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Fire and EMS Multi-Agency Mutual Aid, Preparedness, and Operations Guide

July 2024



FEMA



U.S. Fire Administration
Working for a fire-safe America

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Introduction

As disasters increase in frequency, scale, and complexity, collaboration among agencies and organizations has become a cornerstone to the efficient and effective delivery of public safety services. Over the years, fire and emergency medical services (EMS) across State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial (SLTT) agencies have become increasingly reliant on partnerships with multiple outside agencies and organizations for planning, response, operations, recovery, and mitigation; these partnerships are known as mutual aid. Mutual aid “becomes more important and more complicated as the magnitude of emergency incidents increases.”

Additional complexities arise with the varied mutual aid partners, intricate legal authorities, tribal considerations, and jurisdictional nuances at thousands of local departments across the country. In addition to determining eligibility and resource access timing, each incident is unique, and unforeseen events require adaptable responses, non-traditional partners, and strong interdisciplinary and multijurisdictional relationships.

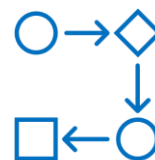
Objective: Provide a guide on the effective uses of mutual aid and multi-agency coordination to support SLTT fire and EMS

To address the complexities around mutual aid, stakeholders approached the development of this guide through a data collection process¹, subject matter expert review, and alignment with model best practices in the public safety community². This guide is a result of a robust data collection and analysis process, including a nationwide study on the use of mutual aid, open-source collection of mutual aid documents, and a working group made up of subject matter experts from fire, EMS, emergency management, and other public safety disciplines. Areas with increased focus included:

- Mutual aid agreements, processes, and relationships addressing atypical incidents and with atypical resource providers.
- Whole community mutual aid and multi-agency coordination processes that include planning, coordination, training, exercising, and operational components.
- Differences between local, state, and federal resources, to include types of resources, authorities, eligible parties, and how each level of government should complement each other during escalating incidents.
- Local, to include small, rural, and volunteer agencies, with limited staffing.



Building relationships



Identifying processes



Embracing differences

¹ IAFC/USFA Mutual Aid Fire and EMS Dashboard. <https://iafc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/f94c49ea87f648288a427cb11ce82ecf>

² NAPS Foundation. Resource Management Maturity Study Report. <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/fe6c9d70cb0d47eda2ce5deb41895920>

Agreements



Key Takeaways

- Conducting a mutual aid agreement audit will enable your agency to determine outdated, missing, or unneeded mutual aid agreements.
- Automatic aid, mutual aid, intrastate, and interstate mutual aid agreements address vastly different gaps.
- Different types of agreements vary in their complexity for drafting, executing, and maintaining said agreements. Try to pick the least complex agreement for the mission.
- Understand the partners you may have or want to have agreements with.

Mutual aid plays a pivotal role in the effective functioning of fire departments and emergency medical services (EMS) by fostering collaboration, resource sharing, and efficient emergency response. Different types of mutual aid agreements, including local mutual aid, automatic mutual aid, interstate mutual aid, and intrastate mutual aid, further strengthen this collective effort.

All types of mutual aid agreements at a minimum establish a formal process for requesting and managing resources from other agencies when needed. Automatic aid agreements can facilitate the inclusion of predefined responses among neighboring jurisdictions, allowing for an immediate and well-coordinated reaction based on the specific details outlined in the agreement. Mutual aid agreements facilitate the sharing of resources, personnel, and expertise among agencies during large-scale incidents or when additional support is needed. Interstate and intrastate aid agreements expand this collaboration across state borders, recognizing that emergencies can transcend jurisdictional boundaries. These various forms of mutual aid demonstrate the essential nature of cooperation and coordination within the firefighting and EMS communities, enhancing emergency preparedness and response capabilities.

Agreements should also focus on the types of partners, with a focus on (not exclusive) groups such as³:

- Traditional public safety partners at the local level: Fire, EMS, Law Enforcement, Emergency Management.
- Traditional public safety partners at the state/federal level: U.S. National Guard, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Federal Law Enforcement, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Coast Guard.
- Public supporting entities: Departments of Transportation, Public Health & Environment, State Parks, public works, airports, and water ports.
- Private supporting entities: Private businesses, volunteer agencies, nonprofit organizations.

³ FEMA. National Incident Management System Guideline for Mutual Aid. https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema_nims_mutual_aid_guideline_20171105.pdf

Some items to consider when determining which type of agreement to pursue include:

1. **Geographic Proximity:** The distance between jurisdictions is a crucial factor in determining the type of mutual/automatic aid agreement. For neighboring jurisdictions that share a common border, automatic aid agreements are highly beneficial, and can benefit equally, all participating agencies. Such agreements allow for rapid response and seamless coordination, as available resources can be dispatched immediately without the need for explicit requests.
2. **Resource Availability:** Assessing the availability and adequacy of resources is vital in selecting the appropriate type of mutual aid agreement. If a jurisdiction lacks certain specialized equipment or personnel, a mutual aid agreement can be established to ensure access to those resources from nearby agencies during emergencies. Resource availability is also dependent on mutual aid partners' current response load (e.g., they are already responding in their own jurisdiction).
3. **Incident Complexity, Duration, and Frequency⁴:** The nature, duration, and frequency of incidents in a particular area can influence the type of mutual aid agreement needed. If a jurisdiction experiences high-frequency incidents or deals with complex emergencies, a comprehensive mutual aid agreement that allows for resource pooling, joint training, and coordinated incident command may be preferred. Long-duration events may also require renewing or more complex agreements.
4. **Jurisdictional Boundaries:** Consideration of jurisdictional boundaries is crucial when determining the type of mutual aid agreement to form. Interstate aid agreements are necessary when emergencies regularly occur near or extend across state borders. Conversely, intrastate aid agreements are appropriate for addressing incidents within the same state but across multiple jurisdictions.
5. **Legal and Administrative Considerations:** Legal and administrative factors, such as applicable laws, regulations, and administrative procedures, must be considered when establishing mutual aid agreements. Compliance with legal requirements and administrative procedures ensures that the agreements are valid, enforceable, and compatible with existing frameworks.



⁴ FEMA. Incident Complexity Guide. <https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nims-incident-complexity-guide.pdf>

It is important to note that these factors are not mutually exclusive, and multiple considerations may need to be weighed to determine the most suitable type of mutual aid agreement for a given situation. For example, differences between police departments and sheriff's offices may prevent closest unit response, and differences between structural firefighting and wildland-urban interface resources may limit resource availability.



Mutual Aid Audit: Plan Inventory

Before you determine the type of mutual aid agreement you pursue, conducting an audit can help determine the maturity of the organization and potential gaps. Consider reviewing the following:

- Existing mutual aid agreements.
- Roles and responsibilities for who maintains and updates mutual aid agreements.
- Changes in jurisdictional boundaries, statutes, laws, etc.

Automatic Aid

Automatic Aid Agreements provide for pre-defined areas, incident types, and resources to be shared across organizations. This aid typically relies on closest unit/most appropriate unit responses regardless of agency ownership. Automatic Aid also does not require a formal request.

Effective components of Automatic Aid Agreements:

Rapid Response: Automatic aid agreements enable neighboring jurisdictions to respond with on-duty resources, normally as part of the initial response to emergencies based on predefined guidelines. This can significantly reduce response times, leading to enhanced public safety and potential life-saving measures.

Seamless Coordination: By establishing predetermined response protocols, automatic aid agreements promote seamless coordination between neighboring jurisdictions. Fire departments and EMS agencies can seamlessly share resources, personnel, and expertise, ensuring a more effective and efficient response to emergencies. The increased frequency of crews working together promotes the establishment of common operating procedures critical to managing the safety and accountability of first responders.

Resource Optimization: Automatic aid agreements facilitate the optimal use of resources by eliminating unnecessary duplication. Agencies can rely on neighboring jurisdictions' resources, such as specialized equipment or personnel, instead of investing in redundant capabilities. This leads to cost savings and resource optimization.

Enhanced Preparedness: With automatic aid agreements in place, neighboring jurisdictions are better prepared for emergencies. Regular joint training exercises, familiarization with response protocols, and shared incident command systems enhance overall preparedness and interoperability among agencies.



Innovation Idea: Geospatial Resources

Automatic aid agreements already have rules built in to determine when and where resources are moved. Mutual aid, intra, and interstate agreements can use the same concept and automate pieces of a mutual aid agreement such as deployment notifications:

- Work with your GIS staff to visualize resources that are requested, deployed, or demobilized.
- If possible, work with your CAD vendor to automate resource status.
- Automate notifications through Power Automate, Make, or other platforms to make sure all parties are made aware of requests.
- Use data analytics such as Power BI to measure the effectiveness and frequency of automatic aid.

Challenges of an Automatic Aid Agreement:

Resource Imbalance: In some cases, an automatic aid agreement can lead to resource imbalances between jurisdictions. If one jurisdiction consistently requires more assistance than it provides, it can strain the resources and capabilities of the assisting jurisdiction, potentially leading to inequities in resource distribution. Resource imbalances may also be a result of the providing agencies resources that have been committed to existing incidents.

Political Considerations: Establishing automatic aid agreements may involve navigating political dynamics, as jurisdictions need to agree on the terms, responsibilities, and resource-sharing arrangements. This can sometimes lead to delays or challenges in reaching consensus among jurisdictions.

Jurisdictional Complexity: Automatic aid agreements can introduce complexities in terms of jurisdictional boundaries and legal frameworks. Determining the appropriate response area, defining the limits of assistance, and addressing legal and administrative considerations across jurisdictions requires planning and coordination.

Communication and Control: With automatic aid, there is an inherent assumption that assistance will be provided without explicit requests. While this can be beneficial in most cases, it may also result in communication challenges or difficulties in maintaining command and control during rapidly evolving incidents.

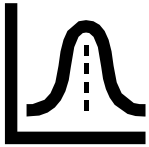


Spotlight: Northern Gila County Automatic Aid Agreement

This agreement clearly defines the mutual aid duties such as the minimum resource response, required training, use of ICS, area orientation activities, and standardized language.

Mutual Aid

Mutual aid agreements facilitate the sharing of resources, personnel, and expertise among agencies during large-scale incidents or when additional support is needed. Mutual aid requests are made on an as needed and less frequent basis and need to be approved by the assisting agency for each call.



Differences Across the Fire and EMS Community

Although there are typical scenarios where automatic aid, mutual aid, intrastate, and interstate agreements are best suited, the vast Fire and EMS community provides many opportunities for atypical agreements.

- Automatic aid agreements are common between agencies near state or country boundaries.
- Mutual aid agreements between local and federal resources (e.g., BLM, Forest Service) may occur without instituting interstate policies.
- Private EMS providers may not be willing to participate in informal mutual aid agreements without defining levels of service, reimbursements costs, etc. Contractual obligations may limit Private EMS providers ability to provide mutual aid.
- Fire-Based EMS, standalone EMS, and Private EMS providers may have different levels of service.
- EMS providers being requested to respond across state borders may require authorization from the certification or licensing authority of the requesting state.

Effective components of Mutual Aid Agreements:

Flexibility and Adaptability: Mutual aid agreements focus on all the components necessary to request and deploy resources without being restricted to predefined response areas and resources. Agencies can request assistance based on their specific needs and availability, allowing for a tailored and adaptable response to different types of incidents.

Incident Support: Mutual aid agreements are particularly valuable during incidents that overwhelm the capabilities of a single agency. By pooling resources and coordinating efforts, agencies can effectively respond to complex emergencies, ensuring a more comprehensive and coordinated response.

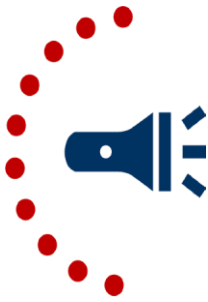
Challenges of a Mutual Aid Agreement:

Resource Strain: Depending on the scale, duration, and frequency of emergencies, a mutual aid agreement can place a strain on the resources of participating agencies. If multiple incidents occur simultaneously, agencies may struggle to meet their own jurisdictional needs while also helping others.

Administrative Complexity: Establishing and maintaining mutual aid agreements requires administrative coordination, including documentation, training, and regular communication among participating agencies. This administrative complexity can be challenging, particularly if agencies have different protocols, procedures, and reporting requirements.

Interoperability and Communication: Interoperability and effective communication between different

agencies can be a challenge during mutual aid responses. Differences in equipment, radio systems, terminology, and incident command structures may require additional training and coordination to ensure seamless collaboration.



Spotlight: Regional Agreements

Regional agreements, or those containing multiple counties, exist in many states, especially in dense urban environments. Regional agreements give agencies the confidence that their mutual aid needs can be met as they have scaled the available resources and geographic footprint. Other benefits include:

- Scalability of mutual aid systems and licensing costs.
- Improved training opportunities.
- Additional specialized equipment and personnel (e.g., typed specialized teams).

Intrastate Mutual Aid

Intrastate Mutual Aid agreements may include a single statewide agreement that provides a common process for requesting and sending help across the state. These agreements can include processes for supporting reimbursements, logistical support, coordination, resource typing, and tracking.

Effective components of Intrastate Mutual Aid:

Streamlined Legal and Administrative Processes: Intrastate mutual aid agreements often benefit from streamlined legal and administrative processes. Agencies operating within the same state typically adhere to similar regulations and protocols. In some cases, intrastate mutual aid may be required by state law.

Rapid Deployment: Intrastate mutual aid agreements enable states to quickly deploy resources within a state in response to emergencies. This can help address situations where local resources are overwhelmed, allowing for a timely and effective response while minimizing delays in resource mobilization.

Challenges of Intrastate Mutual Aid:

Resource Competition: In larger states with multiple jurisdictions, there may be competition for resources during emergencies. Agencies located in high-density or high-risk areas might face challenges in receiving assistance promptly, as resources may be allocated to other jurisdictions with greater immediate needs.

Jurisdictional Boundaries: Intrastate mutual aid agreements need to address jurisdictional boundaries and establish clear guidelines for resource allocation and incident management. The potential overlap of responsibilities, command authority, and legal considerations can require planning and coordination among participating agencies.

Statutory Responsibilities: Within EMS, certifications and licensure are sometimes handled at the local jurisdiction, and other times are handled statewide. Varying local vs state responsibilities across the country makes it difficult to recommend best practices.



Spotlight: Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) Master Agreement

[MABAS](#) is an Illinois statewide system for fire, EMS, and specialized incident operational teams. It operates both as an intra and interstate system and partners with multiple disciplines such as the State Fire Marshal and Department of Public Health. MABAS solves the issue of when a state does not own resources but wants to help mobilize them across disparate jurisdictions.

Interstate Mutual Aid

Interstate Mutual Aid agreements may include a single nationwide agreement that provides a common process for requesting and sending help across the country. These agreements can include processes for supporting reimbursements, logistical support, coordination, resource typing, and tracking.

Effective components of Interstate Mutual Aid:

Geographic Diversity: Interstate mutual aid provides access to resources from neighboring states, which often have diverse geographic features and expertise. This can be particularly valuable in emergencies that require specialized knowledge or equipment tailored to specific terrain, weather conditions, or environmental hazards.

Rapid Deployment: Interstate mutual aid agreements enable states to quickly deploy resources across state lines in response to emergencies. This can help address situations where local resources are overwhelmed, allowing for a timely and effective response while minimizing delays in resource mobilization.

Challenges of Interstate Mutual Aid:

Administrative Challenges: Coordinating interstate mutual aid efforts involves navigating administrative complexities among participating states. Differences in protocols, procedures, and legal frameworks can require additional coordination and may cause delays in resource deployment or hinder seamless collaboration.

Legal and Liability Considerations: Interstate mutual aid agreements require attention to legal and liability considerations. Clarifying the scope of assistance, establishing liability protections, and addressing legal compliance across different state jurisdictions can be complex and time-consuming.



Spotlight: Stafford Act Amendment – Sandy Recovery Improvement Act of 2013

Interstate mutual aid agreements provide an avenue for local jurisdictions to request and receive federal aid. However, tribal nations have a complex system that necessitates more direct aid. Section 1110 allows “The Chief Executive of an affected Indian tribal government...(to) submit a request for a declaration by the President,” bypassing the need to work through a state governor.

Missions, Capabilities, and Resources



Key takeaways

- Defining the mission that requires a type of aid outside of your organizational capabilities will drive you towards the appropriate agreement.
- Capabilities can be unique to an agency or jurisdiction (e.g., providing heating/cooling centers).
- Be creative when trying to find resources. Outside of the typical public safety community, resources within the VOAD, NGO, and private sector can help agencies accomplish their missions.
- Flexibility with different partners is critical to building lasting relationships. Some agencies do not want to enter formal agreements, determine cost reimbursement up front, or promise a certain threshold of service.

With the understanding of the different types of agreements available to agencies, another way to determine the appropriate type of agreement, elements, and legal authorities is to explore the missions, capabilities, and resources needed. In this context, these are defined as:

- **Missions:** FEMA's definition of mission is working together to best meet needs in each of the five areas: Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response and Recovery. For purposes of this document the word "mission" will be defined as the actual event being described. For example, traditional missions may be a medical call, single-home structure fire, or welfare check and nontraditional missions may be a hazardous materials spill, complex search and rescue, or mass casualty event.
- **Capabilities:** Capabilities are defined as what is the actual task being accomplished. Those familiar with the former Target Capabilities List or Core Capabilities from FEMA look at capabilities a certain way, but local jurisdictions can define them as needed. An example would be the capability of providing swift water rescue.
- **Resources:** These are the personnel, equipment (hardware and software), and facilities needed. Resources can be typed (e.g., RTLT) or defined as a local resource.

Innovation Idea: Data Interoperability

Capabilities from local jurisdictions have been captured in the Threat and Hazard Identification Risk Assessment (THIRA) and Stakeholder Preparedness Review (SPR process) for decades. However, nontraditional partners are not always engaged to understand the capabilities and resources available.

- Organizations may not use typing standards. Be willing to incorporate their processes/definitions.
- Resources can be found outside of 911 systems. Work with road and bridge, fleet and facilities, public works, and other government departments who manage resource inventories.

Missions

Automatic, mutual, and intrastate mutual aid agreements are used to augment local capabilities. Sometimes this is based on an increased threat and hazard environment (possibly caused by population and infrastructure growth), new missions (such as housing developments being built in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)), or aging equipment (previously provided by grants).

Identifying missions that may require an agreement is a critical step in the mutual aid process. Collaborating with a multidisciplinary team, try to identify, based on data, common and uncommon missions your agency may face.

Common mission examples may include:

- Structure fire
- Hazmat response
- Basic medical call
- Backfill



Uncommon mission example may include:

- Technical rescue/US&R
- Drone/technology support
- Viral Disease/Outbreak
- Active threat



While it is impossible to list out every type of mission (both common and uncommon) and the responsible local, state, and federal agency, there are resources that provide a guideline of who should be the primary organization or discipline. These include:

- The National Response Framework, which provides both Emergency Support Functions that describe federal coordinating structures and Support Annexes that include private sector, non-governmental organizations, and other federal partners.⁵
- National Critical Functions, which describes the functions so vital that their disruption would have a debilitating impact on a jurisdiction.⁶
- State Homeland Security Strategies, which typically list out whole community partners and their responsibilities during significant events.
- State and Local Emergency Operations Plans, which typically list out government and non-government partners roles and responsibilities.



Innovation Idea: Utilizing CAD for mission data

Computer-Aided-Dispatch (CAD) data and Records Management Systems (RMS) can provide common and uncommon missions that a jurisdiction typically respond to. Try engaging with:

- ECC dispatchers/supervisors and 911 boards. They have robust data collection efforts for accreditation and funding.
- Crime analysts from law enforcement agencies. They already conduct data analytics to support CompStat.
- Fire data analysts/pre-planners from fire agencies. They work with the Fire Marshal, NFIRS, and other systems and have a good idea of what incidents and resources are used.

⁵ FEMA. National Response Framework. <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/frameworks/response>

⁶ CISA. National Critical Functions. <https://www.cisa.gov/topics/risk-management/national-critical-functions>

Another way to determine typical and atypical missions is by looking at statistics provided by professional organizations and mandated data collection systems such as the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS).⁷ Some statistics to help agencies determine the types of missions they may encounter include:

Fire-based statistics (from the National Fire Protection Association):

- 36,624,000 total calls (inclusive of medical calls).
- 1,353,500 fire calls.
- 550,000 mutual aid calls.

Law-enforcement statistics (from the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics):

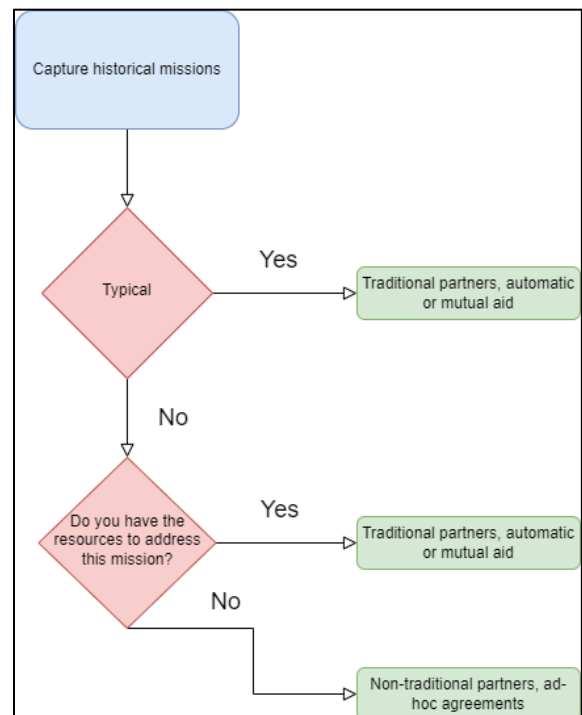
- 240,000,000 calls made to 9-1-1.
- 61,500,000 contacts with police.

EMS-based statistics (from NEMSIS Data Report for 2021):

- 43,488,767 activations (an EMS activation is an occurrence which initiates an EMS response with the potential of patient medical care).
- 22,433,561 patients treated and transported.

Most of these calls require no mutual aid but reflect the significant interaction public safety personnel have with the public. By comparison, the amount of flood, earthquake, storms, and fire related incidents considered to be “disasters” are minimal, with 114 presidentially declared disasters in 2023.⁸

Finally, another resource to identify potential missions is to look at local Hazard Mitigation Plans (HMPs) or Threat and Hazard Identification Risk Assessment Plans (THIRAs). These documents typically utilize historical data, modeling, and geospatial tools to rank- order threats and hazards **with the highest risk, vulnerability, or consequence.**



⁷ FEMA. NFRIS. <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/nfirs/>

⁸ FEMA. Declared disasters.

Capabilities

Capabilities are defined as specific tasks needed to accomplish the mission. For example, being able to provide swift water rescue capabilities may be needed for a flood mission. Capabilities may be based on **typing or may not be typed if they are a local resource**.

Matching capabilities is key to requesting and receiving the appropriate mutual aid. For example, a basic medical call may require only a BLS response. However, if an ALS response is requested, that resource is now unavailable.



Mutual Aid Audit: Cybersecurity Capabilities

Capabilities are easy to understand if you follow the Target Capabilities List or Core Capabilities List. However, these capabilities are rarely updated (or replaced). Cybersecurity capabilities cross the entire spectrum of mutual aid, and may manifest as:

- Cybersecurity requirements in mutual aid agreements, such as base cybersecurity posture or monitoring services.
- Data protections for resource and personnel data.
- Cybersecurity capabilities to address adversarial attacks.
- Always look across your organization to identify capabilities.

Sometimes an agency does not even know it needs a specific capability. For example, during COVID there was a need to decontaminate buildings and vehicles. Capabilities are also as varied as the jurisdictions that have them. For example:

- Translation capabilities to areas with a significant English as a second language (ESL) population.
- Wildlife protection and preservation capabilities during a wildfire.
- Imaging or data collection capabilities, such as synthetic-aperture radar, tornado paths, or repeat coverage satellite imagery.

Utilizing the core capabilities⁹ is a good way to start to identify stakeholders who may be good mutual aid and coordination partners. A few examples include:

- Hazardous materials spill (significant): There would be a need for a forensics and attribution capability. This may be split between the Department of Transportation and the Department of Justice (if criminal).
- Major hurricane: There would be a need for supply chain integrity and security. This may be split between private businesses/business operations centers, National Guard, and the Department of Health.

⁹ FEMA. Core Capabilities. <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/mission-core-capabilities>

Resources

When some people think automatic and mutual aid, they immediately jump to the needed resources. Not until you have identified the correct agreement and construct, the mission to accomplish, and the capability needed is it ideal to define resources. Resource management, as defined by the National Incident Management System (NIMS), describes standard mechanisms to systematically manage resources, including personnel, equipment, supplies, teams, and facilities, both before and during incidents in order to allow organizations to more effectively share resources when needed.¹⁰

Personnel:

Personnel can be found in many systems and have various qualifications and credentials they can hold. For example:

- Law enforcement: A law enforcement officer can be Peace Officer Standards and Training (P.O.S.T.)¹¹ certified, making it easier to share resources across jurisdictions. They may also work for a Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement (CALEA) agency. This ensures they meet stringent requirements and have arrest authority, although they may not have specialized training such as SWAT, K9, or Explosive Ordinance Disposal (EOD).
 - Unique considerations should be given to Sheriff Offices and Tribal Law Enforcement and the need to “deputize” requested mutual aid resources.
- Fire personnel: Fire personnel can meet NFPA Standards¹² (such as NFPA 1001, Firefighter I and II), or work for a Center for Public Safety Excellence (CFAI) accredited agency. This ensures they meet stringent requirements and have firefighting skills, but may not qualify them for hazardous materials response, ALS, or fire investigation.
 - Unique considerations should be given to wildland fire operations. A National Wildfire Coordinating Group¹³ (NWCG) Red Card is an accepted interagency certification.
- EMS personnel: Emergency medical services personnel may have state certification or licensure, in addition to certification through the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians. The National Registry is recognized in every state in the United States, and 46 states use the National Registry certification as a basis for licensure. EMS certification levels include emergency medical responder (EMR), emergency medical technician (EMT) and paramedic. Some specialized qualifications for EMS personnel include wilderness medicine, tactical medics, HAZMAT medical providers, rescue-qualified medics, etc.
 - Resource requests may need to consider the level of care (basic or advanced life support) required for a mission, along with any specialized capabilities.
 - Requests may also need to consider whether the EMS resource has patient transport capabilities or requires use of another resource to transport patients.

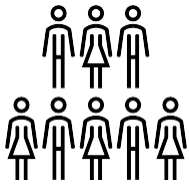
¹⁰ FEMA. National Incident Management System Guideline for Resource Management Preparedness.

<https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nims-guideline-resource-management-preparedness.pdf>

¹¹ Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers. P.O.S.T. Certification. <https://www.fletc.gov/post-certification>

¹² NFPA Codes and Standards. <https://www.nfpa.org/for-professionals/codes-and-standards?l=30>

¹³ NWCG Standards for Wildland Fire Position Qualifications. <https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/pms310-1/nwcg-standards-for-wildland-fire-position-qualifications-pms-310-1>. <https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/pms200/nwcg-standards-for-wildland-fire-resource-typing-pms-200>



Finding the Resources: Personnel

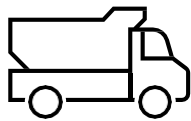
Personnel, and their respective qualifications, can be found in countless systems across the country. Although it may differ at the local level, main systems include:

- Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) – daily personnel on shift.
- Interagency Resource Ordering Capability (IROC) – firefighting personnel.
- [National Resource Hub](#)/National Qualifications System – qualification, certification, and credentialing system for nationwide mutual aid.
- Private-public-partnerships – personnel from the private sector such as HAZMAT personnel from rail owners and operators.

Equipment:

Equipment can be found in some of the same systems as personnel, although there is a significant amount of equipment owned and operated by atypical partners such as the private sector, nonprofits, and VOADs. For example:

- Utilities own heavy equipment and generators.
- VOAD's¹⁴ have shelter equipment and food and aid trailers.
- Wildlife agencies have boats, game cameras, etc.



Finding the Resources: Equipment

Common equipment used by public safety can be found in similar systems to personnel. However, a lot of the equipment used is owned and operated by partners that do not typically respond to event. Equipment can be found in:

- Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) – some include equipment lists.
- Public Works/Fleet and Facility Management – snowplows, bulldozers, graders, and other heavy equipment.
- [National Resource Hub](#)/Resource Inventory System (RIS) – equipment and personnel.

Equipment, although different than personnel, can also be categorized by capability, category, type, and kind. Commonly used equipment can be found typed at the Resource Typing Library Tool (RTL)¹⁵.

One significant limitation of these tools is that they do not consider local typing definitions.

¹⁴ National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD). <https://www.nvoad.org/>

¹⁵ FEMA. Resource Typing Library Tool. <https://rtlt.preptoolkit.fema.gov/Public>

Facilities:

Facilities, or sometimes even just space, are the final resource consideration for mutual aid.

Facilities can be fixed (e.g., a warehouse) or mobile (e.g., large tents, temporary structures). Common facilities used include:

- Schools and places of worship as evacuation or overnight shelters.
- Large warehouses or parking lots for staging resources.
- Offices or government buildings to house incident management personnel.
- Temporary communication centers, command posts, medical aid tents, cell-on-wheels, and other trailer-based facilities.

When identifying facilities during mutual aid planning, keep in mind operating hours, staffing, and ownership. Facility costs, reimbursement, accessibility, and amenities should also be considered. Facilities, especially those used as staging and operation areas, should be deconflicted with existing agreements. For example, a US&R Task Force may have pre-identified a staging area for a Base of Operations and entered into an agreement. This agreement would supersede and just-in-time agreements.



Innovation Idea: Utilizing Point of Interest (POI) Data to find facilities

Point of interest (POI) data can enrich the mutual aid process. At a minimum, POI can provide a list of locations/businesses in an area. POI data can also help streamline outreach to non-traditional partners who have not been engaged before an incident.

- [POI data](#) can provide an overview of businesses that may be closed based on foot traffic before/after an event.
- POI data is categorized in an easy to navigate way and typically uses NAICS codes.
- Some POI data is free to use (<https://www.openstreetmap.org/>). Commercial providers also have robust POI data per industry.

Finding non-traditional resources and partners

Although most mutual aid utilizes typical resources and partners, there is often a chance to engage with nontraditional partners and systems to find unique resources, cost-effective or free support, or expertise that is lacking at the local level.

Jurisdictions facing hazardous materials risks engage in this process frequently. Private rail companies have hazardous materials teams and resources to respond to spills caused by the operator but may be able to help local incidents. Other examples include:

- Compressed gas companies providing oxygen to high-risk shelter populations.
- Vacuum trucks aiding in trench rescue.
- STEM schools designing and printing PPE.

Follow some of these best practices to engage with and find non-traditional resources and partners as part of your mutual aid process.

1. Engage with local chambers of commerce and business leaders before an incident. This can be part of a concerted mutual aid planning process or included as part of outreach such as HMP and [Local Emergency Planning Committees](#) (LEPCs) activities.
2. Work with your Business Emergency Operations Centers at the local and state level. This is a captive audience who are already engaged.
3. VOADs/NGOs have a wealth of resources and typically larger footprints than local jurisdictions.
4. Work with your finance and legal departments to understand the limitations (both financially and legally) of purchasing or contracting with non-traditional partners during an event. This may include waivers of purchase limits, direct/sole sourcing, or other adjustments based on legal authorities.

Common Themes of Mutual Aid



Key Takeaways

- Common mutual aid themes throughout the fire and EMS community provide trust when drafting agreements.
- Mutual aid agreements should be flexible enough to adapt to unexpected events and requests.
- Always provide a mechanism to review and amend mutual aid agreements.
- Engage with other departments that use mutual aid to derive best practices, such as the Department of Transportation, IT, and Public Health.

Mutual aid reinforces the shared commitment to saving lives and protecting property. As a result, mutual aid agreements have evolved to ensure both requesting and providing agencies operate on firm legal standing, provide a safe environment for personnel, and understand the risks associated with requesting and rendering aid.

Mutual aid agreements have been built upon previous intergovernmental processes. As most agencies do not have a person dedicated to authoring and maintaining mutual aid agreements, common themes have carried over to most agreements in fire and EMS agencies. These common themes can help agencies draft, revise, and agree on language for mutual aid agreements.

Depending on the mission, mutual aid agreements should, at a minimum, include:

- Key elements
 - Introductory content such as purpose and scope, benefits, authorities, and definitions
 - Key personnel such as those who can activate the agreements, amend, cancel, etc.
 - Protective elements such as recognition of licensure/certifications, insurance, workers compensation, etc.
 - Administrative elements such as termination, dispute resolution, modification, etc.
- Operational plans
 - Operationalizing the plan
 - Resource management elements such as inventorying, requesting, tracking, mobilizing, receiving, and demobilizing resources.
 - Communication plans and interoperability

Key Elements

The following key elements are derived from the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Guideline for Mutual Aid¹⁶ and from a review of various example mutual aid documents.

Purpose and Scope:

- What does it cover? – General information about the agreement, general scope, the reason this agreement is needed, and other background information.
- Why is it needed? – Sets the foundation for the entire agreement and provides validity for the need.
- Example – All Parties to this Agreement agree that its purpose is to provide a highly efficient, effective, and mutually beneficial relationship among multiple regional jurisdictions to provide for the overall public safety of the region through an Automatic Aid System. This Agreement will continue to allow for an automatic response of the closest, most appropriate fire department/district resource.



Benefits:

- What does it cover? – Covers overall benefits of entering into the agreement. Does it reduce costs? Improve capabilities? Provide better coverage to the community?
- Why is it needed? – Helps gain support from senior and elected officials who may need to sign off on the agreement.
- Example – The Agreement is for the sole purpose of facilitating the most expeditious response to call for Fire/Emergency Medical Services (EMS) services without regard to jurisdictional boundary. Both Cities have stations and apparatus that may physically be closer to a call.



Authorities:

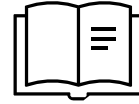
- What does it cover? – What is the legal basis?
- Why is it needed? – Provides legitimacy to the agreement.
- Example – Planning for joint response to discharges of oil and releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, and contaminants is authorized by the National Contingency Plan (NCP), Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980, 42 U.S.C 9601 (CERCLA), as amended by the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986, (SARA), and by section 311 of the Clean Water Act, as amended, 33 U.S.C 1321 (CWA). – MOU between the U.S Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management Colorado and the Grand Junction Fire Department, Grand Junction Colorado.



¹⁶ FEMA National Incident Management System Guideline for Mutual Aid. https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema_nims_mutual_aid_guideline_20171105.pdf

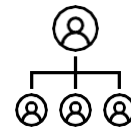
Definitions:

- What does it cover? – Defines language within the agreement where parties may have different understandings.
- Why is it needed? – Prevents future issues should disputes arise.
- Example – The language in this Agreement shall be interpreted in accordance with the following rules of construction: (a) The word “may” is permissive and the word “shall” is mandatory; and (b) except where the context reveals the contrary: The singular includes the plural and the plural includes the singular, and the masculine gender includes the feminine and neuter...when the following words in bold font with the first letter in the upper case are used in this Agreement, such words shall have the meaning ascribed to them in this Subsection (definitions).



Governance Structure and Operations Oversight:

- What does it cover? – Who oversees and executes the agreement, communication procedures, and overall chain of command items.
- Why is it needed? – Ensures that the requesting/providing agencies have personnel identified with sufficient authority when determining if they provide or ask for mutual aid.
- Example – The chief operations officer or authorized agent of any party to this Agreement who receives a request for assistance under this Agreement from another party thereto shall be the sole judge of the extent of assistance, if any, that said agency will provide. No party shall be liable to any other party for failing to respond to a request for assistance.



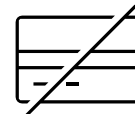
Recognition of Licensure and Certifications:

- What does it cover? – Licenses and certifications necessary for the missions identified in the mutual aid agreement. It may also identify the medical protocols (home jurisdiction vs. Jurisdiction requesting assistance) and source of medical control to be used by the party providing mutual aid.
- Why is it needed? – Impacts who can render aid (especially EMS), insurance issues, and becomes more important as mutual aid agreements go from local to international, and all phases in between.
- Example – If personnel of the Assisting Party hold local licenses or certifications limited to the county or municipality of issue, then the Requesting Party shall recognize and honor those licenses or certifications for the duration of the support.



Tort Liability and Indemnification:

- What does it cover? – How the parties will assign liability (or hold harmless), or citation of the jurisdictional statutory immunity available to the party providing mutual aid.
- Why is it needed? – May impact insurance rates, ability to provide mutual aid.
- Example - Each party agrees to protect, hold harmless, indemnify, and defend the other, its governing body, officers, agents, and employees from any and all loss, damage or liability (including injury and death), including without limitation, all reasonable legal fees, expert witness or consultant fees and expenses related to the response to, settlement of, or defense of any claims or liability, which may be suffered or incurred by a party hereto, its governing



body, officers, agents and employees, caused by, arising out of, or in any way connected with the respective responsibilities and duties hereby undertaken, except that each party shall bear the proportionate cost of any damage attributable to the fault of that party, its governing body, officers, agents, contractors, and employees. It is the intention of the parties that, where fault is determined to have been contributory, principles of comparative fault will be followed.



National Incident Management System (NIMS) Guideline for Mutual Aid (June 2023)

The NIMS Guideline for Mutual Aid provides a background on mutual aid types, elements, and resources. The key elements listed in this guide reflect the newest guideline, as well as unique elements found from local mutual aid. Why is it important to follow these documents?

- Interoperability
- Easier integration with larger systems
- Standards-based

Insurance:

- What does it cover? – What amount and types of insurance are needed. Modern agreements may include the requirement of cybersecurity insurance.
- Why is it needed? – May impact whether agencies can enter into agreements (self-insured vs private insurance).
- Example – All parties shall provide sufficient insurance to cover all such liabilities.
- Example – Each party agrees to maintain adequate automobile and commercial general liability insurance coverage for its own equipment and personnel, covering their operations. Limits of each coverage should be no less than \$1 million combined single limit.



Deployment Notification:

- What does it cover? – Provides a mechanism to officially deploy requested resources. It may be a single mechanism that covers automatic, local, and intrastate mutual aid.
- Why is it needed? – Prevents self-deployment, allows the requesting agency to track when resources are sent and provides resource accountability.
- Example – Agencies shall request emergency fire rescue assistance only through county 911. Equipment and personnel will be dispatched upon request, provided however, the amount of equipment and personnel dispatched shall be at the discretion of the assisting agency consistent with the public safety needs.



Interoperable Communications:

- What does it cover? – Types of communication methods to request, provide, and continue operating during mutual aid activations. May include radio, cell phone, and virtual collaboration technologies (data/video). May also include a communications plan designating the appropriate radio system,



channels, and frequencies to be used during operations.

- Why is it needed? – Makes it easier to execute the agreement and continue coordinating during an event.
- Example - The Parties to this Agreement may mutually agree to allow one another the use of communications systems such as radio frequencies, computer system access, data transmission lines, and communication sites when there is a mutual benefit to the Parties to this Agreement. Such arrangement shall be approved only by Agency authorized personnel and in accordance with agency laws, regulations and policies governing security of systems and facilities.

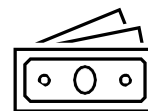
Workers Compensation:

- What does it cover? – How each party will assign responsibility for workers compensation claims, death benefits, etc.
- Why is it needed? – Provides an assurance that injuries will be covered while providing mutual aid to all entities providing aid.
- Example – Each member political subdivision shall be responsible for its own actions and those of its employees and is responsible for complying with (enter state) Workers Compensation Act.
- Example - Each member political subdivision will be responsible for its own actions and those of its employees and is responsible for complying with the Virginia Workers' Compensation Act. Coverage under this Act may be obtained (1) by a policy with an insurance company licensed to do business in the Commonwealth of Virginia, (2) by being qualified self-insured, or (3) by being a member of a group self-insurance association. Each member political subdivision should understand that workers' compensation coverage does not automatically extend to volunteers. Each local government may obtain accident insurance for any volunteer at the locality's discretion. Workers' compensation coverage for certain volunteers (volunteer firefighters, volunteer lifesaving or volunteer rescue squad members, volunteer law enforcement chaplains, auxiliary or reserve police, auxiliary or reserve deputy sheriffs, volunteer emergency medical technicians, and members of volunteer search and rescue organizations) may be obtained by adding this exposure to the locality's workers' compensation coverage. As an alternative, the individual volunteer company may obtain workers' compensation insurance coverage for this exposure.



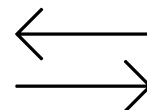
Reciprocity and Reimbursement:

- What does it cover? – Everything related to what is reimbursable, overall rates, how the reimbursement process is managed, etc.
- Why is it needed? – Provides the requesting/providing agency an up- front understanding of costs and procedures.
- Example – The Parties agree that the services to be provided hereunder to each other are of equal value. All Automatic Aid and Mutual Aid rendered under this agreement shall be free of charge to any Party.



Modification and Amendments:

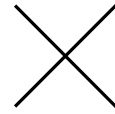
- What does it cover? – Provides a mechanism to modify agreements during certain time frames or after providing aid.
- Why is it needed? – Allows parties to adjust the agreement period, resources, or other components as needed.



- Example – Notwithstanding the provisions of this Agreement to the contrary, the terms and obligations are subject to annual appropriations by the Parties.
- Example – This Agreement may be amended only by written document signed by Parties.

Termination:

- What does it cover? – How and when a mutual aid agreement can be terminated. May be automatic (e.g., expires every year unless renewed) or indefinite.
- Why is it needed? – Allows agencies to understand their obligations under an agreement and if they can cancel said obligations.
- Example – This Agreement is changed when a written change has been signed by all the Parties. Any Party may terminate its obligations under this Agreement at any time.



Innovation Idea: Key Element Administration

Some mutual aid key elements can be easily tracked, especially if they require timed or frequent updates by parties.

- Modification notices can be sent out automatically to parties with requested e-signatures.
- Recognition of licensure, credentialing, and other requirements in the agreement can be tied in or crosschecked with other systems such as OneResponder.
- If key personnel need to be named, dynamic organization charts can automatically feed governance structures.

Dispute Resolution:

- What does it cover? – How and where parties to an agreement can formally file a complaint, and the process to resolve said complaint. Also includes choice of venue for disputes.
- Why is it needed? – Provides a mechanism and parameters for complaints and feedback to mutual aid agreements. This may include specification of the authority having jurisdiction to receive and resolve a complaint.
- Example – This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with local laws and as interpreted by local courts. However, the parties may attempt to resolve any dispute arising under this Agreement by any appropriate means of dispute resolution, except binding arbitration.



Additional Components: Population Considerations, Supplemental Information

- What does it cover? – Anything unique to a jurisdiction (e.g., most residents speak Spanish) that may impact the rendering of aid, or modifications based on a declared disaster (e.g., something that was previously considered non-reimbursable is now reimbursable).
- Why is it needed? – Provides flexibility in every mutual aid agreement to fit the mission, need, and capabilities.



- Example – By signing this Contract, the contracting parties affirm, for the duration of the Agreement, that they will not violate federal immigration law or knowingly employ, hire for employment, or continue to employ an unauthorized alien.

Legal Authorities



Key Takeaways

- National authorities only fit specific use cases.
- These authorities provide some key language that may be adopted at the local level.
- Local authorities should provide mechanisms to feed into national authorities (nested).
- If legal authorities do not exist, agencies may be hesitant to enter into a mutual aid agreement.

Legal authorities provide agencies with statutory authority and confidence that their mutual aid agreements are on sound footing. The landscape of agency and jurisdictional authority varies across the country, and is unique based on discipline, type of agency (e.g., career vs. volunteer), and level of government. To search for state-level legislature related to mutual aid, use <https://www.congress.gov/state-legislature-websites> to access legislation. Use keywords such as **mutual aid, emergency management, public safety, and disaster** to find statutes related to mutual aid.

Whereas local and state resolutions and statutes address specific concerns, larger national authorities address complex incidents and hazard specific concerns. The following four legal authorities may not apply to day-to-day mutual aid, but still provide some best practices when developing a mutual aid agreement.

- Emergency Management Assistance Compact
- Fire Agreements
- EMS Compact
- Stafford Act



Legal Concern: Self Dispatching

Uncontrolled and uncoordinated arrival of resources at emergencies cause significant accountability issues because of personnel freelancing and creating additional safety risks to firefighters, civilians, and others who are operating within the parameters of the incident action plan.

Chaos at the scene occurs, creating additional safety risks because these companies or individuals are not aware of the overall strategic plan. AAR's have shown that self-dispatching causes issues with:

- Verifying appropriate insurance.
- Ensuring sufficient support resources are available.
- Verifying the responder is operating with the appropriate legal authority.

Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC)

The Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) is a robust and flexible interstate mutual aid agreement, providing a streamlined process for states and territories to move **any** resource to assist with disaster response and recovery efforts. Key features include:

Pre-Negotiated Terms: EMAC legislation includes pre-negotiated terms and conditions, including reimbursement, liability protections, and allows for credentials, licenses, and certifications to be honored across state lines. These pre-established agreements simplify the resource-sharing process, reducing delays and potential disputes.

Voluntary Participation: EMAC operates on a voluntary basis, allowing EMAC's Members to provide resources when it is feasible for them to do so.

Resource Sharing: EMAC facilitates the sharing of critical resources, including personnel, equipment, and expertise, among its Membership. This enables a rapid and effective response to emergencies that may overwhelm the capabilities of an affected jurisdiction.

Standardized Processes: The compact establishes standardized processes for requesting and providing assistance. These procedures streamline the authorization, mobilization, and reimbursement of resources, ensuring a quick and efficient sharing of resources between states. The State Emergency Management Agency, on behalf of the Governor, implements the EMAC process and procedures.

Accessing Resources: EMAC

To access EMAC, the Governor of the affected state, territory, or district must declare a state of emergency. The following describes the process for obtaining resources through EMAC.

- The State Emergency Management Agency submits a request for assistance in the EMAC Operations System (EOS). Resource requests are sourced starting with the closest (time/distance).
- Members that have the resources available submit an Offer of Assistance through the EOS. If a Resource Provider has a Mission Ready Package (MRP) this process moves very quickly. The Offer describes available resources and its capabilities, any logistical needs, the duration that the resource is available, and estimated reimbursement cost.
- Offers are reviewed and accepted/declined by the EMAC Authorized Representative of the Requesting State. Timelines for submitting an offer and how quickly the resource will be on-site and able to respond are key factors impacting the selection of an offer.
- Once an offer is accepted, the signed agreement between the Requesting and Assisting States is called a Resource Support Agreement (RSA) and is a legally binding document.
- The deploying resource executes the mission under the operational direction of the Requesting State. Any changes to the mission, duration, or estimated cost should be documented in an RSA amendment.
- Once demobilized, the Assisting State submits for reimbursement following the EMAC guidelines.

Fire Agreements

Multiple [fire agreements](#)¹⁷ serve to provide national-level guidance. However, there are many differences between wildfire and wildland fire agreements, as well as differences between federally owned, tribal, or private land.

[The National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy](#) is a collaborative framework focused on addressing the complexities of wildland fire management. Key aspects include:

- Three Goals: Emphasizes restoring and maintaining resilient landscapes, creating fire- adapted communities, and improving the efficiency of wildfire response.
- Shared Responsibility: Promotes a shared responsibility among federal, state, tribal, and local entities, recognizing the need for a comprehensive, all-lands approach to wildfire management.
- Science-Based Approach: Incorporates science-based decision-making to enhance ecosystem health and reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires.

[The Interagency Agreement for Wildland Fire Management](#) establishes a collaborative framework among federal agencies for efficient and coordinated wildfire response. Unique aspects include:

- Unified Command Structure: Provides a unified command structure for managing wildfire incidents, ensuring seamless coordination among federal agencies.
- Resource Sharing: Facilitates resource sharing, including personnel, equipment, and funds, to optimize firefighting efforts and enhance overall response capabilities.
- Predictive Services: Integrates predictive services to anticipate fire behavior, allowing for proactive and effective firefighting strategies.



Know Your Land

Land ownership plays a significant role in who is responsible for firefighting activities and eligibility for mutual aid, reimbursement, and mitigation grants. Unincorporated land in counties across the country may be the responsibility of Sheriff's Office, whereas different federal land may be the responsibility of a specific department within the Department of the Interior. Some firefighting costs may be reimbursed, such as the [Reimbursement for Firefighting Costs on Federal Property](#).

¹⁷ National Wildfire Coordinating Group. Partners and Agreements. <https://www.nwcg.gov/executive-board/partners-agreements>

¹⁸ U.S. Department of the Interior. Bureaus and Offices. <https://www.doi.gov/bureaus>

The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) Shared Funding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlines financial agreements for wildfire management. Unique features include:

- **Cost-Sharing Mechanism:** Defines a cost-sharing mechanism among federal agencies participating in firefighting efforts, promoting equitable distribution of financial responsibilities.
- **Resource Mobilization:** Enhances resource mobilization by establishing a clear understanding of funding commitments, ensuring timely and effective response to wildfires.
- **Flexibility:** Allows for flexibility in financial arrangements, accommodating various funding sources and allocations based on the specific needs of each incident.

The Operating Plan for Detail Exchange outlines collaboration between the NWCG and the Department of the Interior's (DOI) Dispatch and Aviation Support Program (DASP). Distinct elements include:

- **Resource Detailing:** Facilitates the exchange of personnel and resources between NWCG and DASP, ensuring a seamless integration of expertise and assets.
- **Logistical Support:** Defines logistical support arrangements, including travel, lodging, and equipment, to streamline the detailing process and enhance operational efficiency.
- **Mutual Benefit:** Promotes a mutually beneficial relationship, allowing for the optimization of skills and resources to effectively manage wildfire incidents.

Fire Management Assistance Grants (FMAG) provide critical federal assistance for firefighting efforts in cases of severe and escalating wildfires. Key features include:

- **Presidential Declaration:** Requires a request from the affected state's governor and a presidential declaration to authorize FMAG assistance.
- **Rapid Federal Funding:** Enables prompt federal funding to cover a significant portion of eligible firefighting costs, alleviating the financial burden on affected jurisdictions.
- **Supplemental to State Resources:** Augments state and local firefighting capabilities, ensuring a robust and coordinated response to severe wildfires.

EMS Compact¹⁹

The Emergency Medical Services Compact (EMS Compact) is a groundbreaking initiative designed to enhance interstate coordination and cooperation in the field of emergency medical services (EMS). Established to address the challenges of providing seamless EMS across state lines, the EMS Compact promotes efficient resource utilization and rapid response during emergencies. Key features include:

Interstate Recognition: The EMS Compact facilitates the swift recognition of EMS personnel licenses across participating member states. This recognition ensures that qualified EMS professionals can seamlessly provide assistance in neighboring states during emergencies without delays associated with license verification.

Expeditious Licensure Process: The compact streamlines the process of obtaining EMS licensure in multiple states, reducing administrative burdens and allowing qualified personnel to respond quickly to emergencies in different jurisdictions.

Uniform Standards: Participating states adhere to uniform standards for EMS personnel licensure, training, and practice. This standardization promotes consistency in the quality of care provided by EMS professionals, regardless of the state in which they are rendering assistance.

Compact Administration: The EMS Compact is governed by an administrative body responsible for overseeing its implementation and ensuring compliance with established standards. This body fosters communication and collaboration among member states.

Voluntary Participation: States voluntarily join the EMS Compact, demonstrating a commitment to regional and national collaboration in emergency medical services. Each member state retains its sovereignty and autonomy in regulating EMS within its borders.

Technology Integration: The EMS Compact utilizes modern technology to facilitate efficient information exchange and license verification. This integration enhances the speed and accuracy of the licensure process, contributing to a more agile and responsive EMS network.



Best Practices: REPLICA

The Recognition of EMS Personnel Licensure Interstate CompAct (REPLICA) provides model legislation that can serve as the foundation for statewide legislation. Coupled with a National EMS Coordinated Database, adopting states can track EMS license information and Privilege to Practice status for EMS personnel.

¹⁹ EMS Compact, REPLICA. <https://www.emscompact.gov/resources/replica-model-legislation>

Stafford Act²⁰

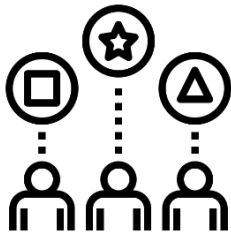
The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act) underwent significant amendments in 2022, enhancing its provisions for more effective disaster relief. These updates focused on eligibility criteria and accessing funds. The 2022 amendments broaden eligibility criteria, ensuring a more inclusive approach. Eligible entities now include not only state, local, tribal, and territorial governments but also private sector partners actively involved in disaster response and recovery efforts.

Accessing Funds:

- **Streamlined Process:** The amendments prioritize a streamlined process for requesting and receiving federal assistance. The President, upon a governor's request, can swiftly issue a disaster or emergency declaration, triggering faster access to resources.
- **Private Sector Engagement:** Recognizing the critical role of the private sector, the updated Stafford Act facilitates collaboration with businesses and nonprofits, allowing for expedited access to funds and resources to enhance overall disaster resilience.

Specific Funding Categories:

- **Enhanced Individual Assistance:** The amendments strengthen provisions for direct federal assistance to individuals and households affected by disasters, emphasizing financial support, temporary housing, and essential needs.
- **Community Resilience Grants:** A notable addition is the introduction of Community Resilience Grants, providing funding to local entities for pre-disaster mitigation efforts. This aims to reduce the impact of future disasters and enhance community preparedness.



Different paths: Declarations

Presidentially declared disasters unlock much needed funds for local jurisdictions before, during, and after a disaster. Regardless of jurisdiction type, a preliminary damage assessment is conducted to determine the extent of the disaster, impacts, and types of assistance needed.

- Local jurisdictions must go through the state and governor to request funds after conducting an Initial Damage Assessment (IDA.)
- Tribal governments may pursue a declaration directly.

²⁰ FEMA. Preliminary Damage Assessments. <https://www.fema.gov/disaster>

Mutual Aid Processes



Key Takeaways

- Define resource request processes before an event based on complexity.
- Reimbursement language should address reimbursable activities, events, resources, etc.
- There are major reimbursement differences between the types of aid agreements. Automatic aid may have fixed amounts, whereas mutual aid may differ on event length and complexity.
- Consistent processes across requests, deployment, reimbursement, and demobilization will make it easier to scale aid for larger incidents.

All mutual aid agreements, regardless of the type, share common components that include such topics as the legal authority for agencies to enter into an agreement, the needed protections and direction for those working outside their normal jurisdiction, and the basic processes for how to make and respond to requests for help. These components are usually more than adequate for local and automatic mutual aid and were discussed in the [Common Themes of Mutual Aid](#) section.

Additional processes may need to be included in agreements that support large-scale incidents or disasters involving the deployment of resources from further away and for extended durations.

These additional processes or components may also be included in a separate response plan. Additional components can include:

- Resource cataloging, typing, and availability.
- The establishment of county, regional, and statewide coordinators.
- Resource requests – For automatic aid, this is coded based on a complex set of rules and geographic proximity, also known as closest unit.
 - Deployment notifications – For mutual aid, this is typically done via emergency communication centers (ECCs)²¹. Notifications should also make other partners aware of the unavailability of resources.
- Reimbursement – This can range from no-cost aid to defined per hour/operational period costs. Some disciplines are more mature in their reimbursement and cost processes (fire). Reimbursement may also differ based on local vs intra vs interstate mutual aid.
- Additional processes – secure data sharing (e.g., LES data, HIPAA), continuity and backup plans, training plans, and other processes to effectively execute mutual aid.

²¹ APCO. <https://www.apcointl.org/community/about/>



Mutual Aid Audit: Subordinate Processes

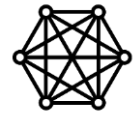
When determining the situations where a mutual aid agreement would fit the needs of organizations, it is important to recognize the need to transition from a mutual aid agreement to a statewide agreement, especially when the local agreement includes language that does not support reimbursements. This is critical because:

- FEMA will not reimburse for costs if local agreements do not cover said reimbursable expenses.
- Agreements should include the ability to request reimbursement when responses extend beyond a certain timeframe or operational period.

Process Types

Depending on the type of mutual aid, different processes are utilized to ensure efficient and effective responses. Common process types are described below for each type of aid previously explored.

Incident Complexity: Based on the NIMS Incident Complexity Guide, the level of difficulty or resistance an incident presents to those working to successfully manage or mitigate it. The measured complexity level is based on a scale of 5 to 1, where Type 5 is the least complex incident and the least resistant to management or mitigation.



- Automatic Aid: Commonly used on Type 5 & 4 incidents.
- Mutual Aid: Commonly used on Type 5 & 4 incidents.
- Intrastate Mutual Aid: Can include all 5 types of incidents.
- Interstate Mutual Aid: Can include all 5 types of incidents.

Mobilization (request, dispatch, and response): The process for making resource requests, dispatches, and responses through mutual aid.

- Automatic Aid: Resource(s) can be pre-loaded in the AHJ's CAD system and/or called directly by dispatchers as part of the initial response.
- Mutual Aid: Requests under this type of agreement are not routinely made, but instead used to address unmet needs at significant incidents in progress or to provide back-fill coverage because of active incidents or events. Requests are normally made directly by the AHJ's dispatch center based on requests from the IC or to provide backfill coverage. Some agreements provide support for extended operational period incidents, special events, or exercises where resource requests can be scheduled in advance. Local Mutual Aid agreements normally do not include any pre-commitment to respond resources, with the decision made at the time of the request.
- Intrastate Mutual Aid: These agreements can provide for mutual aid requests between local jurisdictions in the absence of any local agreements, or when local agreements cannot meet their needs. They are typically used to support large-scale or complex incidents that impact multiple jurisdictions and counties or incidents managed by a state agency. Resource requests commonly include



larger teams configured as Task Forces and Strike Teams that deploy over longer distances and operate over multiple operational periods. Turnout times, travel times, and mission durations details should be included in the requesting process.

- Interstate Mutual Aid: May include a single nationwide agreement that provides a common process for requesting and sending help across the country. The most common systems include:
 - Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC): To receive resources through EMAC, a state's Governor must have declared an emergency or disaster which authorizes funds to be expended for response and recovery efforts and activating EMAC. The EMAC Operations System (EOS) is the online system state emergency management agencies use to request, offer, and track resources for deployments through the nationally adopted Compact. The EOS is only accessible by State Emergency Management Agencies.
 - Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) Master Agreement: Initially established a statewide, non-discriminatory mutual aid response system for fire, EMS, and specialized incident operational teams in the state of Illinois, then expended to include neighboring states under the MABAS Master Plan.
 - Interagency Resource Ordering Capability (IROC): A dynamic, modern, flexible, and scalable resource ordering system that is used for requesting and filling interagency resource requests. Although IROC was built as an all-hazards resource ordering system, the bulk of the resources that have been added are those used in support of wildland fire management.
 - Federal Resource Request Form (RRF)- Resource request forms are used to request federal resource support. The event must be a federally declared disaster to request federal support. The state must consider in-state mutual aid, purchasing, vendors, and EMAC support before requesting federal resources. The exception to this is if the resource that they are requesting is a specialized federal resource that is not available through another source.

Resource Turnout: The urgency of response and time expectation of the requesting agency to receive aid. The Minimum Lead Time a resource needs to prepare for deployment, measured in hours. (Example N+4 means the resource will take 4 hours to deploy following the notice).

- Automatic Aid: Available on-duty resources response immediately.
- Mutual Aid: Responses by neighboring agencies could involve the immediate turnout of available on-duty crews based on the request details. Requests for specialty teams requiring the call back of personnel would have a delayed turnout.
- Intrastate Mutual Aid: Resources requested typically involve larger or specialty teams that could involve the rostering of personnel from more than one agency or work shift and include equipment and apparatus preparations. Turnout time requirements need to be included in the request.
- Interstate Mutual Aid: The minimum turnout and travel time for requested resources from outside the state can take longer, in most cases due to their extended travel distances. The processes requiring completion before resources can move can take longer as well. When dealing with noticed events such as hurricanes, requests can be made pre-landfall speeding up the process, or in the



case of Federalized teams that may already be pre-positioned, could arrive quicker than when dealing with a no-notice event.

Deployment Duration: The maximum time a requested resource is projected to be deployed.

- Automatic Aid: Released with other first due units if not sooner.
- Mutual Aid: Much like Automatic Aid, resources deployed are normally released after the incident is brought under control and may be released ahead of resources belonging to the AHJ.
- Intrastate Mutual Aid: Resources are typically needed for extended periods of time, and a request for a 14-Day deployment plus travel days is common. Crew changeouts may be agreed upon to reduce the impact on resource providers.
- Interstate Mutual Aid: Resources are typically needed for extended periods of time, and a request for a 14-Day deployment plus travel days is common.



Estimating Costs: Providing estimated costs of your requested resource ahead of receiving authorization to deploy.

- Automatic Aid: Typically, not addressed in the agreement or pre-identified costs/reciprocity arrangements already include costs.
- Mutual Aid: Responses under Local Mutual Aid agreements involve local agencies where responses are short in duration and resources can be recalled when needed, so the requirement for reimbursements are normally not included, or triggered after a certain timeframe is met.
 - When an incident scales up and it becomes a declared event where reimbursement is now available from the state or federal government, it is important to include language that supports the ability to qualify. (ex: if agreement states no reimbursement, you cannot change that just because federal reimbursement now available)
- Intrastate Mutual Aid: Due to the extended deployments typically involved, statewide mutual aid agreements provide for the reimbursement of expenses incurred by the responding agency(s). This normally requires the submittal of a projected cost to the requesting agency. Some states create pre-established rates that include personnel pay by agency and position, which can expedite the process and reduce the turnout time.
 - FEMA recognizes mutual aid agreements between Requesting and Providing Entities, and statewide mutual aid agreements wherein the State is responsible for administering the claims for reimbursement of Providing Entities. The reimbursement provisions of a mutual aid agreement must not be contingent on a declaration of an emergency, major disaster, or fire by the Federal government. FEMA encourages parties to address the subject of reimbursement in their written mutual aid agreements. FEMA will honor the reimbursement provisions in a pre-event agreement to the extent they meet the requirements of this policy.
- Interstate Mutual Aid: The processes for providing the estimated costs are well defined in each of the national mutual aid systems. See the respective system for in-depth cost estimation.



Logistical Support: Additional support needed to effectively render mutual aid such as food, water, supplies, and fuel.

- Automatic Aid: No logistical support needed.
- Mutual Aid: Logistical support is normally limited to on-scene support for things like fuel and food.
- Intrastate Mutual Aid: The details of all logistical support needed for travel and work on site should be included in the request to include fuel, hotels/responder camps, food, expendables, communications, and maintenance support. Based on the available infrastructure, or lack of, teams may be asked to provide their own basic needs for an initial period such as the first 72 hours, before those services can be established locally.
- Interstate Mutual Aid: Same logistical support as Intrastate State Mutual Aid.



Deployment Notification: The process of providing acceptable deployment notification protocols and documents authorizing a resource to deploy that reduces the chances of self-deployment.

- Automatic Aid: Resources are notified through direct dispatching by local dispatch centers.
- Mutual Aid: Resources are notified through direct dispatching by local dispatch centers.
- Intrastate Mutual Aid: Requests are usually made through a statewide or regional mutual aid operational plan, utilizing Area or Regional coordinators that assist in locating needed resources in support of a large-scale incident or disaster. This provides for a coordinated process that can reduce any duplication of efforts and self-deployments. Formal processes are used to locate the closest and most appropriate resources needed and include the use of forms to formally document the request and acceptance process.
- Interstate Mutual Aid: Requests are made through the State or Territories' Emergency Management Agency as authorized by the Governor. Tribes can also make requests directly.



Coordination: The coordination of mutual aid processes usually through a statewide or regional mutual aid operational plan, utilizing Area or Regional coordinators that assist in locating needed resources.

- Automatic Aid: Available resources are managed through local dispatch centers, and on-scene management is handled through NIMS ICS.
- Mutual Aid: Available resources are managed through local dispatch centers, and on-scene management is handled through NIMS ICS.
- Intrastate Mutual Aid: The coordination of filling resource requests and tracking them through to their return home are more commonly handled through a statewide or regional mutual aid operational plan, utilizing Area or Regional coordinators that assist in locating and tracking needed resources.
- Interstate Mutual Aid: Just as when filling Intrastate requests, the coordination of filling resource requests and tracking them through to their return home are more commonly handled through a statewide or regional mutual aid operational plan, utilizing Area or Regional coordinators that assist in locating needed resources.



Resource Management: Systems for identifying available resources.

- Automatic Aid: Managed directly by local dispatch centers that maintain real-time availability.
- Mutual Aid: Normally managed directly by local dispatch centers that maintain real-time availability.
- Intrastate Mutual Aid: Based on the specific discipline and operational plan that may be used, cataloging deployable resources can vary considerably. The processes can include something as simple as using spreadsheets, or as formal as prefilling resource details into an online system. Some systems may only track specialty resources while others include all deployable resources.
 - Recognizing the difference between Deployable and Available resources is important. A deployable resource may not be available when requested for reasons that can include being out of service or already deployed, committed to an active incident by the AHJ, heavy alarm loads, and pending impacts from a severe weather event such as a hurricane. When an agency is requested to commit a resource in advance of being deployed, the actual unit selected may not be known until they are deployed.
- Interstate Mutual Aid: National mutual aid systems normally include a cataloging system. These systems may not include all the kinds and types of resources that can be requested, so many times the state or territories' Intrastate system provides the needed capability.



Resource Typing: Defining and categorizing incident resources by capability.

- Automatic Aid: Typically, not necessary, as the local resource capabilities are known and accepted.
- Mutual Aid: Given the agreements are with local agencies, they are typically aware of the resource kinds and capabilities available.
- Intrastate Mutual Aid: Utilizing NIMS typing definitions found in the RTLT (Resource Typing Library Tool) will ensure resources requested and sent meet the needs based on a common naming convention.
- Interstate Mutual Aid: Utilizing NIMS typing definitions found in the RTLT (Resource Typing Library Tool) will ensure resources requested and sent meet the needs based on a common naming convention. Can also use Mission Ready Packages.



Documentation: Includes standardized protocols for documentation and reporting procedures to help parties maintain situational awareness and give personnel access to critical information.

- Automatic Aid: Usually limited to providing rosters or passports on- scene to support accountability.
- Mutual Aid: Usually limited to providing rosters or passports on-scene to support accountability.
- Intrastate Mutual Aid: Includes forms and other documents that support the complete mutual aid process from the initial request through post-deployment reimbursement packages. Some of the documents used includes the formal



request and authorization to deploy, ICS-214 Unit Log, Team Rosters, ICS-218 Equipment List, Estimated Costs, MRPs, Receipts for reimbursable expenses, Incident Action Plans, P-Card statements that document expenses paid and agency payroll records documenting all details of deployed personnel pay including backfill.

Interstate Mutual Aid: In addition to those used in an Intrastate request, there will be additional forms needed to support the different types of national mutual aid agreements. For example, EMAC requests would start utilizing the EMAC Operating System (EOS). Responses to requests by other offering states if selected would complete a Resource Support Agreement (RSA), previously called a Req-A. Requests for federal assistance would start by completing a Resource Request Form (RRF).

Reciprocity and Reimbursement: The process described in the agreement of how the receiving party will compensate the sending party for specific reimbursable costs that can include personnel pay, travel/transportation/Billeting, equipment rates, commodities, and other agreed upon expenses.

- Automatic Aid: Typically, not addressed in the agreement or pre-identified costs or reciprocity arrangements already spelled out.
- Mutual Aid: Typically, not addressed in the agreement or pre-identified costs or reciprocity arrangements already spelled out. Reimbursements may become available after a certain timeframe, like beyond 24 hours.
- Intrastate Mutual Aid: Statewide mutual aid agreements typically include reimbursement provisions which are necessary to qualify for being reimbursed for expenses when deployed to federally declared incidents. Some agreements may include language that suspends the need for reimbursements for the initial response period typically measured in hours (ex: first 24-Hours). The reimbursement provisions may be listed as optional.

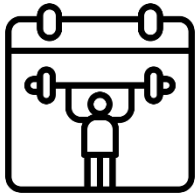


Interstate Mutual Aid: National mutual aid agreements include specific reimbursement guidelines and requirements.

Training and Exercise: The established training and exercise requirements for the different types of mutual aid agreements, how often training and exercise must occur, the process for valuating and improving gap areas, and overall costs associated with training and exercise.

- Automatic Aid: Training and exercise are typically a requirement of mutual aid agreements, especially as it relates to jurisdictional-specific response requirements.
- Mutual Aid: Training and exercise events are typically limited to larger training and exercise events (tabletops, functional exercises) to refamiliarize agencies with capabilities and response standard operating procedures.
 - Intrastate Mutual Aid: Training and exercise events are typically limited to larger training and exercise events (functional or full-scale exercises), often as part of a larger exercise series and funded by sources such as Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) or State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP).
 - Interstate Mutual Aid: Training and exercise are often limited to National-Level Exercise (NLE) events, requirements tied to grants, or for federalized teams (e.g., US&R Teams).





Training and exercise: Resources

Without training and exercise, mutual aid agreements may fail or become stale. Training and exercise events are critical to determining the effectiveness of a mutual aid agreement, identifying gaps, and driving improvements. Training and exercise should:

- Follow best practices for training and exercise series based on discipline-specific standards or the [Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program \(HSEEP\)](#).
- Provide actionable steps through a formal after-action review (AAR) and improvement planning (IP) process.
- Define objectives to validate existing agreements. For example, did the requesting agency follow the appropriate request procedure? Do both entities have access to qualifications? Were SOPs followed on-scene?
- Clearly define training requirements (certifications, joint-training, standard operating procedures such as Rescue Task Force SOPs), qualifications, badging, and other tasks necessary to execute mutual aid and multi-agency coordination.
- Assess whether the current plans reflect the operational environment, and if the update schedule is sufficient.
- Bring in both traditional (named) and nontraditional partners on mutual aid agreements to help plan and execute a training and exercise plan.

To aid in the development and execution of training and exercises, agencies are encouraged to seek out funding opportunities. Funding responsibility may be included in the mutual aid agreement, tied to other grant requirements (e.g., regional assets purchased with SHSGP or UASI funds must participate), or left to the individual agencies to conduct. Some existing funding opportunities to help with training and exercise, staffing, and other projects include:

- [Fire Prevention and Safety \(FP&S\) Grants](#)
- Assistance to Firefighters Grants
- Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER)
- [Emergency Management Performance Grants \(EMPG\)](#)
- [Homeland Security Grant Program](#)

Challenges and Opportunities

Throughout the development of this guide, stakeholders identified many challenges and opportunities.

- 1 Clarification on mutual aid definitions and responsibilities of parties
- 2 Education on national systems (e.g., EMAC and MRPs)
- 3 Diversity of systems, lack of interoperability, and future advancements uncertainty
- 4 Coordination with public safety organizations (e.g., law, private)
- 5 Communications and Cybersecurity
- 6 Disproportionate uses of automatic and mutual aid

Clarification on mutual aid types:

Challenges: It was identified that clarification on mutual aid types, definitions, etc. is needed when discussing fire and EMS mutual aid. This includes who is responsible for mutual aid documents (maintenance, execution, etc.).

Opportunity: Clearly laying out types of mutual aid agreements in a 1- page infographic, when they should be used, etc. will help leadership.



Education on national systems:

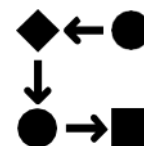
Challenges: It was identified that larger national systems (e.g., EMAC, FMAG) were not widely understood because of the infrequency of use, and that some components (MRPs, declaration process) do not cleanly fit into local processes.

Opportunity: Clearly laying out the different national systems, their use cases, eligibility requirements, and processes through 1-page graphics and other marketing material can help fire and EMS stakeholders better understand the systems.



Process Complexities and Future Advancement

Challenges: It was identified that disparate and legacy systems hinder the adoption of interoperable systems. Additionally, there is not a clear path for the adoption and advancement of emerging technologies to facilitate mutual aid.



Opportunity: As legacy mutual aid systems sunset, development of new systems should embrace industry standards.

Coordination with Public Safety Organizations:

Challenges: It was identified that coordination outside of fire and EMS agencies is difficult, as law enforcement, public works, and private sector resources and mutual aid processes differ.



Opportunity: Utilizing industry standards and APIs can connect disparate systems. Planning with partners before an event on mutual aid can improve operations.

Communications and Cybersecurity:

Challenges: It was identified that mutual aid systems may be vulnerable or not considering interoperable communications and cybersecurity.



Opportunity: Mutual aid agreements should include cybersecurity standards, and stakeholders should identify cybersecurity resources and capabilities when conducting a mutual aid audit.

Disproportionate partners in automatic and mutual aid:

Challenges: It was identified that there will always be an imbalance between those who provide and those who request aid. This leads to not only financial imbalances but potential political concerns around adequate staffing, responsibilities, and sustainability. This can also include mutual aid requests being frequently denied because of a lack of resources.



Opportunity: Utilizing geospatial and call data can help organizations more effectively plan for needed resources. Complex aid agreements may need to be revisited more frequently to adjust for resources provision/requests.

Appendix A: Creating Fire and EMS Mission Ready Packages

The National Emergency Management Association (NEMA) Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) partnered with the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) to develop Mission Ready Package (MRP) templates for commonly requested Fire and EMS resources. IAFC's goal is to provide these templates to Fire and EMS organizations to support them with creating customized MRPs that reflect their individual jurisdiction/organization capabilities.

By creating MRPs, jurisdictions/organizations can quickly submit an offer of assistance through the EMAC compact. This time-savings means that fire and EMA assets can deploy and provide assistance to those in need faster and potentially saving lives and protecting property and the environment.

MRPs are an important preparedness tool that classify and inventory available resources in the Mutual Aid Support System (MASS), making them easy to identify, deploy, and reimburse during disasters. MRPs consist of eight main components all designed to capture the equipment, personnel, and the estimated costs and timelines required to deploy a resource. Below is the breakdown of these components and their makeup:

Mission Ready Package	
RP Details	Contact information, NIMS, Resource Type, Job Position/Qualification, equipment requirements, deployment timeline and more.
Travel	Includes meals, airfare, mileage, rental vehicle, lodging, parking fees, and more.
Personnel	Job title, regular salary and fringe benefit rates, overtime salary and fringe benefit rates, the estimate number of hours and mission days.
Equipment	Equipment by quantity or by rate and number of days used.
Commodities	Items that are consumed during the mission entered by quantity and cost.
Other	Costs not included elsewhere in the MRP such as the shipment of goods or uniform laundry fees, etc.

Total Cost Estimate	Total cost estimates per category and the number of personnel assigned to the mission.
Federal Funding	You can indicate if you received federal funding to maintain the resource.

Click [here to find out more about MRPs and MASS](#).

NEMA EMAC and IAFC analyzed historical data to identify the most requested Fire and EMS resources and developed MRP templates to mirror those requests. The templates were created using the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Resource Typing Library Tool (RTLTL) where applicable. Additionally, the MRP templates were further validated by Fire and EMS Subject Matter Experts from across the nation to ensure they accurately reflect real-world capabilities and include the minimum components necessary to fulfill the requirements of each resource.

The MRP Templates can be found on the NEMA EMAC website by clicking on this link [Fire and EMS MRP Templates](#). These templates are easy to customize to reflect your organization/jurisdictions capabilities.