

ST. JOHNS COUNTY  
COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT PLAN

2016

**Appendix B**  
**Impact Assessment**



## **Impact Assessment**

### *Standard Operating Procedures*

#### **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of these guidelines is to delineate the specific steps to be taken for conducting impact assessment in St. Johns County, Florida in the event of a disaster, and identify the roles and responsibilities of agencies assigned to this function.

#### **II. DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS**

The term, Impact Assessment, used in these guidelines, should be understood to mean the following:

- A.** Impact Assessment is the process undertaken by representatives of St. Johns County to gather information for the following purposes:
1. To provide immediate information regarding the impact to human life.
  2. To describe and document the type, extent, and location of impact for emergency decision making purposes at all levels of government.
  3. To establish damage assessment and disaster recovery priorities and the type and quantity of resources required during recovery.
  4. To gain immediate information on the extent of the impact of a disaster in the event State and / or Federal disaster assistance resources are needed to protect the lives of St. Johns County citizens and prevent additional impact to infrastructure.

#### **III. INITIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

One of the most important functions for emergency service personnel following a disaster is the need to evaluate the impact that the disaster has had upon departmental resources and jurisdictional responsibilities. This assessment may include:

- Observations of structural damages
- Identification of injuries (both to emergency personnel and citizens)
- Status of critical infrastructure such as roads and electrical systems
- Status of critical facilities such as hospitals
- Status of operational capabilities of emergency departments and other county resources
- If needed, assistance in emergency life-saving response to citizens

Initial Impact Assessment is the first step in the damage assessment process and is used to quickly evaluate the ability of the county to swiftly mobilize and sustain large-scale response operations following a disaster by assessing impact to the following county infrastructure elements and private sector entities:

- Roads and bridges, local communications, health care facilities, water and electric power distribution systems, and other important infrastructure facilities and capabilities
- Private homes and businesses in the affected area

Initial Impact Assessment information is used to direct data input to the County Situation Report and Incident Action Plan.<sup>1</sup>

#### **IV. IMPACT REPORT FORM**

- A.** The Impact Report Form (**Attachment 1**) shall be used by the county immediately following a disaster to describe information gathered during the initial Impact Assessment process including:
1. The type of incident and extent and location of damages.
  2. The number of deceased and/or injured.
  3. The general impact of the disaster on the county's infrastructure.
  4. The status of local response efforts.
- B.** The Impact Report Form also gives the county the means to prioritize later detailed damage assessment data in both the private and public sectors.

#### **V. ORGANIZATION**

##### **A. Roles and Responsibilities**

1. The Emergency Management Director (EMD) is responsible for the direction and control of the Impact Assessment process. The EMD will activate the process by direction to EOC and field operations.
2. St. Johns County Fire Rescue (Fire Command) will coordinate pre-assignment of St. Johns County Fire Rescue personnel to specific geographic areas, correlating to their assigned zone, if possible prior to the event. If event is unexpected, Fire Command will assign Fire Rescue personnel to specific geographic areas, based on their assigned zones, and coordinate deployment and communication with the teams while in the impacted area, according to department protocols.

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<sup>1</sup> See St. Johns County Standard Operating Procedures for Damage Assessment, Appendix C

3. Dispatch personnel (St. Johns County Fire Rescue Communications) will coordinate communications either from the Communications Center or the UCC in the field. Other personnel activated to assist with communications will work under the direction of Dispatch staff. Dispatch will convey vital information to ESF 5 in the EOC.
4. ESF 5 - Information and Planning will coordinate information related to the area of impact, number of deaths / injuries, impact to critical infrastructure, and requests for resources. This information will be directed to the appropriate ESF for response, if necessary.

## VI. OPERATIONS

### A. Response

If possible, Impact Assessment personnel shall be pre-assigned to specific geographic areas and pre-staged prior to the event. The Impact Assessment process shall be activated as quickly as crews can arrive in the field from their pre-assigned staging areas. Critical infrastructure is assessed based on the priority established in **Attachment 2**.

1. Personnel – Impact Assessment will be accomplished by St. Johns County Sheriff's Office, St. Johns County Fire Rescue and St. Johns County Road & Bridge personnel. However, it must be accomplished before responding or while en-route to emergency incidents. Other trained individuals from county departments and / or volunteers may be assigned with impact assessment should emergency response personnel be unavailable or overwhelmed with response priorities.
2. Equipment – Appropriate personal protective equipment will be used at all times. Personal and department-issued equipment requirements are listed in **Attachment 3**.
3. Communications – St. Johns County's 800 MHz radio system will be the primary means of communications. Backup systems will include VHF and UHF radio, cell phone, and / or assistance from ARES, if assigned to Impact Assessment Team. If the UCC is deployed, personnel staffing the UCC will be the point of contact for Impact Assessment reports. If the UCC is not deployed, reports will be relayed to St. Johns County Emergency Operations Center from both the Sheriff's Office and Fire Rescue Communication Centers.

Under emergency conditions during a disaster, all radio communications must provide only essential information.

4. Assigned Territory – Impact Assessment Teams will be pre-assigned to a specific geographic district, if possible, and pre-staged to facilitate quick activation following an event. Maps (highway and topographic) of the assigned district are provided in each Team’s equipment. Following a major event, recognizable landmarks may be gone and locations may be identifiable only by GPS unit. United States National Grid will be used as a primary grid reference system for reporting impact assessment locations.
5. Dispatch
  - a) Fire Rescue Communications Center Dispatch

The primary response method, unless otherwise indicated, will be by dispatch from the Fire / Rescue Communications Center via normal dispatch procedures. Units responding to requests from Fire Rescue Dispatch must advise them of any problems encountered during dispatch, or any changes of assignment necessitated by personal observations.
  - b) Self-Dispatch Based on Assessment

It may be necessary for units to dispatch themselves due to lack of communications with the Communications Center. The Officer in Charge should do this based on the assessment of the situation at the time. Consideration must be given to performing additional assessment objectives similar to triage during mass casualty incidents. With the exception of providing life-saving assistance, a search will be conducted as soon as possible of pre-determined priority areas (i.e., public shelters, mobile home parks, nursing homes, etc.)
6. Light Search and Rescue – Light search and rescue may be implemented to support emergency response. This would be limited primarily to rescue of lightly trapped victims. Appropriate decisions must be made as to the priority of responsibility during this time period.
7. Safety and Hazard Identification – Personnel conducting emergency operations must assure their own safety is their first priority. Many hazards will be encountered during the first 72-hours after an event. These include, but are not limited to:
  - Downed electrical wires

- gas leaks
- fires
- unsafe structures
- flooding
- hazardous material
- injured/traumatized animals
- extreme heat

Every attempt should be made to abate these hazards, if it can be done safely and quickly.

8. On-going Assessment – During all emergency response operations, continued zone assessment is vital. This information must be conveyed to command as quickly as possible.

## **VII. Demobilization**

### **A. Relief Crews**

Crews will be released with consideration being given to length of service, amount of work performed, and mental stress encountered. Unified Command must be advised of the need for replacement crews as soon as it appears as though the situation will go into a second operational period.

### **B. Mutual Aid**

Priority should be given to releasing mutual aid or other resources from outside agencies. The first-in / first-out concept should be used in determining a resource release schedule. The release of any resource should be cleared through Unified Command.

### **C. Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)**

Prior to releasing resources from the incident, the need for critical incident debriefing for the response personnel will be determined by the Operations Chief. Personnel who may require CISM should be identified and contacted prior to being released.

## **VIII. Normal Operations**

Normal operations and scheduling will resume at the direction of Unified Command.

**Attachment 1**  
County Impact Report Form

<b>Impact Report Form</b>			
<b>Control Number Issued:</b> _____ <b>Date:</b> _____ <b>Time Assigned:</b> _____ <b>Time Reported:</b> _____ <b>Type of Incident:</b> _____ <b>Sector:</b> _____ <b>Assessment Target:</b> _____ <b>Reported By:</b> _____			
<b>Life Safety:</b>	<u>Count</u>	<u>Recovered</u>	<b><u>Location:</u></b>
Trapped	_____	_____	
Dead	_____	_____	
Injured	_____	_____	
Evacuations	_____	_____	
Need / Status	_____	_____	
<b>Life Lines:</b>	<u>Found</u>	<u>Need</u>	<b><u>Location:</u></b>
Electricity	_____	_____	
Gas	_____	_____	
Sewer	_____	_____	
Water	_____	_____	
<b>Status of Transportation System:</b> (roads, signage, signals, etc.)			
<b>Description of Imminent Hazards:</b>			
<b>Other Major Problems</b> (housing, structures, etc.)			
<b>Resources Required:</b>			

## Attachment 2

### St. Johns County Critical Facilities

Critical Facilities<sup>2</sup> which are designated as being vital to survival and disaster response and recovery operations shall be prioritized in the following order and immediately assessed for damages following a disaster:

1. Transportation infrastructure (roads, bridges, rail lines, etc.)
2. Communications infrastructure (towers, transmission lines, etc.)
3. Electric power infrastructure (substations, transmission lines, etc.)
4. Response facilities (fire stations, sheriff's office, etc.)
5. Medical facilities (hospitals, urgent care centers, etc.)

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<sup>2</sup> **St. Johns County Critical Facilities Database is updated regularly and is on file at St. Johns County Emergency Management, and will be provided at the time of the event.**



### Attachment 3

#### Equipment and Supplies Needed by County Impact Assessment Teams

##### Personal Equipment

- Appropriate personal clothing | for prevailing weather conditions
- Boots | steel-toed, safety boots
- Gloves, coveralls, rubber boots
- Hard hat
- Safety vest
- Raincoat or poncho
- Flashlight, with extra batteries
- Extra pair of eyeglasses, as needed
- Personal medications, as needed
- Insect repellent
- Official identification and authorization badge

##### Impact Assessment Recommended Equipment

- Copy of this procedure
- Paper, pencils, clipboard, etc.
- Multiple copies of Impact Report Forms
- Written instructions, maps, etc., pertinent to the survey area(s)
- Communication equipment | cellular telephone, radio, other
- Spray paint | multiple colors
- Gas can and fuel supply
- Danger tape
- Blankets
- Binoculars
- Global Positioning System (GPS) unit
- Tire patch kit |
- Heavy ropes
- Water
- Portable lights