



United States Department of
Health & Human Services

**Office of the Secretary
Office of the Assistant Secretary for
Preparedness and Response (ASPR)**

**IRCT Fatality Management Branch – Field Operations
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- **Fatality Management is one of the most difficult aspects of disaster response. It has profound and long-lasting consequences for survivors and communities.**
- **Disasters claim thousands of lives each year, yet care of the dead is often overlooked in disaster planning and preparedness.**
- **The absence of guidance for first responders has recently been highlighted following several large disasters in the United States.**

National Response Framework (NRF) Emergency Support Function (ESF) #8

Public Health and Medical Services include -

- Agriculture safety and security
- All-hazard public health and medical consultation, technical assistance, and support
- Behavioral health care
- Public health and medical information
- Vector control
- Potable water/wastewater and solid waste disposal
- **Mass fatality management, victim identification, and decontaminating remains**
- Veterinary medical support

When Fatality Management Response Operations are requested

ESF #8 will -

- assist the jurisdictional authorities/agencies in the recovery, tracking and documenting of human remains and associated personal effects
- mitigate the hazard presented by chemically, biologically, or radiologically contaminated human remains (when indicated and possible)
- establish temporary morgue facilities to assist in - determining the cause and manner of death; perform postmortem data collection, examination and documentation
- collect ante mortem data in a compassionate and culturally competent fashion from appropriate individuals; and return human remains and personal effects to the authorized person(s) when possible
- assist in identifying human remains, re-casketing, and reburial in public cemeteries in the event that caskets are displaced
- ESF #8 may task HHS components and request assistance from other ESF #8 partner organizations, as appropriate, to provide support to families of victims during the decedent identification process

Fatality Management COORDINATION with other Federal ESFs & Supporting Agencies

- **ESF #1 - Transportation**
- **ESF #2 - Communications**
- **ESF #3 - Public Works and Engineering**
- **ESF #4 - Firefighting**
- **ESF #5 - Emergency Management**
- **ESF #6 - Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing, and Human Services**
- **ESF #7 - Logistics Management and Resource Support**
- **ESF #8 - Public Health and Medical Services**
- **ESF #9 - Search and Rescue**
- **ESF #10 - Oil and Hazardous Materials Response**
- **ESF #11 - Agriculture and Natural Resources**
- **ESF #12 - Energy**
- **ESF #13 - Public Safety and Security**
- **ESF #14 - Long-Term Community Recovery**
- **ESF #15 - External Affairs**
- **National Guard Bureau and the DoD**

Planning / Operational Support Considerations:

- Requests for Assistance (RFA) will come early
- Need to know what jurisdictional “system” is being supported
 - ❖ Medical Examiner – State or County level
 - ❖ Coroner – Sherriff or Justice of the Peace
 - ❖ Mix
- Local & mutual aid resources may be quickly overwhelmed
- Must mutually develop support and exit strategies prior to committing resources
- Also need to consider
 - ❖ Day-to-day mortuary services needs will continue in addition to supported response
 - ❖ Emergency / Disaster planning may not have been coordinated prior to the event
 - ❖ Scope of event
 - » Commercial aircraft accident, building collapse?
 - » Major Hurricane, Tornado, Flood?
 - » Pan Flu, Earthquake, Nuclear detonation?
 - ❖ Whether the event is catastrophic (# 5,000 plus) or greater than can be handled by all known state/local/regional support systems
 - ❖ Infrastructure status – intact or not
 - ❖ Geographic and demographic situation
 - » “open” or “closed” population?
 - » Densely populated urban area vs rural landscape?
 - » Elderly or other “at risk” population?

Federal Mortuary Response assets may include:

- **Department of Health and Human Services (ESF-8 Lead Agency)**
 - Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Teams (DMORT).
 - ❖ **10 Regional Teams**
 - Family Assistance Core Team
 - DMORT-WMD Decon Team
 - Disaster Portable Morgue Units (3 total – East, Central and West)

- **Department of Defense Title 10 Assets**
 - Army - 111th QM, FT Lee, VA
 - Army - 54th QM, Ft Lee, VA
 - Air Force – Fatality Search & Recovery Teams (FSRT)
 - Army Reserve - 673rd QM, Delaware
 - Army Reserve - 246th Mortuary Affairs CO, Puerto Rico
 - Army Reserve - 311th QM COL CO, Puerto Rico
 - Marine Corps Reserve - Recovery Team
 - Navy - Embalmers
 - Search & Recovery Teams, Trained for NON-CBRNE recovery OPS

State Mortuary Response Assets may include:

- Medical Examiner and Coroner teams / Mutual Aid resources
- EMAC, ESAR-VP and Professional Association Volunteers
- State Funeral Director Disaster Squads
- National Guard State Active Duty /Title-32
- Fatality Search Recovery Teams (FSRT)
 - 10 Teams
 - 7 more teams being trained - CBRNE Enhanced Response Force Package

IRCT Fatality Management Branch – Field Ops

