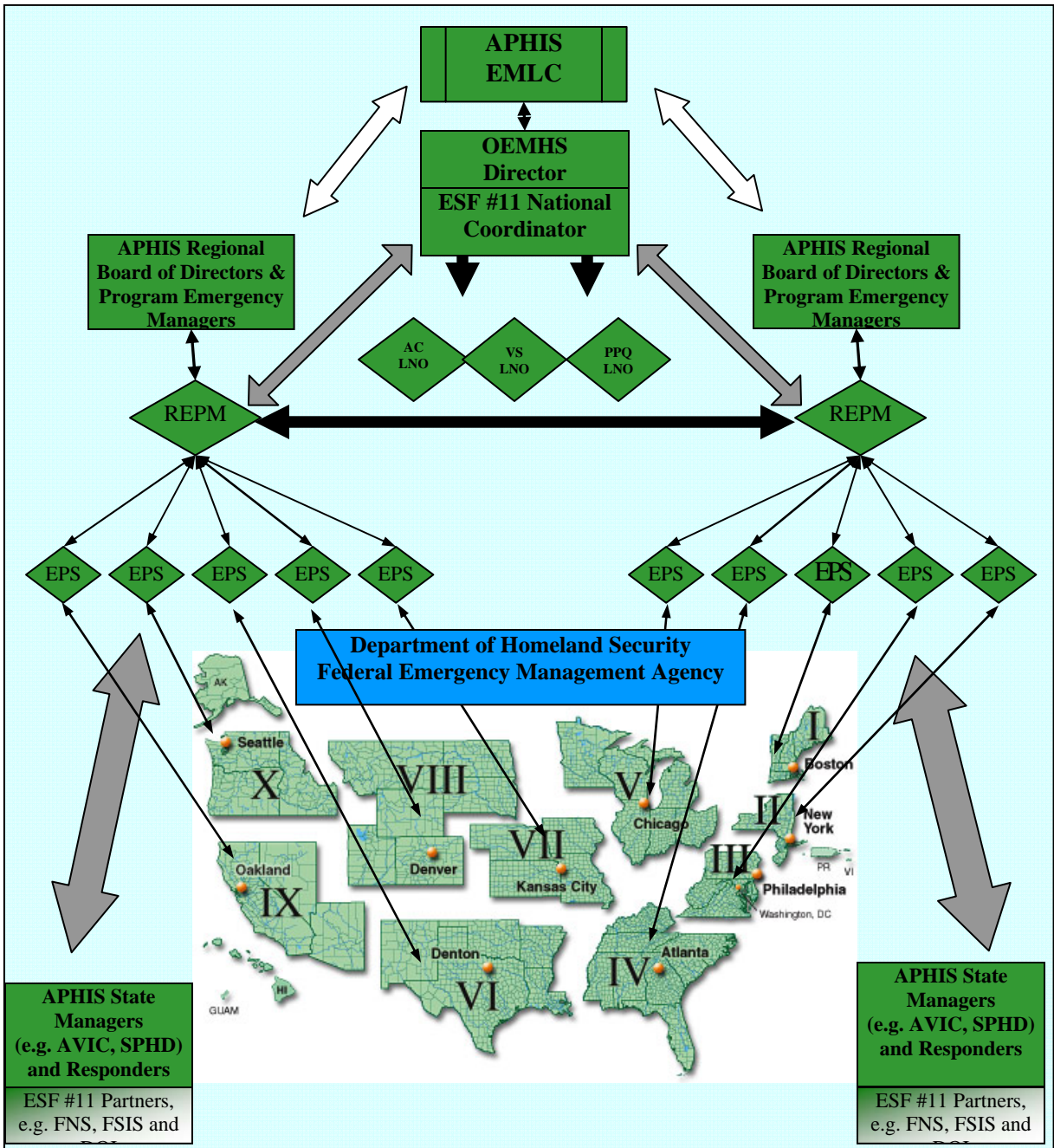


**Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)  
 Concept of Operations (CONOPS)  
 in support of  
 Emergency Support Function #11 (ESF #11)  
 Agriculture and Natural Resources**

<p><i>Purpose and Intended Audience</i></p>	<p><b>This document and diagram provide the policy and operational basis for APHIS emergency response related to Emergency Support Function (ESF) #11, Agriculture and Natural Resources.</b> Collectively, they outline the preparation of APHIS infrastructure, people, and administration for all-hazards support to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the American public according to the ESF #11 program. The intended audience is APHIS employees and senior leadership, and external audiences such as DHS, State and Tribal collaborators, and other entities with an interest in how APHIS is organized to support its emergency response responsibilities.</p>
<p><i>Authority</i></p>	<p>The National Response Framework (NRF) establishes a comprehensive approach to manage domestic incidents. It provides an orderly and continuing means of assistance by the Federal Government to State, local, and tribal governments in disaster response, and outlines provisions for Federal to Federal Support. Other relevant authorities are contained in the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, Homeland Security Presidential Directives, and Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) #44. The NRF contains critical emergency support functions, including ESF #11-Agriculture and Natural Resources. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Homeland Security Office (HSO) is delegated authority to coordinate ESF #11 responsibilities by the NRF and in turn delegated this authority to the APHIS Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (OEMHS) to act as the USDA representative for ESF #11 and to coordinate ESF #11 activities.</p>
<p><i>APHIS Emergency Response – link to USDA and APHIS Strategic Plans</i></p>	<p>APHIS has a proven capacity to prevent, prepare for, and respond to a wide variety of threats to animal and plant resources and to support safe agricultural trade in its mission to protect the health and value of American agriculture and natural resources. This is consistent with the USDA Strategic Plan for 2005-2010, Strategic Goal Four: <b><i>Enhance Protection and Safety of the Nation’s Agriculture and Food Supply</i></b> and with Mission Priority Two from the 2007-2012 APHIS Strategic Plan: <b><i>Strengthen Emergency Response Preparedness</i></b>. APHIS established its Emergency</p>

<p><i>Link to EMLC Integration Plan</i></p>	<p>Management Leadership Council (EMLC), the Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (OEMHS), and Marketing and Regulatory Programs Business Services (MRPBS) Emergency Preparedness Staff to provide leadership and guidance on efforts to strengthen emergency preparedness and response activities.</p> <p>The Draft EMLC Agricultural Health and Homeland Security Emergency Response Integration Plan emphasizes the criticality of adequate personnel, equipment, systems, processes, and services to achieve effective response objectives. The ESF #11 structure is consistent with the Plan and ensures links among USDA agencies, DHS-FEMA, State and Tribal partners to achieve coordinated and effective responses to the wide range of incidents outlined in the EMLC Integration Plan.</p>
<p><i>Strengthening APHIS Emergency Response: ESF #11 Structure</i></p>	<p>The creation of the ESF #11 structure is a commitment by APHIS to a collaborative response to national incidents and emergencies. The ESF #11 structure is comprised of a National Coordinator; three Headquarters Liaison Officers (LNOs); two Regional Emergency Program Managers (REPMs), one each reporting to the Eastern or Western Board of Directors; ten Emergency Program Specialists (EPSs), one in each of the ten FEMA regions; and three Resource Ordering and Status System (ROSS) Dispatchers in each region, for a total of six dispatchers. Reporting lines are shared among APHIS programs; for example, the Emergency Program Manager for the APHIS Eastern Region is administratively assigned to Veterinary Services (VS), whereas the Western Region counterpart is administratively assigned to Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ). (See Figure 1, page 4.)</p>
<p><i>ESF Structure Terminology</i></p>	<p>Consistent terms will define the ESF #11 positions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APHIS National ESF #11 Coordinator (NC) in OEMHS in Riverdale</li> <li>• APHIS ESF #11 Headquarters Liaison Officers in Animal Care (AC LNO), PPQ (PPQ LNO), and VS (VS LNO) in Riverdale</li> <li>• APHIS ESF #11 Regional Emergency Program Manager (REPM) in Raleigh, NC and Fort Collins, CO</li> <li>• APHIS ESF #11 Emergency Program Specialist (EPS) in each of the 10 FEMA Regions</li> </ul>
<p><i>Difference Between ESF #11 Structure and APHIS Emergency Programs</i></p>	<p>VS and PPQ have emergency response programs as integral facets of their mission. This is in accordance with the statutory authorities of the Animal Health Protection Act and the Plant Protection Act. Other APHIS programs assist VS and PPQ in response to their mission-specific emergencies when requested.</p>

	<p>Animal Care's (AC) responsibilities for household pets are delegated from FEMA through the National Response Framework (NRF). Wildlife Services (WS) becomes involved in emergency response through responsibilities described in the Animal Damage Control Act.</p>
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EMLC-Emergency Management Leadership Council  
 OEMHS-Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security  
 NC-National ESF#11 Coordinator  
 AC LNO – AC ESF # 11 Headquarters Liaison Officer; VS LNO -VS ESF #11 Headquarters Liaison Officer;  
 PPQ LNO – PPQ ESF #11 Headquarters Liaison Officer  
 REPM-Regional Emergency Program Manager – APHIS ESF #11 coordinator  
 EPS-Emergency Program Specialist – APHIS ESF #11 coordinator at the FEMA region

Figure 1. APHIS ESF #11 Positions

<p><i>Distinction between ESF #11 activations and APHIS emergency program activations</i></p>	<p>APHIS initiates emergency response upon finding a plant or animal disease or pest surveillance finding or a foreign animal disease (FAD) event under its statutory authorities. By contrast, the notice of activation for ESF #11 comes to APHIS externally from FEMA.</p>
<p><u>Concept of Operations</u></p> <p><i>ESF #11 response activities</i></p>	<p>APHIS - OEMHS is the coordinating body for ESF #11 including the three Federal partners: USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) and Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), and the Department of Interior (DOI). This does not mean that APHIS will accept mission assignments for the partners or direct partner activities. Response activities may be carried out by any of the ESF #11 partners. APHIS provides a single face to FEMA for ESF #11. This single face is to simplify FEMA access to ESF #11 and allow APHIS to reach back to ESF #11 partners for FEMA. This occurs both at the Federal level with the National Coordinator and at the FEMA Regional level with the EPSs. While coordinated by the APHIS ESF #11 coordinators, any of the ESF #11 partners (APHIS, FNS, FSIS and DOI) may support FEMA incident coordination efforts via staffing support at a Joint Field Office (JFO); the Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC); or the National Response Coordination Center (NRCC)<sup>1</sup>.</p> <p>ESF #11 partners may provide technical assistance or field response activities. APHIS response to an ESF #11 activation might cover activities that fall outside APHIS statutory authorities, but should normally be an activity in which we have training or expertise or that falls within our core competencies. The potential for a responder to be involved with activities that fall outside APHIS statutory and regulatory authorities, but still are authorized and funded by FEMA, is a key feature that distinguishes ESF #11 responses from APHIS emergency program responses.</p>
<p><i>Role of the APHIS ESF #11 National Coordinator (NC)</i></p>	<p>The ESF #11 National Coordinator (NC) is assigned to OEMHS and serves both as the overall USDA ESF #11 coordinator, and the APHIS ESF #11 national coordinator. The NC coordinates ESF #11 preparedness and response activities with the REPMs in APHIS’ Eastern and Western Regions and other ESF #11 partners. In this capacity, the NC is called upon to keep the EMLC apprised regarding ESF #11 activities as they pertain to APHIS. The NC also coordinates externally with the ESF #11 Federal partners at FSIS, FNS, and DOI in response to disasters or national incidents. In this capacity, the NC is called upon to keep the Director, USDA Homeland Security Office, apprised of all ESF #11</p>

<p><i>Role of the APHIS ESF #11 Animal Care Headquarters Liaison Officer (AC LNO), Plant Protection and Quarantine Headquarters Liaison Officer (PPQ LNO), and the Veterinary Services Headquarters Liaison Officer (VS LNO)</i></p>	<p>activities.</p> <p>The ESF #11 Headquarters Liaison Officers (LNO) serve as links to APHIS program areas (PPQ, VS, AC, WS, and Biotechnology Regulatory Services) in identification, development, and implementation of concepts, standards, procedures, and policy guidance for ESF #11 emergency preparedness and response. This includes championing high-level issues and bringing resolution to policy questions by working them through the EMLC and reporting back to OEMHS. The AC LNO, PPQ LNO, and VS LNO serve as points of contact for technical and informational briefings to Agency and other senior officials; monitor and administer ESF #11 activities, assets, and resources for APHIS programs at the national level; and participate in national and regional training exercises. They provide leadership in developing goals and action plans in support of all-hazard emergency management and ESF #11 preparedness and response activities. They facilitate responses to homeland security requests from the USDA Homeland Security Office and APHIS OEMHS; and represent APHIS and ESF #11 at meetings and events held with DHS, FEMA; the Department of Health and Human Services and others.</p>
<p><i>Role of the Regional Emergency Response Program Manager (REPM)</i></p>	<p>The REPM serves as Regional ESF #11 Coordinator, directing and coordinating ESF #11 resources in response to disasters or national incidents. The REPM coordinates ESF #11 preparedness and response activities with the EPSs, the NC, and other ESF #11 stakeholders. The REPM serves as APHIS' regional expert and advisor to the Board of Directors and the wider EMLC in the development and implementation of concepts, policy guidance, and critical operations planning for regional ESF #11 emergency preparedness and response.</p>
<p><i>Role of the Emergency Program Specialists (EPSs)</i></p>	<p>The EPSs coordinate ESF #11 resources, preparedness, and response activities in their assigned FEMA regions. This does not imply that APHIS will direct other ESF #11 agencies in carrying out their responsibilities or in responding to FEMA activation. Instead, APHIS provides a single face to FEMA to reach back to the ESF #11 partners on behalf of USDA and DOI. The EPSs serve as emergency response program experts and advisors to APHIS program field offices.</p>
<p><i>Relationship Between ESF #11 Positions and APHIS Program Office Emergency Managers</i></p>	<p>Program office emergency response managers in VS and PPQ, and the APHIS personnel they activate, execute response activities under APHIS statutory authorities when dealing with mission-related emergency responses (APHIS' traditional animal and plant health emergency response activities). ESF #11 personnel deal with</p>

	<p>response activities under a presidential declaration of emergency and are funded for their response activities through a Mission Assignment (MA) issued to APHIS by FEMA. These ESF #11 response activities include administrative staffing of the ESF #11 posts at the JFO, RRCC, and NRCC, and providing technical or response assistance. All animal, plant, and all-hazard/ESF #11 emergency response activities are coordinated through appropriate venues with various partners and stakeholders at each level. This coordination is critical since the animal and plant health programs and the ESF #11 program share the same APHIS resources in a response.</p>
<p><i>APHIS role for pets</i></p>	<p>Animal Care is the lead APHIS program in providing for the safety and well-being of household pets. APHIS supports DHS/FEMA together with ESF #6, ESF #8, ESF #9, and ESF #14 to ensure an integrated response that provides for the safety and well-being of household pets during natural disasters and other emergency events resulting in mass displacement of civilian populations. APHIS responsibilities include: providing technical expertise for evacuation and sheltering of household pets, conducting situation assessments to determine the critical needs of household pets and identifying and managing available resources to support the evacuation and shelter of household pets. AC's infrastructure for emergency management includes a headquarters liaison officer, one assistant to the regional director in each of the APHIS regional offices, and two animal care emergency coordinators.</p>
<p><i>Relationship with Emergency Support Function #6</i></p>	<p>Human and pet evacuation and shelter are linked and Animal Care has a collaborative relationship with ESF #6 (Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing, and Human Services). At the national level Animal Care provides technical support to FEMA, Mass Care Directorate and ESF #6. Details of the structure of the relationship with ESF #6 are under development.</p>
<p><i>APHIS Personnel Response Rosters</i></p>	<p>APHIS personnel rosters will be maintained using the Resource Ordering and Status System (ROSS) dispatch system. APHIS responders will be categorized into one of two types - either readily available for deployment, or those who require supervisor approval prior to deployment. Personnel will be qualified for positions via the APHIS Employee Qualification System (EQS).</p> <p>The EPS assists with recruiting and training Desk Officers from all ESF #11 partners who may be deployed to an RRCC/JFO in a FEMA Region. The qualifications status of the APHIS personnel will also be maintained via the ROSS dispatch system. During activation, the EPSs will identify resource needs and work through</p>

	<p>the dispatch system to obtain the necessary personnel or refer the resource needs to the REPM in the appropriate APHIS Region for support to be determined by the APHIS Regional Board of Directors. The EPS identifies resource needs, and the Board of Directors ensures a suitable pool of employees is available. All partner agency resource requests are handled within their own organization and coordinated with the NC, if appropriate.</p>
<p><u>Communications Flow</u></p>	<p>The ESF #11 function relies on regular, consistent communication among the entities with a responsibility for ESF #11 activities. This includes a number of internal and external entities.</p>
<p><i>EPS communications procedures</i></p>	<p>Regular stakeholder coordination meetings with APHIS emergency response and management personnel; ESF #11 partners; and local, State, Tribal, and Federal representatives keep EPSs informed regarding FEMA regional activities, and provide opportunities for communication and coordination with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Examples include planning conferences and Regional Interagency Steering Committee (RISC) meetings. The EPSs submit a report on the RISC meetings to the REPM, EPSs, local and State APHIS emergency response and management personnel from their FEMA regions, and ESF #11 partners from their FEMA regions. EPSs will have close interaction with APHIS State managers (e.g. SPHDs, AVICs, etc.) and provide meeting reports, situation reports, and other appropriate information to local, State, and APHIS emergency response and management personnel in their FEMA regions.</p>
<p><i>REPMs communications strategies</i></p>	<p>REPMs interact frequently with EPSs; participate in monthly VS Area Emergency Coordinator (AEC) calls; and participate in other calls (e.g., AVIC or SPHD calls) as needed. REPMs maintain frequent contact with their five EPSs – allowing a formal, monthly exchange. In addition, there will be informal calls and meetings on an as-needed basis among the coordinators. The agenda for the monthly calls will include updates on DOI, FNS, FSIS, and APHIS, and will provide a forum for current projects, issues, meetings, and conferences, and will give participants the opportunity to stay informed on APHIS regional and national policies and activities. REPMs collect pertinent ESF #11 information (highlighting success stories and issues for resolution) from monthly calls with the EPSs. This will be shared with the regional Boards of Directors via mechanisms that are appropriate for the issue. As program-specific issues arise, the REPMs will work with individual board members. If appropriate, these issues will be shared at the EMLC and with OEMHS and the HQ Liaison Officers to facilitate collaborative problem solving. The REPMs are expected to work closely together</p>

<p><i>Communications to the Program Emergency Managers and HQ Liaison Officers</i></p>	<p>to ensure information-sharing and comparison of similarities and differences among FEMA regions, State collaborators, or ESF partners.</p> <p>The REPM will share ESF #11 alerts with the regional emergency managers and will keep them informed regularly with appropriate information in a timely manner. The monthly reports for the EMLC will also be shared with the program office emergency response contacts in the regional offices and with program emergency staffs in VS, PPQ, and AC. These reports will also be shared with the Headquarters Liaison Officers (AC LNO, VS LNO, and PPQ LNO).</p>
<p><i>NC Communications Strategies</i></p>	<p>The NC, LNO, and REPM interaction is particularly critical. The NC and REPMs hold weekly calls to ensure that the NC is fully informed on issues and activities that could affect the APHIS ESF #11 response capabilities. The HQ LNOs will be included in meetings, when appropriate, to ensure a collaborative approach to information sharing and problem solving. At least one face-to-face meeting will occur annually for the APHIS ESF #11 community. This is in addition to routine calls to coordinate activities and meetings that correspond with other scheduled events.</p>
<p><i>Communications to USDA HSO SITREPs and SPOTREPs Reporting Flow</i></p>	<p>In December 2006, APHIS established an All-Hazards Internal Communication Plan with a methodology for Situation and Spot Reports. SITREPs and SPOTREPs will be the primary vehicles for distributing information about the status of ESF #11 and APHIS emergency response efforts through the Agency, the Department, other ESF-11 Agencies, and FEMA. The NC receives monthly reports from both regions and provides relevant information to USDA’s Homeland Security Office via the monthly ESF #11 Report. The Report is shared with the EMLC, APHIS senior management, and other stakeholders as deemed appropriate by the NC.</p>
<p><i>Communications to the APHIS EMLC</i></p>	<p>The two regional Boards of Directors are on the EMLC and provide a direct link between the regional BODs and the EMLC. The OEMHS Director is a member of the EMLC, and is the conduit for ESF #11 information to the EMLC. ESF #11 staff may be asked to attend EMLC meetings when their participation will facilitate a particular EMLC agenda item or discussion. OEMHS will notify the EMLC in the event of an ESF #11 activation.</p>
<p><i><u>Standard Business Practices</u></i></p>	<p>In addition to the concept of operations and communications strategies listed previously, the APHIS ESF #11 structure will establish common processes and procedures in support of ESF #11 activities. These are summarized below:</p>

<p><i>Training resources for ESF #11 staff and responders</i></p>	<p>The REPMs have compiled existing ESF #11 resources for the APHIS ESF #11 structure and developed an orientation plan for the new APHIS ESF #11 personnel. An ESF #11 Coordinators Orientation Manual, Standard Operating Procedures, and desktop guides are complete. Training for APHIS response personnel will be conducted in FY 2008 to meet our goal to ensure a common framework for the new ESF #11 structure. Additionally, APHIS-wide Incident Command System (ICS) training is coordinated at the program level and meets requirements for ICS positions.</p>
<p><i>Overview of FEMA MA Process</i></p> <p><i>Developing and Approving Mission Assignments (MAs)</i></p>	<p>FEMA officially tasks activities with a Mission Assignment (MA), which is based on a Statement of Work (SOW). All MAs used to date by APHIS have been archived by the ESF #11 coordinators. Pertinent MA SOWs have been developed to include: 1) initial activation (prior to a Presidential Declaration of Emergency); and 2) post-declaration (where there is a new funding stream with a Presidential Declaration). New MA SOWs have been proposed to include: technical assistance and response activities using APHIS expertise in the areas of laboratory staff, captive wildlife/exotic, agricultural animals, or household pets.</p>
<p><i>Action Request Form (ARF) Development</i></p>	<p>EPSs develop Action Request Forms (ARFs) for ESF #11 activations in their FEMA regions. The ARFs are not obligating documents, but rather are used during an event as a worksheet to draft a SOW that targets a particular response to a specific work activity at the field level. The REPMs ensure the ARFs are nationally consistent. Program-wide consistency in ARFs, SOWs, and MAs are important to facilitate APHIS preparedness for potential ESF #11 roles. In addition, ARFs developed in the FEMA Regions may be used as models to draft national level proposed statements of work (PSOW) for ESF #11. The PSOW is the first step in the development of Pre-Scripted Mission Assignments (PSMA) that will eventually be accepted by both USDA and FEMA. The PSMA is a precursor to a MA used by FEMA to task and fund specific work under ESF #11.</p>

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<sup>i</sup> FEMA headquarters in Washington, D.C. operates a National Response Coordination Center (NRCC). Each FEMA region can active a Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC). If there is an RRCC activation, it is likely a corresponding Joint Field Office (JFO) or Offices may be opened closer to the disaster area. At any given time, none of these may be activated, or all, including multiple JFOs, may be

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activated. Additionally, there are usually several standing JFOs dealing with long-term recovery issues throughout the country.