



Emergency Support Function 4 Firefighting



Coordinating Agencies

West Virginia Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety (WVDMAPS),
West Virginia Fire Commission (WVFC)

Primary Agency

West Virginia State Fire Marshal (WVSFM)

Support Agencies and Organizations

West Virginia Department of Commerce, West Virginia Division of Forestry (WVDOF), West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR)
West Virginia Department of Transportation (WVDOT)

Purpose

The ESF 4 Annex provides guidance to agencies and organizations involved in the detection and management of wild land, rural, and urban fires, fire operations, and search & rescue activities where fire service personnel will be in support during an all hazard incident requiring a coordinated response.

Scope

A. ESF 4 coordinates firefighting activities on all private, state, and federal lands and coordinates personnel, equipment, and supplies as needed.

B. Wildland firefighters generally respond to forest and other wildland fires with a mission to protect valuable natural resources that are usually found in remote areas with limited water supplies. There may be a delay in discovering and reporting fires in remote areas; consequently, these fires tend to be larger when firefighters arrive. Extreme fire behavior conditions produce high fire spread rates and intensities that rapidly involve large areas and thereby greatly reduce if not eliminate fire suppression effectiveness. Wildland firefighters are trained and equipped to clear the fuel around the outside of the fire perimeter so that the fire cannot continue to spread.

C. Structural firefighters are trained to attack fires at individual buildings and protect adjoining buildings. These firefighters usually rely on water systems providing ready access to piped water for direct fire suppression. Fire crews are equipped and located within communities to provide a response time of minutes, so that a fire can be contained in one or a few rooms, with the rest of the structure and contents saved.

D. When the wildland fire can ignite structures, the standard wildland and structural fire suppression procedures may not be effective, particularly under extreme conditions. Wildland firefighters may be faced with protecting a neighborhood in the path of a large fire. Structural firefighters may be faced with mitigating vegetation and other factors before the fire arrives in the neighborhood.

Policies

All agencies assigned responsibilities within ESF 4 will develop and maintain the necessary plans, standard operating procedures, and mutual aid agreements needed to accomplish their tasks.

- The WVSMF and WVDOF will jointly coordinate the procurement of resources.
- Local governments and municipalities are responsible for providing fire prevention, control and suppression in their jurisdiction until the fire hazard exceeds their capabilities and resources.
- The local jurisdiction is responsible for requesting support through local mutual aid agreements or from the state.
- The WVDOF will participate in the national wild land fire response system and use national training and performance standards consistent with key management principles of NIMS for incident management.

Organizational Structure

The WVSMF operates under the auspices of the West Virginia State Fire Commission (WVFC), under WVDMAPS. The WVFC is comprised of a 13 member board representing various agencies with roles and responsibilities in fire service.

Local Fire Departments

- Provide fire services through local entities to the extent of their capabilities.
- Arrange mutual aid agreements between local entities based on jurisdictional lines and/or proximity of localities.
- Manage local incidents through the use of the ICS or Unified Command System, as appropriate.
- Activate a Joint Information Center (JIC) to communicate information to the public and news media for the local level.
- Protect or avoid unnecessary damage to potential evidence when responding to suspicious situations.
- Provide firefighter safety oversight with specific attention to secondary devices and possible hazardous material exposure.

Concept of Operations

A. General

1. Each responding fire unit uses the Incident Command System (ICS), managing its assigned incident until relieved by higher command or unified command, if established.
2. When local area fire suppression equipment and/or personnel assets are overwhelmed, local mutual aid, state and federal agencies may provide assistance and support to the initial responding authority.
3. Coordination of fire and rescue efforts is made by the WVSM, upon request of the local authority through the WVDHSEM or the West Virginia State Emergency Operations Center (WVSEOC), when activated.
4. Technical expertise and specialized equipment may be provided by state and federal agencies, if needed and requested.
5. Requests for assistance is made from the incident or unified commander in the appropriate local municipal or county emergency operations center to the WVSEOC.
6. Fire support requests forwarded to the WVDHSEM or WVSEOC are handled in accordance with current procedures.
7. If the need for firefighting support is beyond state capabilities, the WVDHSEM or WVSEOC validates the request and forwards it to other states through the use of the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), if applicable, and/or the federal government for assistance.

B. Response

1. Establish Incident / Unified Command (IC/UC).
2. Develop an Incident Action Plan.
3. Develop a Demobilization Plan.
4. Appoint Safety Officer(s).
5. Establish Accountability.
6. Establish resource tracking.

7. Request mutual aid from neighboring communities, if needed.
8. Integrate arriving resources into the existing IC/UC organization.
9. Retain team integrity.
10. Track mutual aid resources.
11. Modify Incident Action Plan and Demobilization Plan to adjust for the resource enhancement.
12. Request state or federal resources through the WVSEOC if neighboring mutual aid assistance has been maximized and further resources are needed.
13. Track state and federal resources.
14. Establish and coordinate a JIC with the Governor’s Office of Communications through the WVSEOC. Refer to ESF 15 External Affairs.

C. Recovery

1. Conduct planning for demobilization when Incident Command is initially established.
 2. Release state and federal resources first if possible, followed by other mutual aid resources.
-

Agency Responsibilities Matrix

Supporting Agency	Acronym	Responsibilities
West Virginia Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety (WVDMAPS) (WVFC, WVFSM, WVSP, WVNG)	WVDMAPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide liaison as needed with local fire services • Provide fire and specialized rescue support to incidents as needed or requested • Provide specialized training for structural fire suppression and advanced incident management as appropriate • Coordinate evacuation with WVDOF, local governing officials and law enforcement personnel • Provide back-up field communications and emergency radio repair • Provide command post support • Assist local law enforcement agencies in providing security, traffic control, and law enforcement at evacuation centers and fire areas • Provide rotor and fixed wing aircraft for reconnaissance operations and transportation of fire personnel • Assist in the investigation of fires • Coordinate state military forces and resources employed in emergency fire suppression operations under the direction of WVDOF • Provide military support of: back-up communications; area security and traffic control; heavy equipment, such as bulldozers and water supply; aerial reconnaissance; aerial cargo delivery; and water buckets • In selected Guard units, provide personnel for firefighting crews, dozer crews or chain saw crews and crew leaders with emergency onsite training in basic fire control, chain saw use and safety as necessary to support a response mission

<p>West Virginia Department of Commerce (WVDNR, WVDOF)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate and perform wild land fire suppression and response statewide • Coordinate and perform forest and forest fire law related enforcement activities statewide, including wild land fire origin and cause investigation and all related criminal and civil actions related to this effort • Develop specialized response resources and crews according to capabilities including: dozer crew, chain saw crew, fire line hand crew, equipment repair, other specialized equipment, transportation, etc. • Provide specialized training for wild land fire suppression and advanced incident management as appropriate • Provide law enforcement officers for traffic control and security measures and assist in fire investigations
<p>West Virginia Department of Transportation</p>	<p>WVDOT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide personnel to operate heavy equipment in fire suppression operations • Develop and provide firefighting, dozer crews, chain saw crews, and crew boss/leaders • Provide equipment; such as chain saws, bulldozers and water tankers • Provide ground transportation for fire personnel • Provide back-up field communications • Provide mechanics for repair and support of fire equipment • Provide fuel to support firefighting operations
<p>West Virginia Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management</p>	<p>WVDHSEM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate support as necessary

Authorities & References

Authorities

State of West Virginia Emergency Services and Disaster Laws

West Virginia Code §7-17, County Fire Boards

West Virginia Code §15-5, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management

West Virginia Code §20-3, Forests and Wildlife Areas

West Virginia Code §29-3, Fire Prevention and Control Act

West Virginia Code §29-3A, Authority of Local Fire Departments

References

State of West Virginia Emergency Operations Plan – Basic Plan

Fire Management Assistance Grant Program

Public Law 93-288, as amended, Section 417 and 420

Rural Development Act of 1972 – Title IV

National Incident Management System

Fireline Handbook, National Wildfire Coordinating Group