JOINT STATE GOVERNMENT COMMISSION

General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Assessment of the Commonwealth's Urban Search and Rescue Capabilities

Report of the Advisory Committee

July 2025

Serving the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Since 1937

REPORT

Act No. 113 of 2024 (2023 HB843)
Assessment of the Commonwealth's Urban Search and Rescue Capabilities

Project Manager:	Allison Kobzowicz, Public Policy Analyst
Project Staff:	John Brettler, Legal Analyst Yvonne Llewellyn Hursh, Counsel Wendy L. Baker, Office Manager/Executive Assistant

The report is available at http://jsg.legis.state.pa.us

The podcast is available at https://jsg.legis.state.pa.us/podcasts.cfm

JOINT STATE GOVERNMENT COMMISSION	
Room 108 Finance Building 613 North Street Harrisburg, PA 17120	**Telephone:** 717-787-4397 **Fax:** 717-783-9380 **E-mail:** jntst02@legis.state.pa.us **Website:** http://jsg.legis.state.pa.us

The Joint State Government Commission was created in 1937 as the primary and central non-partisan, bicameral research and policy development agency for the General Assembly of Pennsylvania.[1]

A fourteen-member Executive Committee comprised of the leadership of both the House of Representatives and the Senate oversees the Commission. The seven Executive Committee members from the House of Representatives are the Speaker, the Majority and Minority Leaders, the Majority and Minority Whips, and the Majority and Minority Caucus Chairs. The seven Executive Committee members from the Senate are the President Pro Tempore, the Majority and Minority Leaders, the Majority and Minority Whips, and the Majority and Minority Caucus Chairs. By statute, the Executive Committee selects a chairman of the Commission from among the members of the General Assembly. Historically, the Executive Committee has also selected a Vice-Chair or Treasurer, or both, for the Commission.

The studies conducted by the Commission are authorized by statute or by a simple or joint resolution. In general, the Commission has the power to conduct investigations, study issues, and gather information as directed by the General Assembly. The Commission provides in-depth research on a variety of topics, crafts recommendations to improve public policy and statutory law, and works closely with legislators and their staff.

A Commission study may involve the appointment of a legislative task force, composed of a specified number of legislators from the House of Representatives or the Senate, or both, as set forth in the enabling statute or resolution. In addition to following the progress of a particular study, the principal role of a task force is to determine whether to authorize the publication of any report resulting from the study and the introduction of any proposed legislation contained in the report. However, task force authorization does not necessarily reflect endorsement of all the findings and recommendations contained in a report.

Some studies involve an appointed advisory committee of professionals or interested parties from across the Commonwealth with expertise in a particular topic; others are managed exclusively by Commission staff with the informal involvement of representatives of those entities that can provide insight and information regarding the particular topic. When a study involves an advisory committee, the Commission seeks consensus among the members.[2] Although an advisory committee member may represent a particular department, agency, association, or group, such representation does not necessarily reflect the endorsement of the department, agency, association, or group of all the findings and recommendations contained in a study report.

---

[1] Act of July 1, 1937 (P.L.2460, No.459); 46 P.S. §§ 65–69.

[2] Consensus does not necessarily reflect unanimity among the advisory committee members on each individual policy or legislative recommendation. At a minimum, it reflects the views of a substantial majority of the advisory committee, gained after lengthy review and discussion.

Over the years, nearly one thousand individuals from across the Commonwealth have served as members of the Commission's numerous advisory committees or have assisted the Commission with its studies. Members of advisory committees bring a wide range of knowledge and experience to deliberations involving a particular study. Individuals from countless backgrounds have contributed to the work of the Commission, such as attorneys, judges, professors and other educators, state and local officials, physicians and other health care professionals, business and community leaders, service providers, administrators and other professionals, law enforcement personnel, and concerned citizens. In addition, members of advisory committees donate their time to serve the public good; they are not compensated for their service as members. Consequently, the Commonwealth receives the financial benefit of such volunteerism, along with their shared expertise in developing statutory language and public policy recommendations to improve the law in Pennsylvania.

The Commission periodically reports its findings and recommendations, along with any proposed legislation, to the General Assembly. Certain studies have specific timelines for the publication of a report, as in the case of a discrete or timely topic; other studies, given their complex or considerable nature, are ongoing and involve the publication of periodic reports. Completion of a study, or a particular aspect of an ongoing study, generally results in the publication of a report setting forth background material, policy recommendations, and proposed legislation. However, the release of a report by the Commission does not necessarily reflect the endorsement by the members of the Executive Committee, or the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Commission, of all the findings, recommendations, or conclusions contained in the report. A report containing proposed legislation may also contain official comments, which may be used to construe or apply its provisions.[3]

Since its inception, the Commission has published almost 500 reports on a sweeping range of topics, including administrative law and procedure; agriculture; athletics and sports; banks and banking; commerce and trade; the commercial code; crimes and offenses; decedents, estates, and fiduciaries; detectives and private police; domestic relations; education; elections; eminent domain; environmental resources; escheats; fish; forests, waters, and state parks; game; health and safety; historical sites and museums; insolvency and assignments; insurance; the judiciary and judicial procedure; labor; law and justice; the legislature; liquor; mechanics' liens; mental health; military affairs; mines and mining; municipalities; prisons and parole; procurement; state-licensed professions and occupations; public utilities; public welfare; real and personal property; state government; taxation and fiscal affairs; transportation; vehicles; and workers' compensation.

Following the completion of a report, subsequent action on the part of the Commission may be required, and, as necessary, the Commission will draft legislation and statutory amendments, update research, track legislation through the legislative process, attend hearings, and answer questions from legislators, legislative staff, interest groups, and constituents.

---

[3] 1 Pa.C.S. § 1939.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Kevin E. Boozel, M.S.
Commissioner, Butler County

Thomas Cook
State Fire Commissioner
Office of the State Fire Commissioner

Joseph Dishler
Montgomery County Department
of Public Safety, Program Manager,
Urban Search & Rescue
Representing: Pennsylvania Fire &
Emergency Services Institute (PFESI)

Fred Endrikat, Chief (retired)
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Urban Search and Rescue Branch
Deputy Chair, FEMA US&R
Advisory Organization
Task Force Leader – PA-TF1 (current)

Brian D. Enterline
Fire Chief, Harrisburg Bureau of Fire

Mark A. Goodwill, Brig Gen, PAANG
Director, Joint Staff
HQs Pennsylvania National Guard
Staff: Jon Farr, Colonel
Director of Military Support

Kevin Jancewicz, Lt.
Commander, Emergency Preparedness
and Watch Center
Pennsylvania State Police

Michael Johnson
Fire Chief, Port Allegany Fire Department

John J. Judge, IV
Representing, Pennsylvania
Career Fire Chiefs Association (PACFCA)

Ivan A. Lopez
PA-TF 1 Program Manager

Warren W. Messerschmidt
Representing, Southeast Pennsylvania
Regional Task Force

Todd Miller
Pennsylvania State Association
of Township Commissioners (PSATC)

Brian L. Moore
Director, Pennsylvania Department
of Environmental Protection
Emergency Response

Martyn Nevil
Task Force Program Manager
Representing, South Central Pennsylvania
Regional Task Force

Jerry Ozog, MPA, EFO, CAE
Public Safety Specialist
Pennsylvania State Association
of Township Supervisors (PSATS) and

Shawn Corwell, Township Supervisor
and Emergency Management Coordinator
Greene Township - Franklin County

David 'Randy' Padfield
Director, Pennsylvania
Emergency Management Agency
(PEMA)

Kevin Ressler, Captain
Recording Secretary, Pennsylvania
Professional Firefighters Association
(PPFFA)

Jeff Sabo, Colonel
Executive Director
Bureau of Law Enforcement
Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission

William Schlosser, Colonel
Pennsylvania Wing Commander
Civil Air Patrol

Brian Scott
Chairman, Fire, Rescue,
Hazmat Committee
Representing, Northeast Pennsylvania
Regional Counter Terrorism Task Force

Chad Strobel
Representing, Southwest Pennsylvania
Regional Task Force

Michael Taylor
Representing, Southcentral Pennsylvania
Regional Task Force
2nd Vice President, Pennsylvania Association
of Hazardous Materials Technicians

Mark Taylor
Director, Public Safety Blair County
Department of Emergency Services

Gary Watters, President
Heather Harris, Executive Director
Ambulance Association of Pennsylvania (AMED)

General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
JOINT STATE GOVERNMENT COMMISSION
Room 108 – Finance Building
Harrisburg, Pa 17120
717-787-4397
Fax 717-783-9380
http://jsg.legis.state.pa.us/

July 2025

To the Members of the General Assembly of Pennsylvania:

We are pleased to release *Assessment of the Commonwealth's Urban Search and Rescue Capabilitie*s, as directed by Act 113 of 2024. The act directed that the Commission appoint an advisory committee to assist in providing a detailed, comprehensive assessment of Pennsylvania's urban search and rescue (US&R) capabilities and funding, particularly regarding the regional task forces, the PA National Guard, and FEMA's PA Task Force One.

US&R is a highly specialized type of search and rescue operation that requires multidisciplinary teams with extensive training and capabilities. Commission staff visited several training facilities to observe the preparedness, training, and capabilities firsthand. Staff met frequently with the Advisory Committee, conducted a survey of the regional task forces, and held in-depth discussions with personnel from each.

Recommendations developed from this process reflect the broad consensus of Advisory Committee members. The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly consider:

- establishing a permanent US&R Advisory Organization to determine the needs of each region;
- funding Pennsylvania's US&R system to meet the needs of each region based on its hazards and risk profile; and
- amending Title 77 to expand workers' compensation coverage for specialized response teams when they are deployed.

Other recommendations are that PEMA and the Advisory Organization should determine the appropriate sustainability funding for each team, and that regions use a resource tracker to report equipment and personnel so that PEMA remains informed of the system's readiness across the state.

The Commission extends its thanks to the staff of PEMA, PA TF-1, PANG, the regional task forces, and the dozens of first responders who helped produce this report. Most important, we extend our gratitude to the many people who willingly put themselves at risk to keep Pennsylvanians safe when disasters strike.

Respectfully submitted,

Glenn J. Pasewicz
Executive Director

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) is a highly specialized type of search and rescue that requires multidisciplinary teams with extensive training and capabilities. US&R missions typically involve the locating and rescuing of individuals entrapped in collapsed buildings and structures that result from several types of incidents. While some parts of the country frequently experience earthquakes, hurricanes, and tornadoes which may cause these entrapments, it is also very common for man-made situations to produce scenarios that require US&R efforts. Examples include vehicle collisions with structures and building explosions, which can require US&R teams to stabilize a structure and perform rescues or recoveries of trapped occupants. When US&R teams are deployed, they rely upon very specialized equipment such as breaching/breaking, metal cutting/burning, and lifting/rigging equipment, search cameras, listening devices, and heavy machinery to navigate through debris safely.

Pennsylvania established an in-state US&R system after the terror attacks of September 11th, 2001, when the federal team was deployed from Pennsylvania to New York by FEMA and the state was left vulnerable to possible concurrent terrorist attacks that may have required US&R response capability. The establishment of the system received significant state investment for start-up funding; however, as time went on, state funding for the system decreased and sustainment was provided through the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) which includes the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) funding that is provided to each of Pennsylvania's eight regional counterterrorism task forces (RTFs). These grants are also used to support law enforcement, hazardous material (hazmat) teams, and other specialty teams in each region. Because US&R resources are infrequently mobilized at a region-wide or statewide level due to the infrequency of incidents requiring US&R capabilities, they are not often prioritized in funding distribution.

Act 113 of 2024 amended Title 35 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes and directed the Joint State Government Commission to assemble an Advisory Committee and "conduct a comprehensive study and assessment of the Commonwealth's Urban Search and Rescue capabilities."[4] The comprehensive study was to review:[5]

> (i) In consultation with [Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA)], the overall emergency response system plan for this Commonwealth in accordance with [National Incident Management System (NIMS)] standards and guidelines.

[4] 35 Pa. C.S. § 7203(a).
[5] 35 Pa. C.S. § 7203(c)(1).

(ii) The current capabilities of Pennsylvania Task Force 1, the Pennsylvania National Guard [Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN)] Enhanced Response Force Package (CERF-P) and Civil Support Team (CST) and the Commonwealth's regional task forces related to extraction from damaged or collapsed structures in this Commonwealth.

(iii) The status of protocols and capabilities of emergency medical services care provided by and to urban rescue and response teams for entrapped survivors, urban rescue and response team personnel and others. The assessment shall include physical, visual and audio search capabilities.

(iv) The reconnaissance capabilities of Pennsylvania Task Force 1, the Pennsylvania National Guard CBRN Enhanced Response Force Package (CERF-P) and Civil Support Team (CST) and the Commonwealth's regional task forces regarding damage assessment, mission readiness and resource needs.

(v) PEMA's protocols and communications capabilities among Pennsylvania Task Force 1, this Commonwealth's regional task forces and local emergency response personnel, such as fire companies, EMS agencies and State and local law enforcement, as well as Federal, State and local governments regarding their emergency operations.

(vi) The current protocols, capabilities or needs for hazardous material surveys, extraction and cleanup.

(vii) The capabilities regarding structural stabilization as well as shoring and cribbing operations to damaged buildings of Pennsylvania Task Force 1, the Pennsylvania National Guard CBRN Enhanced Response Force Package (CERF-P) and Civil Support Team (CST) and this Commonwealth's regional task forces.

Additionally, the Joint State Government Commission must assess the inventory of equipment held by PA-TF1, CERFP, CST, and each of the regional elements, and examine each of the component parts with respect to the relevant standard-setting organizations.[6] Lastly, the Commission must:[7]

(i) Conduct a monetary assessment to identify and quantify existing Federal, State and local funding resources and the funding impacts of Pennsylvania Task Force 1 and the regional task force system, as well as the short-term and long-term funding impact of creating an additional NIMS-typed urban search and rescue resource in this Commonwealth.

[6] 35 Pa. C.S. § 7203(c)(2).
[7] 35 Pa. C.S. § 7203(c)(3).

The Joint State Government Commission and the Advisory Committee formed pursuant to 35 Pa.C.S. § 7203 were charged with identifying gaps in capability and making recommendations to close these gaps and issue a report within six months of the effective date of the law. The Advisory Committee met twice a month, a total of eight times, to discuss the health of the in-state US&R system. In this time frame, the Advisory Committee agreed on eight recommendations to strengthen the health of the system, which are included at the end of the report on page 135.

The report provides an overview of the US&R system, gives details on the capabilities and needs of PA-TF1, each regional element, and the Pennsylvania National Guard, then details existing funding within the state, in a few other states, and the potential costs of creating a new NIMS-typed resource in Pennsylvania.

Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) teams are made up of highly qualified individuals who have received training and certification in almost all kinds of technical rescues. US&R combines these skills with the ability to stabilize structures and move heavy pieces of debris. Employment of this skill set requires a tremendous knowledge of engineering principles, physics, teamwork, leadership skills, and problem-solving abilities. Team members work with dangerously heavy debris and must ensure that each movement of the materials is safely accounted for through calculated stabilization and rigging.[8] The federal description of a US&R Task Force is:

> a multi-disciplined organization which conducts search, rescue, and recovery in technical rescue disciplines, including structural collapse, rope rescue, vehicle extrication, machinery extrication, confined space (permit-required, non-cave, non-mine), trench, excavation, water operations, and chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosives (CBRNE) defensive operations in a US&R environment.[9]

The full requirements for a federal US&R Task Force are included in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Resource Typing Library Tool and will be addressed later in the report. Unlike the federal US&R Task Force, Pennsylvania's in-state US&R resources are not required to have water rescue capability and soon will not be required to have stand-alone hazmat capability. The US&R teams will be paired with regional hazmat and Voluntary Rescue Service Recognition (VRSR) Swiftwater/Flood Search and Rescue teams.

US&R Task Force Positions

In-state US&R teams are assembled with a few different configurations, but most configurations include personnel like rescue specialists, hazmat specialists, technical search specialists, safety officers, and medical specialists. Included in Appendix B is a summary of the hours of training required for a typical US&R member, developed and provided by an Advisory Committee member.

[8] Site visit HACC Public Safety Center, April 25, 2025.
[9] "Urban Search and Rescue Task Force," *U.S. Department of Homeland Security*, accessed May 1, 2025, https://rtlt.preptoolkit.fema.gov/Public/Resource/View/8-508-1262?q=urban%20search%20and%20rescue.

Rescue Specialists

Rescue specialists are expected to implement technical rescue skills on the scene of an incident and maintain the necessary equipment before, during, and after a deployment. They must meet National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) training standards including rope rescue, confined space rescue, trench rescue, and vehicle and machinery rescue. They also must take a FEMA US&R Structural Collapse Specialist course and a GPS Awareness course and be certified in basic first aid.[10]

Hazmat Specialists

Hazmat specialists are required to survey for the presence of hazardous materials at an incident site and use the decontamination system when necessary. They must ensure that all team members have the proper personal protective equipment (PPE) and collaborate with the logistics team to ensure that hazmat equipment is properly maintained. They must be able to triage buildings and have deep knowledge of the US&R marking system, which signifies to responders which buildings or areas have been cleared and where there may be contaminants or trapped individuals. Hazmat specialists must complete FEMA US&R hazardous material specialist training as well as maintain the NFPA Standard for Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response Hazardous Materials Technician.[11]

Technical Search Specialists

Technical search specialists are responsible for searching for entrapped individuals in impacted structures using the proper techniques and equipment, marking the locations of found survivors or victims, mapping the sites of incidents, and maintaining all necessary equipment. They must complete the FEMA US&R Technical Search Specialist course and complete the technical rescue skill sets and rope skills in Appendix A of the FEMA Position Descriptions.[12]

Safety Officers

Safety officers are expected to ensure the safety of the team throughout the response and prevent "injuries and illness of task force members through appropriate administrative and engineering controls of hazards including enforcement of safety policies and procedures." Safety officers must take the FEMA US&R GPS Awareness Level course, FEMA US&R Task Force Safety Officer course and FEMA US&R Structural Collapse Specialist course. They must be trained to the same level of NFPA requirements for a Rescue Technician, meeting the same requirements as Rescue Specialists. They must be certified in basic first aid and take training in the Intermediate Incident Command System (ICS) for Expanding Incidents.[13]

---

[10] *National Urban Search and Rescue Response System US&R Operations Manual Annex E – Position Descriptions* (Department of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency, December 2020), 23.
[11] *Position Descriptions*, 8.
[12] *Position Descriptions*, 38.
[13] *Position Descriptions*, 27.

Medical Specialists

Medical specialists are expected to provide medical care for all team members, including search canines. They must maintain the necessary medical equipment for the mission. Medical specialists must either be current EMT-Paramedics, or be a physician assistant, registered nurse practitioner, registered nurse who is licensed as a physician assistant, or registered nurse with National Registry of Emergency Medical Technician-Paramedic Standards credentials. They must also complete the FEMA US&R Medical Team Specialist course and have other technical skill sets listed in Appendix A of the FEMA Position Descriptions.[14]

[14] *Position Descriptions*, 18.

PENNSYLVANIA'S US&R RESPONSE SYSTEM

Pennsylvania's Urban Search and Rescue Response System was developed after the September 11th, 2001 attacks, as the Commonwealth became aware of the importance of having qualified rescue personnel that could swiftly mobilize in response to collapsed structures in all Pennsylvania regions. Pennsylvania had no US&R resource available if another attack occurred because PA Task Force-1 (PA-TF1), the federal US&R resource, left Pennsylvania to respond to the collapse of the Twin Towers in New York City. Taking note of this vulnerability, Pennsylvania developed a framework for an in-state US&R response system.[15]

Act 227 of 2002 gave PEMA the ability to establish nine regional counterterrorism task forces (regions) in the state.[16] PEMA and PA-TF1 created the original US&R elements within these regions based on threat and hazard assessments for each region. The different element structures were as follows:

- US&R Squad: Six rescue specialists, with two cross-trained as medical specialists, two cross-trained as hazmat specialists, and two cross-trained as technical search specialists.

- US&R Company: Ten-member team with one company officer, one safety officers, five rescue specialists, one medical specialist, one hazmat specialist, and one technical search specialist.

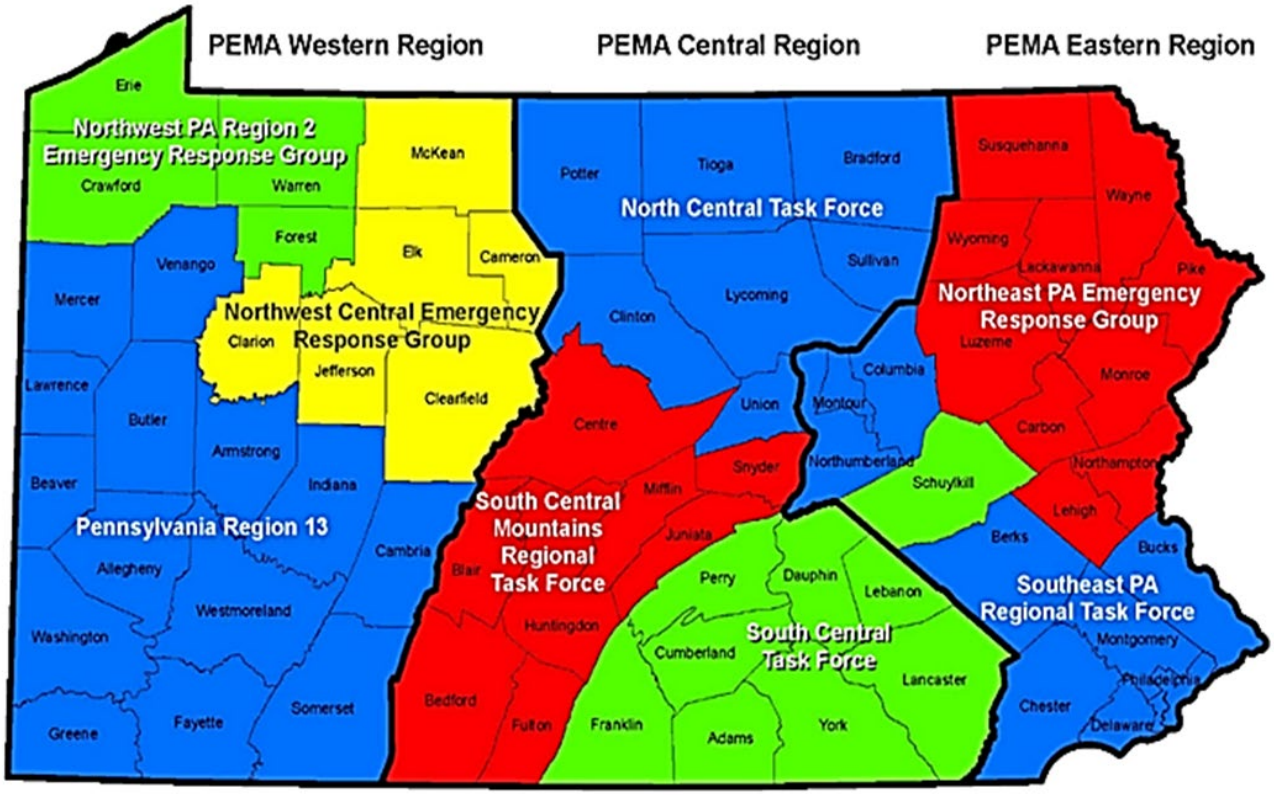
- US&R Strike Team: 20-member team with one strike team leader, one search and rescue manager, one hazmat specialist, one safety officer, two rescue squad officers, ten rescue specialists, two medical specialists, and two technical search specialists.[17]

To be considered fully staffed, an element would retain and maintain a roster depth of three qualified personnel for each position on a team. Regional elements draw membership from local fire departments and emergency management agencies in the area. A local department or agency is chosen as the sponsoring agency for each team. The northwest central counter-terrorism region was determined to need only a Rapid Assessment Element (RAU), which would consist of just two members, a liaison to the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) and an assessment officer. This Task Force eventually opted out of creating the RAU after determining that it did not have the need for a US&R element in the region.[18] If there was a need for US&R in this region that exceeded local capabilities, a different region's team would need to be mobilized.

---

[15] Randy Padfield, "Pennsylvania Urban Search and Rescue Response System: Past, Present and Future of the System – 2017," Whitepaper, 2.
[16] Act of December 16, 2002 (P.L.1967, No.227) (codified by the Act of October 29, 2024 (P.L.1026, No. 113) into 35 Pa. C.S. § 7212).
[17] "Pennsylvania Urban Search and Rescue Response System," 3-4.
[18] "Pennsylvania Urban Search and Rescue Response System," 6.

Map 1
Pennsylvania Regional Counterterrorism Task Forces
2025



Source: Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 7, 2025.

In the original configuration, there were three US&R squads located in the northcentral, southcentral mountain, and eastcentral regions, one strike team in the southwest, and four companies in the northwest, southcentral, southeast, and northeast regions. Between 2011 and 2015, the southcentral mountain and northcentral regions upgraded their squads to be companies resulting in Pennsylvania having one squad, one strike team, and six companies. The southeast region has gradually transitioned to county supported US&R teams, and in the forthcoming concept of operations will no longer support a regional US&R element.[19]

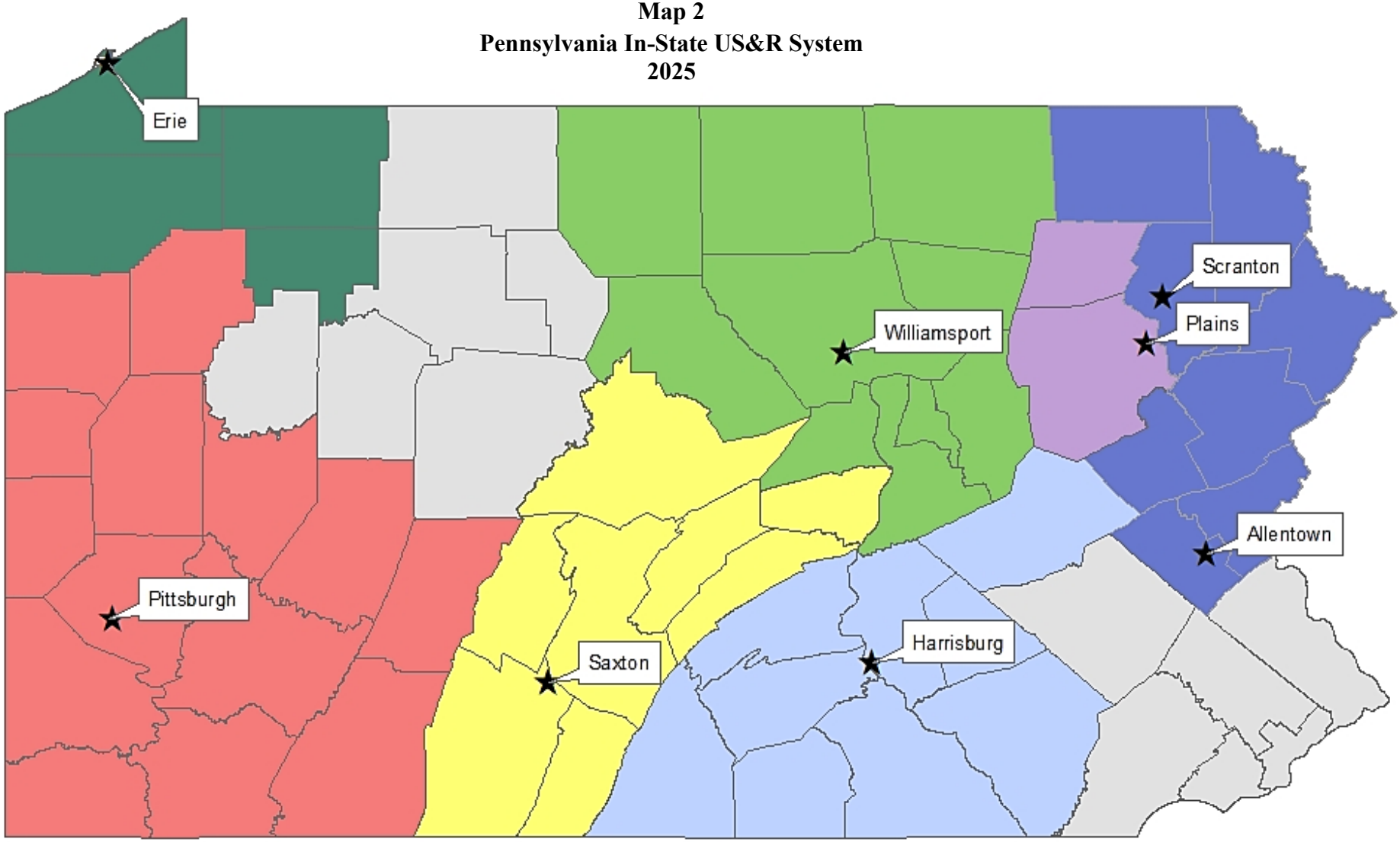
[19] Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, March 20, 2025.

Around 2017, Venango County requested to be reassigned from the northwest regional task force to the southwest regional task force, Region 13. As a fire department within this county was supporting the northwest US&R company, this change weakened the northwest company, but it continued to maintain the company. In 2018, the eastcentral task force disbanded. However, the department supporting the US&R company within the region opted to continue as a squad under the northeast PA emergency response group. Thus, the current US&R elements are as follows:

- Northwest – US&R Company
- Southwest – US&R Strike Team
- Northwest Central – no organized US&R capability currently (Port Allegany may pursue qualification as a NIMS collapse rescue team in the future)
- Southcentral Mountain – US&R Company
- Northcentral – US&R Company
- Southcentral – US&R Company
- Northeast – US&R Company and US&R Squad
  (Might be combined in the future)
- Southeast – Favoring a county-based NIMS configuration currently as opposed to continuing to support a regional US&R Company[20]

[20] Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, March 20, 2025.

Map 2
Pennsylvania In-State US&R System
2025

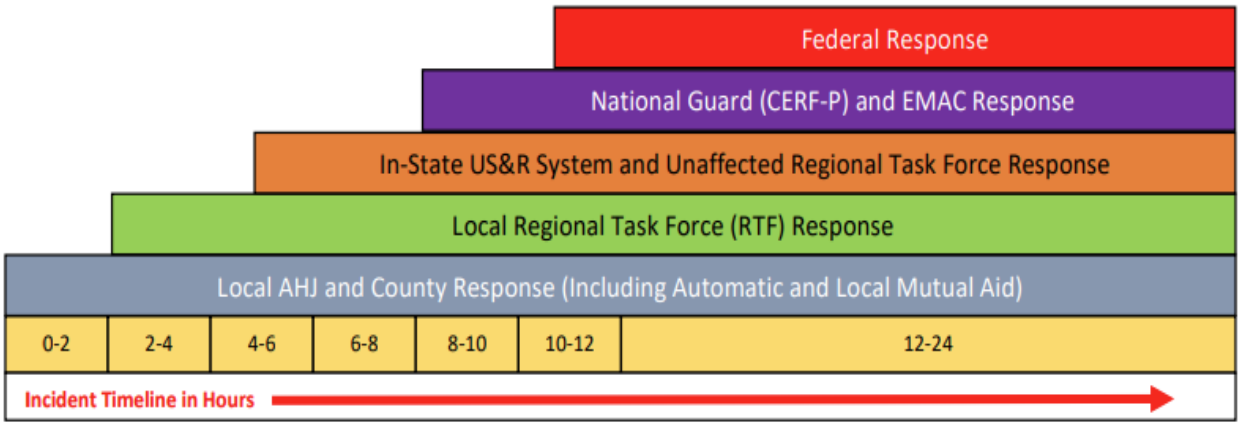


Source: Maps made by Joint State with data gathered from US&R Needs Assessment Results (PEMA, 2025).

Tiered Responses

Responses using these teams are based on a tiered response model that requires local emergency responders to first respond to the incident scene. When needed, the Regional Task Force which covers the incident scene would respond to the incident. If more resources are needed, non-local RTFs would respond along with PA-TF1 if necessary (an in-state response), followed by the National Guard, then other federal teams within the national US&R system.[21] Localities and regions are expected to activate and mobilize their own resources prior to requesting additional resources from the state. A US&R team or any of its components, subgroups or regional elements may only be activated and deployed to the scene of a disaster in accordance with policies and cost principles promulgated by PEMA.[22] Most of the activation of these teams will occur at the local or regional level and will fall under different requirements.[23]

Figure 1
Tiered Response Model
2017



Source: Randy Padfield, "Pennsylvania Urban Search and Rescue Response System: Past, Present and Future of the System – 2017," Whitepaper, 2.

PA-TF1 also entered into an agreement with PEMA to provide the following positions, when needed, that were too difficult to recruit and train for, and too expensive for regional task forces to maintain across the Commonwealth:

- Task force leaders
- Rescue team managers
- Search team managers
- Structures specialists
- Medical team managers

[21] "Pennsylvania Urban Search and Rescue Response System," 17.
[22] 35 Pa.C.S. Section 7214(e)(1).
[23] 35 Pa.C.S. Ch. 73.

- Canine search specialists
- Logistics team managers/logistics specialists
- Heavy rigging specialists
- Planning team members
- Technical information specialists[24]

Because the tiered response system relies on local emergency responders activating first, most collapsed structure incidents do not escalate to the in-state response level. Regional elements are more often utilized to respond to incidents within their regions rather than to assist in other regions at the request of PEMA. Through the Commonwealth Watch and Warning Center (CWWC), PEMA is made aware of structural collapse incidents across the Commonwealth. Since 2020, 188 structural collapse incidents were reported through CWWC. Of those 188 incidents, only 12 required the use of a specialty team (county or regional based team with US&R capability or in the event of a fire incident with an associated collapse, a Rapid Intervention Team).[25] Only two of these events required state level support: the Fern Hollow Bridge Collapse in 2022 and the R.M. Palmer Chocolate Plant Explosion in 2023.[26] The vast majority of structural collapse incidents are handled by local emergency responders. Often, these incidents are a result of failing structural soundness of abandoned buildings in the case of a fire or severe winter weather.[27]

Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) Role

The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) is the statewide agency responsible for preparing for, responding to, and recovering from natural and human-made disasters, including acts of terrorism. PEMA gathers information from local, state, and federal partners by a variety of means, including the triennial Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessments (THIRA). The THIRA determines the most common threats and hazards that could occur in a given area, forecasts the impacts these threats could have, and determines capability targets in various emergency response disciplines.[28]

US&R Protocols

When the in-state response system is needed, that is, after all local and mutual aid resources have been exhausted, the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) can make a resource request to PEMA for additional US&R resources. PEMA monitors incidents through the (CWWC) and may begin to mobilize resources for regions in anticipation of a request. PEMA's External Operations will assemble an Emergency Support Function (ESF) 9 Coordination Call to determine the potential needs and the readiness of available resources and begin to plan for the deployment of the team. PEMA will also determine whether or not to recommend that the governor make a

[24] "Pennsylvania Urban Search and Rescue Response System," 5-6.
[25] Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, March 6, 2025.
[26] Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, March 6, 2025.
[27] Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, March 6, 2025.
[28] *Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA): THIRA Pre-Submission Report Pennsylvania 2024.*

disaster declaration for the incident.[29] PEMA's determination will rely on Coordination Calls, Incident Reports, Tactical Action Plans, Situational Reports, Spot Reports, Critical Information Requirements, and Rules of Engagement.[30] Teams are expected to collect data to provide situational awareness to all stakeholders that will keep track of where in the site they have already searched and what they have found and where they have yet to search. Teams are expected to be self-sufficient for the first 72 hours of deployment and are supposed to pack enough clothing and personal items, including necessary personal medicines, to last for the entire deployment.

PEMA's External Operations or the ESF 9 Coordination Cell will oversee the integration of US&R teams throughout the incident. If an incident requires multiple teams or a large geographical area to be covered, PEMA can establish an Operational Planning Team (OPT) to facilitate the use of multiple teams at once. When the team is mobilized under PEMA for an in-state mission by the governor, PEMA maintains operational control. Once a team is assigned to a specific incident, the team is under tactical control of the local incident commander. PEMA has authority to reassign or demobilize a team when it is no longer needed. PEMA will make the demobilization decision based on:

- Personnel's work/rest ratio prior to mobilization
- Still in transit or on scene with Base of Operations (BoO) established
- Duration of operation already undertaken (work/rest ratio is 2:1)
- Rest period for safety concerns
- [Equipment] cache and transportation status
- Anticipated needs for future operational periods
- Distance and type of work to be performed (if known)[31]

After an incident, teams must complete an After-Action Review (AAR) using the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) guidelines. They must also participate in the in-state AAR. The team's internal AAR must be submitted to the team's RTF and to PEMA within 30 days if the team was deployed under PEMA's authority.[32]

Communication

PEMA administers the Commonwealth Watch and Warning Center (CWWC) that collects incident information at all times across the state. Counties most often report through the Crisis Management System (CMS) but are also able to call or email incident reports. Notifications are dispersed from the CWWC to the proper authorities based on the severity and type of the incident. US&R notifications are sent to a specific distribution group within the Commonwealth. Severe weather, building collapses, and explosions that may require specialized response teams will prompt an ESF 9 advisory from PEMA. PEMA keeps email and phone contact information for all

[29] Urban Search & Rescue Response System.
[30] Urban Search & Rescue Response System.
[31] Urban Search & Rescue Response System.
[32] Urban Search & Rescue Response System.

in-state US&R team leaders and will organize briefings and updates when necessary to keep teams up to date.[33]

PEMA utilizes the statewide radio system through the P25 radio network that is maintained by the Pennsylvania State Police. Emergency Management Agency (EMA) offices and 911 Public Safety Answering Points also utilize this network. US&R response teams do not have portable radios on the P25 radio network for each team due to the expense incurred by maintaining the technology, but the teams do possess radios so that members of the team can communicate with each other. If a response necessitates additional communications capabilities, PEMA has the ability to deploy communication equipment to the scene of an incident to ensure interoperable communications among local, state, and federal agencies and other partners. Other communication equipment that can be deployed to an incident site includes a SATCOM unit, PCOM trailers, and caches of portable radios.[34]

PEMA also maintains the Satellite Emergency Voice Alerting Network (SEVAN)/Satellite. This system provides satellite voice and data connectivity to EMA offices and 911 Public Safety Answering Points. Separate from the SEVAN system, an additional satellite system that can deliver Emergency Alert System (EAS) messages is maintained in case of a failure of the land-based system. It can send texts to broadcast stations or news providers and the EMA offices and 911 Public Safety Answering Points.[35] Satellite capability also allows PEMA to communicate with FEMA and PA-TF1.[36]

Amateur radio connections constitute the Auxiliary Communications Services (ACS) to provide backup communications between the Commonwealth Response Coordination Center (CRCC) and county Emergency Operations Centers (EOC) if necessary.[37] Separately, PEMA operates terminals for the federal National Alert and Warning System (NAWAS), however this system is viewed as a last resort communication system only used when all other systems have failed.[38]

PEMA does not communicate directly with local public safety responders unless there is a specific need to do so. PEMA communicates with RTFs and county EMA offices or 911 centers. If there is a need for a specialty response like the Helicopter Aquatic Rescue Team (HART), local public safety will be looped into a conference with PEMA, the county 911 center, the National Guard, and the local incident commander to ensure that all groups have a shared understanding of the mission.[39]

[33] Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 13, 2025.
[34] Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 13, 2025.
[35] Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, June 19, 2025.
[36] Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 13, 2025.
[37] Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, June 19, 2025.
[38] Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 13, 2025.
[39] Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 13, 2025.

PENNSYLVANIA TASK FORCE ONE

Pennsylvania Task Force One (PA-TF1) is one of 28 NIMS Type 1 US&R Task Forces located across the country as part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National US&R Response System. PA-TF 1 is funded through a Cooperative Agreement with FEMA/DHS and receives no other funding.[40] These task forces are deployed by FEMA to disaster areas when there is a need for structural collapse rescue or other life-saving measures. PA-TF1 was notably deployed to Ground Zero at the World Trade Center in New York City in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, as well as to the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina in Mississippi and Louisiana in 2005. More recently, PA-TF1 has been deployed during 13 hurricanes or tropical storms since 2015, as well as being deployed in 2020 to support a COVID-19 testing site, wildfires in Oregon in 2020, the Presidential inauguration in 2021, a building collapse in Florida in 2021, after a tornado in Kentucky in 2021, and as recently as Hurricane Helene in 2024 and Severe Weather in Kentucky in 2025.[41] Most recently, around the release of this report, PA-TF1 was deployed to Texas to "lead a multi-state support team for search, rescue, and vital response" after severe flooding in the state.[42] PA-TF1 is also available to the in-state system through the aforementioned agreement with PEMA for certain technical positions, and can be utilized within the state as a full task force.[43]

Capabilities

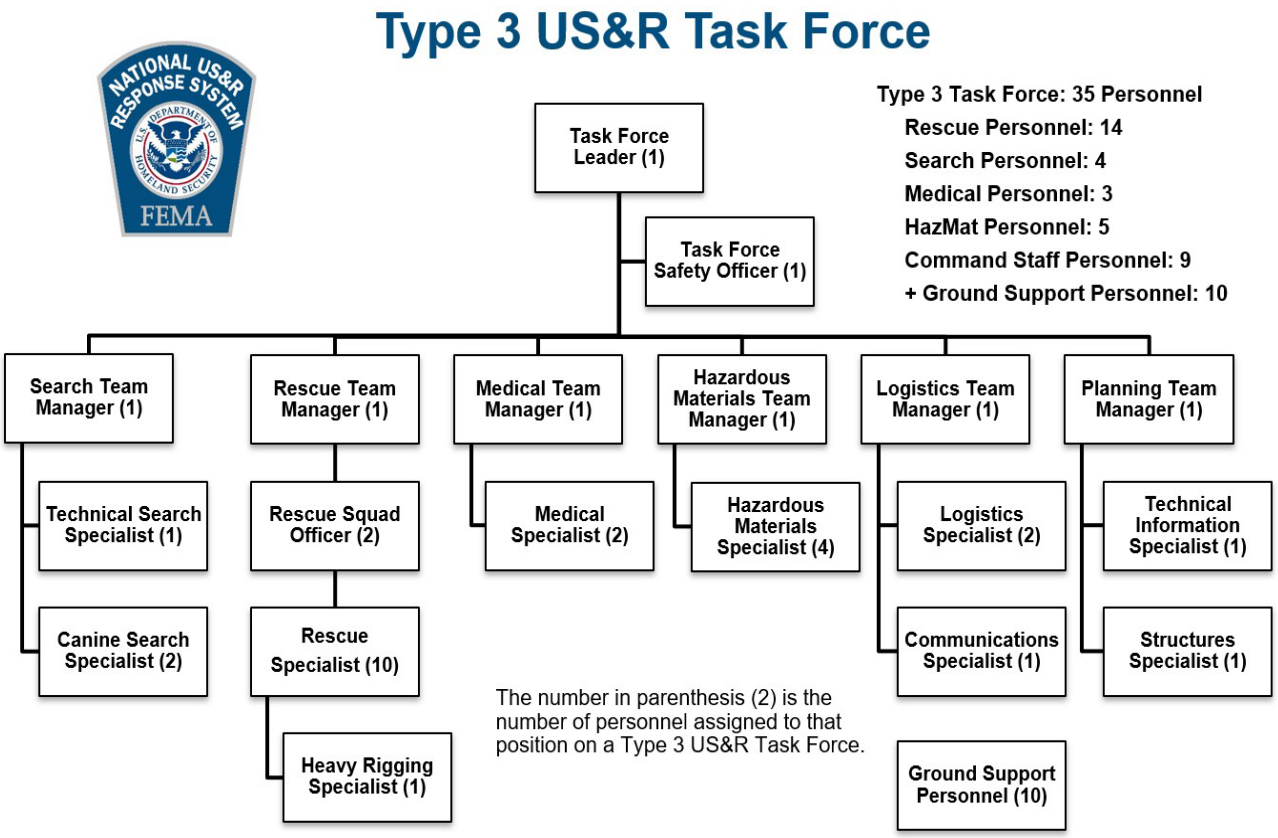
US&R Task Forces have the capability to conduct search rescue and recovery using:

- Wide-area search
- Structural collapse assessment, search, rescue, and rigging in light through heavy frame construction, including reinforced concrete
- Associated technical rope rescue (including highlines)
- Confined space search and rescue (permit-required, non-mine, non-cave)
- Trench and excavation rescue
- Mass transportation vehicle rescue (subway, rail, bus)
- Supporting the transport of service or companion animals with persons rescued[44]

[40] PA-TF1 Leadership, e-mail message to Commission staff, June 19, 2025.
[41] "Pennsylvania Urban Search and Rescue," *PA-TF1*, accessed March 18, 2025, https://www.patf1.org/deployments.php; Ivan Lopez, e-mail message to Commission staff, June 19, 2025.
[42] "PA Task Force 1 Heads to Texas to Assist with Rescue and Recovery Efforts," *The Express*, last modified July 9, 2025, https://www.lockhaven.com/news/local-news/2025/07/pa-task-force-1-heads-to-texas-to-assist-with-rescue-and-recovery-efforts/.
[43] "Pennsylvania Urban Search and Rescue Response System," 17.
[44] "Urban Search and Rescue Task Force," *U.S. Department of Homeland Security*.

They coordinate and conduct search and rescue response efforts for any hazard and can operate in areas with and without infrastructure like road access and utilities.[45] A NIMS Type 1 or 2 team must have 70 personnel on the task force at all times. Type 1 or 2 teams have the same configuration as Type 3 but double the positions to give them the ability to operate for 24 hours by switching out responders for each position.[46] PA-TF1's US&R Task Force responds with 80 positions when deploying by ground with their vehicle fleet. Ground deployment requires 10 support positions to drive the tractor-trailers and other vehicles to the incident scene. When required to deploy via airlift, PA-TF1 deploys with 70 personnel.[47] PA-TF1 had 198 deployable personnel as of March 26, 2025.[48]

The Type 3 team configuration is as follows:



Source: Ivan Lopez, PA-TF1 Program Manager, e-mail message to Commission staff, May 13, 2025.

[45] "Urban Search and Rescue Task Force," *U.S. Department of Homeland Security*.
[46] "Urban Search and Rescue Task Force," *U.S. Department of Homeland Security*.
[47] Conversation with Ivan Lopez and Fred Endrikat, March 26, 2025.
[48] Conversation with Ivan Lopez and Fred Endrikat, March 26, 2025.

Medical Capabilities

The four types of NIMS US&R Task Force configurations are capable of providing "sophisticated medical care for survivors entrapped in collapsed structures" and for their full task force personnel: 22 personnel for Type 4, 35 personnel for Type 3, and 70 personnel each for Types 1 and 2.[49] Additionally, Type 3 teams can provide equipment and pharmaceuticals to handle 5 critical injuries, 7 moderate injuries, and 12 minor injuries. Types 1 and 2 teams can handle 10 critical injuries, 15 moderate injuries, and 25 minor injuries.[50]

Reconnaissance Capabilities/Capabilities for Structural Stabilization

Type 4 teams can perform rescue, search, medical, logistics, planning and safety functions in light or medium construction structures and some limited operations for hazardous materials. They can perform light to moderate operations in frame and concrete constructions, rope rescue, confined space rescue, and wide-area search.[51]

Type 3 teams can perform Type 4 operations as well as operations in heavy reinforced masonry structures and can perform heavy rigging operations and structural assessment. They can perform search and rescue operations in heavy frame, reinforced concrete, high-angle rope rescue, confined space rescue, trench/excavation, wide-area search, stillwater/flood operations, and mass transportation rescue. Type 1 and 2 teams can perform all these capabilities as well.[52]

Capabilities for Hazmat

For hazmat capabilities, Type 4 teams provide atmospheric monitors and decontamination equipment. Type 2 and 3 teams have that capability as well as Level C PPE for structural collapse and "self-contained respiratory protection for rescue personnel working in IDLH or confined spaces."[53] Type 1 teams also require Level B PPE that can operate for up to 12 hours and can be extended to 24 hours with augmented equipment.[54]

Type 4 teams have safety equipment that includes an electric current detector, replacement level C PPE, extinguisher, dry chemical ABC #10, emergency signaling device, light sticks, and barrier tape. Type 2 and 3 teams include this equipment plus confined space entry equipment like a supplied air breathing system and a lockout/tagout kit. Type 1 teams also have replacement level B PPE.[55]

---

[49] "Urban Search and Rescue Task Force," *U.S. Department of Homeland Security*.
[50] "Urban Search and Rescue Task Force," *U.S. Department of Homeland Security*.
[51] "Urban Search and Rescue Task Force," *U.S. Department of Homeland Security*.
[52] "Urban Search and Rescue Task Force," *U.S. Department of Homeland Security*.
[53] "Urban Search and Rescue Task Force," *U.S. Department of Homeland Security*.
[54] "Urban Search and Rescue Task Force," *U.S. Department of Homeland Security*.
[55] "Urban Search and Rescue Task Force," *U.S. Department of Homeland Security*.

Type 1 teams perform all the functions of Type 2, 3 and 4 teams and also deploy Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) functional hazmat capability and requires teams to deploy appropriate Level B PPE that can operate for at least 12 hours and 24 hours if augmented with additional equipment for CBRNE incidents.[56]

Communications Capabilities

US&R Task Force Types 1-3 have the same communications capabilities. They can support:

- Data communications between two forward operational areas, Incident Command and other agencies
- Ongoing sustainment and maintenance of the communications cache
- Wide area communications to meet the operational need of the task force[57]

Equipment Inventory

Task Force Types 1-4 all require the same base technical equipment, which includes "search cameras, listening devices, and mapping, Global Positioning System (GPS) and other victim locating equipment."[58]

For Type 4, required rescue equipment is:

- Shoring equipment for wood and prefabricated metal shoring, including saws and other construction equipment
- Concrete lifting and stabilization equipment
- Rope rescue equipment for high-angle, low-angle, and confined space rescue
- Vehicle and machinery extrication equipment including air bags and hydraulic rescue equipment
- Survivor extraction equipment[59]

Types 1-3 require the above equipment, plus concrete breaching and breaking equipment like concrete saws, jack hammers, concrete drills, and hammer drills. They also must have heavy rigging equipment for crane operations.[60]

[56] "Urban Search and Rescue Task Force," *U.S. Department of Homeland Security*.
[57] "Urban Search and Rescue Task Force," *U.S. Department of Homeland Security*.
[58] "Urban Search and Rescue Task Force," *U.S. Department of Homeland Security*.
[59] "Urban Search and Rescue Task Force," *U.S. Department of Homeland Security*.
[60] "Urban Search and Rescue Task Force," *U.S. Department of Homeland Security*.

Standards

The federal system has a well-established process of continuous self-assessment and reporting that includes three readiness evaluation phases: a self-evaluation, an on-site administrative readiness evaluation, and an operational readiness exercise and evaluation.[61]

The self-evaluation is completed annually by the task force's sponsoring agency for the task force and rates operational, logistic, and management readiness. The evaluation includes a formatted score sheet and a narrative portion.[62] The factors being assessed are:

- Operational Readiness
  - Complement of Rostered Task Force Members
  - Complement of Trained Task Force Members (including Task Force Members trained in more than one specialty)
  - Complement of Deployable Task Force Members
  - Complement of Task Force Member Participants in Annual Training and Exercises
  - Complement of Deployable Canine Search Specialist Teams

- Logistic Readiness
  - Complement of Cache Equipment Items
  - Transportation Resources
  - Equipment Cache Training
  - Cache Management Inventory System
  - Warehouse Resources

- Management Readiness
  - Complement of Task Force Administrative Staffing and Resources
  - Complete Accurate Timely Cooperative Agreement Reports
  - Cooperative Agreement Plans and Memoranda of Agreement
  - Financial and Accounting Processes and Records
  - Sponsoring Agency Support Functions[63]

PA-TF1's 2024 self-evaluation scored an 82 overall, with a 77.5 in operational readiness, an 82 in logistic readiness, and an 86 in management readiness.[64] The scoresheet is included in the report as Appendix B.

The on-site Administrative Readiness Evaluation (ARE) is conducted once every three years by Peer Evaluators that are members of other task forces from the federal US&R system, as well as US&R Branch staff from FEMA Headquarters. This evaluation essentially verifies the

[61] *National Urban Search and Rescue Response System US&R Administration Manual Annex E – US&R Readiness Assessment Program Manual* (Department of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency, October 2013), 5.
[62] *Annex E – US&R Readiness Assessment Program Manual*, 5.
[63] *Annex E – US&R Readiness Assessment Program Manual*.
[64] 2024 Task Force Self-Evaluation Scoresheet, provided by Ivan Lopez, May 13, 2025.

annual self-evaluation by the task forces.[65] In their most recent ARE, conducted in 2023, PA-TF1 was determined to be fully compliant with the American National Standard Institute (ANSI) US&R Standard.[66]

The Operational Readiness Exercise and Evaluation is also to be completed once every three years. Each task force must submit an exercise plan to complete five modules in each three-year period:

- Mobilization
- Transportation of personnel and equipment cache
- Establishing a Base of Operations
- Onsite operations
- Demobilization/deploy[67]

These module requirements can be met individually throughout the three-year period or all together in one deployment exercise within the three-year period.[68] After completing the exercise, the task force conducts an evaluation to assess:

- Expected versus actual performance,
- Lessons to be learned from conduct,
- Improvements to be made in performance and process, and
- Best practices to consider adopting.[69]

The evaluation team drafts an After Action Report (AAR) that is presented to the task force representatives. This group collaborates to develop an improvement plan to implement any necessary improvements. This report is also submitted to FEMA Headquarters.[70]

PA-TF1 stores training documentation for all deployable personnel and maintenance records for all equipment in a database called the EMOS Database, which is used by many of the other federal US&R Task Forces. This database allows PA-TF1 to easily ensure that all deployable members are up to date on their training and that all equipment has been properly maintained according to the necessary guidelines. When a piece of equipment is added to the database, the person adding the equipment will program the increments of time between maintenance or replacement of the equipment and the database will alert PA-TF1 when action is necessary for a piece of equipment. When the team deploys, a member's barcode on their helmet is scanned and the equipment they take is also scanned. All equipment and personnel can be easily accounted for and guaranteed to be at the proper standard. The use of this system allows PA-TF1 to assure Commission staff that all equipment is properly maintained and ready for use.[71]

---

[65] *Annex E – US&R Readiness Assessment Program Manual*.
[66] ARE ANSI US&R Standard Compliance Determination, provided by Ivan Lopez, May 13, 2025.
[67] *Annex E – US&R Readiness Assessment Program Manual*, 6.
[68] *Annex E – US&R Readiness Assessment Program Manual*, 6.
[69] *Annex E – US&R Readiness Assessment Program Manual*, 57.
[70] *Annex E – US&R Readiness Assessment Program Manual*, 58.
[71] Conversation with Ivan Lopez and Fred Endrikat, March 26, 2025.

Recent actions at the federal level by the Trump administration made the future of FEMA and the funding that states receive through FEMA uncertain. The "Achieving Efficiency Through State and Local Preparedness" Executive Order from March 2025 signals a move away from federal support in emergency management and an increased emphasis on state preparedness.[72] Additionally, the "Council to Assess the Federal Emergency Management Agency" Executive Order established a council to review the "existing ability of FEMA to capably and impartially address disasters occurring within the United States and shall advise the President on all recommended changes related to FEMA to best serve the national interest."[73]

Though at the time of the writing of this report no official announcements have been made, FEMA US&R Task Forces and state emergency management officials are preparing for their federal funding and task forces to be potentially terminated. Pursuant to 35 Pa. C.S. § 7214, Pennsylvania is required to have a Type 1 US&R Task Force to cover Pennsylvania's only county of the first class, Philadelphia. Should the federal task forces be dissolved, PA-TF1 would likely transition to be the Type 1 Task Force in Philadelphia County, contingent on Philadelphia's desire to financially support the element. If Philadelphia were not interested in supporting the task force, another agency in the Southeast region would need to become the sponsoring agency. When distributing funding to the various regions, PEMA or state legislators would need to take this information into account to ensure that the law is being followed and the proper preparedness steps have been taken to protect residents in Philadelphia. Additionally, if transitioned to a state element, PA-TF1 would need to enter into new agreements with the regional elements to provide the team positions that they offer to regional elements that are listed on page 25 of this report, or these regional teams would need to fund these positions for their own teams.[74]

[72] "Achieving Efficiency Through State and Local Preparedness," *The White House*, accessed May 12, 2025, https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/achieving-efficiency-through-state-and-local-preparedness/.
[73] U.S. Department of Homeland Security, "President Trump Appoints New Members to Federal Emergency Management Agency Review Council," Press Release, https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/04/28/president-trump-appoints-new-members-federal-emergency-management-agency-review.
[74] Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, May 9, 2025.

Commission staff consulted with each of the eight regional elements in the in-state system to ascertain their current capabilities and gaps that they would like to fill. Additionally, around the same time as the writing of the report, PEMA sent out a needs assessment survey to each of the regional elements. The following descriptions of each element are comprised of a combination of information from the needs assessment survey and Commission staff conversations with each of the teams. Each team provided information on their capabilities, training levels, equipment inventory, and funding mechanisms and needs. As mentioned previously, regional elements are the next tier of response if a collapse exceeds the capability of local first responders within their own region. They can also be utilized as part of the in-state system if an AHJ outside of their region requests additional assistance at an incident site. They are currently supported by each region's Counterterrorism Task Force with Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) funding.

Capabilities

Seven of the eight regional task forces have teams with these capabilities:

- Scene assessment
- Basic hazardous materials assessment
- Technical search (acoustic/seismic and visual/video)
- Structural collapse shoring/building stabilization
- Void space exploration and physical search
- Concrete breach/breaking
- Metal cutting/burning
- Heavy lifting/rigging
- Basic and advanced care and removal of entrapped patients[75]

Capabilities that may be too difficult and/or expensive to maintain for each region are provided by PA-TF1 through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). These include:

- Live Find Canine Teams and Human Remains Detection Canine Search Teams – Canine handlers and canines specifically trained and certified to the FEMA standards for collapsed building search.

- Medical team managers – Physicians with specific training and expertise in care and treatment of heavily entrapped patients.

- Structures Specialists – Structural engineers with specific training and expertise to include advanced building monitoring capabilities.

[75] Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 18, 2025.

- Heavy Rigging Specialists – Individuals with specific training and expertise in crane operations and rigging for larger more complex operations (Rescue Specialists on the teams have some training in rigging and load calculations and can work with cranes, but [rigging specialists] may be required for more complex operations).

- Hazardous Materials Managers – Individuals with specific training and expertise for operations in contaminated environments such as those resulting from Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) or Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear (CBRN) weapons.[76]

Reconnaissance Capabilities

All RTF US&R teams have Rescue Specialists who are trained to FEMA standards in building construction types, collapse patterns, probable victim locations and structural shoring, giving them reconnaissance and damage assessment capabilities. Team members are also trained in the use of acoustic/seismic search equipment and visual/video equipment.[77]

Structural Stabilization Capabilities

Rescue Specialists are also trained in building shoring systems like raker shores, vertical shores, tiebacks, sloped floor shores, box cribbing and more. These can be constructed with either wood or expedient aluminum.[78]

Hazmat Capabilities

Original US&R configurations included a hazardous materials specialist, as either a standalone position or a cross-trained individual on smaller teams. The "specialist" title rather than the "technician" title indicates that these individuals received hazardous materials training along with training to conduct a basic hazardous materials assessment to determine viability of victims in a collapsed structure, potential exposure concerns, personal protective equipment and respiratory requirements and decontamination considerations for rescuers and victims.[79] The NIMS typing standard to which the RTFs will be transitioning does not require hazardous materials specialists, only hazardous materials technicians. The technicians are trained by the Office of the State Fire Commissioner and certified by PEMA under Act 165 of 1990.[80] The new state concept of operations for US&R pairs US&R teams with a hazmat team as needed rather than funding standalone hazmat capabilities for each team.[81]

[76] Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 18, 2025.
[77] Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 18, 2025.
[78] Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 18, 2025.
[79] Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 18, 2025.
[80] Act of December 7, 1990 (P.L.639, No.165); 35 P.S. §§ 6022.101-6022.307; known as the Hazardous Material Emergency Planning and Response Act.
[81] Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 18, 2025.

Standards

The original in-state US&R system was built on the FEMA US&R Standards and Guidelines as they were the preeminent standards at the time. [82] This system is a tiered response system with response teams properly suited to the needs of their regions, with the option for additional support from a higher tier if necessary.

Since the early 2000s, other US&R guidelines and standards have been developed. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has multiple standards, including NFPA 1006, the Standard for Technical Rescue Professional Qualifications; NFPA 1670, the Standard on Operations and Training for Technical Search and Rescue Incidents; and NFPA 2500 – Standard for Operations and Training for Technical Search and Rescue Incidents and Life Safety Rope and Equipment for Emergency Services, which combines NFPA 1670 with 1858 and 1983.[83] The American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) US&R Standards include guidelines on management and operation, equipment, testing, maintenance, personnel, training, and education. The National Incident Management System (NIMS) also provides US&R guidelines for Structural Collapse Rescue Teams Type 1-3, Structural Collapse Search Teams Type 1-3, and Urban Search and Rescue Task Forces Type 1-4.[84] The Emergency Management Accreditation Program also has a US&R standard that mirrors the federal standard.[85] Pennsylvania has not pursued this accreditation for all teams because the size and configuration of the teams do not align completely with the standard.[86]

As of the writing of this report, PEMA is meeting with regional teams to facilitate a transition to NIMS typing so that the teams and their qualifications are more easily standardized. Structural Collapse Rescue Teams Type 1-3, Structural Collapse Search Teams Type 1-3, and Urban Search and Rescue Task Forces Type 3 and 4 are the accepted NIMS typed configurations for an in-state US&R team.[87]

PEMA proposed a NIMS Tier 2 typing, which is a typing definition that is developed by a state that cannot be used on deployments outside of the state. This typing guideline would be very similar in makeup to Pennsylvania's legacy in-state system US&R Company. This guideline creates a team that combines a NIMS-typed Collapse Rescue Team with 6 members, a Structural Collapse Search team with 4 members, and adds a few other dedicated positions like a paramedic and a hazardous materials technician.[88]

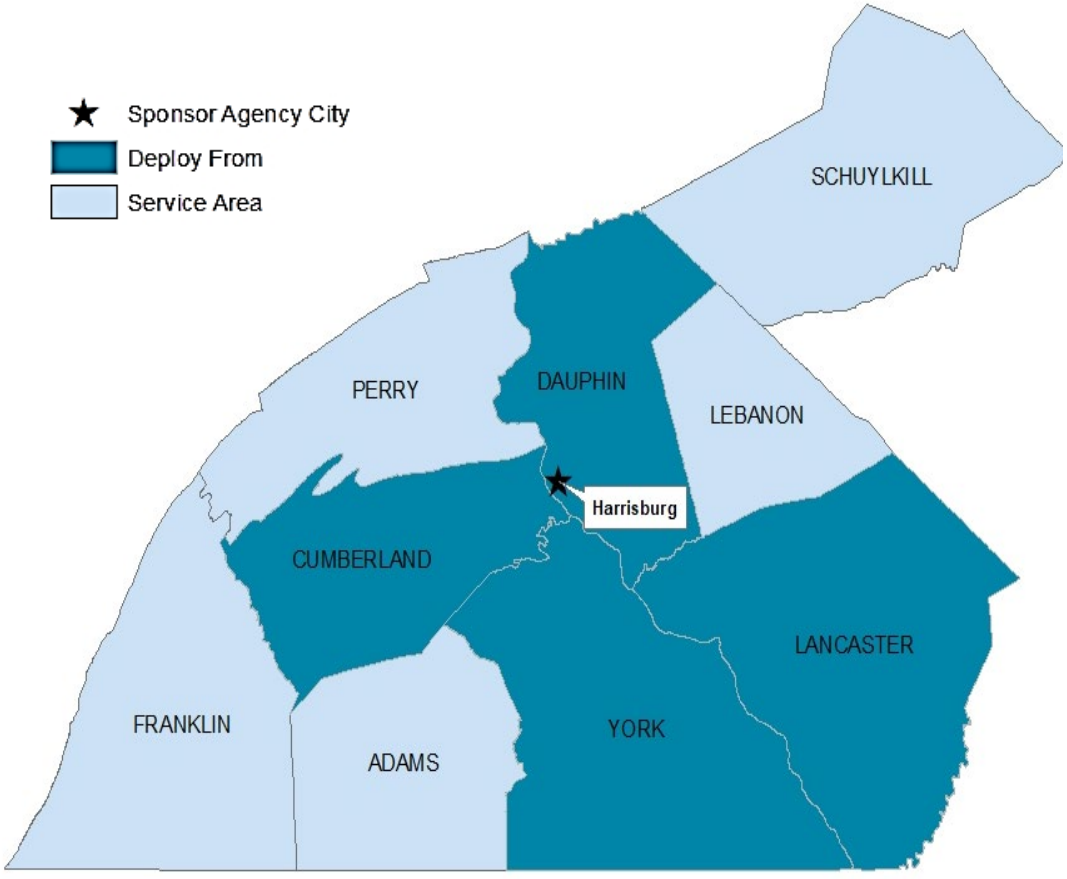
---

[82] "Response System," *National Urban Search & Rescue System*, accessed May 12, 2025, https://www.responsesystem.org/.
[83] Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 18, 2025.
[84] Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 18, 2025.
[85] "Urban Search and Rescue Standard," *EMAP*, accessed June 23, 2025, https://emap.org/urban-search-and-rescue-standard/.
[86] Randy Padfield, Director of PEMA, e-mail message to Commission staff, June 19, 2025.
[87] Urban Search & Rescue Response System Framework & Concepts, provided by Randy Padfield, February 18, 2025.
[88] Urban Search & Rescue Response System Framework & Concepts, provided by Randy Padfield, February 18, 2025.

Pennsylvania Company 1
(PA-CO1)

PA-CO1, also known as PA-SCR-SARTF, or South Central Task Force (SCTF) US&R, is hosted in Dauphin County. Response units come simultaneously from Dauphin, Lancaster, York, and Cumberland counties. PA-CO1 covers Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, Schuylkill, and York counties. The agencies that provide personnel and/or equipment to the team include the Harrisburg Bureau of Fire, Lancaster Bureau of Fire, Manheim Township Fire & Rescue, federal Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) Fire Department located in New Cumberland, and several individuals from various volunteer fire companies throughout the region.[89]

Map 3
Pennsylvania Company 1
2025



Source: Maps created by Joint State with data gathered from *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025).

[89] *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025), 8.

PA-CO1 has created three tiers of response within its region to expedite the deployment of its team. Its concept of operations details this relationship:

1. Tier One: Local Response, governed by AHJ and County EOC Response Authority. This includes municipal assets and county mutual aid assets.

2. Tier Two: Regional Response, governed by County EMC or South Central Task Force Response Authority. This is the deployment of in-region assets, including US&R.

3. Tier Three: State Response, governed by PEMA Response Authority. This would be the deployment of the regional team as a state resource to another region, or the deployment of PA-TF1.[90]

For Tier One responses, smaller teams at local fire departments can be deployed for faster response times as a single or multiple unit resource. For Tier Two and Three responses, the SCTF reports in its concept of operations that it can deploy a NIMS Type 4 US&R Task Force. For a Tier Two response in the region, this team is expected to deploy within one hour of receiving a request. For a Tier Three response outside of the region, this team is expected to be able to deploy in two hours, with the ability to be self-sufficient for 72 hours.[91] Within 90 days after a deployment, an After Action Report (AAR) and improvement plan should be distributed to the SCTF-PA-SCR-SARTF.[92]

Though the administrative and operational elements of the Task Force are given freedom in the concept of operations to develop the specific requirements, the SCTF requires the SCTF-PA-SCR-SARTF to develop six plans: a strategic plan, administration plan, mobilization plan, training plan, operations plan, and equipment management plan.[93]

Capabilities

As described in the concept of operations, PA-CO1's capability is as follows:

1. Conducting search, rescue, and recovery, including:
    a. Wide-area search
    b. Structural collapse assessment, search, rescue, rigging, shoring, and stabilization in light through heavy frame construction buildings (including reinforced concrete)
    c. Technical rope rescue (including highlines)
    d. Confined space search and rescue (permit required, non-mine, non-cave)
    e. Trench and excavation rescue
    f. Mass transit and heavy vehicle and machinery rescue
    g. Swift water and floodwater rescue operations

[90] *Pennsylvania South Central Region Urban Search and Rescue Task Force: Concept of Operations* (December 8, 2023), 2.
[91] *Concept of Operations*, 6.
[92] *Concept of Operations*, 7.
[93] *Concept of Operations*, 8.

2. Coordinating and conducting search and rescue response efforts for all hazards, including locating, accessing, medically stabilizing, and extricating survivors from the damaged structures.

3. Operating in environments with and without infrastructure, including compromised access to roadways, utilities, transportation, and limited availability of shelter, food, and water.

4. Capable of continuous 24-hour operations which can split into two 12-hour operational period teams.

5. While capable of providing lifesaving stabilizing care to victims PA-SCR-SARTF is not equipped as an ambulance service and thus cannot transport humans, or animals to shelter(s) or other locations.

6. The search element has physical and electronic capabilities.

7. The Hazmat element is primarily responsible for the detection of environmental conditions for response members and entrapped victims.

8. The logistics element provides the task force with logistical support and communications.[94]

Most members are career staff in the various departments in the region, including the medical element, which is housed in UPMC Life Team. PA-CO1 has atmospheric monitoring capability and the capability to provide limited decontamination. However, in the Southcentral region, there are five PEMA-certified hazardous materials response teams that coordinate with the US&R team. These teams meet the NIMS Type 2 standards for hazardous materials response teams.[95]

In structural stabilization, PA-CO1 has the capability to work with light through heavy frame construction buildings, including reinforced concrete. The medical team from UPMC Life Team offers the ability to perform medical care to entrapped individuals as well as provide basic medical care for members of the task force. The task force possesses search cameras, listening devices, mapping and GPS capabilities, physical search capabilities, and canine search capabilities.[96]

Training

Each deployable member must have an application for a position on file with PA-SCR-SARTF. Once their application has been accepted, the member will be assigned to a position on the Task Force. Position training and certification requirements are the same as those in the national US&R system. It is the responsibility of each participating agency to ensure that all rostered

[94] *Concept of Operations*, 2.
[95] Interview with PA-CO1 Leadership, April 16, 2025.
[96] Interview with PA-CO1 Leadership, April 16, 2025.

members are fully qualified to meet the standard that the executive board expects.[97] In general, all members must go through annual initial and general refresher training.[98] Each agency is required to maintain a secure electronic or physical personnel file for each member with the proper documentation of their licenses and certifications.[99]

PEMA circulated a needs assessment to each of the RTFs in March of 2025. As of that assessment, PA-CO1 had 60 active qualified (including having the necessary training) personnel on its team, with 50 Rescue Specialists and 20 Technical Search Specialists. Some personnel were cross trained for multiple positions. The needs assessment survey did not ask for specific information for every required position on the team but did ask if each team had two qualified personnel for each required position on the team. PA-CO1 responded that it did.[100]

PA-CO1 meets the standards for a FEMA Type 4 Task Force (a more in-depth explanation of the NIMS typing is included on page 18). Type 4 Task Forces have 22 members:

- 1 safety officer
- 2 NIMS type 1 structural collapse rescue team leaders
- 10 NIMS type 1 structural collapse rescue technicians
- 2 NIMS HazMat technicians
- 2 NIMS paramedics also trained in collapse compartment syndrome
- 2 logistics specialists
- 1 NIMS communication technician
- 1 plans team manager who is also qualified as a technical information specialist[101]

Most of the members are career firefighters from one of the seven participating agencies, though there are some volunteer members as well. PA-CO1 is struggling to attract new, younger members due to a nationwide trend of decreased volunteerism in emergency services.[102] The concept of operations provides the structure to ensure that standards are being met for the members' training and certification.[103]

[97] *Concept of Operations*, 3.
[98] *Concept of Operations*, 3.
[99] *Concept of Operations*, 3-4.
[100] *US&R Needs Assessment Results,* 8.
[101] "Urban Search and Rescue Task Force," *U.S. Department of Homeland Security*.
[102] Interview with PA-CO1 Leadership, April 16, 2025.
[103] Interview with PA-CO1 Leadership, April 16, 2025.

Table 1
PA-CO1 Training Ratings
2025

Course	*1 being greatest - 5 being least needed*				
	1-need to achieve	**2**	**3-need to maintain**	**4**	**5-least need**
Leadership Course (such as All Hazards (AH) Strike Team/Task Force Leader Course)	--	--	**X**	--	--
Program Management Course	--	**X**	--	--	--
Structural Collapse Technician Course	--	--	**X**	--	--
Technica Search Specialist Course	--	--	**X**	--	--
Logistics Specialist Course	--	--	**X**	--	--
Safety Officer Course	**X**	--	--	--	--
US&R Planning Team Course	**X**	--	--	--	--
Wide Area Search/GPS Awareness	--	--	**X**	--	--
Hazmat Specialist Course	--	**X**	--	--	--

Source: *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025).

For each RTF, PEMA provided a list of training courses and asked the teams to rate their need to achieve or maintain each on a scale of 1-5, one being "need to achieve," three being "need to maintain," and five being "least need."[104]

PA-CO1 rated the Safety Officer Course and US&R Planning Team Course the lowest at 1 and ranked the Program Management Course and Hazmat Specialist Course at 2. All other courses were rated at "need to maintain."[105] When asked specifically what course was needed most, PA-CO1 named the US&R Planning Team Course.[106]

Equipment

Most of the equipment utilized by PA-CO1 is owned by the supporting agencies that make up the team. Throughout all the supporting agencies, PA-CO1 owns the required equipment cache for a FEMA Type 4 US&R Task Force. Through the concept of operations, each department tracks the maintenance needs of its own equipment. Even though their equipment could be funded from a variety of sources, the participating agencies are responsible for documenting each piece of equipment in the Task Force's records management system (RMS) if the equipment is considered deployable by the Task Force. Each participating agency is responsible for creating its own internal system for tracking the status of its own deployable equipment.[107] However, there is currently no central database that stores the information on the necessary equipment. Task Force leaders emphasized that an all-encompassing equipment database for the in-state system is essential for future procurement, technology exchange, and life-cycle management of equipment.[108]

[104] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 9.
[105] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 9.
[106] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 9.
[107] *Concept of Operations*, 4.
[108] Interview with PA-CO1 Leadership, April 16, 2025.

All RTFs were provided with a list of equipment and asked to say whether they did not have the piece, whether it was broken or near end of life, or whether it was not required for the team's configuration. The survey did not provide an option to indicate that equipment was in good condition, but it appears that many teams used the "not required," field to indicate that their equipment was in good condition.

PA-CO1 stated that it did not have radios, but all other equipment was covered by the cache of the various departments.[109] When asked what its top three greatest equipment needs would be in the next five years, PA-CO1 noted prime movers/cache trailers/containers, support equipment, and communication equipment.[110]

Table 2
PA-CO1 Equipment Status
2025

Equipment	Do not Have	Broken or Near End of Life	Not Required
Radios	**X**	--	--
Hazmat detection equipment	--	--	**X**
Radiation equipment	--	--	**X**
Shelter(s) for operations and life support	--	--	**X**
Logistics (generators, scene lights, air compressors, etc.)	--	--	**X**
Structural shoring equipment	--	--	**X**
Breaching/breaking tools (pneumatic, electric, hydraulic, gas)	--	--	**X**
Torch/welding tools	--	--	**X**
Air lifting bags and controls	--	--	**X**
Technical rope	--	--	**X**
Technical search equipment	--	--	**X**
Medical cache (patient care/general assessment)	--	--	**X**
Medical cache (pharmaceuticals)	--	--	**X**
Safety/sanitation items	--	--	**X**

Source: *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025).

[109] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 10.
[110] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 11.

PA-CO1 was asked what program management support PEMA could provide out of five options:

- Planning (SOP/SOG, manuals, dispatch processes, CONOPs, etc.)
- Organizing (administrative manual, position descriptions, MoU's/sponsoring agency agreements, etc.)
- Equipping (inventory management, sustainment contracts, resource sharing agreements, sustainment processes, etc.)
- Training (currency training, position task books, knowledge management, etc.)
- Exercising (canned scenarios, exercise planning teams, evaluators, evaluation sheets, etc.)[111]

PA-CO1 listed planning (SOP/SOG, manuals, dispatch processes, CONOPs, etc.) and organizing (administrative manual, position descriptions, MoU's/sponsoring agency agreements, etc.).[112]

Funding

PA-CO1 has received no private grant funding or donations nor any state funding. In regard to local funding, certain elements of the US&R team are funded by each fire department that provides a member in the form of salary, training, and personal protection equipment. PA-CO1 receives State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) funding from the Southcentral Task Force, with Dauphin County serving as the designated fiduciary for all the funding. As of this report, it is engaged in discussions for the Lancaster County Emergency Management Agency to become the sponsoring agency, which will help with written mutual aid agreements and may help non-participating agency members by providing them mutual aid workers' compensation.[113]

Much of the initial equipment procurement was made more than 20 years ago with the influx of funding following 9/11. That funding has dropped significantly; there has been no resource expansion based on the limited amount of funding and training available. Due to the limited funding of the RTF, US&R receives barebones SHSP funding – just the minimal amount for sustainment. PA-CO1 estimates that cache recapitalization, including the transport vehicle fleet, would present a one-time $1.5 million cost for the closure of gaps.[114]

[111] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 29.
[112] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 11.
[113] Interview with PA-CO1 Leadership, April 16, 2025.
[114] Interview with PA-CO1 Leadership, April 16, 2025.

In regard to yearly sustainment costs to maintain its NIMS Type 4 US&R team, PA-CO1 estimates it would cost $415,000 per year. This includes approximately $125,000 per year for a fully supported training program to address ongoing human resource life cycle management, as well as quarterly proficiency training and professional development. An additional $125,000 per year would be needed for a certification evaluation exercise and an annual multi-operational period functional exercise for validation of NIMS typing (capability and capacity) and PEMA standardized readiness evaluation. Additionally, an equipment cache life cycle management program and maintenance would require approximately $90,000 each year. Lastly, the rolling stock life cycle management and maintenance program, including unanticipated equipment failures and routine operation costs, would add $75,000 per year.[115]

Pennsylvania Company 2
(PA-CO2)

PA-CO2 does not exist in the same fashion as the other regional elements across the Commonwealth and therefore its PEMA needs assessment results are not representative of the region's capabilities or concept of operations. Representatives of the county capabilities in SEPA met with Commission staff to share information on their capabilities and operational procedure in the region.

PA-CO2 is sponsored by the Southeastern Pennsylvania (SEPA) RTF and was initially part of the Commonwealth Tiered Response plan. PA-CO2 could deploy to assist other in-state regional elements and support key stakeholders (Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia), with Montgomery County serving as the deployment point. Additionally, at that time, the Montgomery County 911 center handled the dispatch notification system for the team.

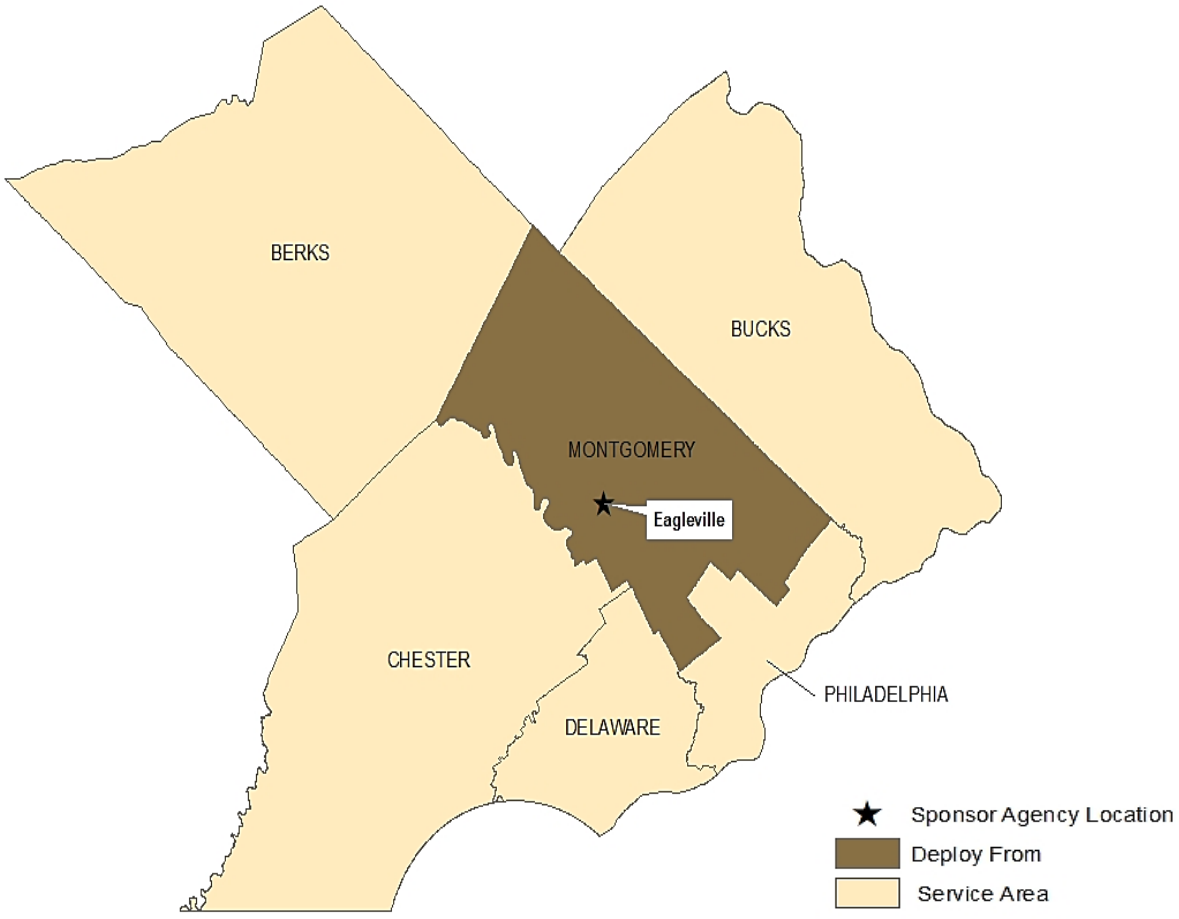
In 2007, a county-based US&R model was adopted in the Southeast Region. This change allowed each county to determine their level of support for a US&R component, and it was agreed upon due to the failure of the in-state US&R system and Commonwealth's inability to provide financial and management support of PA-CO2.

The previous system constrained each county due to limitations in staffing and funding, which impacted both training opportunities and overall sustainability. The SEPA RTF believes that PA-CO2, under the current county-based leadership, can develop a robust, state-based asset, provided that PEMA allocates the necessary funding and structural guidance of the Commonwealth's goal for the state US&R system.

Although PA-CO2 may not officially exist as a recognized entity at this time, the region has consistently demonstrated its capacity to support US&R operations, both as individual counties, and collectively through mutual aid. This has been proven through various responses, both within and outside the region, in recent years.

[115] Interview with PA-CO1 Leadership, April 16, 2025.

Map 4
Pennsylvania Company 2
2025



Source: Maps created by Joint State with data gathered from *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025).

SEPA's US&R capabilities are developed at the county level; however, the representatives from Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties make up a US&R Subcommittee of the region's Emergency Response Group, which meets regularly to remain strategically aligned on the US&R capabilities and needs for the region. Their allocated HSGP funding is utilized by the county US&R leaders; designing projects or training that allow for uniformity within the region. For instance, 2023 HSGP funding was used to collaborate on a water-based Mission Ready Package (MRP). This allowed for the purchase of five boats, motors, trailers, and support equipment. This standardized response package will be crucial for the regional task force when a county requests support during a flooding event. Additionally, 2024 HSGP funds were recently used to standardize battery-operated equipment, ensuring that all teams responding to an incident will have access to the same battery platform and equipment type. The teams within the region also coordinate training opportunities. As of the writing of this report, the subcommittee is currently conducting the 80-hour Structural Collapse Specialist (SCS) class.

They have 24 students attending, with three from Bucks County, six from Chester County, five from Delaware County, five from Montgomery County, and five from Philadelphia County. This class is being funded by the 2024 UASI funding. Furthermore, they have also received approval and funding to conduct the following certifications in the upcoming year: Task Force Leader, Heavy Equipment & Rigging Specialist, Heavy Vehicle Rescue Class, ArcGIS Training Program, and a scenario-based weather event. Each year since 2019, events have occurred which warranted the use of multiple US&R teams in the region.[116]

Berks County is included in the SEPA RTF and receives SHSP funding, but does not receive UASI funding. Boyertown Fire and Rescue in Berks County supports a NIMS Type 2 Structural Collapse Rescue Team and NIMS Type 2 Confined Space Rescue Team, but these teams are not associated with the SEPA US&R component. Other fire departments within the county have varying degrees of technical training and equipment. There is no centralized database in the county of all resources available. In the case of a specific incident requiring a certain kind of technical rescue, emergency coordinators rely on their knowledge of available resources to coordinate a response.[117]

Montgomery County operates as a Type 3 US&R team (reference document RTLT ID 8-508-1262), consistent with the 508 documents. This team meets the requirements for both equipment and staffing certifications, with all members being part-time paid county employees. The team follows the FEMA standard for position-specific training, including Structural Collapse Specialist, Technical Search Specialist, and Heavy Equipment & Rigging Specialist. Additionally, they have three Subject Matter Expert (SME) positions filled in K9, Structures, and Medical. Since 2020, Montgomery County has also been a PEMA Type I water asset.

Chester County operates similarly to Montgomery County. The group is moving from a volunteer model to a part-time paid staffing model. A few fire companies in the county have a PEMA water rescue certification.

Bucks County has a county-based part-time paid staffing model and is pursuing the training offered by the region to transition the team from a technical rescue team to a FEMA equivalent US&R standard.

Delaware County houses its US&R capabilities in the Upper Darby Fire Department. The department can send six to eight members to respond within the county and to assist other counties when necessary.[118]

Philadelphia has approximately 100 PA-TF1 members, many of whom are cross-trained to serve in multiple positions on a US&R Task Force. Philadelphia has three special operations companies that are available 24 hours a day: Rescue 1, Squad 72, and Squad 47. These companies respond to incidents within the city but would be less likely to be able to assist in the region at large. Because US&R responses in the state use a tiered system, if teams in another county need

[116] Interview with SEPA RTF US&R Subcommittee Leadership, July 2, 2025.
[117] Interview with SEPA RTF US&R Subcommittee Leadership, July 2, 2025.
[118] Interview with SEPA RTF US&R Subcommittee Leadership, July 2, 2025.

to be refreshed after the first operational period, Philadelphia US&R members would likely mobilize in the form of a PA-TF1 in-state deployment, not as Philadelphia County US&R.[119]

PFD Special Operations Command maintains an equipment vehicle that was once used by the regional element. The Philadelphia Fire Department Special Operations Captain maintains the equipment using regional funding or PEMA funding or grants as much as possible and maintains the vehicle through the City of Philadelphia Fleet Services. The equipment cache supports US&R operations including ropes, confined space and structural collapse. However, it has not been deployed in many years and is in need of updating.[120]

Funding

The SEPA RTF leadership has implemented a unique and effective process for distributing UASI/SHSP funds within the Task Force. The distribution is based on a competitive workgroup request process, followed by the allocation grant funds to each county. The Executive Board of the region, which consists of the public safety/emergency management directors from each county, develops priorities for the entire region. The regional US&R committee proposes to the Executive Board numerous funding requests which are meant to add capability to the region as a whole and are not targeted for any one particular team. The Executive Board then decides which projects, if any, are priorities for the region and funds those projects accordingly. County leaders across the region estimate that 25-33 percent of funding each year is reserved for regional workgroup and subcommittee projects while the remaining 67-75 percent of funding is allocated for county-based projects. Berks County is not a recipient of UASI funding, so they are a participant in the workgroups and subcommittees, but do not receive funds during the aforementioned allocation process. Berks County receives their allocation of SHSP funding directly and prioritizes projects at the county level.

County leaders across the region estimate that the US&R Subcommittee receives a combined $185,000 each year on average. In FY2024-2025, the Philadelphia area was eligible to receive $11,952,986 in UASI funds and $1,351,611 in SHSP funds for a combined total of $13,277,597, meaning US&R received approximately 1.1 percent of the total UASI/SHSP funds available in the region.[121] Berks County's US&R team, which is sponsored by Boyertown Area Fire & Rescue, has the ability to apply for a part of the approximately $225,000 available to Berks County from SHSP funds.[122]

It is important to note that while the SEPA region's US&R teams do not operate under the company structure followed by the other regions in the state, the existing teams are supported by the same HSGP and UASI funding that the other companies use. Beyond those federal funds, each county has made investments in their US&R teams in an attempt to fill gaps that are not adequately funded by those grant programs. In any potential restructuring of the in-state system, the SEPA region should be considered and supported in the same way as the other regions to ensure that its

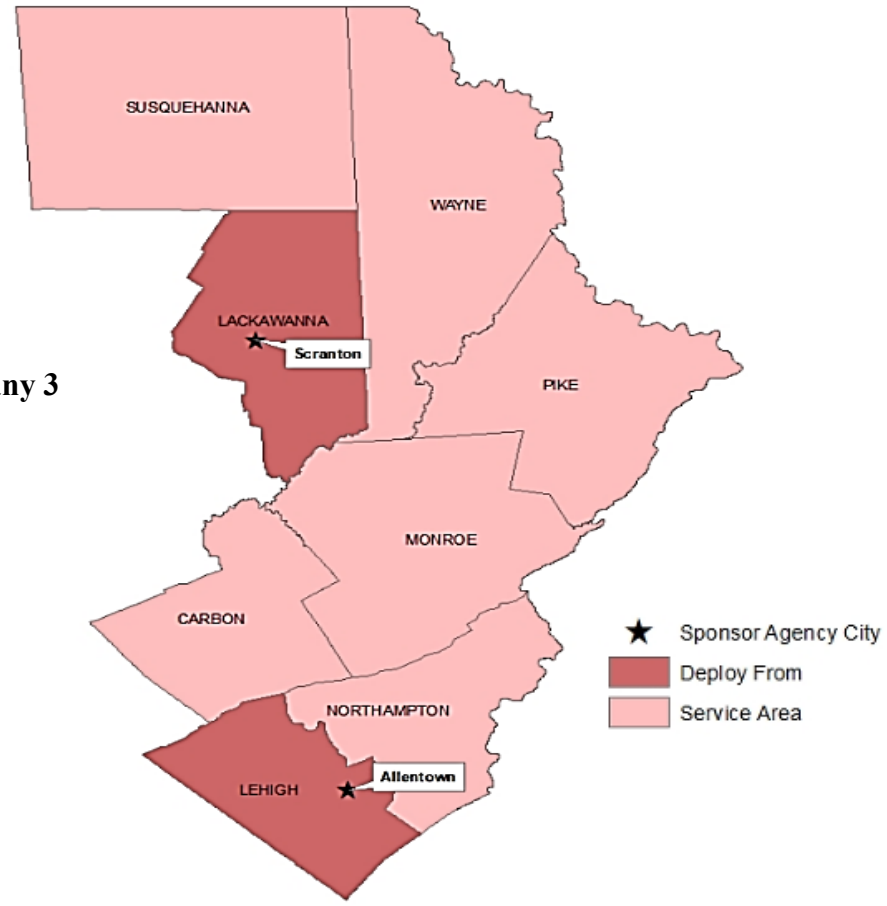
[119] Interview with SEPA RTF US&R Subcommittee Leadership, July 2, 2025.
[120] Ivan Lopez, e-mail message to Commission staff, April 2, 2025.
[121] PEMA by the Numbers 2025, Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 26, 2025.
[122] Interview with SEPA RTF US&R Subcommittee Leadership, July 2, 2025.

responders can continue to support their region in the case of incidents requiring US&R capabilities.[123]

Pennsylvania Company 3
(PA-CO3)

PA-CO3, also known as the Lehigh County Special Operations and City of Scranton Fire Department Technical Rescue, has a north component (PA-Company 3 North) in Scranton and a south component (PA-Company 3 South) in Lehigh County. It is sponsored by Lehigh County Emergency Management and the City of Scranton Fire Department. The group primarily responds from Lehigh and Lackawanna County and the service area covers Lehigh, Northampton, Monroe, Carbon, Lackawanna, Wayne, Pike, and Susquehanna counties.[124] PA-CO3 has been mission-ready since its inception and remains so today. Other participating agencies in PA-CO3 include the City of Allentown Fire Department, City of Allentown EMS, and Lehigh Valley Hospital Public Safety.[125]

Map 5
Pennsylvania Company 3
2025



Source: Maps created by Joint State with data gathered from *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025).

[123] Interview with SEPA RTF US&R Subcommittee Leadership, July 2, 2025.
[124] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 19-20.
[125] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 24.

Capabilities

Though the full PA-CO3 regional element is rarely deployed, the individuals that comprise the team are frequently utilized because of their expertise in various technical rescues like rope rescue, water rescue, trench rescues, and confined space rescues. Flooding is the most common threat that the region faces in search and rescue operations.[126] PA-CO3 is able to do preliminary damage assessment for rescue operations but does not have any structural engineers. PA-CO3 is able to mobilize within one hour for a rescue. For structural stabilization, the team possesses Paratech gold and gray struts (gold for heavy rigging and gray for lighter rigging) and a lumber cache. PA-CO3's medical capabilities come from the Lehigh Medical Unit, which provides two medical doctors and numerous paramedics. The team uses search cameras and a Delsar Listening Device for their search capabilities.[127]

The team has operations level hazmat capabilities, which entails:

- Assisting in controlling, and minimizing the spread, of the HazMat release
- Knowledge of defensive Hazmat techniques such as absorption, damming, diverting, vapor dispersion and suppression
- Experience in basic air monitoring
- Technical and mass decontamination
- Assisting with evacuation and victim rescue
- The establishing of hazard zones
- The preserving of evidence[128]

Training

PA-CO3 has 40 active qualified personnel on its team, with 25 rescue specialists and three technical search specialists. At least two qualified members hold each required position on the team. PA-CO3 uses NFPA and FEMA training standards.[129] The documentation for completed training for members is stored virtually in emergency reporting software and hard copies are also stored in filing cabinets. Members are trained to the same requirements as were required at the advent of the Pennsylvania in-state system. PA-CO3 leadership noted that PEMA used to cover specialist training through grants. This training is no longer covered through PEMA, though teams are still able to have training covered as an eligible expense through SHSP/UASI funding. PA-CO3 sends its members to Virginia Beach to train. Because of the costs associated with travel, however, leadership stated that if it were cost-effective again, they would much prefer to take these classes at Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC) or in other locations around the state. Additionally, there is no funding available to teams to support filling the space of an employee when they are unable to maintain their regular position due to being away at training. Leadership stated the agencies would benefit tremendously if they were reimbursed for personnel costs. PA-

[126] Interview with PA-CO3 Leadership, May 15, 2025.
[127] PA-CO3 Leadership, e-mail message to Commission staff, May 30, 2025.
[128] "A Guide to the Four Levels of Hazardous Materials (HazMat) Response," *Hazmat Nation*, accessed June 2, 2025, https://www.hazmatnation.com/a-guide-to-the-four-levels-of-hazardous-materials-hazmat-response/.
[129] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 20.

CO3 workers have workers' compensation and liability coverage through their home agencies, which is a cost that is shouldered by the home agencies rather than the regional element budget.[130]

Table 3
PA-CO3 Training Ratings
2025

Course	*1 being greatest - 5 being least needed*				
	1-Need to Achieve	**2**	**3-Need to Maintain**	**4**	**5-Least Need**
Leadership Course (such as AH Strike Team/Task Force Leader Course)	--	**X**	--	--	--
Program Management Course	--	**X**	--	--	--
Structural Collapse Technician Course	--	--	--	**X**	--
Technical Search Specialist Course	**X**	--	--	--	--
Logistics Specialist Course	--	--	**X**	--	--
Safety Officer Course	--	--	**X**	--	--
US&R Planning Team Course	--	--	**X**	--	--
Wide Area Search/GPS Awareness	--	--	--	**X**	--
Hazmat Specialist Course	--	--	**X**	--	--

Source: *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025).

When presented the list of training courses, PA-CO3 rated the Technical Search Specialist Course as a 1, or "need to achieve." The Leadership Course and Program Management Course were rated as a 2. The Logistics Specialist Course, Safety Officer Course, Hazmat Specialist Course, and US&R Planning Team Course were rated as 3, or "need to maintain," and the Structural Collapse Technician Course and Wide Area Search/GPS Awareness Course were rated at a 4. When asked to identify one course as most needed, PA-CO3 indicated that the Technical Search Program and the US&R Leadership Program were the top priorities.[131]

Equipment

PA-CO3 conducts an annual inventory of equipment stored by each of the agencies which includes information on the life cycle and condition of the equipment. PA-CO3 prides itself on proper equipment management and believes its system ensures that aging equipment is maintained to the highest possible standard and always ready for deployment if necessary.[132]

[130] Interview with PA-CO3 Leadership, May 15, 2025.
[131] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 21.
[132] Interview with PA-CO3 Leadership, May 15, 2025.

Table 4
PA-CO3 Equipment Status
2025

Equipment	Do not have	Broken or near end of life	Not required
Radios	--	**X**	--
Hazmat detection equipment	--	--	**X**
Radiation equipment	--	--	**X**
Shelter(s) for operations and life support	--	--	**X**
Logistics (generators, scene lights, air compressors, etc.)	--	**X**	--
Structural shoring equipment	--	**X**	--
Breaching/breaking tools (pneumatic, electric, hydraulic, gas)	--	**X**	--
Torch/welding tools	--	**X**	--
Air lifting bags and controls	--	**X**	--
Technical rope	--	--	**X**
Technical search equipment	--	**X**	--
Medical cache (patient care/general assessment)	--	--	**X**
Medical cache (pharmaceuticals)	--	--	**X**
Safety/sanitation items	--	--	**X**

Source: *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025).

When presented with PEMA's list of equipment, PA-CO3 listed radios, logistics (generators, scene lights/air compressors, etc.), structural shoring equipment, breaching/breaking tools, torches/welding tools, air lifting bags and controls, and technical search equipment as broken or at the end of life. Hazmat detection equipment, radiation equipment, shelter(s) for operations and life support, technical rope, safety/sanitation items and medical cache for patient care and pharmaceuticals were not required in the group's configuration. When asked to list its top three equipment needs in the next five years, PA-CO3 named prime movers/cache trailers/containers, technical search equipment, and rescue tools and equipment.[133]

When asked what categories of program management challenges the company faces that PEMA could assist with, PA-CO3 selected organizing (administrative manual, position descriptions, MoU's/sponsoring agency agreements, etc.) and equipping (inventory management, sustainment contracts, resource sharing agreements, sustainment processes, etc.).[134]

PA-CO3 leadership believed that a statewide oversight system in the Commonwealth could be helpful, as long as there was specific funding attached to it that did not come through the RTFs and could be appropriated directly to the elements. They also emphasized that there should be an advisory organization consisting of boots-on-the-ground members from the various regional teams to ensure proper representation from stakeholders that are familiar with the needs in the regions.

[133] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 23.
[134] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 23.

Leadership noted that funding in the past had followed periods of political interest in the need for such a rescue team prompted by events such as 9/11, but as these events grew further out of national focus, the funding for these teams decreased. The equipment used for these teams is expensive to purchase but also expensive to sustain, as is the required training and exercising of members' skills. Any new funding offered should be viewed through a lens of sustainment that can survive the rise and fall of certain threats and risk factors from the national imagination. An advisory organization composed of members with a depth of experience in US&R and an understanding of their regional and local needs could ensure that this is the case.[135]

Funding

PA-CO3 receives most of its funding from the sponsoring agencies. Because US&R competes with several other specialty teams and law enforcement for RTF funding, US&R is not highly prioritized and does not receive a significant amount of funding from the RTF. PA-CO3 cannot apply for grants from the Pennsylvania Fire Commissioner's Office because it does not have an FDID number.[136]

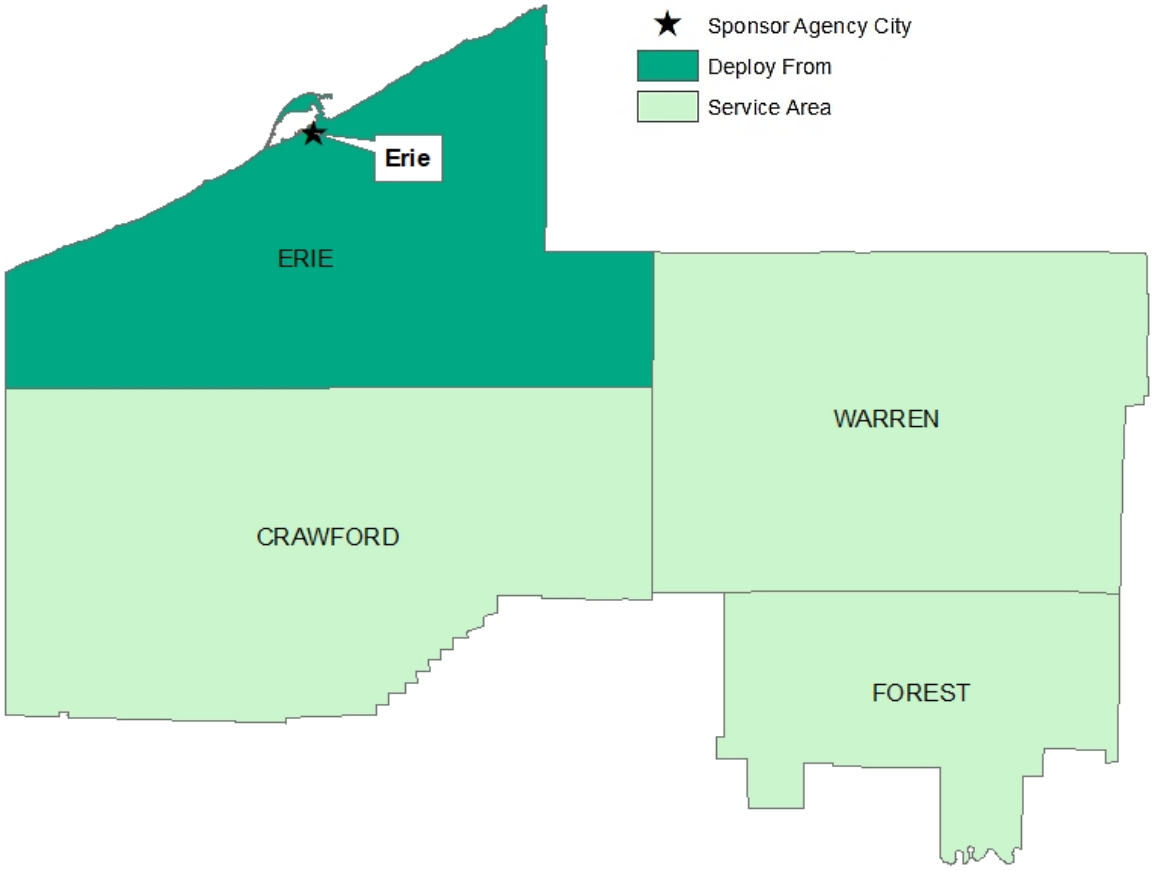
PA-CO3 leadership believed a proper and thorough needs assessment of the region should predate conversations about funding needs. After such an assessment, leadership would reinitialize the system to the goals that were identified within the needs assessment, then determine what sustainment funding for this configuration would cost. They believed this model should be followed for all teams to ensure the most efficient use of taxpayer dollars.[137] At the current configuration, team leadership estimated that they would need around $150,000 to $200,000 for a one-time cache recapitalization and then a lower amount annually to sustain the configuration going forward.

Pennsylvania Company 4
(PA-CO4)

PA-CO4 is sponsored by the Erie Fire Department and primarily responds from Erie County. The counties included in the response area are Erie, Crawford, Warren, and Forest.[138] Other sponsoring agencies include the Erie County Hazmat team and Erie County EMA.[139]

[135] Interview with PA-CO3 Leadership, May 15, 2025.
[136] Interview with PA-CO3 Leadership, May 15, 2025.
[137] Interview with PA-CO3 Leadership, May 15, 2025.
[138] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 25.
[139] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 30.

Map 6
PA-CO4
2025



Source: Maps created by Joint State with data gathered from *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025).

Capabilities

PA-CO4 has recently deployed to a structural collapse of a barn during a heavy snowstorm which still had livestock inside. It has been put on standby for potential collapse of a structure into a lake and has been put on standby by a local business while it had workers on top of a smokestack and no capabilities to rescue them if needed. The team has co-trained rope rescues and has been utilized at Wintergreen Gorge to rescue stranded hikers. Other building collapses have occurred within the region, but local responders determined there was no threat to life and the use of the regional team was not necessary. The area experiences frequent water rescues, but there are many water rescue teams in the region to take care of these incidents. The US&R team focuses resources on the cities with old buildings and potential for collapsed structures. Soon, a company will be doing a large sewer project in this region. Therefore, the team is focusing on trench training at the moment. Some PA-CO4 team members have hazmat technician training, but overall, the team relies on the local hazmat team to provide this capability when necessary.[140] Shortly before the

[140] Interview with PA-CO4 Leadership, May 19, 2025.

release of the report, PA-CO4 also secured 15 additional members when a regional swift water rescue team applied for membership, therefore PA-CO4 will soon also have swift water rescue capabilities.[141]

Training

In the PEMA needs assessment, PA-CO4 reported having 15 trained and qualified personnel. The element reported that there were no qualified rescue specialists or technical search specialists and that it did not have two qualified people for each required position on the team. However, since the completion of the needs assessment, the membership qualifications have changed.[142] PA-CO4 stated that it has two individuals trained in both rescue and search capabilities, at least ten members trained as rescue specialists with technical training and credentials in rope rescue and confined space rescue. Eight of these specialists recently completed a technical collapse class that included Delsar and seismic training and are awaiting their results. Once they are certified, those eight will be technical search specialists.[143]

PA-CO4 is building a trench simulator to train members in trench rescue, awareness, and operations. As of the writing of this report, members are in training for structural collapse. Having completed the awareness and operations portion of training, the members will soon complete the technician portion. Members are also trained on confined space rescue. The team is currently working on digitizing administration and training manuals but currently stores all documentation as physical files. A member would not be deployed to an incident or would not perform a function that they are not trained to perform. The team is working on creating a "passport" for each member with their medical information and their certification levels listed so it can streamline the deployment process. The local training provided to its members is a significant benefit because it allows members to not take vacation days and travel away from their families for 10 days at a time to receive training at the Virginia Beach Fire Training Center. PA-CO4 uses the NFPA 1006 training standards for their personnel, but team leadership indicated that with changing standards, it is difficult to keep track of all changes that are made. PA-CO4 leadership believed more direct PEMA involvement and clear communications of training expectations would be a benefit to their team and the whole in-state system.[144]

Team leadership noted the expensive nature of these training courses, saying that a structural collapse course was around $15,000 per person which does not include travel, lodging, or per diem, the medical specialist class was $12,000 a person, and $176,000 for 32 members to take a 100-hour course at HACC over the course of 3 weekends.[145] These reported course costs were significantly higher than other estimates offered by other teams across the state.

[141] PA-CO4 Leadership, e-mail message to Commission staff, June 25, 2025.
[142] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 26.
[143] PA-CO4 Leadership, e-mail message to Commission Staff, June 23, 2025.
[144] Interview with PA-CO4 Leadership, May 19, 2025.
[145] Interview with PA-CO4 Leadership, May 19, 2025.

Table 5
PA-CO4 Training Ratings
2025

Course	*1 being greatest - 5 being least needed*				
	1-Need to Achieve	**2**	**3-Need to Maintain**	**4**	**5-Least Need**
Leadership Course (such as AH Strike Team/Task Force Leader Course)	**X**	--	**--**	--	--
Program Management Course	**X**	--	**--**	--	--
Structural Collapse Technician Course	--	--	**X**	--	--
Technical Search Specialist Course	**X**	--	--	--	--
Logistics Specialist Course	**X**	--	--	--	--
Safety Officer Course	--	--	**X**	--	--
US&R Planning Team Course	**X**	--	--	--	--
Wide Area Search/GPS Awareness	--	--	**X**	--	--
Hazmat Specialist Course	--	--	**X**	--	--

Source: *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025).

When asked to rate the training level, the Leadership Course, Program Management Course, Technical Search Specialist Course, Logistics Specialist Course, and US&R Planning Team Course were rated as 1, or "need to achieve." The Structural Collapse Technician Course, Safety Officer Course, Wide Area Search/GPS Awareness, and Hazmat Specialist Course were rated at 3, or "need to maintain." When asked to identify the most important training need, PA-CO4 named Trench and Structural Collapse Technical Courses.[146]

Equipment

PA-CO4 has geared its cache toward the most common threats and risks in the region, investing in structural collapse equipment and rope rescue equipment. The company has ropes, tripods, buddy breathers, and new search camera equipment that is operated by an iPad. Pneumatic tools, batteries, and wheels for equipment are expensive to maintain as well. Equipment is assessed with an annual inspection at which point the team identifies any faulty equipment that needs to be maintained or replaced. Recent purchases are accounted for in a spreadsheet and the team is in the process of digitizing the rest of its inventory. Similar to their concerns about training requirements, the team leadership felt it would be helpful if a list of necessary equipment was provided by PEMA and perhaps even a list of vendors to purchase it from. The team leadership was able to collaborate with a business in the area to provide cold weather gear to the team because they were unable to get funding for uniforms for the team members.[147]

[146] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 27.
[147] Interview with PA-CO4 Leadership, May 19, 2025.

Table 6
PA-CO4 Equipment Status
2025

Equipment	Do not have	Broken or near end of life	Not required
Radios	--	--	X
Hazmat detection equipment	--	--	X
Radiation equipment	--	--	X
Shelter(s) for operations and life support	--	--	X
Logistics (generators, scene lights, air compressors, etc.)	--	X	--
Structural shoring equipment	--	X	--
Breaching/breaking tools (pneumatic, electric, hydraulic, gas)	--	--	X
Torch/welding tools	--	--	X
Air lifting bags and controls	--	--	X
Technical rope	--	--	X
Technical search equipment	--	--	X
Medical cache (patient care/general assessment)	X	--	--
Medical cache (pharmaceuticals)	X	--	--
Safety/sanitation items	X	--	--

Source: *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025).

When asked by PEMA to indicate equipment that the company lacked or equipment that was broken or at the end of its life, PA-CO4 indicated that it did not have a medical cache for patient care/general assessment and pharmaceutical, and safety and sanitation items. PA-CO4 stated that logistical equipment like generators, scene lights, air compressors, and structural shoring equipment were broken or at end of life. It stated that radios, hazmat detection equipment, radiation equipment, shelter(s) for operations and life support, breaching/breaking tools, torches/welding tools, air lifting bags and controls, technical rope, and technical search equipment were not required in their current configuration. When asked what the top three equipment needs would be in the next five years, PA-CO4 listed support equipment, shoring tools/kits, and technical search equipment.[148]

When asked about the potential of an oversight framework for US&R in the Commonwealth, team leadership were supportive, stating that clear and proper guidelines that they would be required to follow would allow them to have a clear capability target and goal moving forward as they grow their team.[149]

[148] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 28-29.
[149] Interview with PA-CO4 Leadership, May 19, 2025.

When asked what categories of program management challenges the company faces that PEMA could assist with, PA-CO4 selected all categories:

- Planning (SOP/SOG, manuals, dispatch processes, CONOPs, etc.)
- Organizing (administrative manual, position descriptions, MOU's/sponsoring agency agreements, etc.)
- Equipping (inventory management, sustainment contracts, resource sharing agreements, sustainment processes, etc.)
- Training (currency training, position task books, knowledge management, etc.)
- Exercising (canned scenarios, exercise planning teams, evaluators, evaluation sheets, etc.)[150]

Team leadership also emphasized the barriers they faced due to workers' compensation differences between different employers. Some employers were willing to cover members while being deployed as well as while training, but other employers would not sign MOUs to cover the members while they were training. They wondered if the state could provide blanket coverage for members on the team, knowing that workers' compensation is expensive to provide and removing this burden could allow them to finance other necessary aspects of their work. This can also hinder recruitment for these regional teams because prospective members may be interested in joining but unwilling to risk their lives and wellbeing without a good workers' compensation plan. One member of team leadership suggested the legislature look into the State Workers Insurance Fund (SWIF) as an option for covering members.[151]

Funding

Much of the funding utilized by PA-CO4 derives from local and private funding. Most equipment, including all three trucks, is stored in, and maintained by, the City of Erie Fire Department. The city maintains a fund for the mechanics to maintain the equipment and has just recently replaced the batteries on the trucks. To cut costs where possible, one member of PA-CO4 performs all the small engine repair work on their equipment at no charge. Perry Hi-Way and Hose Company does not contribute any substantial funding for equipment; however, their funding and support for the training grounds used by PA-CO4 is exhaustive.[152]

PA-CO4 has been one of the more successful teams in the state in securing private funding for their efforts. An element leader with CO4 has gone door-to-door in his community seeking funding from local businesses to assist the team in purchasing a machine which would help move concrete. By helping the local businesses realize the importance the machine would have to the community, he was able to raise $14,000 in just one week. The team has also been able to receive other materials, equipment, and funding from local businesses on an ad hoc basis.[153]

---

[150] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 29.
[151] Interview with PA-CO4 Leadership, May 19, 2025.
[152] Interview with PA-CO4 Leadership, May 19, 2025.
[153] Interview with PA-CO4 Leadership, May 19, 2025.

PA-CO4 stated that it has the opportunity to purchase a seven-year-old communications tower from a local person for $100, but with the costs of transportation, crane installation, and the concrete base, it is waiting to purchase the tower until it can secure state funding.[154]

The city has used SHSP funding to purchase and maintain some collapsed structure equipment and training such as a crane, rubble pile, and trenches. With federal SHSP funding diminishing over the years, PA-CO4 estimates that each of the last several years, the RTF has received a 9 to 12 percent reduction in funding leading to US&R's share of that funding reducing at that rate if not greater.[155]

The company applied for an Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) through FEMA for the purchase of a Paratech trailer which it could use to store equipment on their training grounds; however, it was denied the grant.[156]

PA-CO4 maintains their own training and exercise facility for US&R in Erie. Funding for building the facility and its exercise pad was partially provided by SHSP funding, the RTF, and other private funding solicited by an element leader. The facility is fully built and operational; however, it is in need of funding to maintain the grounds and the training equipment. Most of their training can be done in an economically feasible manner in Erie; however, the team travels to Bucks County Community College to complete some specialized training.[157]

Due to the company's limited direct funding sources, it does not maintain any formal budget. PA-CO4 is unable to provide an estimated figure for how much it would cost for them to have the adequate equipment at their NIMS typing level; however, leadership believe with an itemized equipment list, they could determine needed one-time funding as well as sustainment funding. The team would like to have a list provided by PEMA which could show exactly what equipment is needed, the costs of each piece of equipment, and the vendors whom the team is allowed to procure that equipment from.[158]

Some of the personnel on PA-CO4 are members of paid fire departments which assist in paying for their workers' compensation and liability insurance. Other personnel must pay for workers' compensation and liability insurance out of their own pocket. Additionally, some departments prevent their employees from joining the US&R team precisely because of the high cost of workers' compensation and liability insurance for their members. PA-CO4 leadership expressed a desire for their personnel to be a part of the State Workers' Insurance Fund (SWIF) and be given other forms of protection, like with Act 46 of 2011 which designated cancer caused by certain carcinogens as an occupational disease for firefighters under the Workers' Compensation Act.[159] These changes, they believe, would help in reducing costs on local departments and would increase participation and retention.[160]

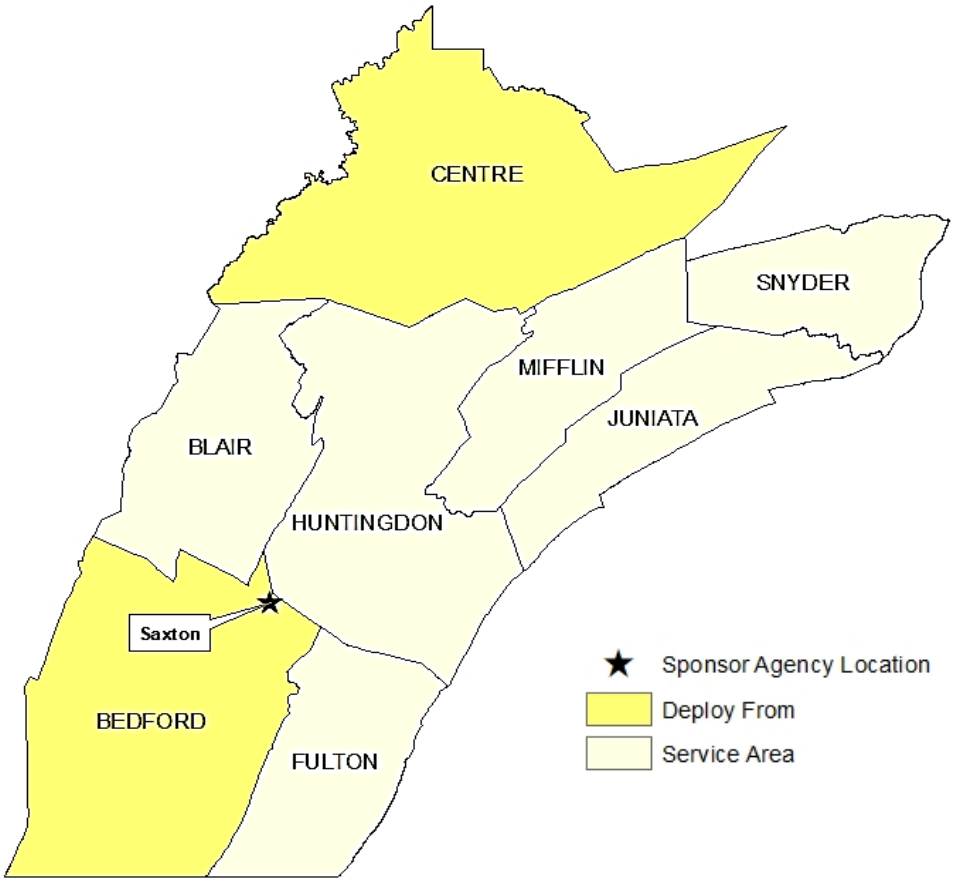
---

[154] Interview with PA-CO4 Leadership, May 19, 2025.
[155] Interview with PA-CO4 Leadership, May 19, 2025.
[156] Interview with PA-CO4 Leadership, May 19, 2025.
[157] Interview with PA-CO4 Leadership, May 19, 2025.
[158] Interview with PA-CO4 Leadership, May 19, 2025.
[159] Act of June 2, 1915 (P.L.736, No.338), § 301(f); 77 P.S. § 414; known as the Workers' Compensation Act, as amended by the act of July 7, 2011 (P.L.251, No. 46).
[160] Interview with PA-CO4 Leadership, May 19, 2025.

Pennsylvania Company 5
(PA-CO5)

PA-CO5 is sponsored by the Saxton Volunteer Fire Company and primarily responds from Bedford and Centre counties. Bedford, Blair, Centre, Fulton, Huntingdon, Mifflin, Juniata, and Snyder counties are covered by PA-CO5. Partnering agencies include Altoona Mobile Emergency Department (AMED) EMS, and Altoona and Centre County Hazmat.[161] Many of the members are volunteers from the Saxton Fire Department, with additional members from Centre Region Fire, Williamsburg Volunteer Fire Company, and Alpha Fire Company.[162]

Map 7
PA-CO5
2025



Source: Maps created by Joint State with data gathered from *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025).

[161] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 33.
[162] Interview with PA-CO5 Leadership, April 15, 2025; PA Legislative USAR Information, provided by PA-CO5 leadership.

Since its inception, PA-CO5 has had seven deployments. The team responded to an incident in Clearfield County where a tractor trailer had driven into a house and the driver was trapped and the house was partially collapsed. In Tyrone, Blair County, the team performed shoring operations when a vehicle crashed into a house and showed structural collapse indications. In Blue Knob, Blair County, the team performed shoring operations in a house after a basement collapsed due to flooding. In Saxton, Bedford County, a vehicle crashed into the milking parlor of a dairy barn, requiring shoring operations. In Wyoming County, PA-CO5 responded to a PEMA mobilization in 2011 for a major flooding event caused various incidents and required the team to perform search operations and damage assessment. A Washington County building collapse incited a region-to-region request for PA-CO5's capabilities of shoring, patient access, packaging, and removal. Several other regional responses were for structural collapses due to severe weather or vehicles colliding with houses.[163]

Capabilities

PA-CO5 is a NIMS Type 4 Search and Rescue Task Force, with the ability to complete structural collapse operations, high and low angle rope rescues, trench rescue, confined space rescue, water rescue, wilderness search and rescue, heavy vehicle rescue, and animal rescue.[164]

PA-CO5 has the capability to conduct damage assessment, however, this capability has been used infrequently. The local deployments are typically for small building collapses and do not require damage assessment capabilities.[165]

Since PA-CO5 relies on volunteer staffing, members' vacations or conflicting work schedules can strain mission readiness; however, the team has never failed on a mission. The team has enough members to roster in an appropriate time frame and deploy. A Peterbilt box truck is stored in State College, but most of the other equipment is stored at the Saxon Fire Department, making that department the muster location.[166] The Peterbilt box truck was recently moved to Centre Region Fire in State College. This truck carries most of the heavy equipment cache. Centre Region provides paid staffing that are US&R team members, so this helps assure the truck is readily deployed.[167]

Medical capabilities are provided by AMED, which maintains its staff and cache of medical equipment independently. These members are salaried employees of AMED, as opposed to the volunteer force from the other agencies.[168]

PA-CO5 has two large structural collapse pneumatic shoring caches, multiple search cams, and the Delsar seismic/acoustic audio search systems.[169]

---

[163] PA Legislative USAR Information.
[164] PA Legislative USAR Information.
[165] Interview with PA-CO5 Leadership, April 15, 2025.
[166] Interview with PA-CO5 Leadership, April 15, 2025.
[167] PA-CO5 Leadership, e-mail message to Commission staff, May 22, 2025.
[168] Interview with PA-CO5 Leadership, April 15, 2025.
[169] Interview with PA-CO5 Leadership, April 15, 2025.

Training

In the PEMA needs assessment, the team reported that it had 18 active personnel, with 16 Rescue Specialists and 16 Technical Search Specialists.[170] Additional members fulfill the requirements for a Type 4 Task Force, including the Medical Specialist and other planning, logistics, and support personnel.[171] PA-CO5 uses FEMA training standards. Many members are cross-trained for multiple positions. PA-CO5 has two qualified personnel for each required position on the team.[172] All current members of the team have the proper training, but regional US&R leadership noted that the challenge is attracting newer younger members and getting them the proper training.[173] All certificates are filed for each member, and if a member does not have the proper qualifications they will no longer be a member of the team.[174]

PA-CO5 holds a training session each month and rotates the training among the participating agencies to practice different US&R technical skills. It also holds an annual readiness exercise, which will be a joint exercise with the regional water rescue teams in October 2025.[175]

Table 7
PA-CO5 Training Ratings
2025

Course	*1 being greatest - 5 being least needed*				
	1-Need to Achieve	**2**	**3-Need to Maintain**	**4**	**5-Least Need**
Leadership Course (such as AH Strike Team/Task Force Leader Course)	--	--	**X**	--	--
Program Management Course	**X**	--	--	--	--
Structural Collapse Technician Course	**X**	--	--	--	--
Technical Search Specialist Course	**X**	--	--	--	--
Logistics Specialist Course	**X**	--	--	--	--
Safety Officer Course	**X**	--	--	--	--
US&R Planning Team Course	**X**	--	--	--	--
Wide Area Search/GPS Awareness	**X**	--	--	--	--
Hazmat Specialist Course	**X**	--	--	--	--

Source: *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025).

[170] PA Legislative USAR Information.
[171] PA-CO5 Leadership, e-mail message to Commission Staff, June 24, 2025.
[172] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 33.
[173] Interview with PA-CO5 Leadership, April 15, 2025.
[174] Interview with PA-CO5 Leadership, April 15, 2025.
[175] PA Legislative USAR Information.

When responding to the PEMA needs assessment, PA-CO5 indicated that it needed to achieve training in all categories except for the Leadership Course, which it rated as "need to maintain."[176] The team needs leadership training for new members.[177] Discussion with regional US&R leadership indicated that this rating was based on the need for new members to receive this training, rather than the training received by the current members. The biggest current need for this region is the need for newer, younger members. The region is working to promote recruitment projects that include training sessions for participants.[178] The cost of conducting this training is an obstacle for this region, with a contributing factor being the travel to a location at Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC) for training classes.[179] PA-CO5 would like to add training classes capability to the Centre County Public Safety, but have not yet been able to find a funding mechanism to support the necessary facility improvements.[180] When asked for the most critical training course need, PA-CO5 listed Rescue Specialist, Technical Search Specialist, and Wide Area Search.[181]

Equipment

PA-CO5 maintains a spreadsheet with replacement dates to keep track of the equipment inventory. The team does frequent tool labs where every piece of equipment is taken out and tested. There are between 700 and 1,000 items listed in the inventory.[182]

PA-CO5 provided a list of its deployment apparatus and equipment movers:

- Company 5 Kenworth Box Truck/Lift Gate
- Company 5 Prime Mover GMC Crew Cab, 4WD Dual Wheel Pickup with Rescue Style Box
- Saxton Fire Company Rescue Engine
- Saxton Fire Company Technical Rescue Trailer
- Saxton Fire Company Water Rescue Trailer
- AMED – ALS Response Vehicle
- John Deere Gator ATV
- Equipment Vaults[183]

[176] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 33.
[177] PA-CO5 Leadership, e-mail message to Commission staff, May 22, 2025.
[178] Interview with PA-CO5 Leadership, April 15, 2025.
[179] Interview with PA-CO5 Leadership, April 15, 2025.
[180] PA Legislative USAR information.
[181] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 33.
[182] Interview with PA-CO5 Leadership, April 15, 2025.
[183] PA Legislative USAR information.

PA-CO5 also provided a generalized list of its equipment inventory as of April 2025.

- 4 Gas Meters
- SCBA
- Hand Held GPS
- PAPRs
- Rad Detectors
- LEVEL A, B & C Suits
- Field Kits
- Air Cart
- Building Marking Kits
- Cascade System
- Search Cam 3000
- EMS Kits
- Search Cam Mongoose
- Portable O2
- Delsar Victim Locator
- AED
- Core Drill
- Yates Spec Paks
- Stanley Hydraulic System/Breakers & Saws
- LSPs
- Hilti Breakers & Hammer Drills
- Skeds
- Concrete Saws
- Stokes
- Metal Saws
- 1000” Life Line
- Cutting Torches, Slice Pak & Petrogen Cutting System
- Rope Hardware & Haul Systems
- Rebar Cutters
- Webbing & Accessory Cord
- 2 - Air Shore USAR Kits
- Tripods
- 2 - Air Shore A Frame & Gantry Kits
- Theodolite Station
- Air Shore Heavy Duty Raker Rails
- Hammers and Palm Nailers
- Air Compressor & Nail Guns
- Table Saws/Cutting Station
- Slings, Collars and Shackles
- Wet Suits
- Confined Space Tripods
- PFDs
- Portable Blowers & Heaters
- 6x6s & 4x4s
- Air Shore Advanced Level Trench Kit and Paratech Intermediate Trench Kit
- Shovels & Buckets
- Shore Form Trench Panels & Ground Pads
- Portable Pumps
- Air Knife
- Air Bags
- Hurst Hydraulic Rescue System/Spreaders, Cutters, Rams & Accessories
- Generators/Lighting[184]

[184] PA Legislative USAR Information.

Table 8
PA-CO5 Equipment Status
2025

Equipment	Do not have	Broken or near end of life	Not required
Radios	--	X	--
Hazmat detection equipment	--	X	--
Radiation equipment	--	--	X
Shelter(s) for operations and life support	--	--	X
Logistics (generators, scene lights, air compressors, etc.)	--	--	X
Structural shoring equipment	X	--	--
Breaching/breaking tools (pneumatic, electric, hydraulic, gas)	--	--	X
Torch/welding tools	--	X	--
Air lifting bags and controls	X	--	--
Technical rope	X	--	--
Technical search equipment	--	--	X
Medical cache (patient care/general assessment)	--	X	--
Medical cache (pharmaceuticals)	--	X	--
Safety/sanitation items	--	X	--

Source: *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025).

When asked by PEMA to indicate equipment that it did not have or equipment that was broken or at the end of its life, PA-CO5 responded that it did not have structural shoring equipment, air lifting bags and controls, and technical rope. However, a more updated inventory completed for this report did find that the team had two large structural collapse pneumatic shoring caches. Radios, hazmat detection equipment, torches/welding tools, medical caches for patient care/general assessment and pharmaceuticals, and safety/sanitation items were either broken or at end of life. Radiation equipment, shelter(s) for operations and life support, logistics, breaching/breaking tools, and technical search equipment were not required. When asked to list the top three equipment needs in the next five years, PA-CO5 listed communication equipment and rescue tools.[185]

When asked what program management support PEMA could provide, PA-CO5 selected all categories:

- Planning (SOP/SOG, manuals, dispatch processes, CONOPs, etc.)
- Organizing (administrative manual, position descriptions, MoU's/sponsoring agency agreements, etc.)

[185] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 34-35.

- Equipping (inventory management, sustainment contracts, resource sharing agreements, sustainment processes, etc.)
- Training (currency training, position task books, knowledge management, etc.)
- Exercising (canned scenarios, exercise planning teams, evaluators, evaluation sheets, etc.)[186]

Funding

PA-CO5 relies on local fire departments to assume costs for personal protective equipment, equipment maintenance, insurance, and inspections. The salaried fire department in Centre Region assumes all the storage costs for the team's trucks and trailers. Some equipment is still stored with Saxton Volunteer Fire Department, but that storage cost is not significant. To reduce costs related to the medical cache upkeep, AMED EMS utilizes and rotates the medical equipment so there is no waste. PA-CO5 has not received any funding or donations from any private organizations nor from the state. PA-CO5 does receive SHSP funding from their regional task force, which prioritizes US&R and water rescue based on their Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA), with water rescue being the most frequently used asset.[187]

PA-CO5 is currently revitalizing their equipment with present SHSP funding; however, a complete assessment of needs has shown that it needs $65,000 for the closure of gaps. PA-CO5 does not believe that it will be able to receive all the needed funding from the regional task force. For 2025, PA-CO5 is requesting $35,651.78 from their task force to replace and update equipment at the end of its lifecycle. The SCMRTF just approved HSGP funds for the $35,651.71 for grant year 2024.[188]

The sponsoring agency currently spends approximately $3,000 per year on vehicle inspections, maintenance, fuel, and insurance. Additionally, tires are replaced every five years at an average cost of $3,000. Consumables used at training and exercises are generally replaced through the SCMRTF training budget. SHSP funding is also used to support their annual readiness exercise in conjunction with other teams under SCMRTF.[189]

PA-CO5's most significant concern is for capability to be added to the Centre County Public Safety Training Center for training new members. The facility does not have a rubble pile or a tunnel, and PA-CO5 has been unable to find a funding mechanism for the needed facility improvement. Harrisburg Area Community College offers the required classes, but they can be costly and difficult to schedule due to significant demand. Additionally, classes in Harrisburg require some members to leave their family for a few weeks and can bring substantial travel costs compared to a class which can be conducted in their region. There have been some concerns about the backfill for pay statewide; however, all PA-CO5 members have MOUs discussing their pay and backfill pay is not a concern.[190]

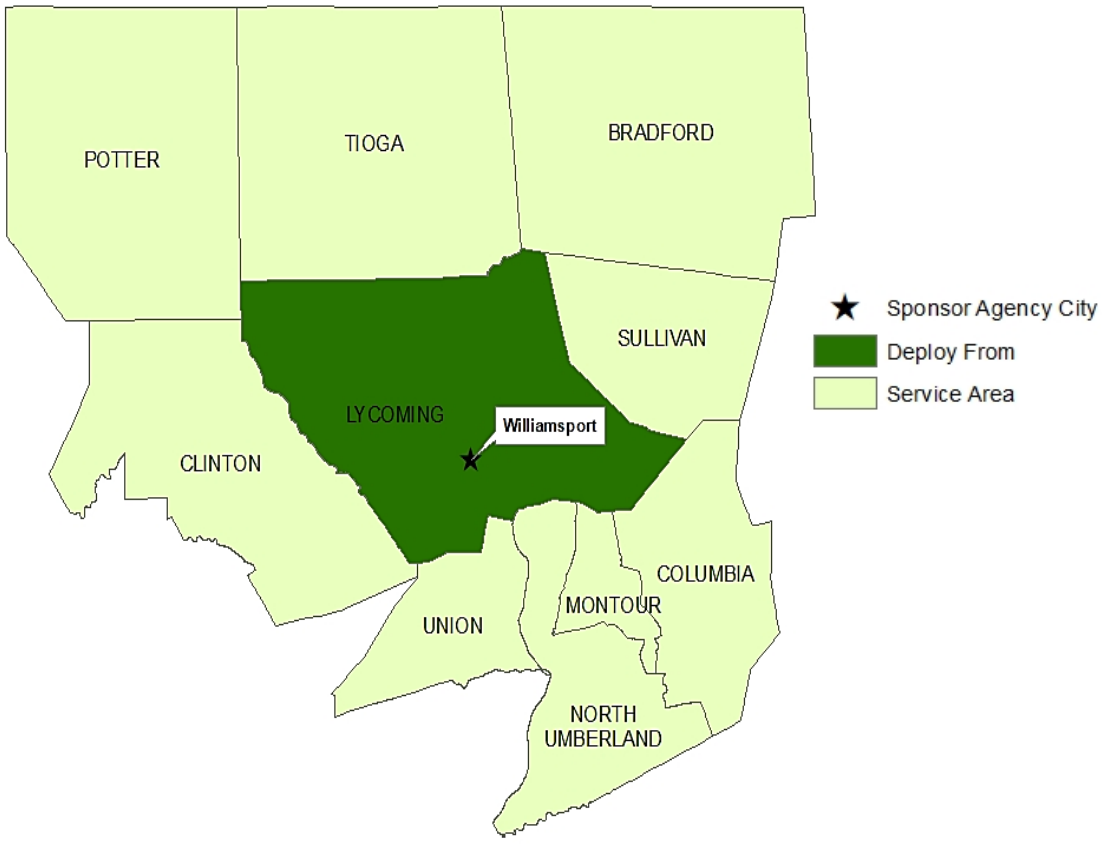
---

[186] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 41.
[187] Interview with PA-CO5 Leadership, April 15, 2025.
[188] PA-CO5 Leadership, e-mail message to Commission staff, May 22, 2025.
[189] Interview with PA-CO5 Leadership, April 15, 2025.
[190] Interview with PA-CO5 Leadership, April 15, 2025.

Pennsylvania Company 6
(PA-CO6)

PA-CO6 is sponsored by the Williamsport Bureau of Fire and primarily responds out of Lycoming County. PA-CO6 had been PA-SQ2 until there was enough interest in the region to expand their element to a company level.[191] The primary response area includes Lycoming, Clinton, Tioga, Potter, Sullivan, Bradford, Union, Montour, Columbia, and Northumberland counties.[192] Other supporting agencies for PA-CO6 include Montgomery Volunteer Fire Company (VFC), Old Lycoming VFC, Duboistown VFC, Citizens Hose Company, and William Cameron Engine Company.[193] The medical professionals come from Greater Valley EMS, Bradford County EMS, and Jersey Shore EMS, and UPMC Williamsport.[194]

Map 8
Pennsylvania Company 6
2025



Source: Maps created by Joint State with data gathered from *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025).

[191] Interview with PA-CO6 Leadership, May 2, 2025.
[192] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 38.
[193] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 42.
[194] Interview with PA-CO6 Leadership, May 2, 2025.

PA-CO6 has 30 active qualified personnel, with six rescue specialists and five technical search specialists. It has at least two qualified personnel for each required position on their team.[195] Leadership approximated that the personnel are probably split halfway between career firefighters/EMS and volunteer.[196]

PA-CO6 leadership explained that US&R responses in their region are arranged as Task Force 80, which includes members at the technician, operation, and awareness level. Official PA-CO6 members are technicians and are the mostly highly qualified members in the region.[197] Operations level members have the proper training but may not have as much experience as the technicians. Awareness level members are essentially extra hands who can carry dirt or help construct shores. Technician level members supervise others when responding to regional calls. There should be two technicians on all regional or local deployments.[198]

Capabilities

PA-CO6 is well-versed in water and rope rescue and are currently improving capabilities in confined space rescue, though such rescues are not often necessary in their region. It would like to refresh trench rescue and confined space equipment, which is growing dated and is difficult to find replacement parts for necessary maintenance.[199] It has operations-level hazmat capabilities and is supporting a towing company that is in the process of receiving credentials from PEMA to become a formal hazmat team by providing resources and equipment to this team.[200] PA-CO6 characterized its structural collapse capabilities as light structural collapse capabilities. It has struts and has shored up barn or wall collapses over the years to rescue individuals when necessary. When asked about how the region's threat profile plays into their preparedness and capabilities, PA-CO6 leadership stated that water rescue and rope rescue are the most important due to increased occurrences of flooding and stranded hikers in the rural areas. Trench rescue is also necessary due to the amount of construction and gas lines being installed in the region. Leadership believed that different regions would have different US&R priorities based on their regional profile and that the regions should have the flexibility to adjust their priorities based on their risk profiles.[201]

Because of its rural nature, this region sees more water rescue and rope rescue for stranded hikers than structural collapses. However, the Little League World Series, an international event with around 375,000 visitors over the two weeks of the tournaments is hosted in Williamsport, the same city as the sponsoring fire department for PA-CO6.[202] PA-CO6 leadership stated that the team used to be involved in support for the event and were available for decontamination operations, however as the threat of a weapons of mass destruction (WMD) or Chemical, Biological,

---

[195] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 38.
[196] Interview with PA-CO6 Leadership, May 2, 2025.
[197] Interview with PA-CO6 Leadership, May 2, 2025.
[198] Interview with PA-CO6 Leadership, May 2, 2025.
[199] PA-CO6 Leadership, E-mail message to Commission Staff, June 18, 2025.
[200] PA-CO6 Leadership, E-mail message to Commission Staff, June 18, 2025.
[201] Interview with PA-CO6 Leadership, May 2, 2025.
[202] John Beauge, "Little League World Championship Game Had the Most TV Viewers Since 2015," *Pennlive*, last modified August 27, 2024, https://www.pennlive.com/little-league-world-series/2024/08/little-league-world-championship-game-had-the-most-tv-viewers-since-2015.html.

Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) incident decreased, PA-CO6's support has been phased out.[203] This support was used as a training event for teams across the Commonwealth, but has not been used as such for over a decade. These functions are now provided by the National Guard's CERFP and CST teams.[204]

Training

PA-CO6 uses FEMA and local training standards for their members. PA-CO6 noted that its members have difficulty signing up for training offered at HACC in Harrisburg. The classes are often full before the members have time to register. Additionally, traveling for training and spending days or weeks away from their family is a difficult commitment for volunteer firefighters. PA-CO6 covers the cost of the training but does not pay for the members' time. They must use vacation time to participate in training. Therefore, PA-CO6 does regular local training. There are enough state-certified instructors in the region that the team is able to drill regularly within their region. The team will soon be drilling for rope rescue, water rescue, medical rescue, etc.[205] PA-CO6 leadership keeps hard copies of the certifications of members in Williamsport and also stores them in a database.[206]

Table 9
PA-CO6 Training Ratings
2025

Course	*1 being greatest - 5 being least needed*				
	1-Need to Achieve	**2**	**3-Need to Maintain**	**4**	**5-Least Need**
Leadership Course (such as AH Strike Team/Task Force Leader Course)	--	X	--	--	--
Program Management Course	X	--	--	--	--
Structural Collapse Technician Course	--	X	--	--	--
Technical Search Specialist Course	X	--	--	--	--
Logistics Specialist Course	X	--	--	--	--
Safety Officer Course	--	--	X	--	--
US&R Planning Team Course	X	--	--	--	--
Wide Area Search/GPS Awareness	X	--	--	--	--
Hazmat Specialist Course	--	--	X	--	--

Source: *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025).

[203] Interview with PA-CO6 Leadership, May 2, 2025.
[204] Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission Staff, June 19, 2025.
[205] Interview with PA-CO6 Leadership, May 2, 2025.
[206] Interview with PA-CO6 Leadership, May 2, 2025.

When asked to rate their training level on various courses, the Program Management Course, Technical Search Specialist Course, Logistics Specialist Course, US&R Team Planning Course, and Wide Area Search/GPS Awareness Course were rated as 1, or "need to achieve." The Leadership Course and Structural Collapse Technician Course were rated at 2, and the Safety Officer Course and Hazmat Specialist Course were rated as 3, or need to maintain. When asked for their most critical training need, PA-CO6 responded with Technical Search and Rescue Specialist Courses, while noting that realistically, all training was a critical need due to the funding required and the limited availability of the classes.[207]

Equipment

The majority of PA-CO6's equipment is housed in a Peterbilt Rescue Truck in Williamsport.[208] The current spreadsheet with equipment information is not regularly updated, however PA-CO6 leadership updated the information and provided it to JSGC staff:

- Search Cam 3000
- Petrogen system
- Stihl chop saw
- Stihl chain saw
- Air Arc
- Stanley system
- Air knife
- Tripod
- PAPR's for HAZMAT
- Rebar cutters
- Cordless drills
- Western Shelter
- How water heater
- Heater for shelter
- Various struts for structural collapse
- Air shores
- Air compressor
- Cutting station
- Circular saws
- Honda generators
- 3000 kw generator
- 34 portable radio's (VHF, UHF, 800 MGH)
- 6 mobile radios
- Sked board
- Stokes basket
- Reeves litter
- Paratec air bags
- DECON tent
- Rollers for non- ambulatory patients
- Sawzall's
- Hammers
- Pneumatic nail gun
- A/C unit for western shelter
- 2500' of life safety rope
- Pulleys, ascenders, carabineers, racks, misc.
- Rope rescue equipment
- Helmets
- BDU Uniforms
- 4 and 5 Gas meters
- Hilti tool
- Concrete saw
- Core drill[209]

[207] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 39.
[208] Interview with PA-CO6 Leadership, May 2, 2025.
[209] PA-CO6 Leadership, e-mail message to Commission staff, May 16, 2025.

Table 10
PA-CO6 Equipment Status
2025

Equipment	Do not have	Broken or near end of life	Not required
Radios	--	**X**	--
Hazmat detection equipment	--	**X**	--
Radiation equipment	--	**X**	--
Shelter(s) for operations and life support	--	**X**	--
Logistics (generators, scene lights, air compressors, etc.)	--	**X**	--
Structural shoring equipment	--	--	**x**
Breaching/breaking tools (pneumatic, electric, hydraulic, gas)	--	**X**	--
Torch/welding tools	--	**X**	--
Air lifting bags and controls	--	**X**	--
Technical rope	--	**X**	--
Technical search equipment	--	**X**	--
Medical cache (patient care/general assessment)	--	**X**	--
Medical cache (pharmaceuticals)	--	**X**	--
Safety/sanitation items	--	**X**	--

Source: *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025).

When asked about the status of the equipment listed in the PEMA needs assessment, PA-CO6 indicated that every item besides structural shoring equipment was either broken or at the end of its life.[210] When asked to clarify this indication, PA-CO6 leadership stated that no equipment was broken, it was simply at the end of its life. Battery operated equipment was listed as at the end of its life because the batteries needed replaced, but replacement batteries for the specific equipment are no longer in existence.[211] In order to efficiently use the funding it is allotted, PA-CO6 maintains equipment very intentionally so as not to create unnecessary waste, such as using a certain blade for training to save other blades for deployments.[212] When asked to select the top three equipment needs in the next five years, PA-CO6 listed communication equipment, technical search equipment, and rescue tools/equipment.[213] PA-CO6 needs to update its cache with new Tyvek suits, boots, powered air purifying respirators (PAPR), and a few other items to maintain operational hazmat capabilities. For trench and confined space rescue, PA-CO6 needs to refresh cylinders on the air carts, umbilical hoses for the air cart, and some other pieces of equipment for each of these rescue types.[214]

[210] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 40.
[211] PA-CO6 Leadership, E-mail message to Commission Staff, June 18, 2025.
[212] Interview with PA-CO6 Leadership, May 2, 2025.
[213] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 41.
[214] PA-CO6 Leadership, E-mail message to Commission Staff, June 18, 2025.

When asked what categories of program management challenges the company faces that PEMA could assist with, PA-CO6 selected all categories:

- Planning (SOP/SOG, manuals, dispatch processes, CONOPs, etc.)
- Organizing (administrative manual, position descriptions, MoU's/sponsoring agency agreements, etc.)
- Equipping (inventory management, sustainment contracts, resource sharing agreements, sustainment processes, etc.)
- Training (currency training, position task books, knowledge management, etc.)
- Exercising (canned scenarios, exercise planning teams, evaluators, evaluation sheets, etc.)[215]

When asked about the potential of statewide oversight, PA-CO6 leadership believed there would be operational benefits to a statewide system so that a central committee was well-apprised of the risks and capability needs across the state. However, they cautioned that the funding must be disbursed based on the actual needs in the area and no regions should be prioritized above the others. They also worried that an element that was a good steward of resources and training would be inadvertently punished by receiving less support for being more well-prepared. Funding should support the mission of each region in the best way possible.[216]

Funding

PA-CO6 receives some funding from their regional task force; however, their task force splits the money in half between law enforcement and fire and rescue. With the region dispersing $87,500 across multiple fire and rescue organizations, it is difficult for PA-CO6 to make any significant purchases which it may require. As such, the City of Williamsport covers a significant portion of the funding required for technical rescue equipment and its storage and maintenance. Because of the reduced funding over the years, the team has observed that this has caused gaps in Little League World Series response.[217]

The team has shared that it has been more difficult than it once was to fill gaps in their equipment. As an example, leadership reminisced about a time when PEMA and FEMA were funding the purchase of three uniforms for every initial member of the team, which is no longer the case. Additionally, the team still operates a 2006 Ford F-350 truck which has had many maintenance issues over the last decade which it struggles to fund. Because it is cheaper in the short term to maintain the twenty-year-old truck than it is to replace the vehicle, the team continues with their only reasonably attainable option of repairing.[218]

[215] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 41.
[216] Interview with PA-CO6 Leadership, May 2, 2025.
[217] Interview with PA-CO6 Leadership, May 2, 2025.
[218] Interview with PA-CO6 Leadership, May 2, 2025.

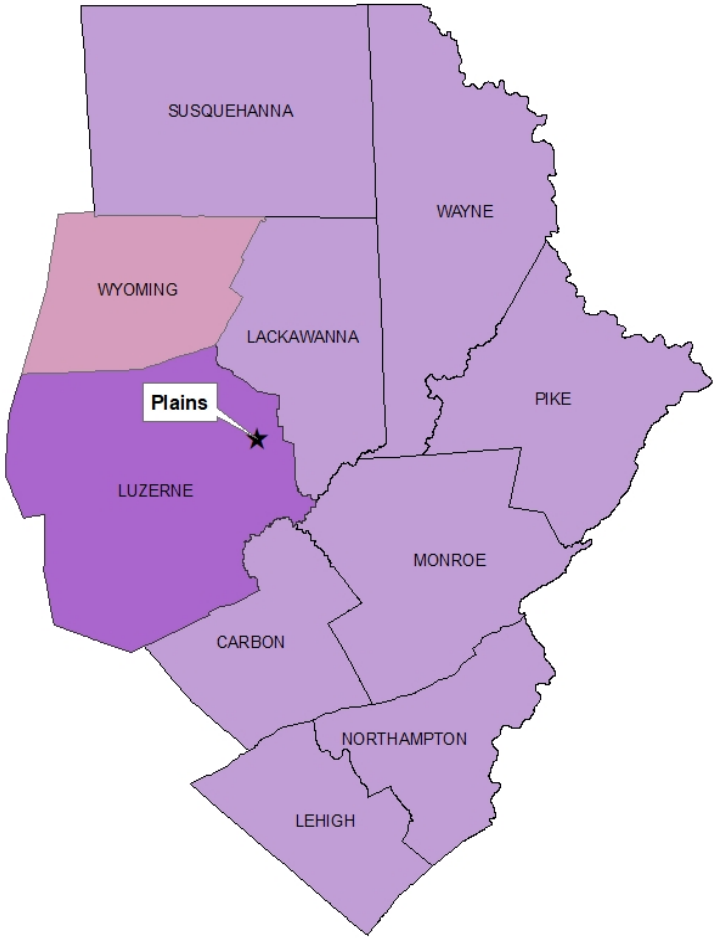
The PA-CO6 roster consists of a nearly equal split of career firefighters and volunteer firefighters. Workers' compensation coverage is provided under each career and volunteer firefighters organization while they are deployed with PA-CO6.[219]

Funding for training classes has also been a significant obstacle for PA-CO6. The team does most of their training and drills in Williamsport, where it is fortunate to have many state-certified instructors. Approximately twenty years ago, with the influx of funding, most of their individuals would travel to other states to complete FEMA classes. With most of those individuals having cycled out of the team, new team members must take the classes; however, traveling out of state is not a feasible option for every single person on their team and so the team elects to do the training in less sophisticated facilities in the state.[220]

Pennsylvania Squad 1
(PA-SQ1)

PA-SQ1 is sponsored by the Plains Volunteer Ambulance Association. The team responds primarily from Luzerne County and the primary response area includes Luzerne, Lackawanna, Wyoming, Lehigh, Wayne, Pike, Susquehanna, Monroe, Carbon, and Northampton counties.[221] Other supporting agencies include Luzerne County EMA, Wyoming County EMA, and Durea Water Rescue.[222]

Map 9
Pennsylvania Squad 1
2025



Source: Maps made by Joint State with data gathered from *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025).

[219] Interview with PA-CO6 Leadership, May 2, 2025.
[220] Interview with PA-CO6 Leadership, May 2, 2025.
[221] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 43-44.
[222] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 48.

Capabilities

PA-SQ1 has 23 active and qualified personnel, with 20 rescue specialists and 15 technical search specialists. There are at least two qualified personnel for each required position on the team.[223] The team has fully mobilized twice since 2018, one time for the aftermath of the 2018 tornado in Wilkes-Barre, and once to assist with a technical rope rescue in another county. The most common need for search and rescue in the region are water rescue, which many team members are trained for but do not possess the appropriate equipment to perform water rescues.[224]

PA-SQ1 currently has the capabilities to perform structural collapse, trench, confined space, technical search, and rope rescue. It is mission-ready for in-region responses, with limited out of region response capabilities. PA-SQ1 has operations level hazmat capabilities along with limited technician level capabilities. It has six medics and four FEMA-equivalent medical specialists. The team performed one full deployment in the past five years, and have responded to assist Luzerne County assets at least twice a year.[225]

Training

PA-SQ1 uses FEMA, PEMA, NIMS, and NFPA standards for training.[226] Documentation of the training records for members are stored both digitally and in physical files. In order to join the team, prospective members need the following prerequisites: Firefighter 2 Training, Basic Vehicle Rescue, and Technical Rescue certification in vehicle machinery, rope, and confined space. Members should also have trench rescue and collapse rescue training, but since these are harder trainings to obtain, the team will assist members in receiving this training. Some training, like structural collapse rescue training, is difficult to arrange because of schedule constraints. Three members need structural collapse training and two new members will need to receive onboarding training shortly. Through the Northeast Regional Task Force, the team was able to receive four surface water rescue certifications, and five members received structural collapse trainings at the Virginia Beach Fire Training Center. Team leadership believed if PEMA could offer in-state training on weekends as it used to many years ago, this would make training requirements much more manageable for volunteers with families who could not be away for seven days at a time.[227]

PA-CO3 and PA-SQ1 coordinate to perform trainings for both teams with a training committee comprised of two members from each team. The teams will be performing a breaching and breaking training in Spring 2025, and will develop two training exercises for the year, one in Fort Indiantown Gap, and one in a mine in Carbon County. PA-SQ1 leadership also believed that the establishment of workers' compensation for team members would help increase recruitment and ease the financial burden on departments.[228]

---

[223] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 44.
[224] Interview with PA-SQ1 Leadership, May 21, 2025.
[225] PA-SQ1 Leadership, e-mail message to Commission staff, June 20, 2025.
[226] PA-SQ1 Leadership, e-mail message to Commission staff, June 20, 2025.
[227] Interview with PA-SQ1 Leadership, May 21, 2025.
[228] Interview with PA-SQ1 Leadership, May 21, 2025.

Table 11
PA-SQ1 Training Ratings
2025

Course	*1 being greatest - 5 being least needed*				
	1-Need to Achieve	**2**	**3-Need to Maintain**	**4**	**5-Least Need**
Leadership Course (such as AH Strike Team/Task Force Leader Course)	--	--	**X**	--	--
Program Management Course	--	--	**X**	--	--
Structural Collapse Technician Course	--	--	**X**	--	--
Technical Search Specialist Course	--	--	**X**	--	--
Logistics Specialist Course	--	**X**	--	--	--
Safety Officer Course	--	--	**X**	--	--
US&R Planning Team Course	--	**X**	--	--	--
Wide Area Search/GPS Awareness	--	--	**X**	--	--
Hazmat Specialist Course	--	--	**X**	--	--

Source: *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025).

When asked to rate their training level, PA-SQ1 listed most courses as 3, or "need to maintain." The Logistics Specialist Course and the US&R Team Planning Course were rated at a 2. The most critical need identified by PA-SQ1 was Wide Area Search and Hazmat Specialist training.[229]

Equipment

PA-SQ1's equipment is stored at the Plains Township Ambulance Association and is catalogued in an inventory sheet. A prime mover truck houses the structural collapse, breaking and breaching, stabilization, and technical search equipment. A truck was lent to the team from Luzerne County EMA that is being retrofitted on volunteer time to become a response vehicle. Two additional trailers also hold equipment. Luzerne County EMA also provides vehicles to pull trailers full of equipment when needed for a response. Equipment is checked quarterly to address maintenance needs. Members purchase their own PPE because these items were not made available to them when the team was established. Recent purchases of search camera equipment has been helpful for the team, but the team does not have much equipment for surface water rescue and some of their structural collapse equipment is becoming outdated and obsolete.[230]

[229] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 46.
[230] Interview with PA-SQ1 Leadership, May 21, 2025.

Table 12
PA-SQ1 Equipment Status
2025

Equipment	Do not have	Broken or near end of life	Not required
Radios	--	**X**	--
Hazmat detection equipment	--	**X**	--
Radiation equipment	**X**	--	--
Shelter(s) for operations and life support	--	**X**	--
Logistics (generators, scene lights, air compressors, etc.)	--	**X**	--
Structural shoring equipment	--	**X**	--
Breaching/breaking tools (pneumatic, electric, hydraulic, gas)	--	**X**	--
Torch/welding tools	--	**X**	--
Air lifting bags and controls	--	**X**	--
Technical rope	--	**X**	--
Technical search equipment	--	**X**	--
Medical cache (patient care/general assessment)	--	**X**	--
Medical cache (pharmaceuticals)	--	**X**	--
Safety/sanitation items	--	**X**	--

Source: *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025).

When given the list of equipment pieces by PEMA to categorize, PA-SQ1 said all equipment listed was broken or at the end of its life except for radiation equipment, which it did not have. When asked to list the top three equipment needs in the next five years, PA-SQ1 listed prime movers/cache trailers/containers, shoring tools/kits, and technical search equipment.[231]

When asked what categories of program management PEMA could assist PA-SQ1 with, it selected equipping (inventory management, sustainment contracts, resource sharing agreements, sustainment processes, etc.) and training (currency training, position task books, knowledge management, etc.).[232]

When asked about the potential for a statewide oversight system run through PEMA and an Advisory Organization comprised of regional peers, PA-SQ1 leadership was supportive, given that the involvement with and support of the US&R system in the Commonwealth was a continuous commitment. Earlier iterations of the US&R system had clearer expectations and standards for teams, but as the system received less and less funding, the oversight was no longer feasible. A renewed interest in oversight of the US&R system would require a commitment over time to the health of the system. Team leadership also noted that a list of approved and necessary

[231] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 46-47.
[232] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 47.

equipment would make it much easier for teams to plan their acquisitions over the next few years.[233]

Funding

PA-SQ1 operates on approximately $4,000 per year from their regional task force, which supports some vehicle maintenance, equipment maintenance, and repairs. Luzerne County and the Plains Township Ambulance Association and other fire departments within the region provide additional support to the squad with their own funding and resources. The regional task force does provide additional financial support and assists the squad in funding their training and exercises. PA-SQ1 leadership believes that the regional task force does a fair and adequate job on allocating the money that is available for the region; however, they note that the task force receives very little money to begin with and must make cuts in some places. Most individuals on PA-SQ1 purchase their own harnesses and other PPE, but there are some local agencies which do cover the costs of such equipment.[234]

PA-SQ1 recently received a truck from the Luzerne County Department of Public Safety, which the team has been working on modifying to meet their needs; however, the team needs some additional funding to outfit the truck with shelving and other necessary upgrades.[235]

At the current configuration, team leadership estimated that they would need at least $750,000 for a one-time cache recapitalization followed by annual sustainment funds.[236]

PA-SQ1 shared that it has a great relationship with PA-CO3 in Scranton and Allentown, which is better funded and has a larger asset that can be deployed in Luzerne if the need arises. In order to reduce spending, PA-SQ1 and PA-CO3 perform training and full-scale exercises together, including three at Fort Indiantown Gap since 2020, at least one in Allentown, and the teams are additionally performing an exercise in a Carbon County coal mine later in 2025 to simulate a collapse rescue.[237] PA-SQ1 leadership emphasized that the significant amount of time involved in training, as well as its limited availability in the state, is a growing issue. PA-SQ1 leadership believes that there are enough assets in Pennsylvania to develop a statewide training and exercise location, and suggested the Commonwealth consider partnering with the Pennsylvania National Guard to make Fort Indiantown Gap, which currently has US&R resources on site, a central training location for all US&R teams in the state.[238]

Most individuals on PA-SQ1 are volunteer firefighters who are not covered by the team for workers' compensation insurance. Instead, most are covered under their volunteer agency's workers' compensation and death benefits plan. Career firefighters for the Kingston Fire Department are covered under their agency's workers' compensation plan. Leaders on PA-SQ1 believe it would be beneficial for the state to assist agencies in paying for this insurance, providing

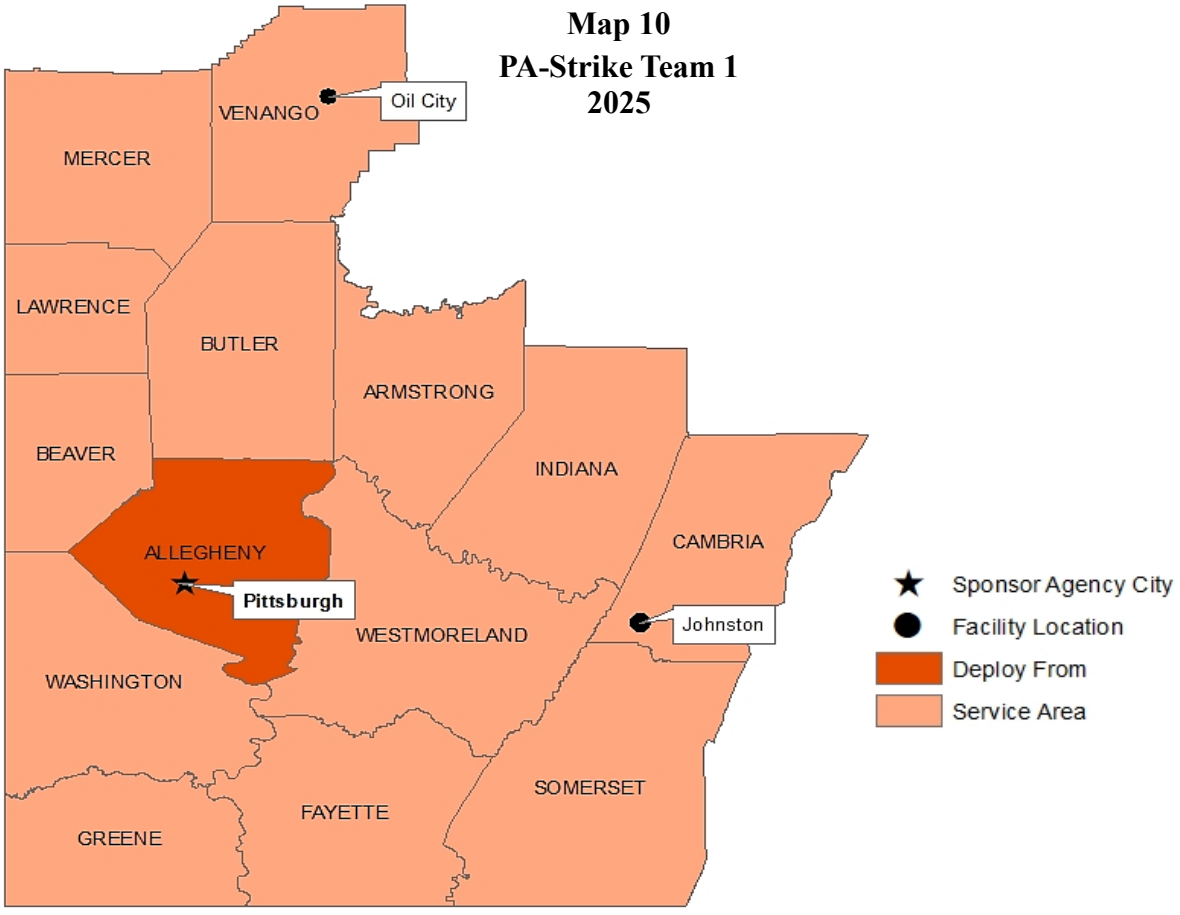
[233] Interview with PA-SQ1 Leadership, May 21, 2025.
[234] Interview with PA-SQ1 Leadership, May 21, 2025.
[235] Interview with PA-SQ1 Leadership, May 21, 2025.
[236] PA-SQ1 Leadership, e-mail message to Commission staff, June 20, 2025.
[237] Interview with PA-SQ1 Leadership, May 21, 2025.
[238] PA-SQ1 Leadership, e-mail message to Commission staff, June 20, 2025.

a $5,000 a year grant to volunteer organizations to cover the cost of workers' compensation insurance. PA-SQ1 shared that, in 2002, the team had an MOA with PEMA for the state to pay workers' compensation if they were deployed in the state. Currently, members have an MOU that when responding in their region, their organization is responsible for these costs; however, there exists an issue with out of region responses.[239]

Pennsylvania Strike Team 1
(PA-ST1)

PA-Strike Team 1 (PA-ST1) is sponsored by the Pittsburgh Department of Public Safety and primarily responds from Allegheny County. The counties included in its primary response area are Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Cambria, Fayette, Green, Indiana, Lawrence, Mercer, City of Pittsburgh, Somerset, Venango, Washington, and Westmoreland. There are 49 participating agencies in PA-ST1.[240]

Map 10
PA-Strike Team 1
2025



Source: Maps created by Joint State with data gathered from *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025).

[239] Interview with PA-SQ1 Leadership, May 21, 2025.
[240] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 54.

PA-ST1 has been utilized in around 20 incidents, mostly within the region, since the advent of the in-state system. Due to aging infrastructure located in Western Pennsylvania and a change in weather patterns over the years, the frequency of responses has increased over time. PA-ST1 has also offered support with their technical expertise to incidents at the local level that did not require a full team mobilization but utilized members of the Strike Team.[241]

Capabilities

PA-ST1 is a NIMS Type 4 US&R Task Force that is in the process of becoming a Type 3 US&R Task Force as stipulated in Act 113. The team can conduct damage assessment with the use of the Search & Rescue Common Operating Platform (SARCOP). A specific search team performs the initial reconnaissance for an incident, and several members are trained to perform Large Area Searches. The team is mission ready at all times.[242]

For structural stabilization, the team has the full complement necessary which includes Rescue Team Managers, RSO, and Rescue Specialists. The team also has three Structures Specialists. The team still needs some equipment to meet the Type 3 requirements.[243]

The team is working to meet the necessary equipment and personnel qualifications for a Type 3 US&R Task Force. Currently, the team has a cadre that is dedicated to technical search and owns equipment like FL360 cameras, fiber cameras, and DELSARs. It has purchased two Live Find Canines and plans to make additional investments to meet the canine requirements for a Type 3 US&R Task Force.[244]

The team has upgraded some aging hazmat equipment recently but is looking to use the incoming funding to fill large cache gaps for hazmat capability. For medical capability, the team currently has 12 medical specialists, seven of whom are rostered with medical specialist as their primary rostered position. The team is currently in negotiations with both major hospital systems in Western Pennsylvania to supply the pharmaceutical cache. If agreements cannot be made with either of these systems, the cost for maintaining this cache on their own would be significant.[245]

PA-ST1 has 97 trained and qualified active personnel on their team, with 60 rescue specialists and nine technical search specialists. It has at least two qualified personnel for each required position on their team.[246] Their team is organized into 11 cadres:

- [Task Force Leaders] (TFL)
- Safety
- Medical
- Engineering/Structures
- [Heavy Equipment Rigging Specialist] (HERS)

[241] Document Response from PA-ST1 Leadership, received May 13, 2025.
[242] Document Response from PA-ST1 Leadership, received May 13, 2025.
[243] Document Response from PA-ST1 Leadership, received May 13, 2025.
[244] Document Response from PA-ST1 Leadership, received May 13, 2025.
[245] Document Response from PA-ST1 Leadership, received May 13, 2025.
[246] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 50.

- Rescue
- Planning
- Logistics
- Hazmat
- Search
- Training[247]

PA-ST1 is organized into different response packages that can be deployed for mission needs. Their Concept of Operations summarizes the capabilities of these packages well:

- Communications: Equipment in this package includes all items generally thought of as communications. It includes portable radios, base radios, repeaters, batteries, power sources, and small tools.

- Command Base of Operations (BoO): The Command BoO is the equipment needed to create a command post for an operation. It includes shelter for the command staff, the planning equipment, computers, tables, chairs, generator and associated wiring. It also included hygiene equipment needed to support a small operation.

- Medical Forward Operating Base (FOB): The Medical FOB is the facility required to support PA-ST1 members during operations. It consists of shelter, power, OTC meds, first line emergency medicines, patient assessment equipment for a small number of patients, and patient comfort equipment for a small number (2) of patients.

- K9: This is the equipment for the K9 operators that is not carried by their handlers. This equipment can be used to support the PA-ST1 canines or canine assets from other teams.

- Engineering and Survey: The equipment used by the Structural Specialists.

- Search: This equipment [is] used by the search teams to perform search operations. Operations supported by this package are: Hasty search, Primary search, Secondary search, and Targeted search. Techniques supported are Physical search and Technical search.

- Hazmat: The mission of the PA-ST1 Hazmat team is the protection of PA-ST1 members.

- Light Rescue: The light rescue package is designed to support initial rescue operations. These packages are located in Johnstown and Oil City and can serve as two independent Structural Collapse Rescue Teams.[248] It consists of tools and materials needed to perform stabilization operations during the first operational period. This package also

[247] Document Response from PA-ST1 Leadership, received May 13, 2025.
[248] PA-ST1 Leadership, e-mail message to Commission staff, June 18, 2025.

includes the rope rescue portions of the cache. The Oil City and the Johnstown components of PA-ST1 fall into this category.

- Heavy Rescue: The heavy rescue package is designed to support rescue and recovery operations after the first operational period. It provides additional equipment and materials for stabilization as well as the equipment needed to perform Heavy Equipment and Rigging Specialist (HERS) operations. Confined space is included in this package. The remainder of the rescue cache not included in the light rescue package is in this package.

- Repair: This package includes the equipment, tools and parts, needed to repair Strike Team equipment during operations.

- Full BoO: This is the equipment needed to support the team during extended duration operations. It includes billeting space and sleeping facilities.

- Medical BoO: This is the portion of the medical cache that is not included in the FOB package. The majority of this package is the pharmacy. Additional items include the general stores materials needed to support multiple patients over extended periods of time.

- Water: This package contains the water-specific portions of the water MRP. This package includes the offensive water rescue equipment, the technical rescue parts of the water cache, and the support portions of the water cache.[249]

Training

PA-ST1 utilizes FEMA, State Urban Search and Rescue Alliance (SUSAR), NFPA, and OSHA training standards.[250] The team uses FEMA's US&R Operations Manual Annex E- Position Descriptions to define the qualifications and trainings necessary for each member.[251] The information for each member's training and certification level are stored in the EMOS database and are easily accessible. The database will also alert members when certifications need to be updated.[252] PA-ST1 uses a two-year rolling training schedule to ensure that all necessary training is covered for their members. Members must receive 30 hours of training each year or they will be deemed undeployable until they acquire the proper training.[253] The Planning Team develops Incident Action Plans (IAPs) for each training and records lesson plans in the EMOS database. The attendance of each member is recorded in EMOS as well. After each training, members fill out an after action survey where they can list recommended areas of improvement. Themes that occur repeatedly in the surveys are drawn into an After Action Tracker to be resolved moving forward through a Continuous Improvement Process (CIP). PA-ST1 attends training events throughout the year in Virginia Beach training facility, the New York Technical Rescue Training

[249] *Concept of Operations* (Pennsylvania Urban Search and Rescue: Region 13), 6-8.
[250] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 50.
[251] Document Response from PA-ST1 Leadership, received May 13, 2025.
[252] *Training Program Administration Manual* (Pennsylvania Urban Search and Rescue: Region 13, 2025-2028), 7.
[253] Administration Manual (Pennsylvania Urban Search and Rescue: Region 13), 15.

Conference, the Medical Special Operations Course at the New York City Fire Department (FDNY), and SUSAR.[254]

PA-ST1 leadership noted that though the team is able to use SUSAR conferences to fill training gaps, demand for classes still exceeds availability. FEMA courses are especially difficult to access.[255] PA-ST1 submits a request to Region 13, the regional counterterrorism task force, for UASI funding for bi-monthly trainings once a year because training requests must be submitted 135 days in advance. The Western Pennsylvania Regional Urban Search and Technical Rescue Team (WPARTUSATRT), a non-profit which will be discussed in more detail in the funding section, can also support training and other resource needs for PA-ST1. A member can receive this funding support only if the requested training is required for their current rostered position. The non-profit will reimburse the member for the cost of the training course and their travel, lodging, meals, and additional course fees.[256]

Table 13
PA-ST1 Training Ratings
2025

Course	*1 being greatest - 5 being least needed*				
	1-Need to Achieve	**2**	**3-Need to Maintain**	**4**	**5-Least Need**
Leadership Course (such as AH Strike Team/Task Force Leader Course)	--	**X**	--	--	--
Program Management Course	--	--	--	**X**	--
Structural Collapse Technician Course	**X**	--	--	--	--
Technical Search Specialist Course	**X**	--	--	--	--
Logistics Specialist Course	**X**	--	--	--	--
Safety Officer Course	--	--	**X**	--	--
US&R Planning Team Course	--	**X**	--	--	--
Wide Area Search/GPS Awareness	--	--	**X**	--	--
Hazmat Specialist Course	**X**	--	--	--	--

Source: *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025).

When asked to rate their training level in the PEMA needs assessment, the Structural Collapse Technician Course, Technical Search Specialist Course, Logistics Specialist Course, and Hazmat Specialist Course were rated as "need to achieve." The Leadership Course and Planning Team Course were rated at 2, Safety Officer Course and Wide Area Search were rated at 3, or "need to maintain," and the Program Management Course was rated at 4. When asked to select the most critical training need, PA-ST1 listed NFPA Proboard, which is a highly recommended but not required training for inclusion in the in-state system.[257]

[254] *Training Program*, 9-10.
[255] Document Response from PA-ST1 Leadership, received May 13, 2025.
[256] *Training Program*, 5-6.
[257] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 51.

Equipment

PA-ST1 uses the EMOS database to track equipment. WPARUSATRT is doing an inventory update to ensure alignment to the new requirements for a Type 3 US&R Task Force. This includes updating the preventative maintenance schedules in EMOS. Though with recent funding, WPARUSATRT was able to replace most equipment at the end of its life cycle, team leadership stated that they still needed to purchase a "road tractor, a box truck, and equipment to support an independent water MRP."[258] Some equipment is considered "maintained as operational" by PA-ST1 leadership, meaning it is currently functional, but due to batteries or equipment being discontinued, it will eventually need to be replaced. The table below reflects the condition of the equipment cache that PA-ST1 received from PEMA at the creation of the in-state system.[259]

Table 14
PA-ST1 Equipment Status
2025

Equipment	Do not have	Broken or near end of life	Not required
Radios	--	**X**	--
Hazmat detection equipment	--	**X**	--
Radiation equipment	--	**X**	--
Shelter(s) for operations and life support	--	**X**	--
Logistics (generators, scene lights, air compressors, etc.)	--	**X**	--
Structural shoring equipment	--	**X**	
Breaching/breaking tools (pneumatic, electric, hydraulic, gas)	--	**X**	--
Torch/welding tools	--	**X**	--
Air lifting bags and controls	--	**X**	--
Technical rope	--	**X**	--
Technical search equipment	--	**X**	--
Medical cache (patient care/general assessment)	--	**X**	--
Medical cache (pharmaceuticals)	**X**	--	--
Safety/sanitation items	--	**X**	--

Source: *US&R Needs Assessment Results* (PEMA, 2025).

When asked about the status of the equipment listed in the PEMA needs assessment, PA-ST1 indicated that all of the equipment was broken or near end of life besides a medical cache, which it did not have.[260] When asked to rate the top three equipment needs over the next five years, PA-ST1 listed prime movers/cache trailers/containers, support equipment, and communication equipment.[261]

[258] Document Response from PA-ST1 Leadership, received May 13, 2025.
[259] PA-ST1 Leadership, e-mail message to Commission Staff, June 18, 2025.
[260] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 52.
[261] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 53.

When asked what program management areas PEMA could assist with, PA-ST1 listed training (currency training, position task books, knowledge management, etc.) and exercising (canned scenarios, exercise planning teams, evaluators, evaluation sheets, etc.).[262]

When asked about the possibility of increased oversight from PEMA, PA-ST1 leadership said they were supportive as long as the standards aligned with those of FEMA's typing definition standards. They stated that though there would be overhead costs associating with implementing such a framework, like conducting Administrative Readiness Reviews and Operational Readiness Reviews, the significant benefit would be a better understanding of the resources that are currently available in the Commonwealth and their capabilities.[263]

Funding

Over the last few years, PA-ST1 has been in an ideal financial situation; however, leadership do have concerns for their future without additional sustainment funding.[264] Team leadership estimated that PA-ST1 has received yearly funding from Region 13 at approximately $150,000 - $200,000 over the last decade.[265] Reports filed with PEMA for the most recent closed SHSP/UASI grant year show that Region 13 gave PA-ST1 $198,514.93 in SHSP/UASI grants for equipment in 2019.[266] That amount is not inclusive of SHSP/UASI funding for training and exercises, which Region 13 shared as being $82,079.33 in 2019.[267] Combined, PA-ST1 expended $280,594.26 in SHSP/UASI grant funds in 2019. PEMA leadership noted that, over the last seven closed grant years, PA-ST1 has received a total of $1,098,067 in equipment funding, which would average to $156,856 per year in equipment, not inclusive of training and exercises.[268] The team said that this support by Region 13 is not enough to cover simple maintenance or housing of current equipment.[269] In July 2022, the team received a grant from the Department of Community and Economic Development for $4.6 million to support its efforts to become a Type 3 Task Force.[270] Additionally, the team received a state budget appropriation in the amount of $6 million; the City of Pittsburgh will be responsible for those funds following transmittal by PEMA. As of the release of this report, the funds have not been released to PA-ST1 while the City of Pittsburgh and PEMA finalize the terms of the Intergovernmental Grant Agreement (IGA). Without the funding from the $6 million grant, PA-ST1 leadership stated that they will not be able to pay rent, utilities, cover preventative maintenance, or contracted service payments after July 2025.[271] PA-ST1 shared that it has not received any private donations of equipment and supplies or any local funding support.

---

[262] *US&R Needs Assessment Results*, 53.
[263] Document Response from PA-ST1 Leadership, received May 13, 2025.
[264] Interview with PA-ST1 Leadership, May 27, 2025.
[265] Document Response from PA-ST1 Leadership, received May 13, 2025.
[266] Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, June 30, 2025.
[267] Greg Leathers, e-mail message to Commission staff, July 1, 2025. *Note: this figure includes all training for "Search and Rescue (Land);" however, US&R training would cover a significant portion, if not all, of that expense.
[268] Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, June 19, 2025.
[269] Interview with PA-ST1 Leadership, May 27, 2025.
[270] This grant is discussed at length in the *Funding of US&R in Pennsylvania* chapter.
[271] PA-ST1 Leadership, e-mail message to Commission staff, June 18, 2025.

PA-ST1 is engaging in discussions with UPMC and Allegheny Health to support a full Type 3 medical cache.[272] There currently exists a "loose agreement" with Allegheny Health Network to support some of the cache; however, until a formal agreement can be established, the cost of the pharmaceutical cache remains a significant part of ST-1's budget. Once the interagency agreement between the City of Pittsburgh and PEMA is signed, where the team will receive $6 million in funding, leadership expects it will take twelve months from that point to contract out the pharmaceutical cache.

To manage initial grant funding from the Commonwealth, a nonprofit corporation, WPARUSATRT was established.[273] This nonprofit organization manages the team's facility, equipment, and finances. This nonprofit has recently replaced most equipment that had exceeded its specified life cycle. PA-ST1 has an additional financial need for larger purchases to meet the requirements of Act 113, including an additional road tractor, a box truck, and equipment to support an independent water mission ready package. Additionally, the team is looking to move facilities, as leadership shared that the current facility is barely functional. The nonprofit is considering whether to rent a new facility, purchase and update the current facility, or obtain property and construct a new facility.

The team is unable to estimate one-time costs needed to meet their desired NIMS typing due to the current turmoil around tariffs and the unpredictability of the real estate market.[274] Leadership have shared that, without additional state or federal funding, maintaining a Type 3 US&R resource as required by Act 113 is not feasible. The team estimates that a $2 million per year sustaining budget would likely cover all costs for the organization. Once the team has a better insight into future funding, they will be able to create a more detailed budgeting process.

PA-ST1 currently covers personal protective equipment costs for each team member.[275] Workers' compensation is provided by each member's respective agency while liability and equipment insurance are covered by the nonprofit organization. Sponsoring agencies are not reimbursed for the associated costs of training or deploying personnel. The team does pay two administrative staff as independent contractors for their part time work; together, they produce one FTE for logistics, purchasing, and financial records work.

Training expenditures also are a significant portion of the team's budget as new members of the team cycle in to replace spots of individuals who have since retired from the team.[276] The team mainly utilizes a small training site at Allegheny County Fire Academy for training; however, it has also utilized other assets from regional partners, like a former VA hospital site, private buildings that are set to be demolished, and also a few coal mines in the region. Due to the limited availability of classes in close proximity to their region, it often sends members to Virginia Beach for training or to the SUSAR conference in Florida to receive training and become certified. PA-ST1's leadership has identified three main issues with training in Pennsylvania: the fact that individuals are not compensated for attending training, the limited training ground enrollment

[272] Interview with PA-ST1 Leadership, May 27, 2025.
[273] Document Response from PA-ST1 Leadership, received May 13, 2025.
[274] Document Response from PA-ST1 Leadership, received May 13, 2025.
[275] Document Response from PA-ST1 Leadership, received May 13, 2025.
[276] Interview with PA-ST1 Leadership, May 27, 2025.

availability, and the significant delay between asking the region and PEMA to fund training and receiving that approval often after the classes achieve maximum enrollment.

PA-ST1 leadership is supportive of a state oversight system to ensure regional elements meet proper standards; however, they emphasize that those oversight standards must align with FEMA's definitions.[277] They recognize there will be some overhead for operating this type of process and that the administrative and operational readiness reviews are costly, both in time in money. A benefit they realize is that the state and the organizations would be able to understand the real capabilities provided by each team in the Commonwealth. A secondary benefit, they share, is the ability to respond to EMAC requests which, until Act 113, was not possible. Leadership believes that any US&R funding should be directly provided to the sponsoring agency of the organization, and that agency should be responsible for budgetary control.

Regional Elements Conclusion

The information included in this section of the report comes from two self-reported sources: a recent PEMA needs assessment survey and interviews with leadership from the various teams. Throughout the process of collecting information, Commission staff found discrepancies between the survey results and later conversations with teams. Commission staff attempted to follow up on these discrepancies and clarify them when possible. Even with these small discrepancies, the major themes reported by each team remain clear. Though the regional teams had various sizes of teams, rescue priorities, and resource needs, all teams were supportive of a more structured statewide oversight system. Leadership across the state believed that more standardized requirements and guidelines for teams would allow PEMA and local emergency management agencies to have a better sense of what the teams' capabilities are. It would also ensure that funding is properly distributed to each region for expenses that will help the teams reach the appropriate US&R capability targets for the region. Several team leaders noted the importance of including the insights of leaders from each of the regions when making funding decisions. Several teams also believed a thorough assessment of the capability needs for each region should precede any funding decisions.

Several teams had difficulty recruiting and retaining members due to a variety of factors. Training is expensive and for many regions, members must use their vacation time to undergo training. Because there is more demand for training in Pennsylvania than there are spots in training courses, many members must train outside of the state, which takes up more vacation time and requires agencies to cover the shifts of the members who are in training. Many teams hope that PEMA will invest into holding more trainings in the state at HACC or provide funding to support the construction of other training sites across the state.

[277] Document Response from PA-ST1 Leadership, received May 13, 2025.

Many teams also believed PEMA should investigate a solution for workers' compensation for members that does not involve a patchwork of MOUs from each agency, since each agency may determine slightly different terms for the MOUs. The teams emphasized that members who are risking their lives for the Commonwealth and its residents should never need to worry about what would happen if they were injured or killed while deployed.

Different teams' estimates of how much funding the teams would need to recapitalize their cache varied greatly, depending on the soft costs that various sponsoring agencies covered and the amount of funding the teams received from their regional counterterrorism task forces. All teams were creative in finding solutions to maintain operational readiness as funding decreased. Teams were aware of the high cost of search and rescue equipment and made efforts to use taxpayer dollars as efficiently as possible. All teams would benefit from annual sustainability funding so that expensive equipment can be well-maintained and preserved for as long as possible.

The Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear (CBRN) Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) is a National Guard organization with five operational elements: Command and Control, Search and Extraction, Decontamination, Medical, and Fatalities and Recovery. These operational elements are staffed by existing National Guard personnel.[278] Their mission is:

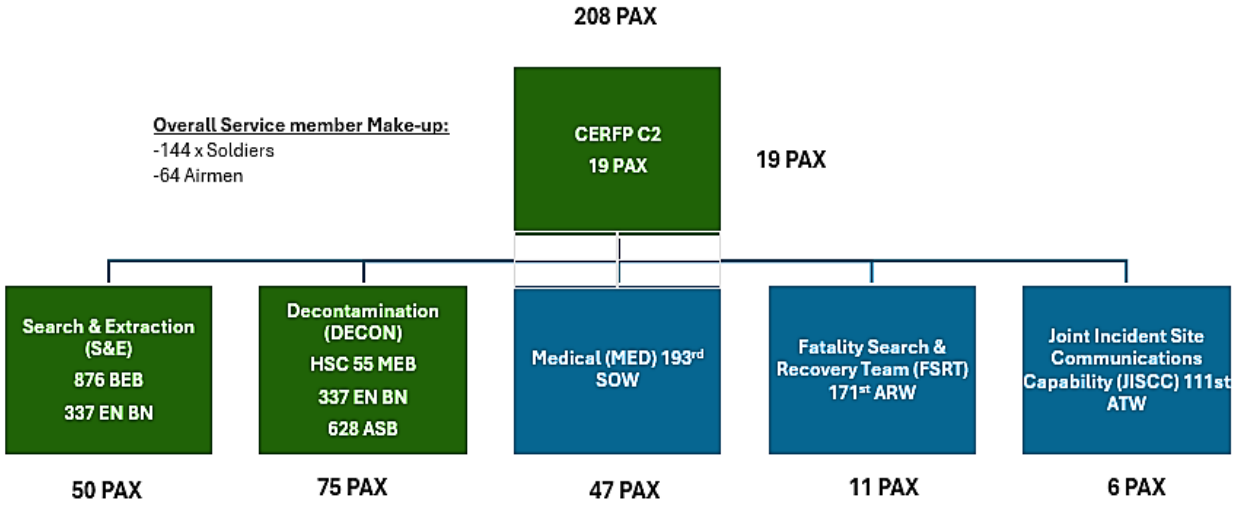
> To provide immediate CBRN incident response capabilities to the governor including: incident site search of collapsed buildings and structures, conducting rescue tasks to extract trapped casualties, providing mass decontamination, performing medical triage and initial treatment to stabilize patients for transport to medical facilities by the Incident Commander, and the recovery of CBRN incident fatalities.[279]

Capabilities

When requested, the CERFP recalls and deploys critical command and control and life-saving capabilities within six hours. It deploys and conducts command and control, search and extraction, mass casualty decontamination, and medical stabilization in order to save lives and mitigate human suffering. The CERFP is designed to operate at the federal, state and local level. It is HAZMAT Awareness and Operations Certified, and all members are trained on Incident Command System (ICS) 100b (Introduction to ICS), 200b (ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents), IS 700a (Introduction to NIMS) and 800b (Introduction to National Response Framework). Each capability can be deployed on an individual basis or an as needed basis.[280] The overall service member makeup organizational chart is below, and the military term PAX refers to personnel transported.

[278] *Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High-Yield Explosive Enhanced Response Force Package (CBRNE)* (National Guard, December 2017), https://www.nationalguard.mil/Portals/31/Resources/Fact%20Sheets/CBRNE%20Fact%20Sheet%20(Dec.%202017).pdf.
[279] *Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High-Yield Explosive Enhanced Response Force Package (CBRNE)*.
[280] PANG, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 6, 2025.

Chart 1
CERFP Organizational Chart
2025



Source: Email with PANG, February 6, 2025.

For the CERFP, the Pennsylvania National Guard (PANG) provides:

1. Command and Control

   - Operationally committed to support the IC
   - Provides a regionalized, distributed, life-saving CBRN Response Capability
   - Bridges the gap between First Responders and follow-on State and Federal Elements

2. Search and Extraction

   - Casualty Search and Extraction in a contaminated environment
   - Lift and move heavy debris using ropes and chains (Rigging)
   - Uses Equipment designed to support the sides of an excavation and prevent cave-ins
   - Trained for basic and light Search and Extraction
   - NFPA confined space entry qualified (non-permit)
   - Conducts Hot Zone Triage -Patient Packaging

3. Decontamination (Decon)

   - Mass Casualty Decontamination
   - 225 Ambulatory and 75 Non-Ambulatory Patient Decontamination/hour
   - Technical Decontamination for CBRN TF Personnel and First Responders

4. Medical

    - Provide medical treatment to ~330 ambulatory, non-ambulatory, and critical patients
        - Doctors/Surgeons
        - Physician Assistants
        - Nurses/ EMT/Medics
        - Respiratory Therapy
        - Biological Environmental Officers
        - Public Health Officers/Technicians
        - Search and Extraction Medics
    - Performs Medical Triage and initial treatment
    - Stabilizes critical and non critical patients for transport/evacuation

5. Fatality Search and Recovery Team (FSRT)

    - Mortuary Operations: Collect, Recover, Store, Prepare, and Ship human remains
    - Provide Limited Expeditionary Search and Recovery
    - Search and Recovery Capability in CBRNE Environment

6. Joint Incident Site Communications Capability (JISCC)

    - Access to Public/Commercial and Military telephone services
    - Voice/Radio interoperability with incident, civilian, and military response partners
    - Beyond Line of Sight (HF) Radio
    - Wired/Wireless Local and Wide Area Networking[281]

The team is capable of "search and extraction in and around collapsed structures and/or other hazardous areas and emergency decontamination."[282] The team can be deployed within six hours of receiving a notification and will assist the first responders with several tactics like damage assessment, consequence management tactics, and other emergency management capabilities.[283] The team can perform physical reconnaissance with visuals, hailing, and listening, and technical reconnaissance with specific equipment: "Delsar life detector (seismic/acoustic listening device), thermal imaging camera, snake eye camera, binoculars, RD80 Skyraider drone."[284]

The hazmat capabilities include a hasty decontamination tent and PPE up to level C, which includes:

- full-face air purifying respirators;
- inner and outer chemical-resistant gloves;
- hard hat;

[281] PANG, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 6, 2025.
[282] Major Gagliardo, e-mail message to Commission staff, April 30, 2025.
[283] Major Gagliardo, e-mail message to Commission staff, April 30, 2025.
[284] Major Gagliardo, e-mail message to Commission staff, April 30, 2025.

- escape mask; and
- disposable chemical-resistant outer boots.[285]

The medical response of CERFP includes "Victim management, victim assessment, simple triage and rapid treatment, patient packaging."[286] An eight-person Air Force Medical Team attaches to the CERFP. Every team member is trained in CPR and ten percent of the team has a combat lifesaver certification, which is "a 40-hour course for non-medical military personnel being deployed into combat."[287] For use in structural stabilization, CERFP has cribbing jacks and shoring materials.[288]

Training

As mentioned above, members of the team are trained to the following standards:

- HAZMAT Awareness and Operations Certified
- 100b: Introduction to Incident Command System (ICS)
- 200b: ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents
- IS 700a: Introduction to NIMS
- 800b: Introduction to National Response Framework[289]

Documentation for each member's certification and the collective training events is all collected and held as per CERFP guidelines. The team also undergoes an external evaluation (EXEVAL) and a Standardization and Evaluation Assistance Team (SEAT) inspection once every three years. The next evaluation will be July 2025.[290]

Equipment

PANG utilizes a platform called GCSS-Army to inventory equipment and do some financial management. The system allows PANG to keep track of the maintenance needs for their equipment. All equipment is inventoried at least annually, and some sensitive items require monthly inventories. CERFP also performs quarterly inventories on all equipment and also conducts inventories and preventative maintenance before and after any exercises or deployments. Each month, GCSS-Army generates a worksheet for the equipment inventory and there is a module that allows PANG to order replacement parts for equipment.[291]

---

[285] "Personal Protective Equipment," *EPA*, accessed May 12, 2025, https://www.epa.gov/emergency-response/personal-protective-equipment.
[286] Major Gagliardo, e-mail message to Commission staff, April 30, 2025.
[287] "TCCC Combat Lifesaver (TCCC CLS)," *NAEMT*, accessed May 12, 2025, https://www.naemt.org/education/trauma-education/naemt-tccc/tccc-cls-guidelines-and-curriculum.
[288] Major Gagliardo, e-mail message to Commission staff, April 30, 2025.
[289] PANG, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 6, 2025.
[290] Major Gagliardo, e-mail message to Commission staff, April 30, 2025; Colonel Farr, e-mail message to Commission staff, May 30, 2025.
[291] Major Gagliardo, e-mail message to Commission staff, April 30, 2025, Colonel Farr, e-mail message to Commission staff, May 30, 2025.

Civil Support Team
(CST)

Capabilities

The 3rd Civil Support Team (CST) is an on-call, 22-person joint PA Army and Air National Guard unit which conducts quick response, provides reach back capabilities, and conducts steady state operations throughout the Commonwealth for incidents involving Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear (CBRN) weapons of mass destruction (WMD), incidents involving potential CBRN WMD threats as well as Toxic Industrial Chemicals/Materials (TICs/TIMs), and natural/man-made disasters. The 3rd CST works (at no cost) with their civilian partners at all levels (local, state, federal) to ensure the safety of the public while attending large scale and televised events that may be potential targets. This support can be tailored to the needs of the requesting agency and can include as much as the whole team with the mobile lab and communications vehicle or as little as a few personnel with air monitoring capabilities.[292] The mission of the CST is as follows:

> Support civil authorities at a domestic incident site during specified events, which include use or threatened use of a weapons of mass destruction; terrorist attack or threatened terrorist attack; intentional or unintentional release of nuclear, biological, radiological, or toxic or poisonous chemicals; natural or manmade disasters in the United States that result, or could result, in the catastrophic loss of life or property by identifying hazards, assessing current and projected consequences, advising on response measures, and assisting with appropriate requests for additional support.[293]

The 1996 Nunn-Lugar-Domenici Weapons of Mass Destruction Act increased support to state and local emergency response agencies to respond in the case of a national or localized threat.[294] In 1998 there were 10 CSTs across the country; now there are 57.[295]

CST teams are composed of 22 full-time Army and Air National Guard employees in six different groups: three in a command group, eight in survey, three in operations, four in medical, two in administration and logistics, and two in communications. The team members complete on average around 1,800 hours of training per team member. This consists of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) incident response training, hazmat technician training, and training through the US Army Chemical School, Defense Nuclear Weapons School, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), National Fire Academy (NFA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of Defense (DoD), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Department of Energy (DOE), and Dugway Proving Ground.[296]

---

[292] PANG, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 6, 2025.
[293] CST 101, PANG, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 6, 2025.
[294] Defense Against Weapons of Mass Destruction Act of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-201, tit. XIV, 110 Stat. 2715 (1996) (codified at 50 U.S.C. § 2301), (commonly known as the ”Nunn-Lugar-Domenici Act”).
[295] CST 101, PANG, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 6, 2025.
[296] CST 101, PANG, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 6, 2025.

The CST is a CBRN reconnaissance asset and in the event of a terrorist attack can perform reconnaissance and characterization of any CBRN hazards present. However, they are not designed for search and rescue or structural stabilization. Likewise, although the CST has a medical section and medical personnel, they are not designed to project this medical capability. The CST medical assets are primarily for internal team care with the ability to render limited assistance outside the team on a case-by-case basis.[297]

Training

The CST conducts an external evaluation every year and a half to remain accredited with the Department of Defense. U.S. Army North conducts the evaluation. The most recent exercise in April 2024 simulated an attack on a collegiate sporting event with contaminated materials in the stands and the press box.[298]

Equipment

Personal Protective Equipment

- Military Issue JSLIST
- Level A & B Protective suits
- Chemical Resistant Undergarments
- SCBA (Draeger)
- M53 Mask
- UDR 13
- PDR-75 Wristwatch Dosimeter
- BG4 Rebreathers (Draeger)[299]

Biological Detection Equipment

- Bioassay Tickets - 8 Agents
- RT-PCR - Agent DNA Targeting
- SASS 3100 – Dry Filtration Unit
- IBAC - Instantaneous Bio Analyzer & Detector
- ECL – Toxin Identification[300]

[297] Comments from CST Team Leaders, May 1, 2025.
[298] Wayne V. Hall, "Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team Trains to Keep Commonwealth Safe," *Pennsylvania National Guard*, last modified April 12, 2024, https://www.pa.ng.mil/Site-Management/News-Article-View/Article/3739756/weapons-of-mass-destruction-civil-support-team-trains-to-keep-commonwealth-safe/.
[299] CST 101, PANG, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 6, 2025.
[300] CST 101, PANG, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 6, 2025.

Radiological Detection Equipment

- AN PDR 77 RADIAC (Alpha, Beta, Gamma, & X-Ray)
- AN VDR2 RADIAC (Beta and Gamma)
- Ludlum Micro-R (Beta and Gamma at micro-R levels)
- Identifinder (Detects radiation level and identifies isotope)
- Portal Monitor
- Radiation Detection Backpacks
- RadEye Pager
- ORTEC Micro Detective HX[301]

Chemical Detection Equipment

- INFICON HAPSITE (GC/MS) – Identifies and quantifies volatile organic chemicals
- FTIR (Infrared Spectrometry) – Identifies thousands of chemical substances
- RMX – Identifies pure chemical substances
- MULTIRAE (Photo Ionization Detector) – VOC, LEL, O2, H2S, CO
- JCAD/RAID-M – Nerve/ Blister Agents
- M256A2 Kit (Low Volatility) – Detects low volatility Nerve/ Blister/ Blood
- M8 Paper – Nerve/ Blister Agents
- AreaRae – Remote monitoring of large venues[302]

The Unified Command Suite is a vehicle that includes radios like HF/UHF/VHF, SATCOM, and INMARSAT; phones like DSN/Commercial; data capabilities like NIPRNET and SIPRNET; video conferencing tools; and interoperability with ACU-1000.[303]

The Advon is a vehicle that includes radio capabilities of HF/UHF/VHF, SATCOM, and Incident Command Radio Interface; phones including Commercial (VOIP), INMARSAT, and Iridium; and data capabilities including KU Satellite, NIPRNET, Interoperability, and Printer/Scanner/Fax.[304]

[301] CST 101, PANG, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 6, 2025.
[302] CST 101, PANG, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 6, 2025.
[303] CST 101, PANG, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 6, 2025.
[304] CST 101, PANG, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 6, 2025.

The Analytical Laboratory System (ALS1A1) can be staffed by two personnel and is operable within 15 minutes. It includes:

- Agilent GC/MS
- Infrared Spectrometry (FTIR)
- Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR)
- Antigen Antibody Assay
- Robust Reach-Back System
- Communications Linked to UCS
- Level III Gloveboxes
- Electrochemiluminescence (ECL)[305]

The CST has hazard prediction capabilities that allow them to predict the dispersion of hazardous chemicals, biological agents, and radioactive materials. It uses weather and terrain details to produce models such as the Plume model, which predicts dispersion street by street, and predicts lethal effects and makes recommendations for an exclusion zone.[306]

[305] CST 101, PANG, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 6, 2025.
[306] CST 101, PANG, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 6, 2025.

The entire in-state system was established in 2003 after 9/11. At that time, the federal government provided a significant amount of funding, training, and other resources for the teams. Those resources have since dwindled, and many of these teams have been left struggling. Throughout advisory committee meetings and meetings with individual teams, funding was the largest and most persistent concern.

US&R teams receive funding in a variety of ways. The most significant source of funding is from FEMA grants which are passed down by PEMA. There are two grant programs within FEMA's Homeland Security Grant Program: State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) and Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) Program.

With the SHSP funding, PEMA applies for, and usually receives, the maximum amount of money available to the Commonwealth. In Fiscal Year 24, that amount was $7,322,627. PEMA then retains twenty percent of that amount for use by state agencies, which is the maximum amount permitted under the grant program. At least 80 percent of funding must be directed to local or regional programs. PEMA uses a formula which replicates the federal formula to allocate the funding between the eight regional task forces in Pennsylvania. The regional task forces split the allocation between multiple resources in their region based on their THIRA, including Hazmat, water rescue, SWAT, EMS task forces, US&R, etc. The fiduciary county for each regional task force is thereby authorized to pay invoices and to submit those invoices to PEMA for reimbursement of county funds.

With the UASI funding, PEMA applies for and usually receives the maximum amount of money available to certain urban regions in the Commonwealth. FEMA decides which regions are eligible and how much money each region will receive. In Fiscal Year 24, the Philadelphia region received $14,941,233 and the Pittsburgh region received $1,476,785. Like with the SHSP funding, PEMA may retain up to 20 percent of that amount for use by state agencies and for grant management, which they do. These UASI funds are then passed to the fiduciary county for the regional task force which contains the urban area. The fiduciary county for each regional task force is thereby authorized to pay invoices and to submit those invoices to PEMA for reimbursement of county funds.

These funds pass through the regional task forces which means that US&R must compete with other capabilities in the region for funding of equipment, training, and exercises. This presents a significant challenge with funding US&R because the regional THIRAs do not support an investment in US&R since the THIRAs do not identify significant gaps when it comes to US&R-related mass search and rescue operations.[307] Directing state and federal grants to US&R can put the Commonwealth in jeopardy of not funding projects that rank higher from a risk and hazard

[307] Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 25, 2025.

perspective.[308] Funding US&R, which can be deployed only a few times a year in some areas, at an adequate amount means that capabilities like SWAT and Hazmat, which can be deployed much more frequently throughout any given year, will receive less funding.

This federal funding is not reliable and has been reduced drastically over the last decade. In Fiscal Year 16, Pennsylvania received a combined $31,279,500 in SHSP and UASI funds. In Fiscal Year 24, that amount was $23,740,645, representing a 24 percent decrease over the last nine fiscal years. Further, that amount carries the risk of being reduced to near-zero in the future as federal spending is being closely scrutinized. On May 2, 2025, President Trump unveiled a high-level budget proposal for Fiscal Year 26, calling for cuts to approximately $646 million in non-disaster FEMA grant programs.[309] That proposal did state that it would reduce non-disaster grant programs while continuing funding for "FEMA's Preparedness Grants Portfolio, as well as State-level programs, [which] are better suited to dealing with [emergency management] issues. The Budget reduces bloat and waste while encouraging States and communities to build resilience and use their unique local knowledge and ample resources in disaster response." Despite that statement, which appears to show that FEMA's Preparedness Grants Portfolio (which includes SHSP and UASI funds) would not be reduced, FEMA submitted a Congressional Justification for Fiscal Year 26 on May 30, 2025.[310] The justification budgeted for a reduction in SHSP funding from $468 million to $351 million and for a reduction in UASI funding from $553.5 million to $415.5 million. Since Fiscal Year 18, that is a 13 percent reduction in SHSP funds and a 28 percent reduction in UASI funds. These budget reductions are passed onto the regional task forces, which must more closely scrutinize and direct their allocation of funds to the most used and required assets in their region, which is likely not US&R. When these funds are used to enhance the region's ability to prepare for, prevent, respond to, and recover from potential attacks and other hazards, the first budget cuts will likely be to response and recovery.

PEMA leadership shared that the potential reduction in SHSP and UASI funding may be related to a proposal to implement a 25 percent non-federal match for the funding programs.[311] If such is the case, PEMA shared that they would have to drastically change the way in which they distribute these funding programs. This would likely include the grant program becoming a much more competitive process which would be tied to strategic initiatives at the state level.

The second most consistent source of funding is through in-kind and some monetary donations by local fire departments, ambulance associations, or other agencies that are members of the US&R team. Most US&R teams have been given permission to store their equipment at county, local, or private facilities at no cost to them. Additionally, some local agencies contribute funds to maintain the equipment, including tire replacement, inspection costs, and small parts replacement. Most local agencies are covering the costs related to the team members, including for personal protective equipment (PPE) and workers' compensation benefits.

---

[308] Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 25, 2025.
[309] "Fiscal Year 2026 Discretionary Budget Request," *The White House*, accessed June 17, 2025, https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Fiscal-Year-2026-Discretionary-Budget-Request.pdf.
[310] "FEMA Fiscal Year 2026 Congressional Justification," *Department of Homeland Security*, accessed June 17, 2025, https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/2025-05/25_0530_fema_fy26-congressional-budget-justification.pdf.
[311] Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, June 20, 2025.

Some teams have found that training and exercises are more difficult to fund than equipment, despite its importance. While most training can be offered at various higher education institutions and county facilities throughout the state, some highly technical courses require travel to other states like Texas and Virginia. Two issues have been present in US&R training. First, teams must seek approval from their regional task force and PEMA to expend the HSGP funds for training. Teams have shared that with the significant delay in the approval process, by the time they are approved, most classes have already filled up to their maximum number of individuals. PEMA leadership stated that the cause of these delays can be attributed to many of the regional task forces and teams not planning expenditures or training accordingly which leads them to seek last minute approvals.[312] PEMA leadership shared that this issue can be resolved by teams seeking approvals a few months in advance, when many of these training programs are first scheduled, to give the executive committee of each respective task force, which generally meet monthly, the time to approve the expenditure and give PEMA the time to ensure the expenditure is for an eligible expense in accordance with the requirements of the grant program. The second and most significant issue Commission staff heard from interviewing individual teams was that training opportunities hurt recruitment efforts. As almost every US&R member in the state is unpaid, they must take time off from their income-producing careers to attend trainings and exercises, which can last as long as a few weeks. Additionally, if training is not offered within a few hours of their home, they must spend that time away from their family and the team must realize the added costs of transportation, lodging, and hospitality.

As noted in the review of certain teams' finances, some teams solicit and receive funding from private donors in their community to help pay for and manage equipment. This has not generated a significant amount of funding but has allowed some teams to update or maintain smaller pieces of equipment.

With two exceptions, there presently exists no state funding available to US&R teams for updating their equipment or for cache sustainment. The US&R team in Region 13 was able to procure a $4.6 million grant from the Department of Community and Economic Development in 2022 which was used to fund its operations for two-and-a-half to three years. Additionally, in 2024, the team received a $6 million appropriation from the Commonwealth for the purpose of transitioning their team into a Type 3 US&R team. The $10.6 million in funds over the last three years highlights the significant costs involved with building and sustaining US&R teams. These funds have not been made available to other teams in the Commonwealth, which insist a fraction of those state funds would drastically change the services they could offer their region. Throughout advisory committee meetings and meetings with individual teams, many stressed the importance of fairness in distributing funds to every team to build a more coherent in-state system.

[312] Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, June 20, 2025.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING OF US&R

Federal Emergency Management Agency

The Federal Emergency Management agency (FEMA) coordinates the National US&R Response System, a framework which organizes federal, state, and local partner emergency response teams as integrated federal disaster response task forces.[313] The system currently has 28 task forces which can be deployed by FEMA to disaster areas to provide assistance in structural collapse rescue, or they may be pre-positioned when a major disaster threatens a community.

Each of the 28 teams has had to apply to be one of the federal US&R task forces, and FEMA has selected each team strategically based on threat levels across the country. The federal government has funded each of these teams at a uniform level. In fiscal year 2024, each team received $1,369,884.[314] Additionally, FEMA will set aside additional funds within their $40.832 million US&R budget for specific requests from individual teams. In Fiscal Year 24, PA-TF1 received an additional $196,500. Of that, $110,000 was for National Level Training Hosting for Medical Team Specialist Training (MTT), $35,000 was for National Level Training Hosting for Safety Officers (SOFR), $7,500 was for an Annual Meeting Hosting for a Training/Exercise Workshop, $20,000 was for Annual Advisory Organization Stipends as Divisional Task Force Representatives (TFR-Ds), and $24,000 was for Annual Advisory Organization Stipends as Deputy Advisory Group Chair. Funding for the federal teams is never certain; however, for Fiscal Year 2026, a bipartisan coalition of members of the U.S. Congress, including Reps. Brendan Boyle and Mary Gay Scanlon from Pennsylvania, have called for a $16 million increase, for a total of $56 million, in funding for the National Urban Search & Rescue Response System.[315]

With respect to neighboring states, Delaware and West Virginia have no federal US&R task forces. Ohio has one federal US&R task force in the southwest part of the state outside of Dayton. New York has one federal US&R task force in the southeast part of the state in New York City. Maryland has one federal US&R task force in the central western part of the state around Gaithersburg. New Jersey has one federal US&R task force in the central eastern part of the state in Wall Township. Virginia has two federal US&R task forces: one in the southeast part of the state in Virginia Beach; and the other in the northern part of the state just outside Arlington. The Maryland and Florida federal task forces each host the Hazardous Material Equipment Push Packages (HEPP) and Virginia's second federal task force in Virginia Beach hosts the Incident

[313] "Urban Search & Rescue," *Federal Emergency Management Agency*, accessed June 17, 2025, https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/frameworks/urban-search-rescue.
[314] Appendix D.
[315] "Lawmakers Call for an Increase in Federal Funding to Fully Support Urban Search & Rescue Efforts," *Office of Congressman Kevin Mullin*, accessed June 17, 2025, https://kevinmullin.house.gov/2025/06/03/lawmakers-call-for-an-increase-in-federal-funding-tofully-support-urban-search-rescue-efforts/.

Support Team (IST) cache for the FEMA US&R Eastern Division, which Pennsylvania is covered under.

Below the federal US&R task force level, FEMA administers the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) which is the most significant funding source used to support state and local US&R capabilities across the nation. There are three individual grant programs under HSGP: the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP), the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI), and Operation Stonegarden (OPSG). SHSP and UASI are the two grant programs that can be used for US&R funding.

State Homeland Security Program (SHSP)

The most significant portion of funding available for all regional task forces is provided through SHSP. The goal of SHSP is to assist state, local, tribal, and territorial governments in preventing, preparing for, protecting against, and responding to acts of terrorism. SHSP also provides funding to implement initiatives based on capability targets and gaps identified during the THIRA process and assessed in the Stakeholder Preparedness Review (SPR). SHSP funding each year from Fiscal Year 16 to Fiscal Year 18 was set at $402 million and from Fiscal Year 19 to Fiscal Year 23 at $415 million. In Fiscal Year 24, funding for the program was reduced by 10 percent to $373.5 million.

For Fiscal Year 24, it was announced that Pennsylvania would receive $7,322,627, an amount similar to Virginia.[316] Only New York, California, Texas, Illinois, and Florida received more SHSP funding than Pennsylvania. In Fiscal Year 24, the total amount of SHSP funding in Pennsylvania was split as follows:[317]

Table 15
Fiscal Year 24 SHSP Funding in Pennsylvania
2025

Region	SHSP Funds Received (as percentage of state)	UASI Funds Received	Total Funds Per Resident (SHSP + UASI)
State Agencies (statewide)	$1,464,525 (20.00%)	$3,283,604	$0.36
Southeast	1,351,611 (18.45%)	11,952,986	2.84
Southwest	1,229,976 (16.80%)	1,181,428	0.83
Southcentral	1,086,766 (14.84%)	--	0.49
Northeast	806,419 (11.01%)	--	0.48
Northcentral	459,736 (6.28%)	--	0.94
Southcentral Mountain	409,295 (5.59%)	--	0.83
Northwest	271,531 (3.71%)	--	0.69
Northwest Central	242,768 (3.32%)	--	1.05

Source: *PEMA by the Numbers 2025 emailed by Randy Padfield 2/26/2025; 2024 Census population estimates*

[316] "Grant Programs Directorate Information Bulletin No. 517," *FEMA*, accessed June 17, 2025, https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_gpd-fy24-preparedness-grants-ib.pdf.
[317] PEMA by the Numbers 2025, Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 26, 2025.

In regard to the application for funding, only the State Administrative Agency, in Pennsylvania, PEMA, is eligible to submit an application to FEMA. PEMA must submit one application on behalf of the entire state for the funding through the FEMA Grants Outcomes (GO) system. [318] Following FEMA's release of the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), PEMA has anywhere from 30 to 60 days, depending on the NOFO release date, to submit its application in the GO system; this requires each task force and agency to supply PEMA with the required information in a relatively quick manner. The fiduciary counties of the regional task forces apply to PEMA for sub-grants through the Electronic Single Application (ESA) grants portal site. State agencies may also apply to PEMA for sub-grants; however, they do not utilize the ESA system to provide their paperwork. While each UASI region is required to compile and submit their own THIRA and SPR to PEMA, which in turn submits to FEMA in the state's application, task forces that just receive SHSP funding and not UASI funding are no longer required to complete a THIRA; however, in practice, many task forces still complete the THIRA and provide the information to PEMA. PEMA then utilizes all information submitted by the task forces and state agencies to create a state THIRA and SPR which is a requirement for the SHSP. The THIRA and SPR results do not impact grant allocations or awards.

Each task force must also submit an Investment Justification (IJ) for each of the six National Priority Areas:

- Enhancing the protection of soft targets/crowded places
- Enhancing information and intelligence sharing and analysis
- Combating domestic violent extremism
- Enhancing cybersecurity
- Enhancing community preparedness and resilience
- Enhancing election security (three percent minimum spend)

The IJs must directly tie their planned investments to gaps identified in their THIRA. The funding levels across all six National Priority Areas must equal or exceed 30 percent of the total SHSP allocation. Additionally, at least three percent of the total SHSP funding must be spent on enhancing election security.

The remaining 70 percent of funding must be allocated to gaps identified through the THIRA and SPR process. FEMA recommends that some of the funding be allocated towards effective planning, training and awareness campaigns, equipment and capital projects, and exercises. There exists a 50 percent cap on funding of personnel. Additionally, task forces must allocate at least 35 percent of their total SHSP funding to Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Activities (LETPA). With all these stipulations on funding by FEMA, it is difficult for US&R teams to receive an adequate share of funding from their task forces.

Following application to FEMA, and an average of 45 days later, FEMA will then give notification to PEMA that the funding has been awarded. PEMA then has 45 days to obligate the funds and provide assurances to FEMA that at least 80 percent of the funds will be given to the

[318] "The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Fiscal Year 2024 Homeland Security Grant Program," *FEMA*, accessed June 17, 2025, https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_fy2024_hsgp_nofo.pdf.

regions and localities. While technically local agencies and other nonprofit organizations may apply for the funding, the practice has been that only regional task forces have applied. The regional task forces in turn allocate the funding across their regions in order to ensure every county is supported with necessary resources.

SHSP funding is then allocated by PEMA to the different regional task forces using an allocation formula found in U.S. Department of Homeland Security grant guidance.[319] For Fiscal Year 24, each task force received 0.35 percent (.0035) of the total pass-through funds allocated for grants, which amounts to a total baseline amount of $830,923 applied to each SHSP allocation based on the number of counties within each task force. FEMA uses the exact same base formula of 0.35 percent in dividing the SHSP funding between each state and territory. The remaining funding is split based on performance-based factors including population index (65 percent), economic index (15 percent), and critical infrastructure points (20 percent). In Fiscal Year 24, population was derived from 2023 U.S. Census estimates; the economic index included sales, value of shipments, or revenue for each county; and the critical infrastructure points were accumulated as five points for Tier 1, three points for Tier 2, and one point for Tier 3, with military facilities counting as Tier 3 sites.

PEMA has had discussions with the regional task forces about the possibility of a transition to a competitive grant process for the SHSP funding, giving PEMA the ability to target specific projects by setting up the criteria for the grants.[320] PEMA believes that approach would still allow for them to achieve the 80 percent pass through criteria; however, some task forces have expressed concerns about being able to control funding within their region. Since New Jersey's in-state system's inception, they have relied on a competitive bidding process for their distribution of funding. PEMA has also discussed with the task forces a hybrid approach where PEMA would distribute a base allocation to the regional task forces to maintain core operations and any amount beyond that would be used in a competitive process open to all the regional task forces based on criteria set by the state.

SHSP funding is a reimbursement grant, meaning the fiduciary county for each regional task force or UASI has the spending authority commensurate with the grant allocation and can pay invoices. They can then provide those receipts to PEMA for reimbursement to the county. Subrecipients can purchase items in accordance with established procurement policies and procedures, but the vast majority of large equipment purchases run through PEMA procurement to ensure compliance with Federal Financial Assistance regulations and avoid the potential of subrecipients having to pay back funds if there is a compliance finding that they did not follow the appropriate procedures to purchase equipment, supplies, or services. [321]

Subrecipients of SHSP grants must also complete other tasks to be eligible for the funding such as the submission of an annual NIMS implementation progress report and completion of the Nationwide Cybersecurity Review (NCSR) by the end of February each year. Additionally, there are a number of reporting requirements post-award that are required by FEMA. This includes the Investment Justifications, the Initial Strategy Plans, and the Biannual Strategy and Implementation

[319] Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 25, 2025.
[320] Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 25, 2025.
[321] 2 C.F.R.

Reports (BSIR) which are processed on a regular basis over the lifespan of the grant. Further, subrecipients must create and provide many other documents including an annual equipment inventory, complete forms when they take delivery of equipment that was procured through PEMA and delivered to them, etc.

SHSP funding has decreased significantly over the years, and there exists questions on sustainability of the funding source both in the short- and long-term.

Table 16
Historical SHSP Allocation to Pennsylvania
2003-2024

Fiscal Year	Pennsylvania SHSP Allocation
2024	$7,322,627
2023	8,136,252
2022	8,136,252
2021	8,447,973
2020	8,846,000
2019	9,200,000
2018	9,622,000
2017	10,037,500
2016	10,054,500
2015	10,054,500
2014	10,026,000
2013	8,718,570
2012	7,265,475
2011	13,545,257
2010	27,090,515
2009	28,589,000
2008	30,310,000
2007	20,230,000
2006	12,810,000
2005	34,676,612
2004	55,260,000
2003	67,760,000

Source: Each respective NOFO is available at https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/homeland-security.

Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) Program

There exists additional federal funding for urban cities and their surrounding counties through UASI. The goal of UASI is to assist high-risk urban areas in preventing, preparing for, protecting against, and responding to acts of terrorism. UASI funding each year from Fiscal Year 16 to Fiscal Year 18 was set at $580 million, Fiscal Year 19 was set at $590 million, and Fiscal Year 20 to Fiscal Year 23 was set at $615 million. In Fiscal Year 24, funding for the initiative was reduced by ten percent to $553.5 million.

For Fiscal Year 24, the Philadelphia area received $14,941,233 and the Pittsburgh area received $1,476,785.[322] The Philadelphia area received an amount similar to the Boston area, Dallas/Fort Worth/Arlington area, and San Diego area. The Pittsburgh area received the same exact funding as the Cincinnati area, Cleveland area, Indianapolis area, New Orleans area, and the Kansas City area. In total, Pennsylvania received $16,418,018 in UASI funding. As is permitted by law, PEMA retained the maximum allowed 20 percent of funding, amounting to $3,283,604, for distribution across multiple state agencies, including PEMA, the Pennsylvania State Police, and the Office of Homeland Security. The remaining 80 percent is available for applicants in those two regions, with the Philadelphia area having access to $11,952,986 and the Pittsburgh area having access to $1,181,428.

Table 17
UASI Allocations Within Pennsylvania
2003-2024

Fiscal Year	UASI Philadelphia Area	UASI Pittsburgh Area
2024	$14,941,233	$1,476,785
2023	16,646,500	1,645,333
2022	16,900,000	1,500,000
2021	16,900,000	0
2020	16,900,000	3,500,000
2019	16,900,000	3,250,000
2018	17,500,000	2,500,000
2017	17,763,000	2,837,000
2016	18,263,000	2,962,000
2015	18,500,000	3,000,000
2014	18,500,000	3,000,000
2013	17,567,086	3,000,000
2012	14,268,859	0
2011	23,335,845	4,479,093
2010	23,335,845	6,398,705

[322] "Grant Programs Directorate Information Bulletin No. 517," *FEMA*, accessed June 17, 2025, https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_gpd-fy24-preparedness-grants-ib.pdf.

Table 17
UASI Allocations Within Pennsylvania
2003-2024

Fiscal Year	UASI Philadelphia Area	UASI Pittsburgh Area
2009	17,950,650	6,395,500
2008	18,139,000	6,732,000
2007	18,700,000	6,940,000
2006	19,520,000	4,870,000
2005	22,818,091	9,635,991
2004	23,080,000	11,980,000
2003	14,220,000	6,820,000

Source: Each respective NOFO is available at https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/homeland-security.

In regard to the application for funding, the application process is very similar to the application process for SHSP funding, with some exceptions. FEMA determines the eligible high-risk urban areas through an analysis of relative risk of terrorism faced by the 100 most populous metropolitan statistical areas (MSA) in the U.S., in accordance with the Homeland Security Act of 2002, as amended.[323] Each UASI region and regional task force are given draft copies of their risk profile prior to FEMA's selection of UASI-eligible MSAs. The region and task force may then respond with additional information if they believe the ratings are not appropriate or some of the information used to develop the risk profile is not accurate. In 2024, that produced 41 high-risk urban areas, two of which are in Pennsylvania: the Philadelphia Area and the Pittsburgh Area. Over the last two decades, the Pittsburgh Area has not been an eligible high-risk urban area twice, meaning it received no UASI funding for those two years.[324] The funding level for each urban area is pre-determined by FEMA, and only those two areas are eligible to receive funds. There are two other MSAs in Pennsylvania which are among the 100 most populous areas across the country but do not have high enough relative risk scores: the Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton Area and the Harrisburg-Carlisle Area.

Despite the funding level being set, each urban area must still apply for the UASI funding, which PEMA must do on their behalf as with SHSP. While it is not a requirement with SHSP funds, for UASI, each UASI region is required to compile and submit its own THIRA and SPR to PEMA, which in turn submit that to FEMA in the state's application. The investment requirements for the six National Priority Areas in SHSP funds are the exact same for UASI funds. UASI funding has decreased significantly over the years, and there exists questions on sustainability of the funding source both in the short- and long-term.

[323] Homeland Security Act of 2002 § 2003(b)(2)(A), 6 U.S.C. § 604(b)(2)(A) (2025).
[324] Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, February 25, 2025.

There presently exists no direct state funding of US&R in the Commonwealth for teams to rely on. One team, PA-ST1, has received state funds from the Commonwealth through two forms: a Department of Community and Economic Development grant in the amount of $4.6 million in 2022, and a line-item budget appropriation in the amount of $6 million in 2024. Outside of these direct funds, and without including any in-kind donations provided by PEMA or other state agencies, no other team has received direct state funding for their operations.

Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Grant

In 2022, the Western Pennsylvania Regional Urban Search and Tech Rescue Team (WPARUSARTRT), a non-profit corporation affiliated with PA-ST1 in Region 13, applied for an Economic Development and Community Development Initiatives Program assistance grant. The application itemized the $4,600,000 request as follows:

Table 18
DCED Grant Itemization by Applicant
2022

Category	Total Projected Spending
Machinery & Equipment	**$2,064,700**
New Equipment	715,700
Vehicles	1,349,000
Operating Costs/Working Capital	**1,567,541**
Salary/Fringe Benefits	858,553
Training/Technical Assistance	357,988
Office Equipment	27,000
Space Costs	324,000
Related Costs	**718,247**
Insurance	129,600
Contingencies	588,647
Miscellaneous	**249,512**
Legal & Accounting Fees	150,000
Software Subscriptions	27,512
Equipment Maintenance	72,000
Budget Total	**4,600,000**

Source: 2022 Economic Development and Community Development Initiatives Program assistance grant contract.

In its application, WPARUSARTRT stated that the new equipment purchase would cover the purchase of equipment defined by NIMS in the US&R Cache documents. The rolling stock (vehicles) would cover the trucks, trailers, and utility vehicles needed to maintain and deploy the US&R team. The salary and fringe benefits would cover salary and overhead for a program manager and logistics specialists. The training/technical assistance costs would cover the cost of training new US&R team members as well as continued training for the current members of the team. The office equipment and insurance costs would cover phone, internet, insurance, vehicle maintenance, and fuel costs. The space costs were an estimate for leasing a facility to support the project, which would include enough space for equipment, offices, and training. The contingences and equipment maintenance included the cost of maintaining the equipment, including repair of damaged equipment and the replacement of consumables. The administrative costs would cover expected software subscriptions, accounting, and legal fees.

The organization's project narrative summary for supporting such grant funding, taken from the application, was:

> Identified Problem
>
> During a disaster, most victims are rescued by local first responders. Rescue of the remaining victims are often beyond the capabilities of these resources. Those victims are rescued by highly trained Urban Search & Rescue personnel using state of the art equipment. In PA, there is a single NIMS Type 1 US&R team in Philadelphia. For events in the western portions of the Commonwealth, this results in extended response times of over six hours. This grant would provide a NIMS compliant US&R team with highly trained personnel and very sophisticated rescue equipment for Western PA. Currently Western PA is protected by PA-ST1, a Type 4 US&R team supported by Region 13. This grant would enhance PA-ST1s capabilities by allowing it to provide a very high level of response to everyone in Western PA on a timely basis. The grant funds will be administered by Western PA Regional Search and Technical Rescue Team.
>
> Project Plan
>
> Equipment: At the end of the project we will have acquired a FEMA NIMS compliant US&R Equipment Cache along with the trucks and trailers needed to transport that equipment.
>
> Personnel: At the end of the project we will have a Program Manager in place along with two Logistics Specialists. This full-time staff will be responsible for the management of the US&R team and assuring that the teams equipment is able to be deployed when requested.
>
> Training: The TPAM (Training Program Administration Manual) defines the three-year raining plan for the organization. All members of the US&R team will be trained based on this schedule. This will account for over 3,000 training hours. In

addition, training funds will be used to bring 50 new members up to operational standards.

Facility: The team will lease a facility that will be used to house equipment, offices and training areas for the US&R team.

Use of Funds

Equipment: Acquisition of a NIMS compliant US&R Equipment Cache along with the trucks and trailers needed to transport that equipment and personnel. $715,700 will be used to purchase equipment to match FEMA Type 1 cache requirements and $1,349,000 will be used to purchase vehicles.

Operating costs: Hire full time personnel to manage the project and assure equipment is operational: $858,553. Team training, detailed in the TPAM (Training Program Administration Manual), will account for $357,988 providing over 3,000 hours of training. Office equipment and working capital will account for $324,000. Other related costs: Insurance (General Liability, Vehicles, Property, Errors & Omissions) for $129,600. Contingencies make up $588,647, or about 13% of the total budget.

Miscellaneous: legal and accounting fees at $150,000. Equipment maintenance, including vehicles and portable equipment, accounts for $72,000. Software subscriptions for accounting software, inventory, and team management at $27,512.

In the contract with the Commonwealth regarding the grant, the rescue team noted the following:

Contingencies – The facility needs to have a training room that will accommodate ~80 people. A large portion is set aside in contingencies is allocated to extra leasing costs, if leasing is an option, or to construction costs, if a special purpose facility is required. In either case funds allocated to Contingencies would be moved to Space Costs. While the passenger vehicle market is starting to stabilize, there is still significant uncertainty in the market for larger commercial vehicles. The plan is to move funds from Contingencies to Vehicles as requirements and market forces stabilize. The current hiring plan has three full time employees coming on during the project period. This number was chosen as a minimum and after researching other similar projects this may be too low. Problems in estimating needs in this area are exacerbated by the current state of the labor market. If needed, the plan is to move funds from Contingencies to Salary/Fringe Benefits.

The funding was granted effective January 20, 2023, and the contract provided that the total funding amount may be used for the reimbursement of any eligible project costs incurred between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2025.[325] The contract specifically provided that, "[t]he Grantor may pay the Grantee for eligible project costs at intervals to be determined by the Grantor." DCED

[325] Contract No. C000084106, received by Commission staff on February 25, 2025.

stated that this clause gives them discretion to determine payment and shared that this grant program is an advancement program, not a reimbursement program, which is why they transmitted the entire $4.6 million in funds to the nonprofit upon the initiation of the contract.[326] At the end of the expenditure period, the contract still requires a project audit to be performed by a third party to ensure compliance. Additionally, as the nonprofit spends the money, if a certain expenditure does not conform to the contractual budget, they may request a budgetary amendment after the fact so that they may remain in compliance with the contract.

In April of 2025, the nonprofit requested, and received, an extension on the end date of the contract to December 31, 2025, from June 30, 2025.[327] Additionally, the nonprofit submitted an amendment to their itemized budget to conform with their past spending of the grant funds:

Table 19

AMENDED
DCED Grant Itemization by Applicant
2025

Category	Total Projected Spending
Machinery & Equipment	**$3,249,826**
New Equipment	1,943,222
Vehicles	1,306,604
Operating Costs/Working Capital	**876,703**
Salary/Fringe Benefits	330, 957
Training/Technical Assistance	112,847
Office Equipment	41,011
Space Costs	391,888
Related Costs	**379,235**
Insurance	73,262
Contingencies	305,973
Miscellaneous	**94,236**
Legal & Accounting Fees	39,863
Software Subscriptions	10,937
Equipment Maintenance	43,436
Budget Total	**4,600,000**

Source: April 2025 Amendment to 2022 Economic Development and Community Development Initiatives Program assistance grant contract.

[326] DCED Legislative Liaison, e-mail message to Commission staff, May 30, 2025.
[327] First Amendment to Contract No. C000084106, received by Commission staff on May 30, 2025.

The differences between the 2022 and 2025 projected budgets for the grant funds can be visualized in the following chart:

Table 20
Original Versus Amended
DCED Grant Itemization by Applicant
2025

Category	Original (2022)	Amended (2025)	Change
Machinery & Equipment	**$2,064,700**	**$3,249,826**	**$1,185,126**
New Equipment Purchase	715,700	1,943,222	1,227,522
Vehicles	1,349,000	1,306,604	-42,396
Operating Costs/Working Capital	**1,567,541**	**876,703**	**-690,838**
Salary/Fringe Benefits	858,553	330,957	-527,596
Training/Technical Assistance	357,988	112,847	-245,141
Office Equipment	27,000	41,011	14,011
Space Costs	324,000	391,888	67,888
Related Costs	**718,247**	**379,235**	**-339,012**
Insurance	129,600	73,262	-56,338
Contingencies	588,647	305,973	-282,674
Miscellaneous	**249,512**	**94,236**	**-155,276**
Legal & Accounting Fees	150,000	39,863	-110,137
Software Subscriptions	27,512	10,937	-16,575
Equipment Maintenance	72,000	43,436	-28,564

Source: 2022 Economic Development and Community Development Initiatives Program assistance grant application (see Table 18); Amended 2025 Economic Development and Community Development Initiatives Program assistance grant amendment (see Table 19).

2024 State Budget Appropriation

The General Appropriation Act of 2024 contained a line-item appropriation of $6 million for urban search and rescue.[328] The Fiscal Code from that year expanded upon that appropriation, requiring it to be distributed to the sponsoring agency of a US&R team covering a county of the second class (Allegheny).[329] The Fiscal Code further required that the money distributed be used for equipment, equipment storage, and training necessary for the US&R task force to meet or exceed the minimum requirements of a NIMS Type 3 US&R team.

Following the appropriation, PEMA, the Pennsylvania Office of the Budget, the City of Pittsburgh, and PA-ST1 had numerous exchanges with each other discussing how to transfer the funds in accordance with the Fiscal Code and with standard financial safeguards in place. As of the publishing of this report, neither the grant agreement for the transfer of funds nor the

[328] Act of July 11, 2024 (P.L. , No.1A), § 231, known as the General Appropriation Act of 2024.
[329] Act of July 11, 2024 (P.L.550, No.54), § 1735-H(d); 72 P.S. § 1735-H(4).

intergovernmental agreement to establish Pittsburgh as the sponsoring agency for the team in accordance with the requirements under 35 Pa.C.S. § 7214(a)(1)(ii) have been contractually entered into.[330] PEMA submitted both documents to the City of Pittsburgh for signing on May 16, 2025; the City of Pittsburgh acknowledged receipt of the documents and assigned a lawyer to review each document.[331] In early June of 2025, the City of Pittsburgh notified PEMA that they are in the process of drafting legislation for the city council to authorize the mayor to sign both agreements, to create a special revenue account for the funds, and to authorize the city to partner with the non-profit to administer the team in coordination with the city.[332]

[330] Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, June 2, 2025.
[331] Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, June 2, 2025.
[332] Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, June 9, 2025.

FUNDING OF US&R IN OTHER STATES

The National Urban Search & Rescue (US&R) Response System (the System), established under the authority of the Federal Emergency Management Agency in 1989, is a framework for organizing federal, state and local partner emergency response teams as integrated federal disaster response task forces. The System's 28 US&R task forces can be deployed by FEMA to a disaster area to provide assistance in structural collapse rescue, or they may be pre-positioned when a major disaster threatens a community. The System is a vital federal asset to support the continuous operation of critical government and business functions that are essential to human health and safety, or economic security capable of being deployed to assist in a disaster located anywhere in the nation.

All 50 states and U.S. Territories receive State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) grants. All U.S. Territories of American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Marianas Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands received $997,200 each for fiscal year 2024. Thirty-five states and the unincorporated territory of Puerto Rico received $4,362,750. The remaining 15 states and the District of Columbia received sums ranging from $4,576,849 (D.C., Michigan, and North Carolina) to over $50 million (California - $51 332,000 and New York - $61,229,940). Most of the remaining states received grants in the $5 million to $8 million range, with Illinois at $12,505,419 and Texas at $16,389,406 as the remaining outliers.[333]

Grants under the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) are, as the name suggests, designated for urban areas. In 2024, grants were made to 41 urban areas located in 25 states and the District of Columbia, with most areas receiving an average of $1.5 million. Major outliers in this grant program with the Los Angeles/Long Beach area at $59,395,378, the National Capital Region (D.C.) at $45,201,207, the Chicago area $59,395,378, and the New York City area at $156,131,176.[334]

This federal funding is used to financially support federal urban search and rescue task forces, as well as state and local urban search and rescue teams that respond to incidents in-state only. While there are 28 federal task forces, they are not located in every state. Instead, the 28 task forces are located in 18 states, with eight federal task forces located in California and two in Florida. Under FEMA, the country is divided into 10 regions, and there is at least one task force located within each region except Region 10, which encompasses Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. While these two grant programs are significant in funding urban search and rescue

[333] U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Grant Programs Directorate Information Bulletin No. 517a, September 30, 2024, p.5. https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_gpd_ib-517a.pdf
[334] *Id*., p. 6.

teams, there are other federal grant programs in which states, individuals, and business can apply for assistance in disaster recovery in general. [335]

The states summarized were selected based on the quantity and quality of their publicly available information, with an emphasis on surrounding states and states with exceptional US&R in-state systems. Throughout advisory committee meetings, many individuals stated that the leaders in US&R in-state systems included Texas, Florida, California, and South Carolina.

States With Federal US&R Task Forces

Pennsylvania is located in FEMA Region 6, and along with the Maryland and Virginia federal task forces. This section looks at states in other regions that have federal task forces, including Florida (Region 4), New Jersey (Region 2), Ohio (Region 5), and Texas (Region 6).

Florida

Florida has two federal task forces, FL-TF1 and FL-TF2. FL-TF1 is sponsored by Miami-Dade Fire Rescue and is located in Miami. FL-TF1 is comprised mostly of Miami-Dade Fire Rescue personnel, along with some other outside specialists as needed.[336] FL-TF2 is sponsored by the City of Miami Fire Department and is located in Fort Lauderdale. The team is comprised of individuals from 24 fire and police departments as well as other outside specialists.[337]

There are eight US&R task forces strategically located throughout Florida; two of them, mentioned previously, are federal task forces which have been folded into the in-state system. The state of Florida has invested significantly in its US&R infrastructure. Each of the eight state US&R teams receives support through both federal and state funding. Following the 2021 Surfside condominium collapse, the need for increased readiness and rapid deployment became more apparent, prompting state leaders to prioritize greater investment in search and rescue capabilities.

In 2022, Florida appropriated $10 million in state general revenue specifically to support the operational readiness and sustainment of the state's eight Urban Search and Rescue teams.[338] These grant funds are disbursed by the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) in conjunction with the State Fire Marshal. US&R teams can use the funding to support equipment purchases, training, mobilization readiness, vehicle maintenance, deployment exercises, and personnel costs. The money may also be used by FDEM to enhance statewide coordination and interoperability between the task forces and local first responders.

---

[335] FEMA, Urban Search and Rescue Task Force Locations, accessed July 10, 2025, https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/frameworks/urban-search-rescue/task-force-locations and FEMA, Regions, States and Territories, accessed July 10, 2025, https://www.fema.gov/about/regions.
[336] "Urban Search and Rescue," *Miami-Dade County*, accessed July 9, 2025, https://www.miamidade.gov/global/fire/urban-search-and-rescue.page.
[337] "USAR South Florida Task Force 2," *FL-TF2*, accessed July 9, 2025, https://www.fltf2.us/.
[338] "HB 5001- General Appropriations Act," The Florida Senate, accessed July 9, 2025, https://www.flsenate.gov/Committees/billsummaries/2022/html/2852.

In addition to this state-level investment, Florida's US&R teams receive funding through the federal SHSP and UASI grant programs. Multiple metropolitan areas in Florida, including Miami, Tampa, Orlando, and Jacksonville, are eligible UASI regions which in Fiscal Year 24 received $21,208,221.[339] A portion of these grants go to US&R and are used to improve response capacity, enhance regional collaboration, and sustain specialized response assets including US&R capabilities.

Florida's investment strategy also includes collaboration with the Fire College in Ocala and other training institutions, ensuring that responders maintain high levels of technical expertise and readiness at the lowest possible cost to their teams. The state's US&R program is regularly tested through statewide exercises, often coordinated by FDEM, to ensure effective deployment, logistics, and interagency communication.

Overall, Florida's US&R funding model is a hybrid approach: significant state-level investment to build and sustain core response infrastructure, augmented by federal preparedness grants to enhance capabilities across high-threat, high-density urban regions.

New Jersey

New Jersey's federal task force, NJ-TF1, is sponsored by the NJ State Police and is based in Wall Township, NJ. NJ-TF1 was established in 1997 to address a technical rescue void in the State Emergency Response Plan. It leases a facility which is 101,000 square feet and contains enough space to house all its equipment and vehicles. Prior to 2018, its warehouse facility was 38,000 square feet, which it had to move out of due to it not being able to house all its equipment and vehicles. For comparison, PA-TF1's facility is approximately 37,000 square feet. It also has approximately 3,000 square feet of office space for its administrative function group to operate in. Additionally, it has a training facility at the Lakehurst Naval Air Station which contains 10,000 square feet of hanger deck space, a 20,000 square foot rubble pile, a seven-acre training field, passenger rail car simulators, confined space simulators, collapsed structure rescue simulators, and trench rescue simulators.[340] Teams from across New Jersey travel to the training facility for its high-quality training simulators and props.

New Jersey has one UASI region which receives federal UASI funds in the amount of $16,723,000 in Fiscal Year 24. The Jersey City/Newark Urban Area Security Initiative, containing the counties of Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, Morris, Passaic, and Union, provides US&R services for the northern part of New Jersey. An executive committee made up of nine members (one for each county and the two cities) determines how UASI funds will be disbursed in the area to fill gaps in regional capability and response.[341] The executive committee established a program management office (PMO) and entered into a contract with Rutgers University to staff the PMO

[339] "The U. S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Fiscal Year 2024 Homeland Security Grant Program," *FEMA*, accessed July 9, 2025, https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_fy2024_hsgp_nofo.pdf.
[340] *UASI Funded Metro USAR Strike Team*, https://www.morriscountynj.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/departments/office-of-emergency-mngmt/metro-strike-morris-co.rev1_.pdf.
[341] *Jersey City/ Newark Urban Areas Security Initiative Charter* (March 2009, Revised April 2016), https://www.njohsp.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/148/638405037684900000.

and provide program oversight and coordination and technical assistance to the executive committee.[342] The PMO assists the region with completion of the THIRA/SPR, links expenditures to the THIRA/SPR, develops Investment Justifications (IJs) as required by FEMA, provides reporting of status programmatically and financially, monitors and validates current and projected maintenance and sustainment costs, assists with procurement issues and the coordination of procurement with the state; develops necessary MOUs and other agreements that ensures regionalization consistent with the THIRA, and many other tasks which are required by FEMA, the state, or the regional executive committee.[343]

Each city and county within the UASI region have their own US&R teams or specialty teams within a fire department which can respond to the vast majority of incidents. For more sophisticated incidents, the region's US&R program, Metro Urban Search and Rescue (MUSAR) responds. MUSAR is made up of nearly 500 firefighters from each jurisdiction as well as 40 Port Authority Police Department officers and together they constitute the Metro USAR Strike Team.[344] MUSAR has 11 rescue trucks which are spread throughout the region and are housed by different fire departments and the port authority police department. The entire program is funded with federal UASI funds, along with some in-kind expenditures from the various agencies apart from the team.

In New Jersey's 2024 state budget, they listed as receiving the following federal revenue for the Department of Law and Public Safety: Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP): $6,367,000; Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI): $16,723,000; and Urban Search and Rescue: $13,500,000.

For 2024, New Jersey appropriated $1 million in state funds to "Urban Search and Rescue" categorized under Direct State Services of the Department of Law and Public Safety. An additional $7.5 million was appropriated to "Urban Search and Rescue" categorized as special purpose funds under the Department of Law and Public Safety. Lastly, $6 million was appropriated to "USAR/FEMA Administration" categorized as special purpose funds under the Department of Law and Public Safety.[345]

Ohio

Ohio's federal task force, OH-TF1, is sponsored by Miami Valley Fire EMS Alliance and is based in the southwest part of their state in Dayton, Ohio. There are numerous participating agencies on the team, including Baldwin EMS, Monroeville Volunteer Fire Company #4, and the City of Pittsburgh Fire Department, all from Pennsylvania.

---

[342] "Current Initiatives- Policing and Law Enforcement," *Miller Center on Policing and Community Resilience*, accessed July 9, 2025, https://millercenter.rutgers.edu/current-initiatives-policing-and-law-enforcement/.
[343] "About UASI," *Jersey City- Newark Urban Area Security Initiative*, accessed July 9, 2025, https://njuasi.org/default.aspx?MenuItemID=5&MenuGroup=Public+Home.
[344] "UASI Programs," *Jersey City- Newark Urban Area Security Initiative*, accessed July 9, 2025, https://njuasi.org/default.aspx?MenuItemID=137&MenuGroup=Public+Home.
[345] Act of June 28, 2024, ch. 22, 2024 N.J. Laws 22

In Fiscal Year 26, the state of Ohio appropriated $250,000 to the OH-TF1 to pay for its operating costs and to develop new programs.[346] Additionally, another $200,000 was to be disbursed by the Ohio Department of Public Safety to OH-TF1, other similar urban search and rescue units, and for maintenance of the statewide fire emergency response plan by an entity recognized by Ohio EMA. These $450,000 in state funds were transferred from the State Fire Marshal Fund, which is funded by taxes from the sale of fire insurance. The federal team did not receive a budget appropriation from the state from its inception in 1996 until July 2019. Since then, the amount of funding by the state has remained constant at $250,000 per year plus access to an additional $200,000 disbursed by the Ohio Department of Public Safety.[347]

In 2021, OH-TF1 valued its equipment cache at approximately $8 million, which included over 50,000 pieces of equipment.[348] Much of that equipment has been funded through the annual FEMA appropriation; however, some vehicles were supported by private foundations and some were purchased with state grant funds like HSGP funds, which led to MOUs with Ohio on the use of that equipment.

Ohio's in-state emergency response system consists of eight total regions, of which five have US&R teams.[349] Like in Pennsylvania, some counties also maintain their own US&R teams separate from their respective regional team.[350] Regional and county-based teams are largely funded by HSGP funds, their respective counties, and by participating agencies.

Texas

Texas has one federal task force, TX-TF-1, sponsored by the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) and with headquarters at Hensley Field in Dallas, Texas. TX-TF1 serves as statewide urban search and rescue team under the direction of the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM). TX-TF1 also coordinates the state's swiftwater rescue program and the helicopter search and rescue team which works in conjunction with Texas Military Department. Additionally, the same sponsor supports TX-TF2, which functions as one of two state Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Teams in the State of Texas which provides a coordinated effort as well as the necessary personnel and equipment to locate, extricate, rescue, and provide immediate medical treatment to victims trapped as a result of a natural or man-made disaster.

---

[346] "Redbook Ohio Legis. Budget Office Analysis of Executive Budget Proposal - Department of Public Safety," *Ohio Legis. Service Comm.*, accessed June 17, 2025, https://www.lsc.ohio.gov/assets/legislation/136/hb96/in/files/hb96-dps-redbook-as-introduced-136th-general-Assembly.pdf#page=56.

[347] "General Revenue Fund," *Ohio Dept. of Public Safety*, accessed June 17, 2025, https://www.lsc.ohio.gov/assets/organizations/legislative-service-commission/files/2024-catalog-of-budget-line-items-dps.pdf#page=16.

[348] "Ohio Task Force One Written Testimony for the Ohio House Finance Committee," *Ohio Task Force One*, accessed June 17, 2025, https://search-prod.lis.state.oh.us/api/v2/general_assembly_134/committees/cmte_h_finance_1/meetings/cmte_h_finance_1_2021-03-09-1000_235/testimony/2277/uploaded-doc/.

[349] "Emergency Response Regions," *Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association*, accessed June 17, 2025, http://ohiofirechiefs.com/aws/OFCA/pt/sp/emergency_regions.

[350] "Butler County Technical Rescue," *Butler County, Ohio Emergency Management Agency*, accessed June 17, 2025, https://ema.bcohio.gov/about/special_operations/butler_county_technical_rescue_.php.

For fiscal year 2024, Texas received $16.4 million in SHSP grants and $44.4 million in USAI grants.[351] For the biennial period September 1, 2023 to August 31, 2025, the Texas Legislature appropriated $1.5 million to TF-1 and $1 million to TF-2 of state general revenue funds to assist the task forces in maintaining operational readiness.[352] In addition, TX-TF1 also receives their annual federal funding from FEMA, which in fiscal year 2024 was $1,369,884.00. In addition, they received $96,500 for IST cache maintenance and recapitalization; $46,000 for HEPP cache maintenance and recapitalization; $35,000 for hosting a national level crisis stabilization and safety (CSS) training course; $6,000 for Blue IST Support; and $8,000 for serving as the sponsoring agency chief representative for their division (SACR-D). That total federal funding for TX-TF1 amounts to $1,561,384.[353] Texas US&R programs are also supported by the Texas Task Force Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization helping support Texas A&M Task Force 1, Texas Task Force 2, and Texas A&M Task Force 1- Region 3 by providing training, equipment, support, and recognition.[354]

TX-TF1 held its first organizational meeting on February 14, 1997 after the 1995 bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. In June 2001, TX-TF1 joined the FEMA National Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) System and responded to their first national incident during the events of September 11, 2001. Members of TX-TF1 participate in over 25,000 hours of training per year. TX-TF1 conducts 2 mobilization exercises per year as well as one operational readiness exercise. In addition, they also have monthly and regional skills sets for a number of disciplines. Though some training is conducted outside of College Station, TX-TF1 primarily trains at the Disaster City™ in College Station, TX. Disaster City is a 52-acre training facility designed to simulate various levels of disaster and structural collapse. It is filled with full-scale collapsible structures with a variety of different infrastructures that can be found in every community in the United States. Some of these examples include a strip mall, movie theater, and a passenger train derailment.[355] Teams from across the country travel to this site for training and exercises, including some Pennsylvania teams. During advisory committee meetings, some advisory committee members characterized this training facility as the best in the nation, and by a significant margin. The original build out of this site was paid for with Texas A&M and some state appropriations. In addition to that continuous funding, the training facility recoups most of its costs each year through facility fees for trainings and exercises conducted at Disaster City.

TX-TF1 utilizes a standardized-FEMA cache for all federal deployments and some state deployments which they state weighs nearly 100,000 pounds and is worth over $7 million.[356] The team also maintains a state cache which is used when a Quick Response Force (QRF) is called to respond for in-state events or disasters. The state cache is made up of around 10,000 items that were previously a part of the FEMA cache. The team maintains a water rescue cache far greater

---

[351] FEMA, Grant Programs Directorate, Information Bulletin No. 517, August 23, 2024. https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_gpd-fy24-preparedness-grants-ib.pdf.
[352] Texas H.B. No. 1, General Appropriations Act, Eighty-Eighth Legislature, May 20, 2023, p. III-259. https://capitol.texas.gov/tlodocs/88R/billtext/pdf/HB00001F.pdf.
[353] See Appendix (insert REF 4 from Endrikat)
[354] "Texas Task Force Foundation," accessed July 8, 2025, https://sites.google.com/view/texastaskforcefoundation/home.
[355] Texas A&M Task Force I Urban Search and Rescue, "About Texas A&M Task Force 1," accessed July 8, 2025.https://texastaskforce1.org/about-us/.
[356] "FEMA Cache," accessed on June 27, 2025, https://texastaskforce1.org/1448-no-title/.

than the minimums required by FEMA. Nearly 30 boats of varying vessel-type and construction are trailered for immediate deployment with ample boat motors for continuous operation in the event of mechanical failure. This water rescue cache supports floodwater and swiftwater flooding events, which is a significant risk in Texas' threat profile. [357] TX-TF1 technicians also maintain the Incident Support Teams (IST) Cache for the central United States, which is designed to be deployed immediately to support deployed US&R task forces following a disaster in the central part of the United States.[358] Additionally, TX-TF1 technicians also maintain one of seven nationwide Hazardous Materials Equipment Push Package (HEPP) Caches. The HEPP cache is designed to support US&R task force who are deployed in hazardous environments for greater than 72 hours. [359] Members of TX-TF1 participate in over 25,000 hours of training per year. TX-TF1 conducts 2 mobilization exercises per year as well as 1 operational readiness exercise. In addition, they also have monthly and regional skills sets for a number of disciplines. [360]

The concept of TX-TF2 was proposed in 2004 by the Dallas Fire-Rescue Department to the North Central Texas Council of Governments. TF-2 officially became operational on April 1, 2007, as a Type-3 US&R task force. The team subsequently expanded to meet the requirements of a Type-II US&R task force, deployable anywhere in the State of Texas. TX-TF2 maintains an equipment cache with over 70,000 items and which weighs in excess of 100,000 pounds.[361] Members of TX-TF2 participate in nearly 7,000 hours of training per year in order to maintain their skills and ensure they are ready to respond at a moment's notice. As part of their training schedule, members of TX-TF2 attend monthly and annual skills sets for a number of disciplines and technical skills. TX-TF2 also trains and exercises in joint Operational Readiness Exercises with TX-TF1 and exercises with regional and state response partners.[362]

The Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) coordinates the state emergency management program, which is intended to ensure the state and its local governments respond to and recover from emergencies and disasters and implement plans and programs to help prevent or lessen the impact of emergencies and disasters. TDEM implements programs to increase public awareness about threats and hazards, coordinates emergency planning, provides an extensive array of specialized training for emergency responders and local officials, and administers disaster recovery and hazard mitigation programs in the State of Texas. In 2019, the Texas Division of Emergency Management was transferred from the Texas Department of Public Safety to The Texas A&M University System.[363] TDEM is divided into eight regions, encompassing 25 districts. TDEM frequently activates both TX-TF1 and TX-TF2 for in-state disasters and disaster preparation including from tropical storms, flash flooding, tornadoes, and other disaster-causing events.[364] From 2019 to 2024, TDEM has activated TX-TF1 57 times, FEMA 12 times, and the

[357] "Water Rescue Cache," accessed on June 27, 2025, https://texastaskforce1.org/water-rescue-cache/.
[358] "FEMA Incident Support Team (IST) Cache," accessed on July 17, 2025, https://texastaskforce1.org/central-division-incident-support-team-ist-cache/.
[359] "Hazardous Materials Equipment Push Package (HEPP) Cache," accessed on July 17, 2025, https://texastaskforce1.org/hazardous-materials-equipment-push-package-hepp-cache/.
[360] "About Texas A&M Task Force 1," accessed on July 17, 2025, https://texastaskforce1.org/about-us/
[361] "Cache," accessed on June 27, 2025, https://texastaskforce2.org/cache/.
[362] Texas Task Force 2 Urban Search and Rescue, "About Texas Task Force 2," accessed July 8, 2025, https://texastaskforce2.org/home-2/about-texas-task-force-2/.
[363] Texas Division of Emergency Management, "About TDEM", accessed July 8, 2025, https://tdem.texas.gov/about.
[364] "Deployments," accessed on June 27, 2025, https://texastaskforce1.org/deployments/.

team additionally deployed for 3 EMAC requests. In that same timespan, TDEM activated TX-TF2 17 times.

States Without Federal US&R Task Forces

Many in-state systems across the state face similar problems to Pennsylvania in their lack of funding by the state. In an audit of the National Urban Search and Response System as published by the Department of Homeland Security Office of the Inspector General (2006), the report implied that FEMA never intended to have an in-house rescue capability of its own and instead established the response system as a "federal-state-local" partnership.[365] There existed a reasonable expectation that FEMA funding was not going to provide a sustained funding stream, especially since much of the federal funding occurred in grant awards rather than as recurring funds. In that audit, at least four of the six evaluated task forces estimated annual funding needs in excess of the current grant awards and because the shortfall was not made up by their sponsoring agencies, they failed to achieve FEMA requirements in the audit.

As states have realized the dwindling federal funding available for these teams, and as natural and other disasters have progressed, some states have started to take a more active role in overseeing and funding their US&R in-state system.

This section looks at two states located in FEMA Region 4 that are prone to natural disasters, specifically hurricanes, and how they finance their in-state US&R response. In the past 10 years, eight hurricanes have resulted in federal disaster declarations in these two states alone.

North Carolina

North Carolina does not have a federal task force located within the state. Since 2001, the state has maintained seven regional US&R task forces, which are referred to as contract response teams, and four other US&R teams which are referred to as specialty rescue teams.[366] Deployment is determined by the State Emergency Operations Center and is based on the nearest team and its capabilities. The regional teams are under the direction of the Division of Emergency Management within the North Carolina Department of Public Safety. There are two NIMS Type 1 teams located in Raleigh and Charlotte, two NIMS Type 2 teams located in Greensboro and Greenville, four NIMS Type 3 teams, and three NIMS Type 4 teams.[367] Training for most teams in North Carolina is accomplished at two main training centers, each individually owned by the Charlotte Fire Department and the Raleigh Fire Department.

---

[365] Michael S. Mayers, *Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management: Developing a Strategic Plan for the South Carolina Urban Search and Rescue* (South Carolina Emergency Response Task Force, Columbia, SC, September 2007), https://apps.usfa.fema.gov/pdf/efop/efo41158.pdf.

[366] "Urban Search & Rescue," *N.C. Dep't of Public Safety*, accessed June 17, 2025, https://www.ncdps.gov/our-organization/emergency-management/em-operations/em-resources/search-rescue/urban-search-rescue.

[367] "USAR Task Forces," *North Carolina Fire Station Mapping Project*, accessed June 17, 2025, https://fdmaps.com/nc-usar-teams/.

The Division of Emergency Management also takes responsibility for establishing standards, guidelines, and training for US&R teams in the state.[368] Any available appropriations for US&R teams are administered by the Division and are used to support training, equipment, and operations. Historically, the primary source of funding for the US&R program in North Carolina has been through HSGP funds. Additionally, counties, cities, and participating agencies have entered into MOAs with each other to contribute funds for the operations and maintenance expenses, as well as to split the costs related to training.[369]

In 2014, due to the decline in federal preparedness grants to maintain search and rescue resources, North Carolina established the NC Search and Rescue Program; however, the state did not fund that program until 2021.[370] Now that the state has funded the NC Search and Rescue Program, the NC Division of Emergency Management can begin providing reoccurring funds in partnership with local units of government to support local search and rescue capabilities, like US&R, across the state. With the $2 million reoccurring appropriation, they established a set of regulations for the system and teams to follow.[371]

Of the $2 million in funds, approximately $220,000 will be set aside for the Division of Emergency Management to administer the program with two full-time employees and four part-time employees. To realize some long-term cost savings, the state will set aside $450,000 annually for direct training support of search and rescue teams, which will cover instructors, course lodging, and logistical supplies needed for the training. Approximately $32,000 will be provided annually per team to offset local training costs and to send personnel to these trainings. An additional $32,000 per year will be set aside for each team's administrative costs, and approximately $30,000 per team will be provided to offset equipment maintenance costs.

In total, the seven contract response US&R teams can each expect to receive $94,000 each year to offset local program equipment, training, and administration costs. North Carolina estimates that those costs per team would be $177,500 to $275,000, meaning the local participating agencies would have to realize the other costs beyond their $94,000 appropriation. Each team will have access to the yearly $450,000 capital equipment replacement appropriation which they may apply to for funding.

South Carolina

South Carolina does not have a federal task force located within their state; however, they have a well-organized in-state system. At the top of South Carolina's tiered response system is

[368] N.C. Gen. Stat. §§ 166A-65 to -69.
[369] "MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT AMONG the Town of Cary, the Town of Chapel Hill, the City of Durham, and the City of Raleigh For Regional Response Urban Search and Rescue Team," *Town of Chapel Hill*, accessed June 17, 2025, https://townhall.townofchapelhill.org/archives/agendas/ca030609/4g-%20MOA%20USAR%20Attachment%201.htm.
[370] "Regulatory Impact Analysis NC Search and Rescue System," *N.C. Dep't of Public Safety*, accessed June 17, 2025, https://www.osbm.nc.gov/documents/files/DPS_2022-07-20/open.
[371] "Regulatory Impact Analysis NC Search and Rescue System," *N.C. Dep't of Public Safety*, accessed June 17, 2025, https://www.osbm.nc.gov/documents/files/DPS_2022-07-20/open.

SC-TF1, which is a NIMS Type 1 US&R team made up of individuals from various fire departments across the state.[372] SC-TF1 is centrally based at the State Fire Academy in Columbia.

SC-TF1 is under the SC Emergency Response Task Force (SC-ERTF) which hosts two other programs in addition to SC-TF1: Firefighter Mobilization and South Carolina Helicopter Aquatic Rescue Team. SC-ERTF is operated by three full time employees, one part time employee, and five temporary employees; the full-time employees are the Assistant State Fire Marshal, a program manager, and a program coordinator.

South Carolina also has five regional response teams located strategically throughout the state which are a part of the SC-ERTF and are subject to deployment anywhere in the state through Firefighter Mobilization.[373] These regional response teams do receive state and federal grants for support; however, they rely heavily on interagency partnerships, utilizing personnel and equipment from various local fire departments across their region.

This system in South Carolina was developed following a report by a member of the SC-ERTF in 2007.[374] That report outlined the issues with state and local funding, service delivery relationships, and simple agreements as to who provides which service, all of which are continually complicated by bureaucratic infighting. There were also issues with unsanctioned and unauthorized canine search and rescue groups having historically shown up at emergencies uninvited and even advertise "Urban Search and Rescue" on their vehicles, which are outfitted to look like official response units. This issue, coupled with the fact that there were multiple state agencies which had teams which purported to have US&R capabilities, led the state to developing a more unified in-state system with multiple tiers and one team, SC-TF1, leading the others.

Federal funding of US&R in South Carolina is limited insofar as South Carolina does not have a UASI region and thus does not receive the significant investment that some states receive in their urban areas through UASI funds. However, like other states, South Carolina does receive SHSP grant funds some of which is directed towards US&R.

In South Carolina's Fiscal Year 2025 Executive Budget, $1 million was appropriated in non-recurring funds to the State Fire Marshal's Office specifically for Urban Search and Rescue operations. An additional $503,095 was allocated in non-recurring funds to meet federal grant match requirements tied to US&R and similar emergency management programs.[375] In previous budget years, most notably Fiscal Year 2023, South Carolina appropriated $5 million in non-recurring funds to support SC-TF1 Task Force operations and an additional $4.5 million in

---

[372] *South Carolina Urban Search and Rescue: Technology & Response… A Winning Combination* (South Carolina Emergency Response Task Force, 2018), https://www.napsgfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/CBeame_FieldEx_SCTF1_20181203.pdf.
[373] "Fire Rescue Special Teams," Hilton Head Island, accessed July 9, 2025, https://hiltonheadislandsc.gov/firerescue/divisions/spteams.cfm.
[374] Michael S. Mayers, *Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management: Developing a Strategic Plan for the South Carolina Urban Search and Rescue* (South Carolina Emergency Response Task Force, Columbia, SC, September 2007), https://apps.usfa.fema.gov/pdf/efop/efo41158.pdf.
[375] "Executive Budget State of South Carolina, Fiscal Year 2024-2025," accessed on July 9, 2025, https://governor.sc.gov/sites/governor/files/Documents/Executive-Budget/FY25%20Executive%20Budget%20Book.pdf.

recurring funds for infrastructure support for SC-ERTF, which included facility renovations and an expansion of the training grounds.[376] An additional $1 million in recurring funds that year was designated to support the ongoing operations of Urban Search and Rescue efforts under the Office of the State Fire Marshal.

FEMA Region 10

The states of Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington do not contain any federal US&R task forces within their geographical confines. State level emergency management and urban search and rescue operations are governed as follows:

Alaska	Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
Idaho	Office of Emergency Management
Oregon	Department of Emergency Management
Washington	Military Department, Emergency Management Division

[376] "Budget Bills," South Carolina Legislature, accessed on July 9, 2025, https://www.scstatehouse.gov/budget.php.

NEW AND CURRENT TEAM EXPENDITURES

The costs to build or sustain US&R teams are difficult to quantify and vary from region to region based on required equipment, personnel costs, training costs, and other covered costs by local fire departments. FEMA has a logistics level doctrine which quantifies costs for required equipment cache based on a team's NIMS typing.[377] PEMA has attempted to quantify the costs of an entire team, including cache, personnel, and training, noting that the numbers in the following tables should be considered low end base amounts due to the numerous variables when building out teams.[378] The initial costs are all calculated by adding the costs of training courses for each student, the equipment required under that specific NIMS typing, the total cost for personal protective equipment, and a team-based functional exercise.

PEMA estimates that the maximum amount of money for a Type 1 US&R Team using the FEMA staffing model with a full equipment cache would cost to build would be at most $15 million, as compared to its own more conservative estimate of $10.5 million. As such, each table will contain a column applying a factor of 1.4 to the base amount for each type of team to show the maximum costs taking into consideration other variables including procurement and training costs. Estimated yearly sustainment costs were calculated at 10 percent of initial cost based on industry standards.

The team configurations listed are based on NIMS typed team configurations, with the exception of the Collapse Search and Rescue Team, which is a NIMS Tier 2 (state) typing configuration and is similar to a US&R Company from Pennsylvania's legacy system. PEMA states that this configuration provides the most capability in a smaller package which can support much of the US&R needs across the Commonwealth.

Additionally, these estimates do not include the cost for any of the prerequisite training required for US&R team members before they may join a team. NIMS guidelines assume that team members would have training in accordance with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards for technical rescue. These estimates would be for adding structural collapse capability to a department or organization that is already providing, and has the necessary equipment and training for, rescue capability. Except for Types 1, 2, and 3 US&R Task Forces, these configurations do not include costs for any vehicles which may be required for storing and deploying equipment. Initial costs also include training for twice the number of deployable individuals required in a team as well as a functional exercise upon completion of training to ensure team operational capability and readiness.

[377] "400 – Logistics Doctrine," *Federal Emergency Management Agency*, accessed June 17, 2025, https://www.responsesystem.org/doctrine.
[378] Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, April 22, 2025.

The following tables contain estimates by PEMA of the costs to build and sustain each US&R NIMS-typed team. Much of the data used in their calculations was derived from FEMA's logistics level doctrine, which itself includes itemized cost estimates.[379]

Table 21
PEMA's Estimated Cost to Build and Sustain US&R NIMS-Typed Teams
2025

Configuration	Minimum Estimated Initial Cost	Maximum Estimated Initial Cost (1.4 Factor)	Minimum Estimated Yearly Sustainment Cost (10%)	Maximum Estimated Yearly Sustainment Cost (10%)
NIMS Collapse Search Team (Type 1)	$128,647	$180,105.80	$12,864.70	$18,010.58
NIMS Collapse Rescue Team (Type 1)	176,143	246,600.20	17,614.30	24,660.02
Collapse Search and Rescue Team (NIMS Tier 2; Type 1)	434,567	608,393.80	43,456.70	60,839.38
NIMS Type 4 US&R Task Force	2,484,250.64	3,477,950.90	248,425.06	347,795.09
NIMS Type 3 US&R Task Force	4,860,127.85	6,804,178.99	486,012.79	680,417.90
NIMS Type 2 US&R Task Force	9,510,326.56	13,314,457.20	951,032.66	1,331,445.72
NIMS Type 1 US&R Task Force	9,974,753.66	13,964,655.10	997,475.37	1,396,465.51
NIMS Type 1 US&R Task Force (3 personnel per position instead of 2)	10,567,820.30	14,794,948.40	1,056,782.03	1,479,494.84
NIMS Type 1 US&R Task Force (3 personnel; full water rescue equipment cache)	10,977,093.50	15,367,930.90	1,097,709.35	1,536,793.09

Source: Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, April 22, 2025.

[379] "400 – Logistics Doctrine," *Federal Emergency Management Agency*, accessed June 17, 2025, https://www.responsesystem.org/doctrine.

NIMS Collapse Search Team (Type 1)

Table 22
National Incident Management System (NIMS)
Structural Collapse Search Team - Type 1
Training and Equipment
2025

Position	Deployed No.	Total
Structural Collapse Search Team Leader	1	2
Structural Collapse Search Specialist	3	6
Total Personnel	**4**	**8**
Training Course	**Cost/Student**	**Total**
Wide Area Search Course (offered through TEEX[1] at no charge)	$0	$0
Technical Search Specialist Course	1,875	15,000
NIMS Strike Team/Task Force Leader Course	500	1,000
Total Training		**$16,000.00**
Equipment	**Unit Cost**	**Total**
Hand tool package	$2,000	$2,000
Technical rope rescue package	18,253	18,253
Night vision goggles	6,199	6,199
Thermal imaging camera	6,000	6,000
Listening device	12,785	12,785
Search camera	17,500	17,500
Battery operated reciprocating saw w/blades	250	250
Battery operated drill w/hole saw blades	250	250
Portable generator w/extension cords	1,500	1,500
Radios	2,000	8,000
Electric core drill w/bits	3,450	3,450
Building marking kit	500	500
GPS or tablet device	750	1,500
Medical equipment (BLS w/AED)	3,500	3,500
Total Cost for Equipment		**$81,687**
Personal Protective Equipment	**Cost**	**Total**
Helmet w/helmet light (1 per member)	$600	$4,800
Gloves (2 sets per member)	30	480
Protective clothing (BDU's) (2 sets per member)	200	1,600
Safety glasses (2 sets per member)	5	80
Hearing protection (2 sets per member)	2.50	40
Protective footwear (1 per member)	375	3,000
Respiratory protection (1 per member)	70	560
Personal flashlight (1 per member)	75	600
Foul weather clothing (1 per member)	250	2,000
Personal gear bag/pack (1 per member)	350	2,800

Continued

Table 22
National Incident Management System (NIMS)
Structural Collapse Search Team - Type 1
Training and Equipment
2025

Total Cost for PPE	**$15,960**
Functional Exercise	**$15,000**
Total Equipment, PPE, Training, Exercise	**$128,647**
Estimated Yearly Sustainment Costs (10% initial costs)	**$12,864**

Notes: Equipment cache information and pricing extrapolated from FEMA US&R equipment cache list. Does not include travel, lodging or meals for training courses. Does not include backfill or overtime costs for covering individuals enrolled in training courses. Does not include costs for vehicles to store or deploy equipment.

Source: Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, April 22, 2025.
[1] Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service.

NIMS Collapse Rescue Team (Type 1)

Table 23
National Incident Management System (NIMS)
Structural Collapse Rescue Team - Type 1
Training and Equipment
2025

Position	Deployed No.	Total
Structural Collapse Rescue Team Leader	1	2
Structural Collapse Rescue Technician	5	10
Total Personnel	**6**	**12**
Training Course	**Cost/Student**	**Total**
Structural Collapse Specialist Course	$3,500	$42,000
NIMS Strike Team/Task Force Leader Course	500	1,000
Total Training		**$43,000**
Equipment	**Unit Cost**	**Total**
Hand tool package	$2,000	$2,000
Technical rope rescue package	18,253	18,253
Breaching and breaking equipment cache	20,000	20,000
Cutting and burning equipment cache	3,000	3,000
Shoring equipment cache (Only includes supplies for wood shoring operations)	3,000	3,000
Lifting equipment cache (Includes high pressure pneumatic lifting bags and jacks)	13,000	13,000
Medical equipment cache(BLS cache; patient packaging devices)	6,500	6,500
Portable generator w/extension cords	3,000	3,000
Radios	2,000	12,000
Electric core drill w/bits	3,450	3,450
Total Cost for Equipment		**$84,203**
Personal Protective Equipment	**Cost**	**Total**
Helmet w/helmet light (1 per member)	$600	$7,200
Gloves (2 sets per member)	30	720
Protective clothing (BDU's) (2 sets per member)	200	2,400
Safety glasses (2 sets per member)	5	120
Hearing protection (2 sets per member)	2.50	60.00
Protective footwear (1 per member)	375	4,500
Respiratory protection (1 per member)	70	840
Personal flashlight (1 per member)	75	900
Foul weather clothing (1 set per member)	250	3,000
Personal gear back/pack (1 per member)	350	4,200
Total Cost for PPE		**$23,940**

Continued

Table 23
National Incident Management System (NIMS)
Structural Collapse Rescue Team - Type 1
Training and Equipment
2025

Functional Exercise	**$25,000**
Total - Equipment, PPE, Training, Exercise	**$176,143**
Estimated Yearly Sustainment Costs (10% initial costs)	**$17,614**

Notes: Equipment cache information and pricing extrapolated from FEMA US&R equipment cache list. Does not include travel, lodging or meals for training courses. Does not include backfill or overtime costs for covering individuals enrolled in training courses. Does not include costs for vehicles to store or deploy equipment. Shoring equipment only includes support equipment for constructing wood building shoring systems

Source: Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, April 22, 2025.

Collapse Search and Rescue Team (NIMS Tier 2; Type 1)

Table 24
National Incident Management System (NIMS)
Collapse Search and Rescue Team (NIMS Tier 2; Type 1)
Training and Equipment
2025

Position	Deployed No.	Total
Structural Collapse Rescue Team Leader	1	2
Structural Collapse Rescue Technician	5	10
Structural Collapse Search Specialist	3	6
Structural Collapse Search Team Leader	1	2
Hazardous Materials Technician	1	2
Paramedic	1	2
Total Personnel	**12**	**24**
Training Course	**Cost/Student**	**Total**
Wide Area Search Course (Offered through TEEX[1] at no charge)	N/A	N/A
Structural Collapse Specialist Course	$3,500	$42,000
Technical Search Specialist Course	1,875	15,000
NIMS Strike Team/Task Force Leader Course	500	2,000
Total Training		**$59,000**
Equipment	**Unit Cost**	**Total**
Hand tool package	$2,000	$2,000
Technical rope rescue package	18,253	18,253
Breaching and breaking equipment cache	20,000	20,000
Cutting and burning equipment cache	3,000	3,000
Shoring equipment cache (Includes Paratech strut package)	130,000	130,000
Lifting equipment cache	13,000	13,000
Medical equipment (ALS equipment cache; patient packaging devices)	25,000	25,000
Portable generators w/extension cords (2 - 5000 watt)	3,000	6,000
Radios	2,000	24,000
Electric core drill w/bits	3,450	3,450
Night vision goggles	6,199	6,199
Thermal imaging camera	6,000	6,000
Listening device	12,785	12,785
Search camera	17,500	17,500
Battery operated reciprocating saw w/blades	250	250
Battery operated drill w/hole saw blades	250	250
Atmospheric monitoring equipment	3,000	3,000
Building marking kit	500	500
GPS or Tablet Device	7500	1,500
Total Cost for Equipment		**$292,687**

Continued

Table 24
National Incident Management System (NIMS)
Collapse Search and Rescue Team (NIMS Tier 2; Type 1)
Training and Equipment
2025

Personal Protective Equipment	Cost	Total
Helmet w/helmet light (1 per member)	$600	$14,400
Gloves (2 sets per member)	30	1,440
Protective clothing (BDU's) (2 sets per member)	200	4,800
Safety glasses (2 sets per member)	5	240
Hearing protection (2 sets per member)	2.50	120
Protective footwear (1 per member)	375	9,000
Respiratory protection (1 per member)	70	1,680
Personal flashlight (1 per member)	75	1,800
Foul weather clothing (1 per member)	250	6,000
Personal gear bag/pack (1 per member)	350	8,400
Total Cost for PPE		**$47,880**
Functional Exercise		**$35,000**
Total - Equipment, PPE, Training, Exercise		**$434,567**
Estimated Yearly Sustainment Cost (10% initial costs)		**$43,456**

Notes: NIMS Tier 2 (state) typing - combines NIMS Type 1 Collapse Search Team and NIMS Type 1 Collapse Rescue Team. Adds dedicated Paramedic and Haz Mat Technician positions. Equipment cache information and pricing extrapolated from FEMA US&R equipment cache list. Does not include travel, lodging or meals for training courses. Does not include backfill or overtime costs for covering individuals enrolled in training courses. Does not include costs for vehicles to store or deploy equipment. Shoring equipment includes support equipment for constructing wood building shoring systems and aluminum strut system

Source: Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, April 22, 2025.
[1] Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service.

NIMS Type 4 US&R Task Force

Table 25 National Incident Management System (NIMS) Type 4 US&R Task Force Training and Equipment 2025		
Position	**Deployed No.**	**Total**
US&R Task Force Leader	1	2
Structural Collapse Rescue Team Leader (Maintain currency as Type 1 Structural Collapse Search Technicians)	2	4
Structural Collapse Rescue Technician (At least 2 of the 10 rostered positions maintain currency as Type 1 Structural Collapse Search Technicians)	10	20
Hazardous Materials Technician	2	4
Paramedic (Also trained in crush syndrome)	2	4
Safety Officer	1	2
Logistics Specialist	2	4
Communications Technician	1	2
Plans Team Manager (Also qualified as a Technical Information Specialist)	1	2
Total Personnel	**22**	**44**
Training Course	**Cost/Student**	**Total**
Wide Area Search Course (Offered through TEEX[1] at no charge)	N/A	N/A
Structural Collapse Specialist Course	$3,500	$91,000
Technical Search Specialist Course	$1,875	$15,000
NIMS Strike Team/Task Force Leader Course	$500	$3,000
US&R Task Force Leader Course	$1,600	$3,200
Logistics Specialist Course	$1,600	$6,400
Plans Team Manager Course	$1,700	$3,400
Communications Technician Course	$1,200.00	$2,400
Safety Officer Course	$1,600.00	$3,200
Total Training		**$127,600**
Equipment	**Unit Cost**	**Total**
Communications Equipment	--	$831,609.39
Haz Mat Equipment	--	$84,052.32
Logistics Section Equipment	--	$929,250.24
Medical Section Equipment	--	$74,598.86
Plans Section Equipment	--	$2,205.89
Rescue Section Equipment	--	$257,809.10
Technical Section Equipment	--	$69,294.84
Water Section Equipment (Inflatable USCG Type 5 PFD's only)	--	$6,850.00
Total Cost for Equipment		**$2,255,670.64**

Continued

Table 25
National Incident Management System (NIMS)
Type 4 US&R Task Force
Training and Equipment
2025

Personal Protective Equipment	Cost	Total
Helmet w/helmet light (1 per member)	$600	$26,400
Gloves (2 pair per member)	30	2,640
Protective clothing (BDU's) (2 sets per member)	200	8,800
Safety glasses (2 pair per member)	5	440
Hearing protection (2 sets per member)	2.50	220
Protective footwear (1 per member)	375	16,500
Respiratory protection (1 per member)	70	3,080
Personal flashlight (1 per member)	75	3,300
Foul weather clothing (1 per member)	250	11,000
Personal gear bags (1 backpack and 1 personal gear bag)	650	28,600
Total Cost for PPE		**$100,980**
Functional Exercise		**$50,000**
Total - Equipment, PPE, Training		**$2,484,250.64**
Estimated Yearly Sustainment Costs (10% initial costs)		**$248,425.06**

Notes: Equipment cache information and pricing taken from FEMA Type 4 US&R cache list. Does not include travel, lodging or meals for training courses. Does not include backfill or overtime costs for covering individuals enrolled in training courses. Does not include FEMA US&R Medical Team Training course for Paramedics (not required under NIMS Type 4 guidelines). Does not include FEMA Hazardous Materials Specialist training course (not required under NIMS Type 4 guidelines). Does not include costs for vehicles to store or deploy equipment.

Source: Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, April 22, 2025.
[1] Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service.

NIMS Type 3 US&R Task Force

Table 26
National Incident Management System (NIMS)
Type 3 US&R Task Force
Training and Equipment
2025

Position	Deployed No.	Total
US&R Task Force Leader	1	2
Structural Collapse Search Team Leader (Also certified as a NIMS Type 1 Canine Search Specialist)	1	2
Structural Collapse Search Technician	1	2
Canine Search Specialist - Live Find	2	4
Structural Collapse Rescue Team Leader	3	6
Structural Collapse Rescue Technician	10	20
Heavy Equipment Rigging Specialist	1	2
Hazardous Materials Technician	5	10
Medical Team Manager (Physicians)	1	2
Medical Specialist	2	4
Safety Officer	1	2
Logistics Team Manager	1	2
Logistics Specialist	2	4
Technical Information Specialist	1	2
Communications Technician	1	2
Plans Team Manager	1	2
Structures Specialist (Structural engineers)	1	2
Total Personnel	**35**	**70**
Training Course	**Cost/Student**	**Total**
Wide Area Search Course (Offered through TEEX[1] at no charge)	N/A	N/A
Structural Collapse Specialist Course	$3,500	$98,000
Technical Search Specialist Course	1,875	7,500
NIMS Strike Team/Task Force Leader Course	500	4,000
US&R Task Force Leader Course	1,600	3,200
Logistics Specialist Course	1,600	9,600
Plans Team Manager Course	1,700	3,400
Communications Technician Course	1,200	2,400
Safety Officer Course	1,600	3,200
Canine Search Specialist	1,700	10,200
Medical Team Training Course	3,500	21,000
Heavy Equipment and Rigging Specialist Course	2,500	5,000
Technical Information Specialist	1,700	3,400
Structures Specialist	2,500	5,000
Total Training		**$175,900.00**

Continued

Table 26
National Incident Management System (NIMS)
Type 3 US&R Task Force
Training and Equipment
2025

Equipment	Unit Cost	Total
Communications Equipment	--	$966,169.77
Haz Mat Equipment	--	359,429.10
Logistics Section Equipment	--	1,283,817.07
Medical Section Equipment	--	183,782.07
Plans Section Equipment	--	1,286.83
Rescue Section Equipment	--	274,855
Technical Section Equipment	--	132,840.73
Water Section Equipment (Inflatable USCG Type 5 PFD's only)	--	10,897.28
Vehicle Section Equipment	--	1,235,500
Total Cost for Equipment		**$4,448,577.85**
Personal Protective Equipment	**Cost**	**Total**
Helmet w/helmet light (1 per member)	$600	$42,000
Gloves (2 pair per member)	30	4,200
Protective clothing (BDU's) (2 pair per member)	200	14,000
Safety glasses (2 pair per member)	5	700
Hearing protection (2 pair per member)	2.50	350
Protective footwear (1 per member)	375	26,250
Respiratory protection (1 per member)	70	4,900
Personal flashlight (1 per member)	75	5,250
Foul weather clothing (1 per member)	250	17,500
Personal gear bags (1 backpack and 1 personal gear bag)	650	45,500
Total Cost for PPE		$160,650
Functional Exercise		**$75,000.00**
Total - Equipment, PPE, Training, Exercise		**$4,860,127.85**
Estimated Yearly Sustainment Costs (10% of initial costs)		**$486,012.78**

Notes: Equipment cache information and pricing taken from FEMA Type 1 US&R cache list with 50% reduction applied for Type 3 component. Does not include travel, lodging or meals for training courses. Does not include backfill or overtime costs for covering individuals enrolled in training courses. Does not include FEMA Hazardous Materials Specialist training course (not required under NIMS Type 3 guidelines). Does include vehicles for storage and deployment of equipment.

Source: Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, April 22, 2025.
[1] Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service.

NIMS Type 2 US&R Task Force

Table 27 **National Incident Management System (NIMS)** **Type 2 US&R Task Force** **Training and Equipment** **2025**		
Position	**Deployed No.**	**Total**
US&R Task Force Leader	2	4
Structural Collapse Search Team Leader (Also certified as a NIMS Type 1 Canine Search Specialist)	2	4
Structural Collapse Search Technician	2	4
Canine Search Specialist - Live Find	4	8
Structural Collapse Rescue Team Leader	6	12
Structural Collapse Rescue Technician	20	40
Heavy Equipment Rigging Specialist	2	4
Hazardous Materials Technician	10	20
Medical Team Manager (Physicians)	2	4
Medical Specialist	4	8
Safety Officer	2	4
Logistics Team Manager	2	4
Logistics Specialist	4	8
Technical Information Specialist	2	4
Communications Technician	2	4
Plans Team Manager	2	4
Structures Specialist (Structural engineers)	2	4
Total Personnel	**70**	**140**
Training Course	**Cost/Student**	**Total**
Wide Area Search Course (Offered through TEEX[1] at no charge)	N/A	N/A
Structural Collapse Specialist Course	$3,500	$182,000
Technical Search Specialist Course	1,875	15,000
NIMS Strike Team/Task Force Leader Course	500	10,000
US&R Task Force Leader Course	1,600	6,400
Logistics Specialist Course	1,600	19,200
Plans Team Manager Course	1,700	6,800
Communications Technician Course	1,200	4,800
Safety Officer Course	1,600	6,400
Canine Search Specialist	1,700	20,400
Medical Team Training Course	3,500	42,000
Heavy Equipment and Rigging Specialist Course	2,500	10,000
Technical Information Specialist	1,700	6,800
Structures Specialist	2,500	10,000
Total Training		**$339,800.00**

Continued

Table 27
National Incident Management System (NIMS)
Type 2 US&R Task Force
Training and Equipment
2025

Equipment	Unit Cost	Total
Communications Equipment	--	$1,932,339.53
Haz Mat Equipment	--	359,429.10
Logistics Section Equipment	--	2,567,634.13
Medical Section Equipment	--	367,564.14
Plans Section Equipment	--	2,573.65
Rescue Section Equipment	--	549,709.99
Technical Section Equipment	--	265,681.46
Water Section Equipment (Inflatable USCG Type 5 PFD's only; no defensive or offensive water rescue equipment)	--	21,794.56
Vehicle Section Equipment	--	2,471,000.00
Total Cost for Equipment		**$457,800.00**
Personal Protective Equipment	**Cost**	**Total**
Helmet w/helmet light (1 per member)	$600.00	$84,000
Gloves (2 pair per member)	30	8,400
Protective clothing (BDU's) (4 sets per member)	200	112,000
Safety glasses (2 pair per member)	5	1,400
Hearing protection (2 sets per member)	2.50	700
Protective footwear (2 per member)	375	105,000
Respiratory protection (1 per member)	70	9,800
Personal flashlight (1 per member)	75	10,500
Foul weather clothing (1 per member)	250	35,000
Personal gear bags (1 backpack and 1 personal gear bag)	650	91,000
Total Cost for PPE		**$457,800**
Functional Exercise		**$175,000**
Total - Equipment, PPE, Training, Exercise		**$9,510,326.56**
Estimated Yearly Sustainment Costs (10% of initial costs)		**$951,032.66**

Notes: Equipment cache information and pricing taken from FEMA Type 1 US&R cache list with 50% reduction in haz mat equipment costs and no water rescue equipment other than PFD's for personnel. Does not include travel, lodging or meals for training courses. Does not include backfill or overtime costs for covering individuals enrolled in training courses. Does not include FEMA Hazardous Materials Specialist training course (not required under NIMS Type 2 guidelines). Does include vehicles for storage and deployment of equipment

Source: Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, April 22, 2025.
[1] Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service.

NIMS Type 1 US&R Task Force

Table 28 National Incident Management System (NIMS) Type 1 US&R Task Force Training and Equipment 2025		
Position	**Deployed No.**	**Total**
US&R Task Force Leader	2	4
Structural Collapse Search Team Leader (Also certified as a NIMS Type 1 Canine Search Specialist)	2	4
Structural Collapse Search Technician	2	4
Canine Search Specialist - Live Find	4	8
Structural Collapse Rescue Team Leader	6	12
Structural Collapse Rescue Technician	20	40
Heavy Equipment Rigging Specialist	2	4
Hazardous Materials Technician	10	20
Medical Team Manager (Physicians)	2	4
Medical Specialist	4	8
Safety Officer	2	4
Logistics Team Manager	2	4
Logistics Specialist	4	8
Technical Information Specialist	2	4
Communications Technician	2	4
Plans Team Manager	2	4
Structures Specialist (Structural engineers)	2	4
Total Personnel	**70**	**140**
Training Course	**Cost/Student**	**Total**
Wide Area Search Course (Offered through TEEX[1] at no charge)	N/A	N/A
Structural Collapse Specialist Course	$3,500	$182,000
Technical Search Specialist Course	1,875	15,000
NIMS Strike Team/Task Force Leader Course	500	10,000
US&R Task Force Leader Course	1,600	6,400
Logistics Specialist Course	1,600	19,200
Plans Team Manager Course	1,700	6,800
Communications Technician Course	1,200	4,800
Safety Officer Course	1,600	6,400
Canine Search Specialist	1,700	20,400
Medical Team Training Course	3,500	42,000
Heavy Equipment and Rigging Specialist Course	2,500	10,000
Technical Information Specialist	1,700	6,800
Structures Specialist	2,500	10,000
WMD Enhanced Operations Course (All members)	750	105,000
Total Training		**$444,800.00**

Table 28
National Incident Management System (NIMS)
Type 1 US&R Task Force
Training and Equipment
2025

Equipment	Unit Cost	Total
Communications Equipment	--	1,932,339.53
Haz Mat Equipment	--	718,856.20
Logistics Section Equipment	--	2,567,634.13
Medical Section Equipment	--	367,564.14
Plans Section Equipment	--	2,573.65
Rescue Section Equipment	--	549,709.99
Technical Section Equipment	--	265,681.46
Water Section Equipment (Inflatable USCG Type 5 PFD's only; no defensive or offensive water rescue equipment)	--	21,794.56
Vehicle Section Equipment	--	2,471,000.00
Total Cost for Equipment		**$8,897,153.66**
Personal Protective Equipment	**Cost**	**Total**
Helmet w/helmet light (1 per member)	$600	$84,000
Gloves (2 pair per member)	30	8,400
Protective clothing (BDU's) (4 sets per member)	200	112,000
Safety glasses (2 pair per member)	5	1,400
Hearing protection (2 sets per member)	2.50	700
Protective footwear (2 per member)	375	105,000
Respiratory protection (1 per member)	70	9,800
Personal flashlight (1 per member)	75	10,500
Foul weather clothing (1 per member)	250	35,000
Personal gear bags (1 backpack and 1 personal gear bag)	650	91,000
Total Cost for PPE		**$457,800.00**
Functional Exercise		**$175,000.00**
Total - Equipment, PPE, Training, Exercise (Assumes training and equipping 2 qualified individuals per team position)		**$9,974,753.66**
Total - Equipment, PPE, Training and Exercise (Assumes training and equipping 3 qualified individuals per team position)		**$10,567,820.30**
Total - Equipment, PPE, Training and Exercise (Assumes training and equipping 3 qualified individuals per team position w/full water rescue cache similar to FEMA standards)		**$10,977,093.50**
Estimated Yearly Sustainment Costs (10% of initial costs - baseline configuration)		**$997,475.37**

Notes: Equipment cache information and pricing taken from FEMA Type 1 US&R cache list to include full hazardous materials cache. Does not include water rescue cache items other than one PFD per deployed member. Does not include travel, lodging or meals for training courses. Does not include backfill or overtime costs for covering individuals enrolled in training courses. Does not include FEMA Hazardous Materials Specialist training course (not required under NIMS Type 2 guidelines). Does include vehicles for storage and deployment of equipment.

Source: Randy Padfield, e-mail message to Commission staff, April 22, 2025.
[1] Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service.

CONCLUSION

US&R resources in the Commonwealth were established in the last quarter century when there was much national concern about terrorist attacks and the need to rescue individuals from collapsed structures due to an attack. As the country moved further in time from 9/11 in the first quarter of the century, funding provided to specialty rescue teams, including US&R teams, has steadily decreased. Interviews with regional element leaders and PA-TF1 members and full Advisory Committee meetings painted a picture of responsible stewards across the Commonwealth who strive to maintain proper equipment and training standards while funding decreases. Participants in the in-state system with decades of experience have spent countless hours of their own time to organize and maintain resources in their region so that they are mission-ready to deploy when a worst-case scenario incident plays out.

These team leaders were clear-eyed about their shortcomings and the challenges they face. The issues faced almost universally included reduced funding, a lack of statewide oversight that sets standard expectations and accountability for training, equipment, and capabilities, and a lack of a standardized solution for workers' compensation for team members when deployed to an incident. The recommendations developed by the Joint State Government Commission and the Act 113 Advisory Committee speak to these issues by recommending the establishment of a statewide oversight and funding framework administered by PEMA and an Advisory Organization composed of boots-on-the-ground team members in each of the regions. This group would realistically assess the capability needs for each region in the state, establish proper capability targets, and allocate the funding necessary for teams to achieve these goals. This oversight framework would also standardize expectations across the state and ensure that PEMA is easily able to ascertain the readiness of the system and the training and equipment needs of each in-state team. The recommendations also include amending the Workers' Compensation Act to expand workers' compensation coverage for specialized teams when they are deployed.[380]

With continually decreasing federal funding, and federal funding for emergency services overall in jeopardy, Pennsylvania is at a crossroads with supporting specialty teams within the Commonwealth. After a thoughtful and comprehensive process to determine the need for various resources within the Commonwealth, it is clear that the state should invest in the in-state US&R system apart from federal funding to ensure the health of the system moving forward. The investment of the first responder heroes in this system for 20 years should be honored and rewarded. These members are willing to sacrifice their lives for the safety of others and take their responsibilities very seriously.

[380] Act of June 2, 1915 (P.L.736, No.338); 77 P.S. §§ 1-2710; known as the Workers' Compensation Act.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Commission Staff developed recommendations in consultation with the Advisory Committee. Following multiple rounds of deliberation and customization, the following recommendations reached a general consensus. The recommendations are not presented in any particular order.

Recommendation 1: Federal preparedness funding has drastically diminished over the last decade and uncertainty remains high on continuity of federal funding that can be used to support US&R capability. The Commonwealth should establish and maintain an Emergency Preparedness Fund to support US&R capability and other specialized response teams throughout the state.

- While no official announcements have been made, FEMA US&R Task Forces and state emergency management officials are preparing for federal funding and federal task forces to potentially be terminated or significantly reduced. Apart from the General Assembly's one-time investment in the southwest, the state budget has not provided adequate support for the entire in-state system. With federal funding having dwindled over the last decade, many teams across the state have struggled to meet the necessary qualifications required for a successful US&R team. Implementation of the recommendations below is contingent on proper support to manage the system, therefore, like other states, the Commonwealth should begin funding the entire in-state system in a manner that is predicated on the need of each region based on their hazards and risk profile.

Recommendation 2: A US&R Advisory Organization, including a US&R representative from each region selected by their respective leadership and other broader community stakeholders, should be created to determine and represent the capability needs and gaps of each region. The Advisory Organization should investigate capability needs, funding needs, and potential accountability frameworks for US&R capability within the state and report its findings to PEMA.

- Advisory Committee members emphasized the need for a cooperative group with representatives from regional and local teams to properly ensure each team's needs are being accurately portrayed and supported. The federal US&R system includes an Advisory Organization model that could be mirrored to implement a similar Advisory Organization in Pennsylvania. The purpose of the Advisory Organization is to support and inform PEMA on administrative, operational matters, as well as policy development for validation of Commonwealth of Pennsylvania recognized Search and Rescue resources as well as to support fiscal assessments and to make recommendations on potential funding allocations. Examples of supporting program areas under PEMA authorities would be administrative, plans, policies, procedures, certification directives and evaluation tools for use by recognized Search and Rescue resources as well as training and exercise programs.

Recommendation 2a: PEMA, in collaboration with the Advisory Organization, should perform an objective evaluation of the existing US&R capability of each region and the region's capability needs, taking into account their differing threat profiles and priorities.

- The Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) is one way that regions determine their US&R capability targets, however, this assessment covers "Mass Search and Rescue" more broadly and does not specify US&R needs within mass search and rescue. Advisory Committee members emphasized the need for an updated evaluation of US&R capability needs in each of the regions and a possible reevaluation of the current capabilities in lower risk regions. Important factors that would affect this risk profile include the different types of occupied buildings' construction in the region, the potential hazards for building collapse (i.e. construction, age of structures, vehicular collisions with buildings, earthquakes, flooding), past incidents and the capability needed to respond to these incidents, current capability of rescue teams and fire departments in the region, and a gap assessment of current capabilities and desired capabilities.

Recommendation 2b: PEMA should consult with the US&R Advisory Organization for distribution of any US&R funds from the Emergency Preparedness Fund, including establishing a base level of sustainability funding for each type of US&R team and selecting priorities for competitive grants with any additional non-sustainment funding.

- In 2024, the General Assembly appropriated $6 million to one US&R team in the state but has not appropriated the necessary funds to support other regions. The resources are currently supported by State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) and Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grants and a complement of local support for some elements. A standard validation process that would establish parameters for funding at a baseline sustainment level for each team based on their typing and the determined capability need in each region, with opportunities for teams to apply for additional competitive funding, would ensure that each region receives the funding necessary to maintain their current capabilities while also allowing for the Commonwealth as a whole to be prepared for an emergency requiring their services.

Recommendation 2c: To receive funding from the Emergency Preparedness Fund, US&R teams should utilize an accountability framework with reporting on staffing, training, equipment maintenance, and needs assessments. This framework could be similar to the existing framework for state certified hazmat teams.

- There is not currently a statewide reporting system for the regional elements. PEMA is facilitating a transition to align with the federal typing system, NIMS. With the future of the federal US&R system uncertain, PEMA and the Advisory Organization should establish a typing framework that mirrors NIMS or other appropriate in-state guidelines and standardizes the qualifications for the regions across the state. Currently, most funding for regional elements is pass-through Homeland Security Grants (HSGP) that Regional Counter-Terrorism Task Forces have the discretion to distribute to several specialized

teams, including US&R teams. Advisory Committee members and regional element leaders alike advocated for an accountability system, preferably administered by PEMA, that would require elements to report their staffing and training levels, equipment maintenance, and needs assessments. This framework could mirror the successful federal framework for US&R Task Forces. PEMA would then distribute funding based on threat assessments and actual capability needs of each regional element. Crucially, PEMA would need proper funding to create new positions to oversee this accountability process. PEMA is in the process of developing an accountability framework for all special teams in the Commonwealth, including US&R teams. PEMA is also in the process of developing a comprehensive resource inventory that could house the required reporting information, or the information could be stored in a stand-alone system.

Recommendation 2d: The accountability framework should include a peer review by members of the Advisory Organization and appropriate staff from PEMA similar to the federal system, which requires annual self-evaluation and administrative review by peers and US&R Branch staff from FEMA Headquarters every three years.

- In April 2025, PEMA collected self-reported information on the capabilities of each of the teams. Confusion or errors in the reporting of this information led to some discrepancies between PEMA's needs assessment survey and more detailed conversations between Commission staff and team leadership. A peer review system for reporting readiness could provide more clarity for PEMA on each team's capabilities and reduce the occurrence of errors or misunderstandings. PA-TF1 has experience with the federal oversight system, which includes an annual self-evaluation for each Task Force. Every three years, Task Forces undergo an Administrative Readiness Evaluation (ARE) where members from the assigned US&R Branch staff from FEMA Headquarters as well as trained peer evaluators from other federal Task Forces come to rate the team on the same metrics as the self-evaluation. The new in-state framework should include a peer review function similar to if not the same as the federal system. The Advisory Organization should collaborate to create an oversight framework and act as the peers that perform these evaluations in Pennsylvania. Correspondingly, PEMA should be adequately funded to employ staff to administer and manage the US&R program, and staff should perform these evaluations in Pennsylvania in conjunction with the peer evaluators. Also, every three years, Task Forces must perform operational exercises consisting of five specific modules: mobilization, transportation of personnel and cache, establishing a base of operations, onsite operations, and demobilization/deployment. PA-TF1 has experience with such a system and can provide guidance to the regional teams, however, performing evaluations and participating in operational exercises is expensive for teams. If they are required to meet these standards, they should be reimbursed by PEMA for reasonable expenses.

Recommendation 3: Amend the Workers' Compensation Act to expand coverage for specialized response teams when mobilized and deployed by PEMA.

- Advisory Committee members and regional element leaders alike highlighted the need for a sustainable solution to workers' compensation coverage for deployments. Though some departments hold MOU's that allow their department's workers' compensation coverage to cover injuries on deployment, some do not, and leadership is wary to send volunteers into dangerous situations without adequate insurance for them and their families in the case of injury or death. PEMA is unable to cover US&R team members on in-state deployments because Pennsylvania courts have interpreted the "agents of the state" clause, which some states use to cover their emergency response teams, to mean only full employees of the Commonwealth, which these individuals are not. Many avenues have been investigated to remedy this issue, but the only viable option is amending the Workers' Compensation Act.[381]

Recommendation 4: Identify and implement a resource tracker at either the state or regional level that will support best practices in compliance reporting for equipment and personnel readiness across all teams that are established by PEMA and the US&R Advisory Organization.

- PEMA collects an annual inventory of all mass search and rescue equipment across the Commonwealth; however, this information is not categorized by specialized teams within mass search and rescue. This information is not easily sortable into helpful information for PEMA when gathering information about the equipment of the various regional teams. PEMA prefers to evaluate teams on their capability rather than by reviewing an itemized list of every single piece of equipment from each regional team. PEMA could either consider a software that PEMA purchases and allows all regional teams to use, or simply require that each region use a system that meets the criteria for compliance with the reporting system.

[381] Act of June 2, 1915 (P.L.736, No.338); 77 P.S. §§ 1-2710; known as the Workers' Compensation Act.

APPENDICES

2024 Act 113
Section 7203

HEALTH AND SAFETY (35 PA.C.S.) - COUNTERTERRORISM PLANNING, PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE, CONSTRUCTION AND MAKING REPEALS

Act of Oct. 29, 2024, P.L. 1026, No. 113 Cl. 35

Session of 2024
No. 2024-113

HB 843

AN ACT

Amending Title 35 (Health and Safety) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in emergency management services, providing for counterterrorism planning, preparedness and response; in Emergency Management Assistance Compact, providing for construction; and making repeals.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. Title 35 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes is amended by adding a chapter to read:

CHAPTER 72
COUNTERTERRORISM PLANNING, PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

Subchapter
A. Preliminary Provisions
B. Counterterrorism Planning, Preparedness and Response

SUBCHAPTER A
PRELIMINARY PROVISIONS

Sec.
7201. Scope of chapter.
7202. Definitions.
7203. Joint State Government Commission study.

§ 7201. Scope of chapter.

This chapter relates to counterterrorism planning, preparedness and response.

§ 7202. Definitions.

The following words and phrases when used in this chapter shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Commission." The Joint State Government Commission.

"Disaster medical assistance team." A complement of individuals organized in accordance with standards developed by the agency and applicable Federal agencies to provide medical service at the scene of disasters and mass casualty incidents.

"Disaster mortuary response team." A complement of individuals organized in accordance with standards developed by the agency and applicable Federal agencies to provide mortuary service at the scene of disasters and mass casualty incidents.

"FEMA." The Federal Emergency Management Agency.

"Letter of agreement." A written agreement between a regional counterterrorism task force and a public, semipublic, private or nonprofit corporation, business, association, partnership, authority, individual or other entity that provides for:

(1) Personnel, equipment, supplies, training facilities or other resources either directly to or in support of the task force's specialized regional counterterrorism response team.

(2) Workers' compensation and death benefits.

(3) Member participation in training exercises, drills and actual activation and deployment.

"Municipal" or "municipality." A city, borough, incorporated town, township or home rule municipality of this Commonwealth.

"Mutual aid." A county's, municipality's or volunteer service organization's affirmative act of sending its personnel, equipment or resources to the scene of an actual or potential disaster, whether inside or outside the boundaries of this Commonwealth, in response to an official dispatch request from a county 911 communications center, county emergency management agency or the State emergency operations center.

"Mutual aid agreement." A written agreement between a regional counterterrorism task force and a county, municipality or volunteer service organization that provides for:

(1) The county, municipality or volunteer service organization to provide personnel, equipment or other resources in response to an actual or potential disaster.

(2) Workers' compensation and death benefits.

(3) Member participation in training exercises, drills and actual activation and deployment.

"NIMS." The National Incident Management System.

"PEMA." The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency.

"Regional counterterrorism task force." A complement of Federal, State, county and municipal emergency management, health, law enforcement, public safety and other officials and representatives from volunteer service organizations, private business and industry, hospitals and medical care facilities and other entities within a multicounty area as determined by the agency that is responsible for conducting counterterrorism planning, training preparedness and response activities.

"Specialized regional counterterrorism response team." As follows:

(1) A complement of individuals established by a regional counterterrorism task force and organized in accordance with standards developed by the agency in accordance with applicable Federal or State guidelines to respond to emergencies involving an actual or potential disaster.

(2) The term includes a disaster medical assistance team and disaster mortuary response team.

"Specialized Statewide response team." As follows:

(1) A complement of individuals organized by the Commonwealth to provide specialized personnel, equipment and other support capabilities in response to an actual or potential disaster in this Commonwealth.

(2) The term includes a disaster medical assistance team and disaster mortuary response team.

"Sponsoring agency." A municipality, county or volunteer service organization that has an agreement with the agency to be the sponsor of an urban search and rescue response team or specialized regional counterterrorism response team.

"Urban search and rescue response team." A multidisciplined complement of individuals organized by the agency in accordance with standards developed by the agency and FEMA, consistent with NIMS guidelines, to provide emergency response and search and rescue capabilities and resources at the scene of a disaster.

"Volunteer service organization." A volunteer fire company, volunteer ambulance or medical company, volunteer rescue squad or any other volunteer entity organized and chartered or incorporated in this Commonwealth or chartered by the Congress of the United States for the primary purpose of providing

emergency services as defined in section 7102 (relating to definitions).

§ 7203. Joint State Government Commission study.

(a) Duty.--The commission shall conduct a comprehensive study and assessment of the Commonwealth's urban search and rescue capabilities.

(b) Advisory board.--The commission shall establish an advisory board to conduct the study under this section. The board shall consist of the following members or their designee:

(1) The Director of PEMA.
(2) The Adjutant General.
(3) The State Fire Commissioner.
(4) The Commissioner of Pennsylvania State Police.
(5) The Secretary of Conservation and Natural Resources.
(6) The Secretary of Environmental Protection.
(7) The Secretary of Health.
(8) The Secretary of Transportation.
(9) The Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission.
(10) The Commander of the Pennsylvania Civil Air Patrol.
(11) The FEMA Region 3 administrator or a designee.
(12) The President, or a designee of the President, of the International Association of Fire Fighters in a fire company in a city that is a sponsoring agency under section 7386(a)(1)(v)(A) (relating to State Fire Advisory Board).
(13) The President, or a designee of the President, of the International Association of Fire Fighters in a fire company in a city of the first class.
(14) One emergency management coordinator each from western, eastern and central Pennsylvania.
(15) A representative of the Pennsylvania Association of Hazardous Materials Technicians.
(16) A representative of the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs.
(17) A representative of the executive board of the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors.
(18) A representative of the Municipal League.
(19) A representative of the executive board of the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Commissioners.
(20) The sponsoring agency chief or a designee of Pennsylvania Task Force 1.
(21) A representative of the Pennsylvania Fire Advisory Board.
(22) A representative of the Pennsylvania Career Fire Chiefs Association.
(23) A representative of the Pennsylvania Fire and Emergency Services Institute.
(24) A representative of the Ambulance Association of Pennsylvania.
(25) The executive board chairperson or a designee of each of the regional task forces.
(26) A representative of the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania.
(27) The President, or a designee of the President, from the Pennsylvania Professional Firefighters Association.

(c) Conduct and assessment.--The commission shall:

(1) Conduct the study by reviewing the following:
(i) In consultation with PEMA, the overall emergency response system plan for this Commonwealth in accordance with NIMS standards and guidelines.
(ii) The current capabilities of Pennsylvania Task Force 1, the Pennsylvania National Guard CBRN Enhanced

Response Force Package (CERF-P) and Civil Support Team (CST) and the Commonwealth's regional task forces related to extraction from damaged or collapsed structures in this Commonwealth.

(iii) The status of protocols and capabilities of emergency medical services care provided by and to urban rescue and response teams for entrapped survivors, urban rescue and response team personnel and others. The assessment shall include physical, visual and audio search capabilities.

(iv) The reconnaissance capabilities of Pennsylvania Task Force 1, the Pennsylvania National Guard CBRN Enhanced Response Force Package (CERF-P) and Civil Support Team (CST) and the Commonwealth's regional task forces regarding damage assessment, mission readiness and resource needs.

(v) PEMA's protocols and communications capabilities among Pennsylvania Task Force 1, this Commonwealth's regional task forces and local emergency response personnel, such as fire companies, EMS agencies and State and local law enforcement, as well as Federal, State and local governments regarding their emergency operations.

(vi) The current protocols, capabilities or needs for hazardous material surveys, extraction and cleanup.

(vii) The capabilities regarding structural stabilization as well as shoring and cribbing operations to damaged buildings of Pennsylvania Task Force 1, the Pennsylvania National Guard CBRN Enhanced Response Force Package (CERF-P) and Civil Support Team (CST) and this Commonwealth's regional task forces.

(2) Review, assess, inventory and catalog urban search and rescue equipment possessed by Pennsylvania Task Force 1, the Pennsylvania National Guard CBRN Enhanced Response Force Package (CERF-P) and each urban search and rescue team of a regional task force in this Commonwealth.

(3) Conduct a monetary assessment to identify and quantify existing Federal, State and local funding resources and the funding impacts of Pennsylvania Task Force 1 and the regional task force system, as well as the short-term and long-term funding impact of creating an additional NIMS-typed urban search and rescue resource in this Commonwealth.

(d) Urban search and rescue.--The commission shall examine each of the component parts of the urban search and rescue system in this Commonwealth, including Pennsylvania Task Force 1, the National Guard CBRN Enhanced Response Force Package (CERF-P) and regional task force urban search and rescue and specialized regional counterterrorism response teams, according to the applicable standard-setting organizations of each respective team, including, but not limited to, the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and standards developed by the National Guard Bureau. The commission shall examine the capability of the current urban search and rescue system in this Commonwealth to provide the needed capabilities in accordance with the Commonwealth's current hazard/risk profile and the capabilities identified in each regional Task Force Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA).

(e) Report and recommendations.--In developing a report as required under this section, the commission shall identify gaps in the system and develop recommendations to address the gaps. The information shall include the identification of resources necessary to address gaps and shall include the identification

of areas or regions in this Commonwealth that lack resources to respond to emergencies requiring urban search and rescue capability in accordance with their hazard profile identified in the regional Task Force Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA).

(f) Time.--The commission shall submit to the General Assembly a report of its findings and recommendations by November 30, 2024, or 180 days after the effective date of this subsection, whichever is later.

SUBCHAPTER B
COUNTERTERRORISM PLANNING, PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

Sec.

§ 7211. Counterterrorism planning, preparedness and response program.

(a) Coordination and consultation.--The agency shall coordinate and consult with other State agencies, departments and offices, including the Office of Homeland Security of the Commonwealth, to establish, develop and maintain a counterterrorism planning, preparedness and response program to promote and protect the health, safety and welfare of emergency responders, public officials and the general public from actual or potential disasters in this Commonwealth.

(b) Agency responsibilities.--The agency shall:

(1) Define the necessary components and composition of regional counterterrorism task forces and specialized regional counterterrorism response teams and the respective regional counterterrorism zones for each, but shall not be responsible for appointing individual members to the regional counterterrorism task forces or the specialized regional counterterrorism response teams.

(2) Provide training and technical assistance for counterterrorism planning, preparedness and response.

(3) Establish guidelines and policies to coordinate emergency response activities with Federal, State, county and municipal emergency management, health, law enforcement, public safety and other officials and representatives from volunteer service organizations, private business and industry, hospitals and medical care facilities and other entities responsible for the health, safety and welfare of the residents of this Commonwealth. The agency shall consult with representatives of the regional counterterrorism task forces to develop such policies and guidelines necessary to carry out this chapter.

(4) Require the regional counterterrorism task forces to prepare counterterrorism emergency response plans or protocols, readiness evaluation reports or other documents deemed necessary by the agency.

(5) Provide grants and other funding assistance as required by this chapter.

(6) Conduct terrorist incident exercises.

(7) Provide technical assistance to regional counterterrorism task forces in developing and entering into mutual aid agreements and letters of agreement.

(8) Establish a certification program for specialized regional counterterrorism response teams that may include standards for the administration, composition, training and equipping of the teams.

§ 7212. Regional counterterrorism task forces.

(a) Establishment.--The agency, in coordination with State, county and municipal emergency management, health, law enforcement, public safety and other officials and representatives from volunteer service organizations, private business and industry, hospitals and medical care facilities and other entities responsible for the health, safety and welfare of the residents of this Commonwealth, shall establish regional counterterrorism task forces throughout this Commonwealth.

(b) Response plans.--A regional counterterrorism task force shall prepare a counterterrorism preparedness and response plan in accordance with guidelines developed by the agency. The agency shall review and approve each plan in a timely manner, but no later than 90 days after its submission to the agency. The task force shall review and update the plan on an annual basis. A task force that does not have an approved plan shall be suspended from a grant or funding program.

(c) Meetings.--Regional counterterrorism task force meetings that are called to discuss sensitive or classified law enforcement, terrorist threat assessment or other confidential public and private facility safety information shall not be deemed a public record subject to disclosure under 65 Pa.C.S. Ch. 7 (relating to open meetings).

§ 7213. Regional counterterrorism response and preparedness.

(a) Specialized regional counterterrorism response teams.--A regional counterterrorism task force shall establish specialized regional counterterrorism response teams.

(b) Regional counterterrorism response zones.--The agency shall establish primary and secondary regional response zones within this Commonwealth for specialized regional counterterrorism response teams. The regional response zones may consist of multiple counties or portions of several adjoining counties as determined by the agency.

(c) Activation and deployment.--A specialized regional counterterrorism response team may be activated and deployed by the Governor, the Governor's designee or an official designated by the appropriate regional counterterrorism task force.

§ 7214. Urban search and rescue response teams.

(a) Establishment.--

(1) The agency shall establish urban search and rescue response teams throughout this Commonwealth to respond to natural and human-caused disasters and other emergencies as deemed necessary by the agency, including:

(i) At least one urban search and rescue response team that:

(A) is within a regional counterterrorism task force covering a county of the first class pursuant to a letter of agreement with a sponsoring agency; and

(B) meets or exceeds the minimum requirements of a Type 1 urban search and rescue task force as defined by FEMA in the resource-typing definition contained in the NIMS guidelines, document identification number 8-508-1262, published in September 2020. The agency will certify whether the

urban search and rescue response team meets these criteria.

(ii) At least one urban search and rescue response team that:

(A) is within a regional counterterrorism task force covering a county of the second class; and

(B) by January 1, 2026, or 18 months after the agency enters into a letter of agreement with a sponsoring agency, whichever is later, meets or exceeds the minimum requirements of a Type 3 urban search and rescue task force as defined by FEMA in the resource-typing definition contained in the NIMS guidelines, document identification number 8-508-1262, published in September 2020. The agency will certify whether the urban search and rescue response team meets these criteria.

(2) The provisions of paragraph (1)(i) may be satisfied by the operation of an urban search and rescue response team established by the Federal Government that has a letter of agreement with the agency to respond to incidents within this Commonwealth.

(b) Support.--The urban search and rescue response teams shall also provide professional, logistical, material and other forms of support to regional counterterrorism task forces and specialized regional counterterrorism response teams.

(c) Organization.--An urban search and rescue response team shall be organized in accordance with guidelines developed by the agency in coordination with FEMA and members of the task force.

(d) Responsibilities.--An urban search and rescue response team shall respond to actual or potential disasters in this Commonwealth and shall also perform search and rescue functions as delineated in The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Public Law 93-288, 42 U.S.C. § 5121 et seq.), the Federal Response Plan or its successor, Emergency Management Assistance Compact missions under Chapter 76 (relating to Emergency Management Assistance Compact), as requested, and the counterterrorism preparedness and response plans created in accordance with this chapter.

(e) Activation and deployment.--

(1) An urban search and rescue response team or any of its components, subgroups or regional elements may only be activated and deployed to the scene of a disaster in accordance with policies and cost principles promulgated by the agency.

(2) During an activation and deployment as the result of a Governor's declaration of a disaster emergency, the administrative and operational costs of the response team, its individual members and their employers, State agencies and other parties shall be paid under the Governor's declaration of disaster emergency, including paying or reimbursing any parties for workers' compensation and death benefits in the event of injury or death of an urban search and rescue response team member.

(f) Workers' compensation and death benefits.--A member of an urban search and rescue response team shall be eligible to receive workers' compensation and death benefits in the event of injury or death that occurs during the period of activation or deployment.

(g) Funding, grants and donations.--In addition to money that is provided to a task force under section 7216 (relating to grant program) or the authority of section 1508 of the act

of April 9, 1929 (P.L.343, No.176), known as The Fiscal Code, the urban search and rescue response team may be eligible to receive grants, donations of equipment and supplies and other funds from any source.

§ 7215. Specialized Statewide response teams.

(a) Establishment.--The Commonwealth may establish one or more specialized Statewide response teams. These specialized Statewide response teams shall also provide professional, logistical, material and other forms of support to the regional counterterrorism task forces and specialized regional counterterrorism response teams organized in this Commonwealth.

(b) Organization and responsibilities.--Specialized Statewide response teams shall be organized in accordance with guidelines developed by the Commonwealth in consultation with applicable Federal or State agencies.

(c) Activation.--Specialized Statewide response teams may only be activated and deployed to the scene of a disaster in accordance with policies developed by the agency.

§ 7216. Grant program.

(a) Authorization.--The agency may make grants to regional counterterrorism task forces, specialized regional counterterrorism response teams, specialized Statewide response teams and urban search and rescue response teams to assist them in carrying out this chapter, including entering into letters of agreement or mutual aid agreements or providing mutual aid.

(b) Grants and funding.--Regional counterterrorism task forces, specialized regional counterterrorism response teams, specialized Statewide response teams and urban search and rescue response teams may receive grants and funding from the Federal Government and the Commonwealth through application to the agency or other entity providing grants or funding for the purposes of this chapter.

(c) Limitation.--Grants shall only be made by the agency to the extent that funding is available.

§ 7217. Miscellaneous provisions.

(a) Immunity from liability.--The provisions of 42 Pa.C.S. § 8331 (relating to medical good Samaritan civil immunity), 8332 (relating to emergency response provider and bystander good Samaritan civil immunity) or 8332.4 (relating to volunteer-in-public-service negligence standard) shall apply to a member of a specialized regional counterterrorism response team, an urban search and rescue response team or a specialized Statewide response team and an individual who provides logistical, material or other forms of emergency response support to a team or task force during activation or deployment of a team or task force to a potential or actual disaster or while engaged in a task force or team drill or training exercise.

(b) Effect on workers' compensation premiums.--Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to permit an insurer to raise workers' compensation premiums due to the participation or membership of a county, municipality, volunteer service organization, individual or employer on a regional counterterrorism task force, specialized regional counterterrorism response team, specialized Statewide response team or urban search and rescue response team.

§ 7218. Commonwealth indemnification.

The Commonwealth shall indemnify a county or municipality for costs related to damaged county or municipal property that results from participation in a regional counterterrorism task force, specialized regional counterterrorism response team or

specialized Statewide response team response only when all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The county or municipality is responding upon activation or deployment by the Governor.

(2) The damage to county or municipal property occurs outside of the primary regional counterterrorism response zone.

(3) The county's or municipality's insurance does not cover the property damage.

(4) The property damage was not caused by the willful misconduct of the county or municipality or any of its employees or agents.

Section 2. Title 35 is amended by adding a section to read:

§ 7605. **Construction.**

For purposes of Article VI of the compact, the term "officers or employees of a party state" shall be construed to include urban search and rescue response teams as defined in section 7202 (relating to definitions) that are assets of the Federal Emergency Management Agency or Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency and the components, subgroups and regional elements of the task forces based in this Commonwealth.

Section 3. Repeals are as follows:

(1) The General Assembly finds that the repeals under paragraphs (2) and (3) are necessary to effectuate the addition of 35 Pa.C.S. Ch. 72.

(2) The definitions, excluding the definitions of "department" and "local health department," in section 102 of the act of December 16, 2002 (P.L.1967, No.227), known as the Counterterrorism Planning, Preparedness and Response Act, are repealed.

(3) Chapter 2 of the Counterterrorism Planning, Preparedness and Response Act, is repealed.

Section 4. The addition of 35 Pa.C.S. Ch. 72 is a continuation of Chapter 2 of the act of December 16, 2002 (P.L.1967, No.227), known as the Counterterrorism Planning, Preparedness and Response Act. The following apply:

(1) Except as otherwise provided in 35 Pa.C.S. Ch. 72, all activities initiated under Chapter 2 of the Counterterrorism Planning, Preparedness and Response Act shall continue and remain in full force and effect and may be completed under 35 Pa.C.S. Ch. 72. Orders, regulations, rules and decisions which were made under Chapter 2 of the Counterterrorism Planning, Preparedness and Response Act and which are in effect on the effective date of this section shall remain in full force and effect until revoked, vacated or modified under 35 Pa.C.S. Ch. 72. Contracts, obligations and collective bargaining agreements entered into under Chapter 2 of the Counterterrorism Planning, Preparedness and Response Act are not affected nor impaired by the repeal of Chapter 2 of the Counterterrorism Planning, Preparedness and Response Act.

(2) Except as specified in paragraph (3), any difference in language between 35 Pa.C.S. Ch. 72 and Chapter 2 of the Counterterrorism Planning, Preparedness and Response Act is intended only to conform to the style of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes and is not intended to change or affect the legislative intent, judicial construction or administration and implementation of Chapter 2 of the Counterterrorism Planning, Preparedness and Response Act.

(3) Paragraph (2) does not apply to the addition of the following provisions:

(i) The definitions of "commission," "disaster mortuary response team," "letter of agreement," "mutual aid agreement," "NIMS," "PEMA," "specialized regional counterterrorism response team," "sponsoring agency" and "urban search and rescue response team" in 35 Pa.C.S. § 7202.

(ii) 35 Pa.C.S. § 7203.

(iii) 35 Pa.C.S. § 7212(b).

(iv) 35 Pa.C.S. § 7213(c).

(v) 35 Pa.C.S. § 7214(a), (b), (d), (e) and (g).

(vi) 35 Pa.C.S. § 7215(a) and (c).

Section 5. This act shall take effect in 60 days.

APPROVED--The 29th day of October, A.D. 2024.

JOSH SHAPIRO

APPENDIX B

US&R Training Courses

US&R Training Certification Levels:

Below are just some of the classes that make up the composition of a US&R team. How many of each is determined by the team type (NIMS discussed above), and the program the agency falls under. A Type III team that requires (35), may have (70) trained and rostered to be able to meet the request when activated.

Many will carry dual certification levels to allow flexibility to fill the gap at the time of resource request, and to cover team attrition rate. Discussed on 3.6.25, funding for classes needs to be consistent to cover for this. A 3/5/7 statewide training plan, by region to support the continued growth of the programs.

The Information below is directly from the TEEX web site:

Structural Collapse Specialist (SCS) (this is the core value class for US&R operations)

- 8 hours of Computer-based training (CBT)
- 80 hours of instructor led training (face-to-face)
    - The Structural Collapse Specialist (Technician) course provides you with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform rescues at structural collapse scenes due to natural disasters or terrorist incidents.
        - Construct Emergency Shoring (Interior and Exterior)
        - Lifting and Moving Techniques
        - Breaching and Breaking

Technical Search Specialist:

- 16 hours of computer-based training (CBT)
- 28 hours of instructor led training (face to face)
    - The Technical Search Specialist course is designed to provide Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Task Force personnel with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform technical search functions for a US&R team during a disaster or a planned event.
    - You will learn the essential requirements necessary to perform all physical, visual, and technical search functions. Upon completion of the ILT component, participants will be able to successfully perform the position of Technical Search Specialist on a US&R team.

Heavy Equipment & Rigging Specialist (HERS):

- 6 hours of computer-based training (CBT)
- 32 hours of instructor led training (face to face)
    - The Heavy Equipment and Rigging Specialist (HERS) course is designed to provide Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Task Force personnel with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform the HERS function. Upon completion of the course, participants will be able to successfully perform the position of HERS on a US&R team.

Medical Team Specialist:

- 13 hours of computer -based training (CBT)
- 46 hours of instructor led training (face to face)
    - The Medical Team Specialist course is designed to provide Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Task Force personnel with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform medical functions for a US&R team during a disaster or planned event. Participants will learn to navigate the operational aspects and organizational issues that affect their ability to practice medicine. Upon completion of the ILT component, participants will be able to successfully perform the position of Medical Team Specialist or Medical Team Manager on a US&R team.

Canine Search Specialist:

- 16 hours of computer-based training (CBT)
- 24 hours of instructor led training (face to face)
    - The Canine Search Specialist course is designed to provide Urban Search and Rescue Task Force personnel with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to select, train, and work with current and future disaster search canines. This course is appropriate for canine handlers that will work with either Live-Find (LF) or Human Remains Detection (HRD) canine during search and rescue operations as part of Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Task Force (TF). Upon completion of the course, participants will be able to successfully perform the position of Canine Search Specialist on a US&R team.

Task Force Safety Officer:

- 6 hours of computer-based training (CBT)
- 25 hours of instructor led training (face to face)
    - The Instructor Led Training (ILT) course is designed to provide Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Task Force personnel with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform the duties of a Task Force Safety Officer (TFSO) on one a US&R task force. Upon completion of the course, participants will be able to successfully perform the position of TFSO on a US&R task force.

Task Force leader:

- 8 hours of computer-based training (CBT)
- 24 hours of instructor led training (face to face)
    - The Task Force Leader Instructor-Led Training (ILT) course is designed to provide Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Task Force personnel with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform the Task Force Leader (TFL) function. Upon completion of the course, participants will be able to successfully perform the position of TFL on a US&R team.

Logistics Specialist:

- 11 hours of computer-based training (CBT)
- 40 hours of instructor led training (face to face)
    - The Logistics Specialist course is designed to provide Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Task Force personnel with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform logistics functions for a US&R team during a disaster or a planned event. Participants will learn the essential requirements of providing support, re-supply, transportation, sustainment, and maintenance of an equipment cache. Upon completion of the course, participants will be able to successfully perform the position of Logistics Specialist on a US&R team.

Planning Team Training:

- 8 hours of computer-based training (CBT)
- 32 hours of instructor led training (face to face)
    - The Planning Team Training Instructor-Led Training (ILT) course is designed to provide Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Task Force personnel with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform the duties of a Planning Team Manager and/or Technical Information Specialist on one of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) US&R Task Forces.

Structures Specialist:

- SC1 56 hours
- SC2 44 hours

Wide Area Search:

- 24 hours of instructor led training (face to face)

    - When disaster strikes it can be a challenge to effectively mobilize, organize, and deploy resources needed to perform search and rescue operations. The purpose of this course is to prepare participants to support a large search and rescue incident in a variety of roles ranging from searchers in the field, planning and support staff, and incident command. While built around the model of a large search and rescue event following a disaster, the course content applies to a vast number of critical situations including missing persons searches, natural disasters, terrorist incidents, and other scenarios.

    - This course exposes participants to a search management system focused on resource management and search documentation designed to conduct search operations efficiently and effectively. The instructor cadre will lead participants through facilitated discussions, table-top exercises, and hands-on activities in practical search skills and search management based on real world scenarios. The three-day long event concludes with a table-top exercise which requires participants to utilize the skills gained during the course to work through an incident from start to finish in a single operational period.

Highwater Operations:

- Class requirements vary by team, but US&R teams support vehicle-based evacuations using specialty vehicles that are designed to operate in flooded areas.
- Teams should expect to complete a 2 hour computer-based training session (CBT), followed by a 8 hour behind the wheel instructor-led.

Water Rescue Based Certifications:

- US&R teams or more specifically water based MRP's are expected to operate in weather-based events that require four certifications:
    - Water Rescue and Emergency Response
        - 16 hours
    - Emergency Boat Operations and Rescue
        - 16 hours
    - Ice Rescue and Emergency Response
        - 16 hours
    - Advanced Line Systems Rescue
        - 16 hours

APPENDIX C

Pennsylvania Task Force 1
2024 Self-Evaluation

Department of Homeland Security
Federal Emergency Management Agency

NATIONAL URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE RESPONSE SYSTEM
Task Force Self-Evaluation Scoresheet

OMB 1660-0073
Expires December 31, 2025

PAPERWORK BURDEN DISCLOSURE NOTICE
FEMA Form 089-0-14

Public reporting burden for this data collection is estimated to average 2 hours per response. The burden estimate includes the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and submitting this form. This collection of information is required to obtain or retain benefits. You are not required to respond to this collection of information unless a valid OMB control number is displayed on this form. Send comments regarding the accuracy of the burden estimate and any suggestions for reducing the burden to: Information Collections Management, Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, 500 C Street, SW., Washington, DC 20472-3100, Paperwork Reduction Project (1660-0073) NOTE: Do not send your completed form to this address.

INSTRUCTIONS

Prior to completing this self-evaluation, consult current guidance from the FEMA US&R Branch

With the use of this form, three areas of readiness will be evaluated:

Operational Readiness – availability of a complement of rostered, trained, deployable, exercised members and canine search specialist teams.

Logistic Readiness – availability of equipment caches and other logistic resources to support immediate deployment.

Management Readiness – in-place resources, plans, agreements, processes, and procedures to support deployments, and meet requirements of the US&R's Preparedness Cooperative Agreements and other audit requirements.

OPERATIONAL READINESS	
1. Compliment of Deployable Task Force Members	max score: 50
2. Compliment of CDL Drivers, Water Rescue Specialists, Jon Boat and IRB Operators	max score: 20
3. Compliment of Additional Operational Support Capabilaities	no score: 0
4. Number of TF Member Participants in annual exercises	max score: 15
5. Number of TF Member Participants in annual training	max score:1 15
Total Operational Readiness	max score: 100

LOGISTICS READINESS	
1. Number of cache equipment items	max score: 20
2. Transportation Resources	max score: 20
3. Equipment Cache Training and Exercises	max score: 20
4. Cache Management inventory system	max score: 20
5. Warehouse Resources	max score: 20
Total Logistics Readiness	max score: 100

MANAGEMENT READINESS	
1. Number of Administrative staffing/resources	max score: 20
2. Cooperative Agreement reporting	max score: 20
3. Cooperative Agreement Plans and Memoranda of Agreement	max score: 20
4. Financial and Accounting Processes and Records	max score: 20
5. Sponsoring Agency Support Functions	max score: 20
Total Management Readiness	max score: 100

This scoresheet has been provided for your task force to make the required point entries and calculate scores. More specific guidance on methodology and scoring criteria will be provided separately.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
FEMA National Urban Search & Rescue Response System

2024 Task Force Self-Evaluation Scoresheet

FEMA

Task Force: PA-TF 1
Date Completed: 22-Apr-25

TASK FORCE OPERATIONAL READINESS

		Members	Points	Score
1) Number of Rostered Task Force (TF) Members:		204	N/A	No Score
2) Number of Trained TF Members:		204	N/A	No Score
3) TF Members Trained in More Than 1 Specialty:			N/A	No Score
3) Number of Deployable TF Members:	**50 Points**	204	10	50
5) Number of Deployable CDL Drivers:				
5a) Class A Drivers:	**(Max 5 Points for 5a & 5b)**	15	3	3
5b) Class B Drivers:		14	2	2
6) Number of Water Rescue Specialist:	**5 Points**	122	5	5
7) Number of Jon Boat Operators:	**5 Points**	20	5	5
8) Number of IRB Operators:	**5 Points**	122	5	5
4) Number of TF Members Participating in Annual Training / Exercises:				
4a) Deployment Exercises	**(Max 15 Points for 4a & 4b)**	54	5	7.5
4b) Modular or Mobilization Exercises:		0	0	0
5) Number of Members Participating in Annual Training:	**15 Points**	62	0	0

Task Force Operational Readiness Total Score: 77.5

TASK FORCE LOGISTICAL READINESS

	Points	Score
1) Compliment of Approved Equipment Cache Items:	8	16
2) Compliment of Transportation Resources:	8	16
3) Cache Movement and Utilization:	8	16
4) Cache Management:	8	16
5) Warehouse Facilities:	9	18

Task Force Logistical Readiness Total Score: 82

TASK FORCE MANAGEMENT READINESS

	Points	Score
1) Number of Administrative Personnel and Resources:	8	16
2) Cooperative Agreement Reporting:	8	16
3) Plans and Memoranda of Agreement:	9	18
4) Financial Accounting Processes and Recordkeeping:	9	18
5) Task Force Support Functions:	9	18

Task Force Management Readiness Total Score: 86
Task Force Self-Evaluation Total Score: 82

Note for the following 4 data entry pages: A grayed out item is a new training requirement in the Position is not scored on the Task Force Self-Evaluations or Administrative Readiness Evaluations.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
FEMA National Urban Search & Rescue Response System

Task Force Self-Evaluation Scoresheet - continuation
US&R Position Description Training Requirements

FEMA

Task Force: PA-TF 1

1) Canine Search Specialist (CSS) (4 pos. x 3 deep)	**# rostered as CSS (12 max):** 7	
1a) Meet all Administrative & General Training requirements:		6
1b) Have current certification as a FEMA US&R Canine Search Specialist Team:		6
1c) Complete the FEMA US&R Canine Search Specialist Course:		6
1d) Complete the FEMA US&R GPS Awareness Level Course:		7
1e) Complete the required Technical Rescue Skill Sets (TRSSs) as defined in Appendix A of the FEMA US&R Opereations Manual Annex E - Position Descriptions:		
	# of CSS trained (12 max):	7
	# of CSS deployable (12 max):	7
2) Communications Specialist (CS) (2 pos. x 3 deep):	**# rostered as CS (6 max):** 6	
2a) Meet all Administrative & General Training requirements:		6
2b) Complete the FEMA US&R GPS Awareness Level Course:		6
2c) Complete the FEMA US&R Communications Specialist Course:		6
	# of CS trained (6 max):	6
	# of CS deployable (6 max):	6
3) Hazardous Materials Specialist (HMS) (8 pos. x 3 deep):	**# rostered as HMS (24 max):** 21	
3a) Meet all Administrative & General Training requirements:		21
3b) Meet & maintain the requirements as a certified Hazardous Materials Technician per OSHA Standard 29 CFR 1910.120 "Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response":		21
3c) Meet & maintain the AHJ competencies in accordance with NFPA Standard 472:		21
3d) Complete the FEMA US&R WMD Considerations for the Hazardous Materials Specialist:		21
3e) Complete all required TRSSs as defined in Appendix A of Ops Manual Annex E:		21
	# of HMS trained (24 max):	21
	# of HMS deployable (24 max):	21
4) Hazardous Materials Manager (HMM) (2 pos. x 3 deep):	**# rostered as HMM (6 max):** 5	
4a) Meet all Administrative & General Training requirements:		5
4b) Meet all of the FEMA US&R Hazardous Materials Specialist PD "Required Training":		5
	# of HMM trained (6 max):	5
	# of HMM deployable (6 max):	5
5) Heavy Equip. Rigging Specialist (HERS) (2 pos. x 3 deep)	**# rostered as HERS (6 max):** 5	
5a) Meet all Administrative & General Training requirements:		5
5b) Complete the Heavy Equipment & Rigging Specialist Course:		5
5c-1) Experienced in heavy construction field, such as heavy equipment operator, crane operator, iron worker, rigger, or other applicable field:		5
OR 5c-2) A minimum of three years experience as a Rescue Specialist on a Task Force:		5
	# of HERS trained (6 max):	5
	# of HERS deployable (6 max):	5
6) Logistic Specialist (LS) (4 pos. x 3 deep):	**# rostered as LS (12 max):** 14	
6a) Meet all Administrative & General Training requirements:		14
6b) Complete the FEMA US&R GPS Awareness Level Course:		14
6c) Complete the FEMA US&R Logistics Specialist Course:		14
6d) Complete an OSHA Title 49 CFR 1910.178 course (Forklift Training):		14
6e) Complete a DOT Title 49 CFR 172.704 course (HazMat Handler / Packer / Labeler):		14
	# of LS trained (12 max):	14
	# of LS deployable (12 max):	14
7) Logistics Team Manager (LTM) (2 pos. x 3 deep):	**# rostered as LTM (6 max):** 6	
7a) Meet all Administrative & General Training requirements:		6
7b) Meet all of the FEMA US&R Logistics Specialist PD "Required Training":		6
7c) Complete & maintain certification as a Certifying Official for Transportation Requirements & Regulations - Air & Ground (IATA, Title 49 CFR 3, & AFMAN 24-204):		6
	# of LTM trained (6 max):	6
	# of LTM deployable (6 max):	6

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
FEMA National Urban Search & Rescue Response System

Task Force Self-Evaluation Scoresheet - continuation
US&R Position Description Training Requirements

Task Force: PA-TF 1

8) Medical Specialist (MS) (4 pos. x 3 deep):	**# rostered as MS (12 max):** 13	
8a) Meet all Administrative & General Training requirements:		13
8b-1) Currently certified / licensed as an EMT-Paramedic and meet local jurisdiction requirements, actively participating in pre-hospital care:		13
8b-2) Currently certified / licensed as a Physician Asst, Reg. Nurse-Pract., or Reg. Nurse, with an accredited organization or municipality, meets the NREMT-P Standards or State certification requirements, actively practices advanced pre-hospital life support, and currently certified in BTLS, ACLS and PALS:		12
8c) Complete the FEMA US&R Medical Team Training Course:		13
8d) Complete the FEMA US&R WMD Considerations for the Medical Team Training Course:		13
8e) Complete all required TRSSs as defined in Appendix A of Ops Manual, Annex E:		13
	# of MS trained (12 max):	13
	# of MS deployable (12 max):	13
9) Medical Team Manager (MTM) (2 pos. x 3 deep)	**# rostered as MTM (6 max):** 12	
9a) Meet all Administrative & General Training requirements:		12
9b-1) Currently licensed physician, emergency medicine residency-trained, and/or Board-certified in emergency medicine, & practices clinical emergency medicine, w/pre-hospital medical care experience:		12
OR 9b-2) Currently licensed physician whose medical activities include clinical emergency and pre-hospital medical care. Currently certified in ACLS, ATLS, and PALS (or equivalent):		12
9c) Complete the FEMA US&R Medical Team Training Course:		12
	# of MTM trained (6 max):	12
	# of Med Team Managers deployable (min of 3 required, 6 max):	12
10) Planning Team Manager (PTM) (2 pos. x 3 deep):	**# rostered as PTM (6 max):** 4	
10a) Meet all Administrative & General Training requirements:		4
10b) ICS 300 in accordance w/the NSCTD Guidance:		4
10c) Complete the FEMA US&R Planning Team Training Course:		4
	# of PTM trained (6 max):	4
	# of PTM deployable (6 max):	4
11) Rescue Specialist (RS) (20 pos. x 3 deep)	**# rostered as RS (60 max):** 63	
11a) Meet all Administrative & General Training requirements:		63
11b) Complete the FEMA US&R GPS Awareness Level Course:		63
11c) Meet requirements - NFPA 1006 Tech Rescue Level 1 & 2 (Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, & 11):		63
11d) Complete the FEMA US&R Structural Collapse Technician Course or equivalent:		63
11e) Current certification in Basic First Aide for First Responders or equivalent:		63
	# of RS trained (60 max):	63
	# of RS deployable (60 max):	63
12) Rescue Squad Officer (RSO) (4 pos. x 3 deep)	**# rostered as RSO) (12 max):** 11	
12a) Meet all requirements of the Rescue Specialist:		11
12b) Shall have experience in /FEMA US&R structural collapse operations to include participation in field exercise(s) and/or a deployment as a RS:		11
	# of RSO trained (12 max):	11
	# of RSO deployable (12 max):	11
13) Rescue Team Manager (RTM) (2 pos. x 3 deep)	**# rostered as RTM (6 max):** 2	
13a) Meet all requirements of the Rescue Squad Officer:		2
13b) ICS 300 in accordance w/the NSCTD Guidance:		2
	# of RTM trained (6 max):	2
	# of RTM deployable (6 max):	2
14) Safety Officer (SO) (2 pos. x 3 deep)	**# rostered as SO (6 max):** 7	
14a) Meet all Administrative & General Training requirements:		7
14b) Complete the FEMA US&R GPS Awareness Level Course:		7
14c) ICS 300 in accordance w/the NSCTD Guidance:		7
14d) Complete the FEMA US&R Structural Collapse Technician Course or equivalent:		7
14e) Complete the FEMA US&R Safety Officer Course:		7
14f) Meet requirements - NFPA 1006 Tech Rescue Level 1 & 2 (Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, & 11):		7
14g) Current certification in Basic First Aide for First Responders or equivalent:		7
	# of SO trained (6 max):	7
	# of SO deployable (6 max):	7

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
FEMA National Urban Search & Rescue Response System

Task Force Self-Evaluation Scoresheet - continuation

US&R Position Description Training Requirements

Task Force: PA-TF 1

FEMA

15) Search Team Manager (STM) (2 pos. x 3 deep)	**# rostered as STM (6 max):**	4	
15a) Meet all Administrative & General Training requirements:			4
15b) Complete the FEMA US&R Technical Search Specialist Course:			4
15c) Complete the FEMA US&R Canine Search Specialist Course:			4
15d) Shall have experience in /FEMA US&R Technical or Canine Search operations to include participation in field exercise(s) and/or a deployment or equivalent as defined by the Sponsoring Agency (Does not apply to those members rostered as STMs prior to July 1, 2008)			4
	# of STM trained (6 max):		4
	# of STM deployable (6 max):		4
16) Structures Specialist (SS) (2 pos. x 3 deep):	**# rostered as SS (6 max):**	6	
16a) Meet all Administrative & General Training requirements:			3
16b) Complete the FEMA US&R GPS Awareness Level Course:			6
16c) Complete the USACE Structures Specialist Training Course (StS 1):			6
16d) Complete all required TRSSs as defined in Appendix A of the FEMA US&R PD Manual:			6
16e) Be currently licensed as a Professional Engineer specializing in structures or *equivalent as sanctioned by the FEMA US&R Structures Sub-Group:			6
AND 16f) Have a sum of 5 years experience in structure design and analysis to include evaluation of existing structures, field investigation or construction observation experience:			6
	# of SS trained (6 max):		6
	# of Structures Specialists deployable (min of 3 required, 6 max):		6
17) Task Force Leader (TFL) (2 pos. x 3 deep)	**# rostered as TFL (6 max):**	8	
17a) Meet all Administrative & General Training requirements:			8
17b) Complete ICS 400 in accordance w/the NSCTD Guidance:			8
17c) Complete the FEMA US&R Task Force Leaders Course:			8
	# of TFL trained (6 max):		8
	# of TFL deployable (6 max):		8
18) Technical Information Specialist (TIS) (2 pos. x 3 deep):	**# rostered as TIS (6 max):**	4	
18a) Meet all Administrative & General Training requirements:			4
18b) Complete the FEMA US&R Planning Team Training Course:			4
	# of TIS trained (6 max):		4
	# of TIS deployable (6 max):		4
19) Technical Search Specialist (TSS) (2 pos. x 3 deep)	**# rostered as TSS (6 max):**	6	
19a) Meet all Administrative & General Training requirements:			6
19b) Complete the FEMA US&R Technical Search Specialist Course:			6
19c) Complete all required TRSSs as defined in Appendix A of the Ops Manual, Annex E:			6
	# of TSS trained (6 max):		6
	# of TSS deployable (6 max):		6
	Total Task Force rostered members listed:	204	
	Total Task Force trained members listed:		204
	Total Task Force deployable members listed:		204

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
FEMA National Urban Search & Rescue Response System

Task Force Self-Evaluation Scoresheet - continuation

US&R Position Description Training Requirements

Task Force: PA-TF 1

FEMA

Water Rescue Specialist (WRS) (14 pos x 2 deep)	**# rostered as WRS:** 122	
a) Meet all Administrative & General Training requirements:		122
b) Complete the GPS Awareness Course:		122
c) Meet requirements of current NFPA 1006, Surface Water Rescue **(Level 1 & 2)**		122
d) Meet requirements of current NFPA 1006, Swiftwater Rescue **(Level 1 & 2)**		122
e) Meet requirements of current NFPA 1006, Rope Rescue **(Level 1 & 2)**		122
f) Complete a minimum swim requirement per the AHJ (Sponsoring/Participating Agency)		122
	# of WRS trained:	122
	# of WRS deployable:	122

Jon / Flat Boat Operator (BO) - 12 Operators	**# rostered as JBO:** 20	
a) Meet all Administrative & General Training requirements:		20
b) Complete the GPS Awareness Course:		20
c) Meet requirements of a US&R Water Rescue Specialist		20
d) Safe boating certificate recognized by the National Safe Boating Council **or equivalent**		20
e) Complete boat operator requirements as outlined in the US&R Boat Operator Position Task Book		20
Note: PTB shall note: Jon Boat Operator	**# of JBO trained:**	20
	# of JBO deployable:	20

Swift Water Boat Operator (SWBO) - 6 Operators	**# rostered as SW/IRB BO:** 122	
a) Meet all Administrative & General Training requirements:		122
b) Complete the GPS Awareness Course:		122
c) Meet requirements of a US&R Water Rescue Specialist		122
d) Safe boating certificate recognized by the National Safe Boating Council **or equivalent**		122
e) Complete boat operator requirements as outlined in the US&R Boat Operator Position Task Book		122
Note: PTB shall note: SW or IRB Boat Operator	**# of SW/IRB BO trained:**	122
	# of SW/IRB BO deployable:	122

APPENDIX D

DRAFT - FY 2024 - $40.832M Budget Spend Plan - (Ver 4.0)
Federal Task Force Readiness Cooperative Agreements

DRAFT - FY 2024 - $40.832M Budget Spend Plan - (Ver 4.0)					
2024-OS-A391-D60D-XXXX				Final Budget Amount:	$ 40,832,000
Task Forces:	$ 40,280,252			Direct Support:	$ 551,748
Task Force Readiness Cooperative Agreements					
#	ITEM	UNIT COST	QTY	EXTENDED COST	SUBTOTAL
1	Program Management	$ 740,532			
2	Staff & Other Travel - TAVs	$ 50,000			
3	Support & Mtg. Travel or as directed by US&R Branch	$ 60,000			
4	Readiness Assessment Program Participation	$ 5,000			
5	Support & Trvl - Nat'l & Local Trng/Exer/Canine Evals	$ 82,500	28	$ 1,369,884	$ 38,356,752
6	Equip, Supplies, Veh Acquisition	$ 166,373			
7	Equip Recapitilization - Congressional Intent	$ 94,714			
8	Insurance Costs				
9	Storage/Maintenance	$ 170,765			
#	ITEM	SPECIFIC TFs	QTY	UNIT COST	SUBTOTAL
10	IST Cache	See: Spend Plan TF Details	1	$ 289,500	$ 289,500
11	HEPP Cache	See: Spend Plan TF Details	1	$ 322,000	$ 322,000
12	Capital Contingency	See: Spend Plan TF Details	1	$ -	$ -
13	Nat'l Level Training Delivery Hosting		1	$ 440,000	$ 440,000
14	Nat'l Level Training Initiatives		1	$ -	$ -
15	Divisional Multi-Task Force Field Exercises		0	$ 15,000	$ -
16	Divisional Multi-Task Force Table Top Exercises		0	$ 10,000	$ -
17	IST CE Wkshp & New Mbr Orntation Hosting - CY24	TBD - UT-TF1 to hold the funds	1	$ 62,000	$ 62,000
18	IST National Level Training Course (S-420)			$ 90,000	$ -
19	IST Support	See: Spend Plan TF Details	1	$ 118,000	$ 118,000
20	Annual Meetings Hosting	See: Spend Plan TF Details	1	$ 145,000	$ 145,000
21	Annual Advisory Organization Stipends	See: Spend Plan TF Details	1	$ 352,000	$ 352,000
22	Canine Search Specialist Certification Process	See: Spend Plan TF Details	1	$ 195,000	$ 195,000
23	TF Readiness Cooperative Agreements Subtotal:			98.6%	$ 40,280,252
24	TF Readiness CA Supplemental Funding - End of Year US&R Funding:				
25	TF Readiness CA Supplemental Funding - End of Year PDO Funding:				
26	Direct Task Force Support Subtotal:			1.4%	$ 551,748
27	Budget Task Force Surplus/Deficit Subtotal:				$ -
28	Final Budget Combined Spend Plans Total:				$ 40,832,000
29	Administrative Travel Spend Plan Total (amount not paid from Appropriation):				
Note: Line Item Changes this version					

DRAFT - FY 2024 - $40.832M Budget Spend Plan - (Ver 4.0)					
2024-OS-A391-D60D-XXXX				Final Budget Total Amount:	$ 40,832,000
A391 - Task Forces:	$ 40,280,252			Direct Support:	$ 551,748
Spend Plan Task Force Details					
#	ITEM	DETAILS	QTY	UNIT COST	SUBTOTAL
30	IST Cache Maintenance *(Exercises, Med Kits, database)*	*CA-TF6, TX-TF1, VA-TF2*	3	$ 91,500	$ 274,500
31	IST Cache Recapitalization	*CA-TF6, TX-TF1, VA-TF2*	3	$ 5,000	$ 15,000
32				**Line 10: IST Cache Maintenance Total:**	**$ 289,500**
33	HEPP Cache Maintenance	*CA-TF7, CO-TF1, FL-TF2, IN-TF1, MD-TF1, NV-TF1, TX-TF1*	7	$ 35,000	$ 245,000
34	HEPP Cache Recapitalization	*CA-TF7, CO-TF1, FL-TF2, IN-TF1, MD-TF1, NV-TF1, TX-TF1*	7	$ 11,000	$ 77,000
35				**Line 11: HEPP Cache Maintenance Total:**	**$ 322,000**
36	Capital Contingency		1		$ -
37	Capital Contingency		1		$ -
38				**Line 12: Capital Contingency:**	**$ -**
39	Nat'l Lvl Training Hosting - CSS	*TX-TF1*	1	$ 35,000	$ 35,000
40	Nat'l Lvl Training Hosting - Comm N Workshop	*not funded in FY24*	0	$ 35,000	$ -
41	Nat'l Lvl Training Hosting - Comm Spec	*CA-TF2*	1	$ 100,000	$ 100,000
42	Nat'l Lvl Training Hosting - HERS	*OH-TF1*	1	$ 45,000	$ 45,000
43	Nat'l Lvl Training Hosting - Log	*CA-TF6*	1	$ 40,000	$ 40,000
44	Nat'l Lvl Training Hosting - MTT	*PA-TF1*	1	$ 110,000	$ 110,000
45	Nat'l Lvl Training Hosting - PTT	*UT-TF1*	1	$ 15,000	$ 15,000
46	Nat'l Lvl Training Hosting - SOFR	*PA-TF1*	1	$ 35,000	$ 35,000
47	Nat'l Lvl Training Hosting - TFL	*CA-TF7*	1	$ 20,000	$ 20,000
48	Nat'l Lvl Training Hosting - TSS	*FL-TF2*	1	$ 40,000	$ 40,000
49				**Line 13: Nat'l Level Training Delivery Hosting Total:**	**$ 440,000**
50	Nat'l Lvl Annual Water Ops Training Workshop (CY24 delivery)	*not funded in FY24*		$ 10,000	$ -
51				**Line 14 Nat'l Level Training Initiatives Total:**	**$ -**
52	IST Support - ISTL Stipend - Red IST	*VA-TF2*	1	$ 6,000	$ 6,000
53	IST Support - ISTL Stipend - White IST	*CA-TF5*	1	$ 6,000	$ 6,000
54	IST Support - ISTL Stipend - Blue IST	*TX-TF1*	1	$ 6,000	$ 6,000
55	IST Support - IST Facilitation e.g., C&GS Stipend/Training, etc	*NE-TF1*	1	$ 100,000	$ 100,000
56				**Line 19: IST Support Total:**	**$ 118,000**
57	Annual Mtg Hosting - CY24 - SAC Meeting	*not funded in FY24*		$ 20,000	$ -
58	Annual Mtg Hosting - FY24 Strat Mtg	*not funded in FY24*		$ 1,000	$ -
59	Annual Mtg Hosting - CY24 TFR Mtg	*VA-TF2*	1	$ 65,000	$ 65,000
60	Annual Mtg Hosting - CY24 Grants Wkshp	*NJ-TF1*	1	$ 7,500	$ 7,500
61	Annual Mtg Hosting - CY24 Trng/Exercise Wkshp	*PA-TF1*	1	$ 7,500	$ 7,500
62	Annual Mtg Hosting - CY24 Adv Org Meetings	*FL-TF2*	1	$ 65,000	$ 65,000
63				**Line 20: Annual Mtg Hosting Total:**	**$ 145,000**
64	Annual Adv Org Stipends - SACR-Ds	*CA-TF5, TX-TF1, NY-TF1*	3	$ 8,000	$ 24,000
65	Annual Adv Org Stipends - TFR-N	*NY-TF1*	1	$ 20,000	$ 20,000
66	Annual Adv Org Stipends - TFR-Ds	*CA-TF7, NE-TF1, PA-TF1*	3	$ 20,000	$ 60,000
67	Annual Adv Org Stipends - Adv Grp Chair	*UT-TF1*	1	$ 30,000	$ 30,000
68	Annual Adv Org Stipends - Dep Adv Grp Chair	*PA-TF1*	1	$ 24,000	$ 24,000
69	Annual Adv Org Stipends - Legal Rep	*UT-TF1*	1	$ 4,000	$ 4,000
70	Annual Adv Org Stipends - Func Grp Ldrs	*See current Adv Org List*	5	$ 12,000	$ 60,000
71	Annual Adv Org Stipends - Dep FGLs	*See current Adv Org List*	5	$ 4,000	$ 20,000
72	Annual Adv Org Stipends - Subgroup & Unit Ldrs	*See current Adv Org List*	20	$ 4,000	$ 80,000
73	Annual Adv Org Stipends - IT Support	*UT-TF1*	1	$ 30,000	$ 30,000
74	Annual Adv Org Stipends - Exer Unit Support	*not funded in FY24*		$ 15,000	$ -
75				**Line 21: Annual Advisory Organization Stipends Total:**	**$ 352,000**
76	Canine Search Specialist Certification Evaluations	*CA-TF3, WA-TF1, AZ-TF1, MO-TF1, FL-TF1, NJ-TF1*	6	$ 32,500	$ 195,000
77				**Line 22: Canine Search Specialist Certification Process Total:**	**$ 195,000**
Note: Line Item Changes this version					

DRAFT - FY 2024 - $40.832M Budget Spend Plan - (Ver 4.0)					
2024-OS-A391-D60D-XXXX				Final Budget Total Amount:	$ 40,832,000
	Task Forces:	$ 40,280,252		Direct Support:	$ 551,748
Direct Task Force Support Spend Plan					
#	ITEM	DETAILS	QTY	UNIT COST	SUBTOTAL
78	Balance of Planned Operational Travel Costs	*On: Ops Trvl Spend Plan*	n/a	n/a	$ 88,500
79	IST and HEPP Fleet Use & Maintenance		1	$ 93,839	$ 93,839
80	IST Equipment	*IST Clothing*	1	$ 9,998	$ 9,998
81	Learning Management System *(Annual sustainment Fee)*		1	$ 85,000	$ 85,000
82	Nat'l Training Development/Delivery		1	$ -	$ -
83	Program Documentation (Fed Register/FOGs)		0	$ 2,600	$ -
84	Shipping - Freight, General		1	$ 10,000	$ 10,000
85	Technical Support Contract	HSFE70-15-F-0090	1	$ 85,411	$ 85,411
86	US&R Mail	UPS / DHL	1	$ 5,000	$ 5,000
87	USACE Interagency Agreement		1	$ 154,000	$ 154,000
88	Warehouse Services Credit Card		1	$ 15,000	$ 15,000
89	OCONUS Operations		1	$ 5,000	$ 5,000
90					$ -
91					$ -
92					$ -
93					$ -
94					$ -
95					$ -
96					$ -
97					$ -
98					$ -
99					$ -
100					$ -
101					$ -
102					$ -
103					$ -
104					$ -
105					$ -
106					$ -
107					$ -
108					$ -
109					$ -
110					$ -
111					$ -
112					$ -
113					$ -
114					$ -
115					$ -
116					$ -
117	Direct Task Force Support Subtotal:			1.35%	$ 551,748
Note: Line Item Changes this version					