NORTH CAROLINA EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN (NCEOP)

BASIC PLAN

2025

I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of the North Carolina Emergency Operations Plan (NCEOP) is to establish a framework that enables a systematic, coordinated, and effective response to emergencies and disasters occurring in the state. The NCEOP incorporates national preparedness guidance as outlined in Presidential Policy Directive 8 (PPD-8) and is consistent with the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

B. SCOPE

This plan is designed to address the hazards and threats likely to require a state response in any part of North Carolina. This plan is scalable, allowing it to be used in all emergencies and disasters, from those requiring a minimal state response to worst-case, state-wide disasters. The NCEOP applies to all State Emergency Response Team (SERT) departments and agencies tasked to assist in a disaster or emergency situation.

The NCEOP is composed of the Basic Plan, a Functions and Responsibilities Annex and a Hazard-Specific Annex. The Basic Plan describes the fundamental policies, strategies, and concept of operations to be used by North Carolina Emergency Management (NCEM) in the command and control of any incident from the onset of response through the recovery phase. The Functions and Responsibilities Annex supports the Basic Plan by providing specific information on policies, processes, roles and responsibilities for NCEM and SERT functions that are common across multiple hazards. The Hazard-Specific Annex identifies the unique response details that apply to a specific hazard and describe how those details affect the Basic Plan.

II. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

A. SITUATION

With a 2021 population of 10.55 million people living in an area of 53,819 square miles, North Carolina is vulnerable to a wide variety of natural and technological hazards. Some of these hazards are limited to specific areas, such as those around nuclear power plants, while others, such as winter storms, may occur statewide. However, the diverse population, economy and geography of North Carolina make some areas more susceptible to certain hazards. From the Atlantic Coast to the Blue Ridge Mountains, the state is divided into three physiographic areas. These are identified as the Coastal Plain, the Piedmont, and the Mountains. Each of these have

climates, populations and geographic features that influence both the likelihood of a particular hazard and its impact on the state.

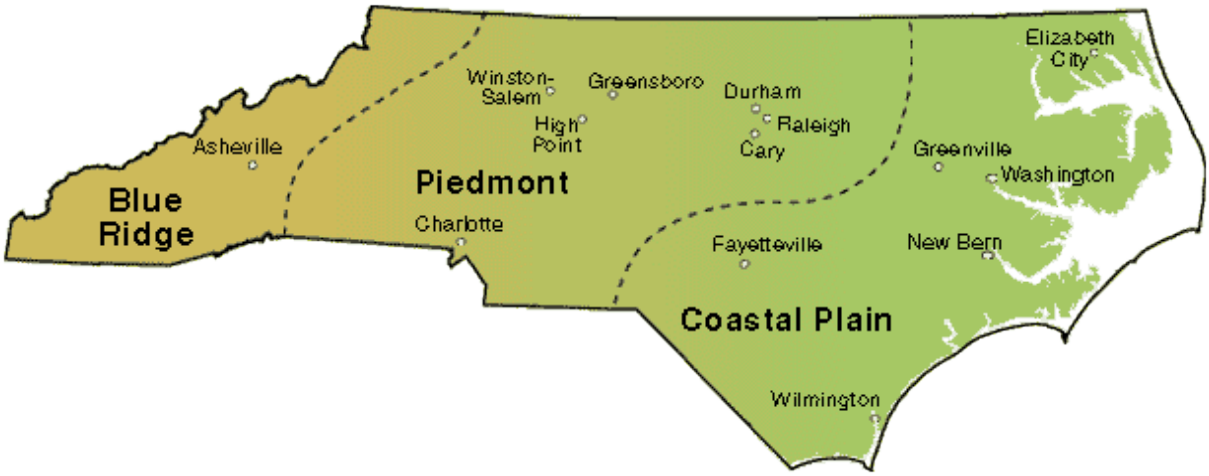

Figure 1. Map of North Carolina Physiographic Regions

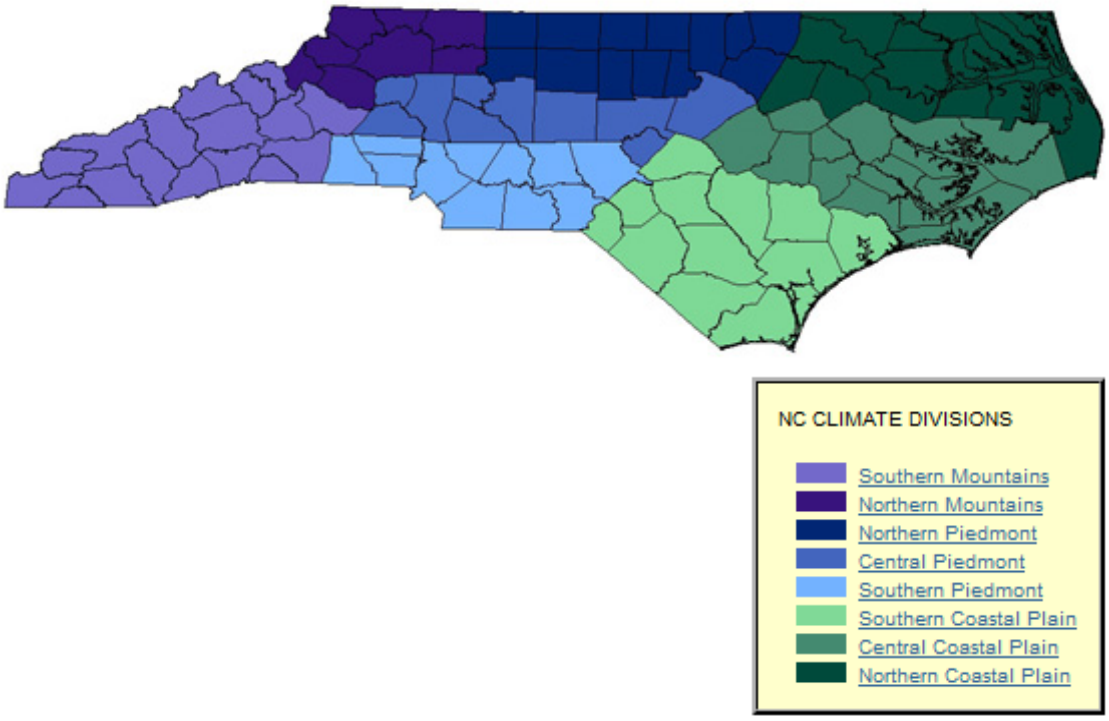

Figure 2. Map of North Carolina Climate Divisions

1. COASTAL PLAIN

The Coastal Plain, comprised of nearly the entire eastern half of the state, includes both flat, swampy tidewater areas as well as a gently sloping, well-drained interior. The elevation of this region ranges from 200 feet in the western boundary down to sea level. On average, hurricanes impact the state twice a year, affecting the 300 miles of barrier island beaches and coastline. Hurricanes can also travel hundreds of miles inland. These storms bring high winds, thunderstorms, and heavy rains that may threaten homes, agriculture and transportation systems.

The Coastal Plain faces threats from violent thunderstorms, localized flooding, tornadoes and winter storms that can disrupt transportation and cause power outages. Additionally, the Coastal Plain is home to many large corporate farming, livestock and food processing operations which could be significantly impacted by drought and foreign animal disease hazards. The Coastal Plain is susceptible to several technological hazards as well. An incident at the nuclear power plant in Brunswick County or at industrial facilities near Wilmington could require a significant emergency response. Large oil spills pose a threat to the coastline from ships transiting offshore or those heading into the Port of Wilmington.

The large tourist and retiree population in the Coastal Plain pose an increased risk during hurricane season. If any of these events occur during the summer tourist season when the population in coastal areas double, response would be even more challenging.

2. PIEDMONT

Rising from the Coastal Plain is the Piedmont which extends from 200 feet to nearly 1,500 feet at the base of the Mountains. The agricultural economy thrives in this area due to the gently sloping fertile terrain. Drought is a part of the state's climate and can affect large areas at a time. The greatest effects are felt in the Piedmont and Coastal Plain due to the dependence on water by farmers and livestock. Wake, Guilford, Forsyth, Mecklenburg Counties, and their respective adjacent counties, are in the Piedmont and are the principal metropolitan areas in North Carolina. Mecklenburg County and surrounding areas contain the Charlotte metropolitan area, Guilford, Forsyth, and the surrounding areas contain the Triad Region, while Wake County is home to the state's capital, Raleigh. These large population centers increase the vulnerability of residents to hazards, including terrorism and hazardous weather.

Nuclear power plants serve as a potential target for terrorism and are located near the major metropolitan areas of Raleigh, Charlotte, and Wilmington. Because of their materials, these power plants can also create hazards on their own through failure, error, or in conjunction with other natural hazards.

Severe weather impacts account for the greatest economic loss in North Carolina and is often attributed to summer thunderstorms. Although tornadoes and other varieties of severe weather can happen anywhere in the state, climatology suggests they occur more frequently in the Piedmont and Coastal Plain regions. On average, 40 to 50 thunderstorm days occur each year, bringing heavy rain, wind, lightning, hail and tornadoes.

3. MOUNTAINS

The Mountains stretch upward from 1,500 feet along the eastern boundary to 6,684 feet at the summit of Mount Mitchell, the highest peak in the eastern United States. There are 125 peaks above 5,000 feet and 43 peaks that exceed 6,000 feet. It is the smallest and least populated region of the three, but it experiences more frequent snow, sleet, and freezing rain, which can create hazardous travel conditions. While earthquakes can occur anywhere in North Carolina, they are more common in the Mountains and can have a devastating effect on life and property. Heavy rains can also cause flooding and landslides that further increase vulnerability.

B. RESOURCES

In keeping with the NIMS framework, emergency operations in North Carolina are handled at the lowest level of government that can effectively respond and manage an incident. Each county in North Carolina has emergency management personnel who are trained and ready to respond to an incident. Local resources and capabilities vary greatly from those in large metropolitan areas to those in small rural ones. If an incident exceeds its capabilities, requests for assistance can be made to the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for state and federal support.

1. LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

In North Carolina, trained local government emergency personnel are almost always the first to respond to any emergency. These include city and county law enforcement, firefighting, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and utility personnel. All counties have staff and an EOC, making them the primary local government emergency management resource, although some municipalities have emergency management and operate an EOC. Each county has an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and personnel

capable of managing an emergency from their EOC. If resource requirements exceed that of the affected county, there are existing mutual aid agreements with neighboring counties that facilitate the flow of additional resources into the affected county.

2. STATE GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

NCEM, a division of the North Carolina Department of Public Safety (NCDPS), operates three branch offices, two warehouses, and an EOC. The State EOC is located in Raleigh within the North Carolina Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ) building. The SERT is managed from the State EOC as well as the State Warning Point (SWP).

Each branch office is led by a Branch Manager and has planning and administrative staff. The manager is responsible for the five area coordinators who are the primary NCEM representative for the 6-8 counties in their area. Figure 3 shows the branches and the 15 areas for which coordinators are responsible. During emergencies, the branch offices become Regional Coordination Centers (RCCs) to provide operational information sharing and resource coordination between the state and counties. The two state warehouses maintain stocks of commodities such as bottled water, tarps and Meals-Ready-to-Eat (MRE). During emergencies they will serve as state staging areas and warehouse personnel can transport supplies using NCEM trucks or contracted haulers.

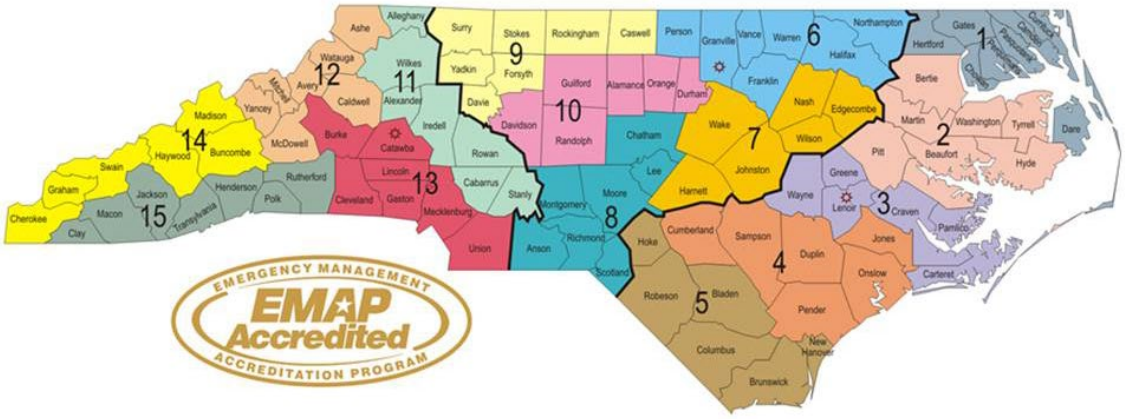

Figure 3. North Carolina Emergency Management Branches and Areas

The North Carolina National Guard (NCNG), headquartered at the JFHQ, strengthens the level of response that is provided during a disaster. One asset provided by the NCNG are Mission Ready Packages, which are

assembled response and recovery capabilities that are organized, developed, trained, and exercised prior to an emergency or disaster. Other state agencies found in Annexes A and B have resources available to support the needs of the state, and they too have Mission Ready Packages. Based on NIMS resource typing, Mission Ready Packages build upon this concept by integrating mission limitations, required support, operational footprint, and estimated costs. They include credentialed personnel who have been identified as possessing the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to conduct that specific mission.

3. OTHER STATE RESOURCES

Private sector, non-profit, and voluntary organizations, as well as the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), provide resources and technical expertise that support both state and local operations during a disaster.

4. EXTERNAL RESOURCES

If North Carolina resources aren't adequate to meet the needs during a disaster, the state can request outside resources to further supplement response and recovery efforts. Federal agency resources, along with those from other states, can be accessed and mobilized to assist in operations that have extended beyond the capacities of state and local governments.

Resources from other states are requested through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC). This compact establishes procedures for resource requests and its pre-negotiated rules on financing, liability, and insurance facilitate quick and effective response. All EMAC operations in North Carolina are conducted under the command and control of NCEM and assisted by the EMAC Assistance Team. EMAC requests for resources are initiated through the NCEM EMAC Coordinator following the verification of a State of Emergency declaration.

5. PRIVATE RESOURCES

The North Carolina Business Emergency Operations Center (BEOC) is a physical and virtual communications and operational hub for business and industry during events that threaten North Carolina. Private sector partners incorporated into the SERT capitalize on shared information in the response, recovery, preparation, and mitigation phases of emergency management. This allows them to make operational decisions and prepare, continue, or resume normal business operations as quickly as possible before, during and after an event. The BEOC is located with the State EOC in Raleigh, NC.

Private sector partners provide input, recommendations and sector analysis that help build capacity and resiliency throughout the state. BEOC members collaborate, train and exercise with the SERT during blue skies. Resource requests are tasked out to private sector partners and are coordinated through the BEOC. Mutual aid between businesses is encouraged to enhance the common operating picture. The Private-Public Partnerships in North Carolina support public safety and help protect North Carolina's economic strength by fostering collaboration, communication and cooperation between businesses and the communities they serve.

The mission of the BEOC is to provide situational awareness and share information with the private sector during disasters in addition to supporting the SERT. It aims to enhance the common operating picture, facilitate collaboration between public and private sectors throughout all phases of emergency management and support the stabilization and recovery of communities after events.

Private sector partnerships with NCEM include:

a. Inclusion on the Private Sector Manager's Distribution List for notifications, alerts, and other information regarding state emergency operations.
b. Access to the crisis management platform, NCSPARTA, which provides real-time information during events down to the county level.
c. Access to training, exercises, annual meetings, and the network of business and industry partners.
d. Vendor re-entry certification.
e. Inclusion in daily coordination calls during events that include operations briefings, power outage/restoration information, as well as evacuation, curfew, and road closure updates.
f. BEOC chairs have the option to offer input, suggestions, and distribute information to their association and sector members straight from the State EOC during activations. Chairs also have access to the SEOC for networking and face-to-face coordination with state agencies.

6. HAZARD & THREAT ANALYSIS

The state's hazards and threats are identified in the State Hazard Mitigation Plan (SHMP).

Natural Hazards	
Flooding (Sea Level Rise)	Dam Failures
Hurricanes and Coastal Storms	Drought
Severe Winter Weather	Tornadoes/Thunderstorms
Excessive Heat	Geological (Landslides, Rock Fall, Sinkholes)
Earthquakes	Infectious Disease
Wildfires	Foreign Animal Disease
Technological Hazards	
Hazardous Substances (Hazardous Materials, Hazardous Chemicals, Oil Spill)	Cyberattack
Radiological Emergency – Fixed Nuclear Facilities Terrorism (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosive)	Electromagnetic Pulse
Civil Disturbance	Food Emergency

The following natural and technological hazards have been identified as warranting a hazard-specific annex. These have been developed in regard to the frequency of regional occurrence, the potential impact of a hazard, and the need for abnormal response procedures. For hazards not listed below, NCEM will conduct operations in accordance with this Basic Plan and Annex A.

Natural Hazards	
Hurricanes and Coastal Storms	Foreign Animal Disease
Severe Winter Weather	Infectious Disease
Drought	Earthquake
Technological Hazards	
Oil/Petroleum Products Spill	Food Emergency
Terrorism	Electromagnetic Pulse
Civil Disturbance	Cyberattack

Table 1. Hazards referenced in the NCEOP

C. PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

1. Local and county governments will develop plans to respond to emergencies and disasters using resources to the extent of their capabilities.

2. Local and county governments will respond to emergencies in ways that are consistent with NIMS and the Incident Command System (ICS).

3. Municipalities and counties will enter into mutual aid agreements with each other as necessary to most effectively use their resources in response to emergencies and disasters.

4. The State EOC and the RCCs are the primary locations from which state operations will be conducted under the direction and control of the SERT Leader. Should the State EOC become untenable, operations will relocate to an Alternate EOC in accordance with the North Carolina Emergency Management Continuity of Operations Plan.

5. SERT agencies have emergency resources and expertise that local governments do not.

6. Federal agency resources and expertise, along with those from other states, can be mobilized to augment local and state efforts when the emergency or disaster is beyond the capabilities of both governments.

7. A disaster or emergency may significantly impact critical infrastructure and will require response to support survivor needs.

8. Immediate response efforts will be hindered by cascading events during some incidents.

III. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

By order of the Governor, North Carolina has adopted NIMS and ICS as an approach for effectively managing emergency operations. These systems provide a rational model to prioritize and manage emergency operations for disaster response protocols to remain flexible.

There are five critical mission areas for emergency management at the local, state and federal levels of government: prevention, protection, response, recovery and mitigation. These mission areas are the general responsibility of all governments working together. Emergency operations, a byproduct of preparedness activities, are initiated in rapid response to the situation.

Emergency operations are handled at the lowest level of government capable of responding effectively and efficiently to an incident. Each county is responsible for emergency management within its jurisdictional boundaries according to established plans and procedures. If a disaster or emergency exceeds local government resources or capabilities, requests for assistance can be to the State EOC for state and federal support.

The State EOC is manned seven days a week, 24 hours per day for normal day-to-day operations with one or more Operations duty officers. The State EOC is organized to serve as an effective communications center to provide resource support and authoritative decisions for local operations. When a disruption causing a threat to life and property occurs or is anticipated, the Director will be notified by the 24-Hour Watch, Senior Staff, and/or SERT Functional Leads.

Upon notification, the Director will determine if a Functional Lead Touchpoint is needed to address the situation, resources gaps and response requirements. The Operations Chief will make a recommendation to elevate the SERT and create an NCSPARTA event. The Governor may also issue an Executive Order declare a State of Emergency which activates the SERT and emergency operations plans. Upon activation, the NCEM Director becomes the SERT Leader. Branch Managers and Functional Leads will coordinate with SERT partners regarding staffing requirements. The levels of activation include:

1. Normal (day-to-day operations): The 24-Hour Watch remains engaged for information-sharing and resource coordination 24 hours a day, every day. The SERT is not activated.
2. Enhanced Watch: Any disaster/emergency that is forecasted or occurs largely within the capabilities of local government and results in only minimal need for state assistance. State agencies that would take action as part of normal day-to-day responsibilities are notified. The SERT is not activated.
3. SERT Activation: Any disaster/emergency that requires involvement of SERT partners, including potential federal resource support, for events that are forecast or occurring that impacts multiple jurisdictions over multiple operational periods and is likely to exceed local capabilities.

The SERT is comprised of subject matter experts from state agencies, private industry, voluntary, and faith-based organizations who provide technical expertise and resources for local operations. During a major incident, these representatives join the SERT Leader at the State EOC. The SERT Leader coordinates relief efforts and supports local and county governments. When the SERT is activated, all SERT partners are represented in the State EOC. The SERT Leader, who is responsible to the Secretary of the Department of Public Safety and the Governor, oversees the SERT operation. This includes planning, staffing, equipping, training, activating and managing emergency management programs. SERT agencies carry out the emergency support functions as outlined in the NCEOP, with NCEM as the lead agency for all hazards to coordinate the support from SERT partners.

When activated, the three field branch offices transition into Regional Coordination Centers which function as Multi-agency Coordination Centers during an event. They provide central locations for operational information sharing and resource coordination in support of on-scene efforts in the RCC's area. RCCs are available to provide guidance and aid local governments seeking assistance. RCCs are

staffed by various agencies and local emergency managers which may come from a branch office that is not expected to receive direct impacts. They may also be staffed with members from Incident Management Teams (IMTs) if the NCEM Operations Section Chief and/or RCC Incident Commander sees fit. Branch office personnel may respond to the county to facilitate ongoing information exchange.

While response efforts are ongoing, preparations begin for a rapid deployment of resources necessary to facilitate recovery. Should the emergency evolve into a disaster with appropriate declarations, response and recovery efforts at the State EOC will transition to a Joint Field Office (JFO). A JFO is established to provide a central location for coordination of response and recovery efforts. NCEM and other state agencies provide liaison and augmentation as required at the JFO. Recovery can continue for many years. It involves short-term restoration of essential community functions and long-term rebuilding. It also incorporates hazard mitigation and resiliency planning as the restoration and rebuilding take place.
The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (PL 93-288, as amended) provides the authority for the federal government to respond to disasters and emergencies in order to help save lives and protect public health, safety, and property. Designated departments and agencies have been assigned responsibilities under the National Response Framework. These agencies are grouped under Emergency Support Functions (ESFs). Each ESF is headed by a primary agency, which has been selected based on its authorities, resources, and capabilities in the particular functional area. Other agencies have been designated as support agencies for one or more ESFs based on their resources and capabilities to support the functional area. The ESFs serve as the primary mechanism through which federal response assistance will be provided to assist the state in meeting response requirements in an affected area. Federal assistance will be provided under the overall direction of the Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO). Federal assistance is to supplement state and local government response efforts. ESFs will coordinate with the FCO and the affected state to identify specific response requirements and will provide federal response assistance based on state identified priorities. The following table identifies the Federal ESFs:

Federal Emergency Support Function (ESF)
ESF #1 – Transportation
ESF #2 – Communications
ESF #3 – Public Works and Engineering
ESF #4 – Firefighting
ESF #5 – Information and Planning
ESF #6 – Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Temporary Housing and Human Services
ESF #7 – Logistics
ESF #8 – Public Health and Medical Services
ESF #9 – Search and Rescue
ESF #10 – Oil and Hazardous Materials Response
ESF #11 – Agriculture and Natural Resources
ESF #12 – Energy
ESF #13 – Public Safety and Security
ESF #14 – Cross-Sector Business and Infrastructure
ESF #15 – External Affairs

Table 2. Federal Emergency Support Functions

IV. ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

The North Carolina Emergency Management Act, Chapter 166A of the North Carolina General Statutes (NCGS), establishes the authority and responsibilities of the Governor, state agencies, and local government for emergency management. The Secretary of the Department of Public Safety, or designee, is tasked with oversight and control of emergency management in North Carolina and is responsible to the Governor for all state emergency management activities.

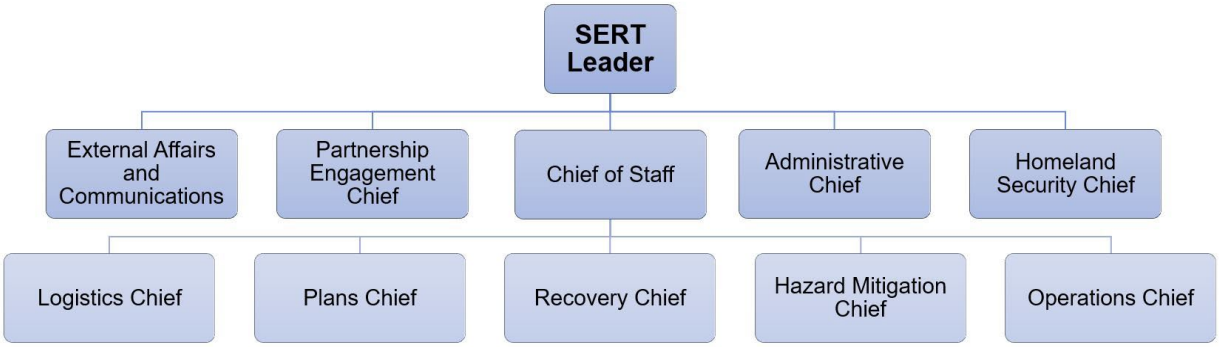

Figure 4. General SERT Organizational Structure

The SERT is comprised of representatives of state agencies, volunteer and nonprofit organizations, and other agencies as identified in the NCEOP who have knowledge of their organizations' resources. As the situation develops or if additional assistance is required, SERT agency representatives may be deployed as All-Hazard Incident Management Teams (AHIMT) to affected counties to provide on-scene coordination and assistance. SERT agencies are responsible for the following:

- Provide departmental liaisons to function as members of the SERT to represent their agencies in preparedness, response, and recovery activities, to include the commitment of their departments' resources and to maintain knowledge of EOC procedures;
- Provide equipment, facilities, and trained personnel as available and required by a specific emergency;
- Review this plan together with annexes and appendices as necessary to ensure portions applicable to each SERT agency are accurate and current;
- Develop and maintain supporting plans, resource inventory lists, standard operating procedures, and alerting lists;
- Plan and provide for the safety of employees and protection of state property in the disaster area;
- Coordinate actions with the SERT and other agencies having related tasks;
- Participate in exercises to test emergency plans and procedures;
- Provide for record keeping and documentation of disaster-related fiscal records;

- Inform counterpart agencies at the local level of the situation; and
- Provide service delivery through voluntary organizations and non-profit agencies that include, but not limited to, mass care feeding, sheltering, distribution of emergency relief supplies, health services, mental health, emotional and spiritual care, debris removal, home repairs and/or rebuilding, volunteer management, as well as casework and case management. See Annex A Appendix 3 Tab E and Annex A Appendix 5 Tab B.

The SERT is organized to provide, coordinate, and arrange for emergency assistance to the counties. At the section level, this organization is identical to that under which NCEM conducts routine business. Appropriate NCEM sections and branches prepare and maintain standard operating procedures to fulfill duties and responsibilities.

A. SERT LEADER

The SERT Leader has the authority to manage the SERT as delegated by the Governor and Secretary of Public Safety. The SERT Leader is the statutory responsibility of the NCEM Director per N.C. Gen. Stat. § 166A-19.3(18).

B. EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

The External Affairs and Communications Section serves as the liaison with the print and electronic communication methods as well as social media during activation. They prepare and distribute news releases and social media messages as needed and support news conferences. Public Information Officers work within the Joint Information System (JIS) before, during, and after the emergency and operate in the Joint Information Center (JIC) during activation. They ensure all necessary emergency information is made available to the at-risk population in a variety of formats.

C. RECOVERY SECTION

The Recovery Section is responsible for the traditional public and individual assistance components as well as long-term recovery. Public Assistance is designed to meet the needs of all eligible applicants for the repair/replacement of disaster-damaged infrastructures and consists of emergency and permanent work. Individual Assistance ensures that all North Carolina individuals and families have access to the full range of state and federal programs made available in the aftermath of a disaster.

D. OPERATIONS SECTION

The Operations Section is responsible for coordinating and directing state government and emergency management field activities in response to emergencies and recovery from disasters. The Operations Section functions include Human Services, Infrastructure, Emergency Services, Hazardous Materials, First Responder Communications, Field Operations and the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC). The Operations Section also coordinates military support to emergency response and disaster recovery efforts.

E. PLANNING SECTION

The Planning Section is responsible for collecting, formatting, distributing, and archiving disaster information. The Planning Section also supports the SERT through continuous situational assessment of natural hazards. Staff within the Planning Section lead after-action reviews and corrective action planning for NC Emergency Management and participating SERT partners and counties following disasters.

F. LOGISTICS SECTION

The Logistics Section is responsible for acquiring, collecting, and moving state and donated resources to enhance response to and recovery from emergencies and disasters. Furthermore, they establish and maintain facilities required to support disaster operations. It contracts and purchases goods, equipment, and services necessary for state response and recovery actions.

G. ADMINISTRATION SECTION

The Administration Section is responsible for documenting disaster-related costs for leadership and process invoices to ensure prompt payment for goods and services necessary to support emergency response and disaster recovery efforts, providing flood inundation mapping and GIS information technology user support, processing the hiring of temporary employees, if applicable, and providing information technology user support and infrastructure capabilities. In addition, the Administration Section provides specialized mental health services in addition to peer team consultation and coordination with first responder agencies upon request through the Responder Assistance Initiative (RAI).

H. PARTNERSHIP ENGAGEMENT SECTION

The Partnership Engagement Section is responsible for identifying, coordinating, and developing private sector business/industry partnerships and non-profits active in disasters in support of NCEM's public safety mission, the stability of NC communities, and the state's infrastructure. This section includes the BEOC, the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), and Voluntary Agency Liaisons (VALs).

I. HAZARD MITIGATION SECTION

The Hazard Mitigation Section is responsible for conducting and maintaining statewide vulnerability assessments for all natural hazards and developing mitigation policies, programs and strategies that will lessen both current and future vulnerability, which includes the state's Hazard Mitigation Plan and all regional hazard mitigation plans. This section prioritizes mitigation strategies after each major disaster and administers post-disaster hazard mitigation grant programs, promotes the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), and offers development planning assistance following each major disaster. The section administers pre-disaster and post-disaster mitigation grant programs and supports the development of local mitigation plans. The section is separated into Program Support and Program Delivery. Program Support includes NFIP, Floodplain Mapping, and Geodetic Survey and Program Delivery includes Planning, Implementation, Development, and Closeout.

J. HOMELAND SECURITY SECTION

The Homeland Security Section is responsible for supporting the SERT through intelligence gathering, cybersecurity, and awareness, maintaining partnerships through the critical infrastructure protection program, and coordinating responses to hazards and threats at school facilities.

K. REGIONAL COORDINATION CENTERS (RCCs)

Regional Coordination Centers (RCCs) coordinate response and recovery operations and the deployment of outside resources to the counties. Branch Managers can assign Area Coordinators to respond immediately to the disaster or emergency site to assess the situation, coordinate activities of state agencies on the scene, and relay any recommendations or requests for resources to the SERT.

L. COUNTY AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

County and local governments are responsible for preparing plans for evacuation and/or sheltering in place as well as conducting such operations when conditions require. Local officials and/or County Commissioners may declare local States of Emergency and request state assistance on the county's behalf. County EOCs are staffed with elected officials and senior representatives of county departments and volunteer organizations. Representatives within the county EOC receive information, coordinate the tasking of resources, and make population protection decisions. County EOCs will coordinate response and recovery operations and the deployment of outside resources to cities. Local emergency management coordinators from non-impacted counties may be dispatched to affected counties as members of All Hazard IMTs and EOC Overhead Teams. The primary responsibilities of these teams are to assist local coordinators, serve as liaison officers for ongoing assessments, and relay local recommendations or requests for resources to the State EOC.

V. DIRECTION, CONTROL AND COORDINATION

The Governor delegates their authority to execute the State Emergency Management Program to the Secretary of the Department of Public Safety and the Director of North Carolina Emergency Management in accordance with Chapter 166A of the North Carolina General Statues. The Secretary of the Department of Public Safety will serve as the State Coordinating Officer (SCO) and will be responsible for the direction and control of state operations. The Secretary of the Department of Public Safety also delegates authority to the NCEM Director to carry out emergency management functions within the state.

NCEM is the lead state agency for the coordination of the activities of all state agencies for emergency management within the state, including the activating and managing of the SERT. See N.C. Gen. Stat § 166A-19.12(1).

The SERT is defined as the representative group of state agency personnel designated to carry out the emergency management support function identified in the North Carolina Emergency Operations Plan. The SERT Leader is the Director of the North Carolina Emergency Management, who has authority to manage the Team. The Team shall consist of the following state agencies:

- Department of Public Safety
- Department of Transportation
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Environmental Quality
- Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

- Any other agency identified in the North Carolina Emergency Operations Plan.

These state agencies may be identified in this plan as Lead Technical Agencies to provide specific technical expertise to the SERT, depending on the incident.

Based on the severity and magnitude of the situation, the Governor may request that the President declare a major disaster for the state. This request for assistance will go from the Governor to FEMA to the President. FEMA may pre-deploy a Liaison Officer to the State EOC along with an Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT).

Upon receiving a declaration, FEMA will assign a FCO to the state, appointed by the President, to manage federal assistance. According to the National Response Framework, the federal government will provide assistance using Emergency Support Functions. A Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator (FDRC) may be activated and deployed to facilitate recovery coordination and collaboration with state, local and tribal leadership.

VI. INFORMATION COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND DISSEMINATION

NCEM may receive initial notification or warning of a disaster from multiple sources, including local emergency management agencies or county warning points, the National Weather Service, the NC State Highway Patrol (NCSHP) Warning Point, and the National Hurricane Center. The 24-Hour Watch will notify key NCEM and NCDPS officials, SERT partners, and the local emergency management agency or county warning point in accordance with standard operating guidelines. The 24-Hour Watch will also notify FEMA and other agencies as appropriate for the situation. Upon notification by NCEM, each SERT partner is responsible for conducting its own internal notifications. The SERT may be called to assemble at the State EOC for an initial briefing and discussion of response requirements.

The SERT Leader will require preparation of recurring reports that document past, current and planned activities existing during an operational period in response to an emergency. Additionally, the SERT Leader will approve a daily Incident Action Plan (IAP) that is often published at the beginning of each operational period and establishes general control objectives which reflect the overall strategy and specific action plans. The Operations Section Chief will issue mission assignments to SERT members based on local government's identified resource shortfalls. To satisfy IAP operational objectives, resource tasking to state agencies will be accomplished through a mission assignment approach.

VII. ADMINISTRATION, FINANCE AND LOGISTICS

Response administration, finance, and logistics will be conducted in accordance with established plans, policies, and procedures. FEMA will conduct an eligibility review, which will be submitted with the request to the President. With a Presidential declaration, FEMA is authorized to use the authority of the Stafford Act to reimburse public assistance response and recovery claims against the Disaster Relief Fund.

VIII. PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

This plan will be reviewed annually, or as conditions warrant. Review of the NCEOP will alternate between a full review and desk review. NCEM will coordinate the reviews of the NCEOP. A desk review will be completed internally by the NCEM Planning Section and will incorporate changes as needed. A full review will be completed external to the NCEM Planning Section through Functional Leads engaging with stakeholders and subject matter experts where appropriate. Each SERT agency is responsible for ensuring applicable portions of the plan remain accurate and up to date. Changes to the plan will be published and distributed as necessary. The plan is also tested during periodic exercises and after-action review forums.

Recommended changes should be made in the form of substitute language and forwarded to the NC Department of Public Safety, North Carolina Emergency Management, Attention: NCEM Planning Section, 4236 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-4713. Changes to the plan will be published and distributed as necessary. This plan supersedes the NCEOP published in December 2023.

IX. AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES

A. LINES OF SUCCESSION

The Governor has general direction and control of the state emergency management program. This includes all aspects of preparations for, response to, recovery from, and mitigation against emergencies and disasters. During the absence of the Governor from the state, the Lieutenant Governor becomes acting Governor. The Lieutenant Governor will also become Governor upon the death, resignation, or removal from office of the current Governor. As prescribed by law, the continuing line of succession as acting Governor incorporates the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House of Representatives.

B. DELEGATION OF EMERGENCY AUTHORITY

1. The State Emergency Management Program includes all aspects of preparations for, response to, recovery from, and mitigation against war or peacetime emergencies. The Governor is authorized and empowered to exercise general direction and control of the State Emergency Management Program and is responsible for carrying out the provisions of Article 1A of Chapter 166A of the North Carolina General Statutes "North Carolina Emergency Management Act," other than those that confer powers and duties exclusively on local governments. See N.C. Gen. Stat. § 166A-19.10 and N.C. Gen. Stat. § 166A-19.15.

   The Governor has the authority to delegate and subdelegate any authority vested in the Governor under Article 1A of the Emergency Management Act. See N.C. Gen. Stat. § 166A-19.10(b)(4)

2. The Secretary of the Department of Public Safety is responsible to the Governor for state emergency management activities and has powers and duties as delegated by the Governor to carry out those functions. The Secretary may subdelegate their authority to the appropriate member of the Department of Public Safety. See N.C. Gen. Stat. § 166A-19.11 and N.C. Gen. Stat. § 143B-602

3. The Division of Emergency Management has authority delegated from the Governor and Secretary of Public Safety to perform the duties and exercise the powers enumerated in N.C. Gen. Stat. § 166A-19.12. The Director of the Division of Emergency Management has the statutory authority as delegated by the Governor to manage the State Emergency Response Team.

4. The Governor or the General Assembly has the authority to declare a state of emergency if either finds that an emergency as defined by N.C.Gen. Stat. § 166A-19.3(6) and N.C.Gen. Stat. § 166A-19.20. During a gubernatorially and legislative declared state of emergency, the Governor, has additional authorities during a state of emergency to address the emergency situation. The Governor may exercise some of these emergency powers with the concurrence of the Council of State. See N.C. Gen. Stat. § 166A-19.30

C. PROVISIONS FOR CONTINUITY

North Carolina Emergency Management is committed to enhancing the quality of life for its citizens by assisting people to effectively prepare for, respond to, recover from, and militate against all hazards and disasters. To accomplish this mission, NCEM must ensure operations can be performed efficiently with minimal disruption, especially during an emergency.

Continuity is an essential element in the responsible and reliable delivery of emergency services to North Carolina.

Should the State EOC be lost when SERT activation is required, a relocation of primary emergency operations to an alternate facility will take place. The NCEM Director will determine when to activate the NCEM Continuity of Operations Plan. This plan identifies NCEM's essential functions, orders of succession, delegation of authority, Emergency Relocation Group, continuity personnel and alternate locations.

D. RECORD RETENTION

Each department of state government is responsible for establishing its own records retention program in accordance with the laws governing that department. Emergency management records and files are reviewed annually and records identified for retention are sent to the State Records Center.

E. LEGAL IMMUNITIES AND LIABILITIES

Generally, all functions and activities related to emergency management within the North Carolina Emergency Management Act or elsewhere in the North Carolina General Statutes are governmental functions. Neither the state nor any political subdivision thereof, nor, except in cases of willful misconduct, gross negligence, or bad faith, any emergency management worker, firm, partnership, association, or corporation complying with or reasonably attempting to comply with this Article or any order, rule, or regulation promulgated pursuant to the provisions of this Article or pursuant to any ordinance relating to any emergency management measures enacted by any political subdivision of the state, shall be liable for the death of or injury to persons, or for damage to property as a result of any such activity. Several provisions in Chapter 166A of the North Carolina General Statutes provide for the protection of individuals and organizations involved in training for and conducting emergency operations and what liability exposure for persons who willfully ignore a warning in emergencies. Questions pertaining to these matters should be referred to the North Carolina Department of Public Safety, Office of General Counsel. See N.C. Gen. Stat. § 166A-19.60, N.C. Gen. Stat. § 166A-19.61, N.C. Gen. Stat. § 166A-46 and N.C. Gen. Stat. § 166A-19.62