

Louisiana Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT)

Concept of Operations



**Governor's Office of Homeland Security and
Emergency Preparedness**

May 25th, 2017





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Purpose and Introduction.....2

Acknowledgements.....3

Acronyms/Abbreviations.....4

Chapter 1: Introduction.....5

Chapter 2: TERT Components.....6

Chapter 3: Requesting PSAP.....6

Chapter 4: Deploying TERT Responsibilities.....7

Chapter 5: Membership, Configuration & Deployment of TERTs.....9

Chapter 6: Requesting PSAP Role.....13

Chapter 7: TERT Deployment Responsibilities.....16

Attachments



Purpose and Introduction

The purpose of the Louisiana Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT) Concept of Operations Plan is to outline the procedure to develop and manage teams across the state. In the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita several agencies that desired to send telecommunicators to the stricken area on mutual aid assignments along with APCO and NENA recognized that there was no national system in place to provide operational support to communications centers and their personnel, in the event of a man-made or natural disaster. The Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT) has been developed to address this need.

The unique nature of communications centers/PSAPs requires that daily operations continue regardless of circumstance. It is therefore imperative that PSAPs plan for emergency circumstances that adversely affect their ability to adequately staff their center.

For this program to be successful it must be recognized and supported by federal, state, local and tribal EMA. Additionally, it is imperative that local participating agencies fully support TERT as a key element of public safety response as they do police, fire and EMS personnel.

This document includes information for:

- Incident Type Classifications
- Criteria for members
- Requesting Agency Role
- Activation steps
- Request Information Form
- TERT package
- Requesting Agency Deployment Review
- Deployment Process
- Member supply list
- Response Personnel Time Form
- Responding Team Deployment Review
- Member Deployment Review

TERT teams are a “state” resource and are under the direction of the Governor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness. GOHESEP will appoint the TERT State Coordinator who has the responsibility for the development and management of the TERT program.



Acknowledgements

The following individuals are recognized for their contribution in the creation of this CONOP:

Shinar Haynes, MBA, RPL
Orleans Parish Communication District, Director

Tyrell T. Morris, MBA
Orleans Parish Communication District, Deputy Director

Chris Guilbeaux
Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, Deputy Director

Wanda M. Newsome
New Orleans Fire Department, Assistant Director of Communications



Acronyms/Abbreviations

For the purpose of this CONOP, the following Acronyms apply:

AHJ	Authority Having Jurisdiction
ANS	American National Standard
ANSI	American National Standards Institute
APCO	Association of Public Safety Communications Officials
CAD	Computer Aided Dispatch
CISM	Critical Incident Stress Management
CONOP	Concept of Operations Plan
EMA	Emergency Management Agency
EMAC	Emergency Management Assistance Compact
EMD	Emergency Medical Dispatch
ICS	Incident Command System
GOHSEP	Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness
OEM	Office of Emergency Management
PSAP	Public Safety Answering Point
NENA	National Emergency Number Association
NIC	National Integration Center
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NJTI	National Joint TERT Initiative
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
SDC	Standards Development Committee
TERT	Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce



Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Scope of Document

The purpose is to outline and clear process for the development and activation of TERT resources housed in the State of Louisiana.

1.2 Reason to Implement

PSAPs, specifically their personnel, are critical for the safety and security of the public. Many threats have the potential of adversely affecting a PSAP's staffing and consequently might place the public and first responders in danger. It is therefore incumbent on PSAP administrators to prepare for such occurrences.

1.3 Document Review

GOHSEP reserves the right to frequently review and modify this document as needed to meet the overall public safety mission. At no time shall this document supersede local, state or federal laws. In the event there is a conflict, the appropriate legislation will prevail.

1.4 Definitions

1.4.1 Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ)

This is the governing body of the communications center which can be at the parish, region or state level. This body has oversight of the communications center and will have knowledge of the skills, knowledge and abilities of employees at the center.

1.4.2 Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT)

A group of trained telecommunications operations and support personnel able to respond to and work with another agency to receive, process, dispatch and monitor calls for service.

1.4.3 TERT State Coordinator

Official appointed by GOHSEP and responsible for managing and coordinating all TERT deployments.

1.4.4 TERT Liaison

Official appointed by the agency head at every PSAP in the state. This individual will be the primary contact to request and receive TERT resources.

1.4.5 Team Leader



Deployed team's leader and liaison. Responsible for management of deployed team.

1.4.6 PSAP Survey (Attachment A)

Data collected and maintained by the TERT State Coordinator regarding type of equipment and training of teams to best match the needs of the requesting PSAP with the skills of the responding TERT.

1.4.7 TERT Telecommunicator

A public safety dispatcher capable of functioning as both a calltaker and radio dispatcher.

Chapter 2: TERT Components

2.1 TERT Telecommunicator

A public safety dispatcher capable of functioning as both a calltaker and radio dispatcher, as described above.

2.2 TERT Team Leader

A public safety telecommunications supervisor, as described above, who is also knowledgeable in the administrative aspects of a TERT deployment and is capable of managing human resources, work task distribution, liaison and documentation needs of the TERT. The TERT Team Leaders are approved by their respective Agency Head, but assigned by the TERT State Coordinator.

2.3 TERT State Coordinator

Individual appointed by GOHSEP as the single point of contact responsible for managing the TERT program and coordinating TERT deployments.

2.4 TERT Liaison

Individual appointed by each PSAP to coordinate training and preparedness efforts for their agency. The TERT liaison will coordinate regularly with the TERT State Coordinator and will be the primary point of contact for the deployment of receiving of TERT resources during activation.

Chapter 3: Requesting PSAP

3.1 Requesting PSAP Role

The Requesting PSAP must initiate activation by providing the appropriate information so the most appropriate team may be assembled. The Requesting



PSAP is also responsible for assuring that responding team members are utilized in an appropriate manner. The Requesting PSAP shall initiate the request for activation and provide guidance and direction to the responding TERT team members.

3.2 Activation Steps

A guide that outlines the steps required to initiate a TERT response.

3.3 TERT Request Information

This form contains additional information that may assist the responding TERT State Coordinator and the TERT Team Leader to staff and initiate a response. This form should be completed by an appropriate representative of the requesting PSAP. *(Attachment B-TERT Request Form)*

3.4 TERT Package

The TERT package is information and resources provided by the requesting PSAP to the responding TERT. This package should be prepared in advance by the requesting PSAP personnel and have the necessary information and supplies for the TERT to function while deployed. *(Attachment C-TERT Package)*

3.5 TERT Requesting PSAP Deployment Review

The TERT requesting PSAP deployment review is a tool to be completed post-mission by the requesting PSAP TERT Liaison. This survey is used to assure that the response was handled in a safe, efficient manner and provide lessons learned to improve future deployment. Completed reviews shall be provided to the State TERT Coordinator and GOSHEP staff. *(Attachment D-TERT Requesting Agency Deployment Review)*

Chapter 4: Deploying TERT Responsibilities

The deploying TERT shall make every reasonable effort to ensure that only qualified personnel respond. Once on scene, the deployed TERT shall provide appropriate supervision for its team members from its own shift supervisors and the Team Leader. TERT shift supervisors and the Team Leaders are expected to work closely and cooperatively with the requesting agency's supervisors and management staff.

4.1 TERT Deployment Process

Outlines the responsibilities and steps required to deploy a TERT. *(Attachment E-Deployment Checklist)*



4.2 TERT Member Supply List

The deployed TERT Team should assure their members are able to be self-sufficient for at least 72 hours when deploying to major disaster scenes, but the Team shall meet the requirements of the deployment order. Local discretion should be used when deploying in-state depending on the nature of the response. The member supply list includes items that shall be used to assure a safe response. *(Attachment F-TERT Member Supply List)*

4.3 Tracking TERT Member Time

The deployment TERT shall use the ICS 214 form to track daily activities. The Team Leader should assume that this form is completed and submitted for each operational period.

4.4 TERT Responding Team Deployment Review

The TERT deployment review is a tool to be completed by the responding Team Leader post-mission. This survey is used to assure that the response was handled in a safe, efficient manner and provide lessons learned to improve future deployment. Completed reviews shall be provided to the State TERT Coordinator and GOSHEP staff. *(Attachment G-TERT Team Leader After Action Report)*

4.5 TERT Member Deployment Review

The TERT Member Deployment Review is a tool that shall be completed by each responding team member post-mission. This survey is used to assure that the response was handled in a safe, effective manner and provide recommendations for program improvement. Completed reviews shall be provided to the State TERT Coordinator and GOSHEP staff. *(Attachment H-TERT Member Deployment Review)*



Chapter 5: Membership, Configuration & Deployment of TERTs

The National Integration Center (NIC), formerly known as the NIMS Integration Center (NIC), has developed national Resource Typing Definitions for some of the most commonly used resources during a response. Resource typing is an integral component of the National Incident Management System (NIMS). It enhances the ability of emergency responders to find needed resources during a disaster. In compliance with NIMS and in support of the Incident Command System (ICS), the Resource Typing Definitions help promote common terminology of descriptions, standards, and types of local, state and federal response assets. Resource Typing Definitions provide the information to request and receive the resources needed during an emergency or disaster. The Resource Typing Definitions shall be continuously updated, revised, and expanded.

Resources are classified by ‘Category’ which refers to function and ‘Kind,’ to include teams, personnel, equipment, and supplies. Information about level of capability is referred to as ‘Type,’ which is a measure of minimum capabilities to perform the function. Type I implies a higher capability than Type II. The metrics shown for each resource are measurements of standards and are applicable to like resources.



5.1 Typing and Default Configuration of TERTs

CATEGORY:	Communications Resources			KIND:	Taskforce	
MINIMUM CAPABILITIES:		TYPE I	TYPE II	TYPE III	TYPE IV	Notes
Positions	# of positions	12+	7-12	4-6	1-3	Note 1
Personnel	Team Leader	7	5	3	1	Note 2
Personnel	Telecommunicator	36+	14-24	8-12	2-6	
Personnel	EMD Certified See Note 4	Same as Type II	25% of Telecommunicators	Same as Type IV	See Note 4	Note 3 & 4
Personnel	Special Qualifications	Same as Type IV	Same as Type IV	Same as Type IV	See Note 4	
Taskforce	Duration of Operations	Same as Type II	Long; Greater than 1 week	Less than 1 week	Less than 1 week	
Equipment	Laptop Computer with wireless Internet connection	Same as Type II	1 Laptop	None Specified	None Specified	
Comments	<p>Note 1: Levels for deployments will be directly based on the number of physical positions being staffed on a deployment. The Requesting Agency will have to determine that. The Type of response will be based on the determining the number of staff that will be needed to cover the positions on a 24 hour basis. The default configuration calls for public safety telecommunicators. Requests for public safety call takers and/or public safety radio dispatchers shall be specified when making the request.</p> <p>Note 2: There should always be a minimum of 1 Team Leader. Once there are more than 2 Team Leaders to cover span of control per 12 hour operational period, an additional Team Leader per shift is needed to coordinate.</p> <p>Note 3: During out-of-state Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) requests at the Type I and Type II levels, the request should automatically include a 25% contingent of EMD certified telecommunicators. TERT State Coordinators are responsible for identifying such members. A multi-state response may be required to fill this requirement.</p> <p>Note 4: Requests for special certifications or qualifications, such as EMD, Incident Dispatchers, law enforcement dispatchers, fire service/EMS dispatchers, call takers, familiarity with a specific CAD system, etc., shall be specified during the request process, however increasing the specific requirements may slow the deployment process and/or may not be able to be accommodated.</p> <p>Note 5: The span of control of 3:7 follows the National Incident Management System(NIMS) guideline.</p>					



5.2 Criteria for TERT Members

All members should meet the following qualifications and skills in addition to meeting national minimum training requirements or equivalent.

- 5.2.1 Pass a criminal background check performed by the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ)
- 5.2.2 All TERT member agencies should follow the vaccination/immunization guidelines outlined in the CDC guidance document titled “Immunization Recommendations For Disaster Responders” located at <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/disease/responderimmun.asp>

In summary, the CDC recommends that:

- 5.1.1.1 All First Responders have a Tetanus immunization or booster if the original immunization is more than 10 years old. The preferred variety is Tdap (tetanus/diphtheria/pertussis).
- 5.1.1.2 The Hepatitis B immunization may be beneficial but is only recommended for First Responders who may have direct patient contact or contact with bodily fluids. Telecommunicators typically should not be exposed to such situations. The decision for Hepatitis B is left to the discretion of the AHJ.
- 5.1.1.3 The Hepatitis A immunization is not recommended for First Responders working on situations in the United States.
- 5.2.3 Have a signed letter from agency head approving participation in TERT on file with TERT State Coordinator (Renewed by January 1 of even numbered years). An employee who has been cross-trained both as a Calltaker and a Dispatcher shall automatically be classified as a Telecommunicator.
- 5.2.4 Completion of FEMA IS-144 (Telecommunicators Emergency Response Taskforce)
- 5.2.5 Successful completion of all relevant and current NIMS training courses identified in Attachment L.



- 5.2.6 Possess positive interpersonal communication and leadership skills.
- 5.2.7 Be flexible and energetic.
- 5.2.8 Be an excellent multi-tasker and problem solver.
- 5.2.9 Be assertive in a positive manner.
- 5.2.10 Be an outstanding team player.
- 5.2.11 Maintain above average annual performance reviews with no chronic work problems.
- 5.2.12 Possess an excellent working knowledge of the appropriate public safety emergency response operation and equipment as it relates to the member's role.
- 5.2.13 Possess an ability to adapt to poor environmental conditions such as no beds, cold meals, no running water, ect.
- 5.2.14 Possess an ability to adapt and be flexible with different policies, procedures, equipment and geographic areas.
- 5.2.15 Possess excellent people and teamwork skills inclusive of cultural diversity.
- 5.2.16 Possess excellent documentation skills.

5.3 TERT Telecommunicator

- 5.3.1 Minimum Equivalent of three (3) years, full-time experience in this position (see Attachment L).
- 5.3.2 Properly certified by the AHJ that the individual has the requisite training and skills of a Telecommunicator (See Attachment L).
- 5.3.3 Telecommunicator certification from APCO, NENA or other nationally recognized emergency communications association/academy.



5.4 TERT Team Leader

- 5.4.1 Minimum Equivalent of three (3) years, full-time experience in a supervisory position (see Attachment L).
- 5.4.2 Telecommunicator certification from APCO, NENA or other nationally recognized emergency communications association/academy.
- 5.4.3 Understand local, state, regional and national mutual aid processes and procedures.
- 5.4.4 Employer has sent special recommendation to the TERT State Coordinator that the individual be considered for appointment as Team Leader.
- 5.4.5 Be able to coordinate work tasks and human resources in adverse and changing environments with minimal direction.
- 5.4.6 Possess knowledge to identify, locate and obtain support for the team.
- 5.4.7 Strong administrative skills, i.e. scheduling, time keeping, cost tracking, ect.
- 5.4.8 Possess the ability to effectively interface with the Incident Command Structure, EMA, GOHSEP, TERT coordinators and TERT liaisons.
- 5.4.9 Successful completion of all relevant and current DHS requirements and NIMS training courses identified in Attachment L.
- 5.4.10 EMD Certification should be obtained for out-of-state deployment.
- 5.4.11 Properly certified by the AHJ that the individual has the requisite training and skills of a Supervisor.
- 5.4.12 Completion of FEMA IS-144 (Telecommunicators Emergency Response Taskforce).



- 5.4.13 All Team Leaders should have adequate interpersonal conflict resolution training/experience as determined by the AHJ. (See section 3, subsection 3.5).

Chapter 6: Requesting PSAP Role

6.1 The Requesting PSAP Role:

- 6.1.1 Verify that an emergency has been declared at the appropriate level. (parish, state or federal)
- 6.1.2 Request TERT activation through their local EMA. (see activation steps)
- 6.1.3 Provide specific information outlining your PSAP's needs to the TERT State Coordinator. The TERT Request Information is the minimum information that a responding TERT State Coordinator will need in order to start the activation process. The TERT State Coordinator may ask for additional information.
- 6.1.4 Assign a TERT Liaison responsible for deployment teams and notify the TERT State Coordinator who that is.
- 6.1.5 Provide TERT packages to arriving teams.
- 6.1.6 Assign and monitor tasks to the TERT personnel while they are working in your PSAP, as necessary.
- 6.1.7 Notify your local EMA after team has checked in.
- 6.1.8 Inform the TERT State Coordinator of any problems regarding TERT personnel, i.e. skills not matched to needs, not performing to your expectations, ect.
- 6.1.9 Update your local EMA at least once per day.
- 6.1.10 Inform your local EMA when the situation is stabilized and TERT personnel are no longer needed.



6.1.11 Ensure completion and submission of all Deployment Review Forms.

6.1.12 Coordinate travel and lodging with the TERT State Coordinator.

6.2 Activation Steps

When a PSAP experiences an event of significant magnitude that creates the need for additional/replacement staffing in order to maintain an adequate level of service to the public and public safety responders, a TERT activation may be requested.

If the event results in the Governor declaring a state of emergency, reimbursement for the deployment may be available. In all declared emergencies, GOHESP will provide reimbursement guidelines and procedures for that particular incident.

If the event does not rise to the level of a declared emergency, the TERT deployment shall be considered a mutual aid situation with no reimbursement made available.

6.2.1 A request for TERT activation must be made by the PSAP Director/or designee to their local EMA. It is critical to provide as much information that is available using the TERT Request Information Sheet (*Attachment B*).

6.2.2 The local EMA will forward the resource request to GOHSEP by whichever mechanism is available at the time (WebEOC, telephone, email, ect.) Requests for Louisiana TERT resources from other states will be received by GOHSEP from the requesting state's EMA.

6.2.3 GOHSEP will notify the TERT State Coordinator of the activation request.

6.2.4 The TERT State Coordinator will contact PSAPs across the state, survey resources available, and receive commitments for deployment. The State Coordinator may contact the requesting PSAP directly if additional information about their request is needed.



- 6.2.5 The TERT State Coordinator will notify GOHSEP of what teams are responding, from where, their ETA, resources and skills the team possesses, and prepare a roster. The TERT State Coordinator will also connect the requesting PSAP TERT Liaison with arriving teams.
- 6.2.6 GOHSEP will notify the local EMA of the TERT deployment details.
- 6.2.7 The local EMA will formally notify the requesting PSAP of what TERT resources are being deployed with all of the appropriate details.

Chapter 7: TERT Deployment Responsibilities

7.1 TERT State Coordinator responsibilities:

- 7.1.1 Ensure MOUs are completed.
- 7.1.2 Ensure resource order number has been assigned by EMA.
- 7.1.3 Contact TERT Liaison to confirm needs.
- 7.1.4 Locate and assign available resources.
- 7.1.5 Assume responsibility for assembling a deployable team.
- 7.1.6 Assign TERT Team Leader.
- 7.1.7 Coordinate transportation.
- 7.1.8 Ensure TERT Liaison receives verification of response.
- 7.1.9 Receives daily updates and disseminates to appropriate agencies.
- 7.1.10 Coordinates communications between deployed TERT and home agencies.
- 7.1.11 Ensure completion of all Deployment Review forms.



7.1.12 Apply for reimbursement as appropriate.

7.1.13 Update the TERT database every March and November. This includes member additions, deletions and update of training records.

7.2 Team Leader responsibilities:

7.2.1 Ensure resource order number has been assigned.

7.2.2 Ensure responding personnel are appropriately equipped (Supply list).

7.2.3 Establish and maintain communication with TERT Liaison.

7.2.4 Ensure safety of team members insofar as possible.

7.2.5 Ensure team members are assigned an appropriate work task.

7.2.6 Ensure logistical needs are met (food, lodging, transportation).

7.2.7 Ensure operational needs are met (scheduling, resource management, personnel issues, required reports).

7.2.8 Request appropriate CISM resources if deemed necessary.

7.2.9 Ensure financial needs are documented (time keeping, associated costs).

7.2.10 Provide daily update to the responding TERT State Coordinator.

7.2.11 Ensure demobilization requirements are met.

7.2.12 Ensure completion of all after action reports.