



# Rapid Deployment Team (RDT) Utah Urban Search and Rescue Task Force Land Based SAR Concept of Operations

## Utah Task Force 1 2015



U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
**National Urban Search & Rescue Response System**

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## **Purpose**

When structural collapse incidents occur, whether from earthquakes, structural failure, or terrorist attacks, the response time for the Utah US&R Task Force can provide critical assets not located anywhere else in the state. For this reason, the Task Force has developed a concept utilizing air assets from the Utah Air National Guard to rapidly deploy select team members into the impact area to conduct US&R operations.

## **Operational Concept**

Located in the northern part of the state, responses to the southern areas of the state could require 6-8 hours of drive time to reach impacted areas. Should weather conditions be less than favorable, the response times for these assets becomes even longer.

Composed of selected members of the Task Force, this team can accomplish a number of operational objectives prior to the remaining Task Force members and equipment arriving. These objectives include:

- Meet with State SAR Coordinator and identify US&R needs
- Conduct Search and Recon Operations
- Conduct Damage Assessment Operations
- Identify Specific Operational Sites for the Task Force
- Conduct minimal Search and Rescue Operations
- Assist or Interface with Local Responder/US&R Personnel
- Identify a Base of Operation Site
- Identify Local Resources that can assist the Task Force
- Establish a re-supply system with the State

## **Composition**

The concept, developed by members of the Task Force utilizes personnel and equipment that will be mobilized and transported to Salt Lake Regional Airport – Utah Air National Guard, where they will be airlifted by the Utah Air National Guard to the incident site, or those incidents where ground travel is possible.

The RDT concept will allow for trained rescue personnel to arrive in the first few hours to an incident in the any part of Utah rather than 8-10 hours, weather dependent. The team will consist of twenty-eight persons selected from the 70 person Task Force.

The RDT shall consist of the following:

- 1 Task Force Leader
- 1 Safety Officer
- 1 Search Team Manager
- 2 Technical Search Specialists
- 4 Canine Search Specialists (with certified canines)
- 1 Rescue Team Manager
- 1 Rescue Squad Officer
- 5 Rescue Specialists
- 1 Heavy Equipment and Rigging Specialist
- 1 Medical Team Manager
- 1 Medical Specialist
- 1 Haz-Mat Team Manager,
- 1 Haz-Mat Specialist
- 1 Plans Team Manager
- 1 Technical Information Specialist
- 1 Structural Specialist
- 1 Logistics Team Manager
- 1 Logistics Specialist
- 2 Communications Specialists

Each of the disciplines from the Task Force is represented on the RDT which provides versatility and enables the Task Force to conduct life-saving operations.

## **Operational Expectations and Limitations**

Understanding the RDT does not have all of its equipment and personnel, there will be limitations of these personnel, but the team will have the ability to perform search and recon operations and conduct limited light rescue with the number of personnel that are deployed. The remaining team members and equipment will deploy to the incident site by ground

transportation and will arrive several hours after the RDT.

The RDT will have the ability to conduct recon operations which will identify the following:

- Potential work sites and develop a priority list
- Potential sites for entrapped victims
- Potential sites for the Base of Operations
- Conduct light rescue operations where victims can be reached with minimal efforts
- Identify area re-supply capabilities
- Critical needs of the incident commander

Crews will have canines, cameras and core drills and will possess the capability to access collapse concrete structures for the purpose of identifying voids where entrapped victims may be located.

Some of the limitations the RDT will encounter are;

- Limitations on Operations – unable to conduct extensive rescue operations due to shortage of personnel and equipment
- Support limitations – Housing and meals will be limited and some support from the locals entities may be required until the remaining cache arrives

### **Transport Requirements of the RDT**

The Task Force will transport members identified as being part of the RDT to the incident site by Utah Air National Guard or by ground. Equipment may be loaded onto military 463L pallets if UNG is moving the team. Logistics personnel must have all hazardous materials paperwork with them to enable the transporting of task force equipment on the aircraft. The Logistics team Manager must also have the required permits for canines to be loaded onto aircraft without being in cages. The military passenger manifest must accompany the Task Force to the POD.

Equipment has been identified by Task Force management and will enable rapid construction of pallets for aircraft deployment. Equipment will enable support operations of the RDT and will support recon capabilities. The RDT pallets will be transported to the POD by task force tractor trailers that must return to the Program Office as soon as possible to enable loading and movement of the remaining cache by ground to the impacted site.

It is critical that personnel be pre-identified and notified they will be deployed as part of the RDT and that their ability to report to the Program Office within two hours after an activation order is received. Personnel need to report in after the notification is sent out of the activation within one hour. Personnel will be identified as High Priority for processing and will be separated from other Task Force personnel for deployment purposes.

Logistics personnel will be tasked with requesting a contract bus company to have buses on site within one hour of the activation for the purpose of moving personnel from the Program Office to Utah National Guard (POD). Should the contractor not be able to meet these time constraints, the Regional Transportation Company (RTC) shall be requested to send a single bus to the Program Office to enable movement of the RDT to the POD.

It is critical that Logistics personnel identify a method for the Task Force to unload and transport equipment from the aircraft. It is important that methods and equipment used to load the cache at the departure point are also available at the destination point. For example, the RDT may be deployed to the St George/Cedar City area where unloading aircraft does not present any serious challenges. Deploying into other smaller towns may present difficulties in unloading and moving the cache. Therefore, it is critical for Logistics personnel to coordinate these issues with the UANG commanders. This may require military flatbed trucks and forklifts to be moved from Salt Lake City International or Hill Air force Base that can accommodate C130 aircraft.

### **Open Issues**

Currently there remain a number of issues that must be addressed to insure operational success of the plan. It is critical these issues be addressed as soon as possible to provide for a plan should the need arise. Many of these issues will require Task Force personnel to work with local and state planners to make the overall plan a success. Some of these are;

- Coordinate movement of Task Force personnel once on site anywhere in the State
- Insure pallet load plan accurately reflects the needs of the Task Force
- Coordinate with the state to ensure plan is part of the state response for SAR assets
- Provide training for Task Force personnel

### **Summary**

This plan, once implemented will provide a US&R capability that has been needed for several years. To ensure the Task Force remains a state asset it is critical that the Task Force have a plan in place that will provide for timely response of US&R equipment and personnel that can conduct limited, but extremely vital, SAR operations for local responders who may lack this capability or are overwhelmed with the incident.

As with any plan, there will be a need to test the plan out and identify weaknesses and strengths and forward recommendations for considerations. It is vital to remember to keep the plan flexible, yet modular to insure the plan has a high degree of success.