li>• Provide assistance and security during death investigations.</li> </ul>
Isle of Hope Fire Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources in the search for victims.</li> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources for the treatment of victims in accordance with local protocols.</li> </ul>
Marine Rescue Squadron	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide available assets to assist with water related Search and Rescue operations.</li> <li>• Establish and maintain communications with the Incident Commander/Search and Rescue Coordinator throughout operations.</li> </ul>
Town of Thunderbolt Fire Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources in the search for victims.</li> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources for the treatment of victims in accordance with local protocols.</li> </ul>



Supporting Agency	Actions
Town of Thunderbolt Police Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide security for Search and Rescue teams and identified search areas.</li> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources in the search for victims.</li> <li>• Provide an Incident Commander during searches for missing persons within assigned jurisdiction.</li> <li>• Provide assistance and security during death investigations.</li> </ul>
United States Coast Guard/Marine Safety Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide available assets to assist with water related Search and Rescue operations.</li> <li>• Establish and maintain communications with the Incident Commander/Search and Rescue Coordinator throughout operations.</li> </ul>
165 <sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing Fire Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources in the search for victims.</li> <li>• Provide assistance through utilizing available resources for the treatment of victims in accordance with local protocols.</li> </ul>

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