

# THE FEDERAL RESPONSE PLAN (FRP)

*"Where We Fit In"*

When disaster threatens a community -- a flood, a hurricane, an earthquake, a chemical spill -- local responders, government agencies and private organizations take action.

Their goal: to save lives and help people cope with the chaos. And most of the time, with the help of the State, they have the skills and equipment to do the job. But sometimes the destruction goes beyond local and State capabilities. That's when Federal help is needed as well. Typically, the Federal role is mostly financial. But when State and local governments are overwhelmed by a catastrophic disaster, such as we have seen in the not to distant past with Hurricanes in the Gulf, the Federal government is called in at once to mobilize resources from a number of Federal agencies, and sometimes to perform the response functions normally carried out by State and local governments. This is when the government implements the *Federal Response Plan* (FRP).

## **Concept**

The concept of the FRP is simple: In a catastrophic disaster, the Federal government provides State and local governments with personnel, technical expertise, equipment and other resources, and assumes an active role in managing the response. Resources are provided by one or more Federal departments and private agencies such as the American Red Cross.

Resources are grouped into 12 *Emergency Support Functions* (ESFs), including transportation, fire fighting, mass care, health and medical services, public works, urban search and rescue, and communications.

## **A Streamlined Process**

National emergency personnel, supplies and equipment are pre-positioned. An *Emergency Response Team -- Advanced Element* (ERT-A) is dispatched to the potential disaster area, ready to: Establish communications, help the State assess damages and identify needs, direct response activities, or handle State requests for assistance.

Amateur Radio is mentioned in three places in the FRP:

**ESF 2: Communications.** Under Resource Requirements, assets critical for the initial 12 hours, support for field activities, the plan refers to Amateur Radio networks/systems providing daily and emergency public service communications during emergencies and major disasters. It further refers to the League's ARES and NTS programs, and recognition of RACES and MARS.

**ESF 6: Mass Care.** Under the DWI (Disaster Welfare Inquiry) System, communications support agencies identified will be tasked with transmitting information to the DWI Center. "In no instance will fatality lists be transmitted via Amateur Radio or the American Red Cross 47.42 MHz system."

**ESF 8: Health and Medical Services.** Under "communications," "Amateur Radio frequencies and networks and the United States Army Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS) will be utilized to the extent necessary to help meet the communications requirements."