

**RULES GOVERNING THE
WESTERN WAYNE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT
MUTUAL AID ASSOCIATION
SPECIAL OPERATIONS GROUP**

(As Amended January 20, 2022)

The purpose of this document is to clearly state the organizational structure, policies, procedures, and scope of the Western Wayne County Fire Department Mutual Aid Association (“Association”) Special Operations Group (“SOG”).

The SOG was created by the Association to provide an emergency response of trained personnel to an incident that involves specialized technical response. The purpose of the SOG teams are to mitigate an incident in a safe and effective manner consistent with nationally recognized practices; to protect life, property, and the environment; and to provide support and assistance to any member community at an emergency incident.

As used herein, the terms “member community” or “member communities” means those governmental entities that have adopted the Interlocal Agreement by which the Association was created.

**ARTICLE I
ORGANIZATION**

Section 100.1 Subordinate to By-Laws:

Sec. 100.1.1 This document is subordinate to the By-Laws of the Association. Organizational structure, funding assessments, team policies, and budgets are subject to the approval of the Association by a majority vote of those present at a duly called meeting. Amendments to this document may be made as specified in Article VI.

Sec. 100.2 Special Operation Group:

Sec. 100.2.1 General Organization Description: The SOG is comprised of separate teams including but not limited to; the Hazardous Materials Response Team (“HMRT”) and the Technical Response Team (“TRT”).

Sec. 100.2.1.1 HMRT: The HMRT is capable of responding to releases or potential releases of Hazardous Materials, as well as CBRNE events. The formal leadership of the HMRT is the Team Administrator and the Team Leader group. Consistent with these Rules, the HMRT can be activated twenty-four (24) hours a day to any request for assistance and can serve either in a consultant role or response role to any request for assistance.

Sec. 100.2.1.2 TRT The TRT team (also known as Urban Search and Rescue Team; USAR) will have a Team Administrator and one (1) Team Leader (for each of the respective disciplines within the TRT. These disciplines include but are not limited to the following; Trench, Collapse,

Rope/Confined Space, Medical & Logistics. Consistent with these Rules, the team can be activated at any time and will respond twenty-four (24) hours a day to any request for assistance.

Sec. 100.2.1.3 SOGOC The Team Administrators for both the HMRT and the TRT will report to the Special Operations Group Oversight Chief (“SOGOC”).

Sec. 100.2.2 Special Operations Committee: A committee of three (3) Chief Fire Officers from Fire Departments serving member communities, to be called the Special Operations Committee (“SOC”), shall be appointed by the President of the Association, and approved by the Association in January of each year. The SOGOC will report to this committee.

Sec. 100.2.2.1 The SOC serves as an advisory committee to oversee and recommend proposals relating to the SOG, including, but not limited to, policies and procedures, budget planning, purchasing, public education, and other related matters, as determined by the Association. The SOC shall also recommend the appointment/dismissal of the SOGOC to the Association for approval.

Sec. 100.2.2.2 Proposals or action requiring approval of the Association shall be submitted by the SOC. Matters requiring Association approval shall include, but not be limited to, budget, policies and procedures, and training schedule.

Sec. 100.2.3 Team Executive Boards: The HMRT and TRT will each have an Executive Board. These Boards are comprised of the SOGOC, Team Administrator and Team Leaders.

Sec. 100.2.3.1 The Team Executive Boards are advisory committees, and shall screen and recommend proposals and matters relating to HMRT and TRT functions, funding, purchasing, equipment training, policies, and other related matters. Their recommendations shall be forwarded through the SOGOC to the SOC for consideration and disposition.

Sec. 100.2.4 Team Administrator: The appointment/dismissal of a Team Administrator for each team shall be recommended by the SOGOC, approved by the SOC, and confirmed by the Association

Sec. 100.2.4.1 The Team Administrators shall be the Operations Officers of each team. If necessary, they shall have the authority to make decisions within the scope of this document. They shall act as a liaison between the SOGOC and their respective Teams. They shall be responsible for coordinating all team activities. They shall provide team activity reports to the Association as well as an annual report to include response activity, purchases, and training activity.

Sec. 100.2.5 Team Leaders: The Team Leaders shall be appointed by the SOGOC. The SOGOC shall seek recommendations from the Team Administrator and other Team Leaders, and the confirmation of the Chief Fire Officer of the prospective Team Leader.

Sec. 100.2.5.1 The Team Leaders report to their respective Team Administrator and are members of their respective Executive Board. They are responsible for the training and performance of their team personnel. They shall make recommendations relating to response, funding, budget,

purchasing, equipment, training, policies and procedures, and other related matters. The Team leaders ensure the team responds in a safe and efficient manner. They serve as the formal leadership within the team and function in a command position if needed. They are able to function in any capacity within the team.

Sec. 100.2.7 Team Secretary: The Team Administrators will also function as the Team Secretaries, unless a different person is selected to serve as Team Secretary by the Team Administrator. The Team Secretaries shall record and publish the minutes of all meetings, assist in establishing an agenda, and maintain all correspondence and documents of their respective Teams Executive Boards.

Sec. 100.2.7.1 Team Members: Team Members include all persons assigned to the HMRT and the TRT. These members are appointed by the Chief Fire Officer of each Fire Department serving a member community. Team members shall be assigned duties and responsibilities according to their individual levels of training. The levels of training for HMRT are recognized as: First Responder-Operations, Hazardous Materials Technician, Hazardous Materials Specialist, and On-Scene Incident Commander. The levels for TRT will include but not be limited to: Trench Awareness/Operations, Trench Technician, Collapse-light to medium and heavy, Confined Space, and Rope Operations and Technician, or an approved equivalent certification.

ARTICLE II POLICIES

Section 200.1 Assessment:

Sec. 200.1.1 Funding for the operation of the SOG shall be through dues and assessments paid by member communities under the authority and requirements of the Association By-Laws.

Sec. 200.1.2 SOG budget proposals shall be drafted by the SOGOC and submitted to the SOC for review by May 1 of each calendar year. The SOC will provide a recommended budget to the Association in June of each calendar year.

Section 200.2 Area of Response:

Sec. 200.2.1 The SOG teams' area of response shall include the geographical area of all member communities.

Sec. 200.2.2 The SOG teams may also respond to incidents in areas adjacent to member communities, where the incident could pose a danger to a member community. Any request for such response shall be made only by the Chief Fire Officer of a member community or his/her designee.

Sec. 200.2.3 No person is authorized to extend the area of response beyond the limitations as set-forth in sections 200.2.1 and 200.2.2 without prior approval by the President or Vice President of the Association or, in their absence, the SOGOC.

Sec. 200.2.4 Nothing contained herein shall prohibit the Association from entering into Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with other entities regarding the response of the SOG teams to incidents outside the area of response.

Sec. 200.2.5 If a community that is not a member of the Association requests a response by one of the SOG teams, the request will first be evaluated by the SOGOC or his/her designee to determine if a response by the team is appropriate. If it is determined that a response would be appropriate, the SOGOC must consult with the President of the Association for approval to activate the team. The requesting community must be advised of, and consent to, the following terms: The requesting community will be responsible for a \$5,000 activation fee, in addition to costs associated with the response which are typically charged by the SOG in connection with a response to an incident. The Chief Administrative or Elected official of the requesting community must acknowledge and agree to such payments prior to the response of the team and, as soon as possible thereafter, sign a written agreement with the Association documenting the same. The requesting community will be invoiced by the Association for the activation fee and all appropriate costs within 90 days of the incident. The requesting community will then have 90 days in which to submit payment to the Association.

Sec. 200.3 SOG Team Membership:

Sec. 200.3.1 Each member community with an official population less than 40,000 persons shall appoint a minimum of one (1) member assigned to the HMRT and one (1) member assigned to the TRT. A member community with a population of 40,000 persons or more shall appoint not less than two (2) members to each team. Population will be based upon the last US Census numbers that were approved by the Association. Any member community that fails to meet this obligation for a period of ninety (90) consecutive days in any calendar year shall be assessed \$5,000 per required appointee. The calendar year shall be from January 1st to December 31st of each year. Member communities who appoint a member to a team and that member fails to attend one of the first two (2) consecutive trainings following appointment will be considered non-participatory and subject to the \$5,000 assessment. The assignment and/or removal of members on a team must be in written form to the SOGOC and Team Administrator prior to the effective day of the action. Member communities may elect to assign an additional member to either team with the approval of the SOGOC.

Sec. 200.3.2 The minimum training and experience qualifications for appointment to the teams are: Each member shall have Fire Fighter I and II certification, certified Hazardous Materials First Responder-Operations Level training, and not less than four years seniority (full-time, part-time, volunteer). Any exceptions to the required seniority level must be approved by the SOGOC.

Sec. 200.3.3 The SOC, SOGOC and the Team Administrators shall identify and develop a level of competence required for each position within the teams. NFPA 472 Standard for Professional Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials Incidents, and NFPA 1006 Standard for Rescue Technician Professional Qualifications, current edition, shall be used as reference. The SOGOC will report to the SOC regarding discrepancies or deviations from the required level of competence on the part of any individual team members.

Sec. 200.3.4 Prior to final appointment of a team member to the HMRT, under MIOSHA Rule 432 and CFR 1910.120, each member of the team is required to successfully complete an entry –level medical surveillance physical examination. The cost for the entry medical examination for the newly appointed team member shall be paid for by the appointing member community. The member communities are also responsible for the cost of the bi-annual HazMat physical for their assigned member(s) under the same standards.

Sec. 200.3.5 Prior to final appointment, each team member shall sign a “Letter of Commitment” to serve on the team for a minimum of three years. Each member community shall be responsible for any training and associated costs which may be required as a result of losing team members before completing their obligation. The Association is responsible for the training costs associated with new members appointed to replace members who have fulfilled their three year obligation. If a member community desires to appoint additional team members, beyond the number it is required to appoint, the SOGOC and the appointing community will discuss the issue of who will pay for the training. The required training for members of each team is listed in Appendix A. New team members shall complete all the required training/certification within 24 months of appointment. The SOGOC may extend the 24 month requirement should there be extenuating circumstances, such as a training program that is unavailable during the 24 month period.

Sec. 200.3.6 All team members participating in active response and training sessions do so as members of their individual Fire Departments. Liabilities incurred as a result of actions taken by the team are covered by the accepted policies so adopted by the Association. Workers compensation claims incurred as a result of responses and training exercises will be covered by the Fire Department appointing the team member.

Sec. 200.4 Response Team Membership Participation: It is expected that each team member attend their monthly training sessions and respond on every incident in which they are requested.

Sec. 200.4.1 Each team member shall be released from duty or compensated for all required team responses and training. It is expected that members attend 100% of all training sessions. All absences shall require prior (when possible) written notification to the SOGOC and Team Administrator. Expected extended absences due to injury or other reasons shall be reported to the SOGOC and Team Administrator in advance. The SOGOC will forward the information to the SOC.

The status of member communities whose required members miss three (3) training sessions within the calendar year will be reviewed by the SOC. The calendar year shall be considered January 1st through December 31st of each year. Member communities whose team members are absent for more than three (3) monthly training sessions in a calendar year will be subject to an assessment of \$555 per member per month missed beyond the first three (3) months. Prior to making such an assessment, the SOC will review the circumstances pertaining to the absences and recommend action to the Association.

Sec. 200.5 Finances:

Sec. 200.5.1 All financial transactions of the SOG shall be overseen by the Treasurer of the Association. All purchases or expenditures shall be approved by the SOGOC and shall be limited to those expenditures as approved in the SOG budget. The Team Administrator shall be responsible for following established purchasing policy and procedures. They shall submit to the Treasurer through the SOGOC all receipts.

Sec. 200.6 Cost Recovery:

Sec. 200.6.1 It is the policy of the Association that cost recovery/compensation will be the responsibility of the requesting member community or, in the case of a request not coming from a member community, the entity making the request. The requesting member community or other entity shall pursue the responsible parties for the cost of equipment loss, personnel (salaries and/or wages), materials, apparatus, clean-up, administrative cost, etc. through amendments or local ordinances. Nothing herein shall operate to bar any recovery of funds from any state or federal agency under any existing statutes. The SOG shall assist the local member community in determining recovery cost. The Association reserves the right to waive any charges to a requesting party.

Sec. 200.7 Personal Equipment:

Sec 200.7.1 Appendix B lists the personal equipment required for all team members, and indicates which equipment items must be purchased by the appointing member community, and which equipment items will be supplied by the SOG. Equipment items purchased by the appointing member community remain the property of that member community when the Team Member leaves the team. Other equipment must be returned to the SOG when the Team member leaves the team.

**ARTICLE III
OPERATIONS: HMRT**

Sec. 300.1 Emergency Response to Hazardous Materials Incidents:

Sec. 300.1.1 The recommendations contained in the current edition of NFPA 472 Professional Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials Incidents will serve as a guidance document for the HMRT and team command personnel who are responsible for managing the team's operations during an incident. These are minimum requirements, and it is not the intent of this section to restrict the response of the team.

Sec. 300.1.2 The Association recognizes there are several federal and state laws regulating the emergency response to a hazardous materials incident and will utilize these as references in the team's SOG's. These laws, in general, pertain to operations, training of personnel, and emergency planning. It is the intent of the Association that the HMRT will comply with all such laws and regulations.

Sec. 300.1.3 Upon request from any Fire Department serving a member community, the Team Leader group can provide consultation and technical assistance to On-scene Incident

Commanders. The Team Leader group will work with the On-scene IC to determine whether response resources are needed, and if so, what type/amount. They shall establish a working relationship with the on-scene incident commander of the jurisdiction having authority and shall provide assistance within the scope of the team's training and capabilities.

Sec. 300.1.4 The HMRT shall not carry out functions that are not associated with direct involvement concerning mitigation of a hazardous materials incident. Fire suppression, EMS, rescue, evacuation, site security, etc. shall be the responsibility of the jurisdiction having authority.

ARTICLE IV OPERATIONS: TRT

Sec. 400.1 Emergency Response to Technical Rescue Incidents:

Sec. 400.1.1 The recommendations contained in the current edition of NFPA 1670 Standards for Operations and Training for Technical Rescue Incidents will be followed by the TRT and by incident commanders that are responsible for managing the incident. These are minimum requirements, and it is not the intent of this section to restrict the response team or individual community from using or adopting more stringent guidelines.

Sec. 400.1.2 The Association recognizes there are several federal and state laws regulating the emergency response to a hazardous materials incident. These laws, in general, pertain to operations, training of personnel, and emergency planning. It is the intent of the Association that the TRT will comply with all such laws and regulations.

Sec. 400.1.3 Upon request from any Fire Department serving a member community, the SOGOC, Team Administrator or one of the Team Leaders will contact the jurisdiction's OIC to gather more information and determine the level of response. They shall establish a working relationship with the On-scene Incident Commander of the jurisdiction having authority and shall provide assistance within the scope of the team's training and capabilities.

Sec. 400.1.4 The TRT shall not carry out functions that are not associated with direct involvement concerning mitigation of a technical rescue incident. Fire suppression, EMS, evacuation, site security, etc. shall be the responsibility of the jurisdiction having authority.

ARTICLE V SCOPE

Sec. 500.1 Planning:

Sec. 500.1.1 Prior to January 1, 2012, and every three years thereafter, the SOC, SOGOC and Team Administrators shall prepare a "Special Operations Group Three Year Plan". This plan shall be submitted to the Association for review and approval. The plan shall address the following:

Sec. 500.1.1.1 A risk assessment of the jurisdiction.

Sec. 500.1.1.2 Evaluate the past and present measures taken by the SOG to address these problems.

Sec. 500.1.1.3 Determine if these measures have been adequate, and what level of response will be needed in the next three years.

Sec. 500.1.1.4 Establish goals to meet the level of response anticipated. Items to be considered may be: number of personnel, equipment, level of training, annual budgets, etc. Provide an outline of objectives on how the organization will reach these goals.

Sec. 500.1.1.5 Evaluate the purpose or mission of the SOG, including whether the mission should or could be changed or expanded to include other types of emergency service.

ARTICLE VI AMENDMENT

Section 600.1 Requirements:

Sec. 600.1.1 This document may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the Association by a vote of two-thirds of the member communities present in the following manner:

- a) Any member community in good standing may propose an amendment, alteration, revision or addition to this document.
- b) A written copy of the amendment, alteration, revision or addition shall be filed with the Secretary.
- c) The Secretary shall publish the proposed amendment, alteration, revision or addition in the minutes, and read the proposal at the next regular meeting. After the reading a vote shall be taken and recorded.
- d) Once adopted, the Secretary shall forward a copy of the approved document to the Chief Fire Officer of the Fire Department serving every member community.

Sec. 600.1.2 The effective date of any amendment shall be first day of the month following the vote.