Strategic Plan 2015-2019

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INTRODUCTION

I-1. Executive Summary

Arizona Task Force One is one of 28 National Urban Search & Rescue Response System task forces that can rapidly deploy skilled personnel and state-of-the-art equipment to sites of natural disasters, terrorist attacks, and building collapses. Deployments include: 1993 Northridge Earthquake, 1995 Oklahoma Bombing, 1996 Atlanta Olympics, 1997 Northridge Floods, 911, 2002 Utah Olympics, 2005 Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, 2008 Hurricanes Ike and Gustav, and 2014 WA Mudslide. In addition to search and rescue (SAR), task force members provide immediate medical treatment to survivors and Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) monitoring and stabilization capabilities.

This strategic plan details the goals of AZ-TF1 to maintain its place as a US&R task force with performance-driven capabilities, attainable and sound program goals, while acknowledging the importance of an integrated, well-trained, highly-skilled membership.

This strategic plan describes AZ-TF1's mission to improve performance and its vision to continue setting a standard of excellence. It identifies goals for fiscal years 2015 through 2019, which address the following four areas:

- Response – Provide regional and national response to a variety of emergencies which includes structural collapse SAR, floods, hurricanes and other disasters to save lives and protect property in an all-hazards environment
- Readiness – Invest in and maintain AZ-TF1 to ensure optimal readiness
- Communication – Effectively exchange information and promote awareness of AZ-TF1
- Collaboration – Build strong and resilient partnerships across the emergency response community to share knowledge, build consensus, and enhance response capabilities

For each goal, this plan identifies objectives, strategies, and performance measures that will create the framework for success.

I-2. Overview

AZ-TF1 is comprised of members of the Phoenix Fire Department and 13 civilian affiliated personnel to fill task force positions that include the following:

- ❑ Canine Search Specialist
- ❑ Communications Specialist
- ❑ Hazardous Materials Specialist
- ❑ Hazardous Materials Team Manager
- ❑ Heavy Equipment & Rigging Specialist
- ❑ Logistics Specialist
- ❑ Logistics Team Manager
- ❑ Medical Specialist
- ❑ Medical Team Manager
- ❑ Planning Team Manager
- ❑ Rescue Specialist
- ❑ Rescue Squad Officer
- ❑ Rescue Team Manager
- ❑ Safety Officer
- ❑ Search Team Manager
- ❑ Structures Specialist
- ❑ Task Force Leader
- ❑ Technical Information Specialist
- ❑ Technical Search Specialist
- ❑ Water Rescue Specialist
- ❑ Boat Operator

AZ-TF1 responds as a Federal resource to disasters through the FEMA/US&R Response Cooperative Agreement to support regional assets. The core mission focuses on structural collapse SAR (urban), with the ability to operate effectively in the all-hazards environment. US&R is a multi-hazard discipline requiring highly trained, skilled personnel, as well as canine search teams.

I-3. Vision

Lead the emergency response community and collaborate with State and Federal partners to build capabilities to save lives during disasters.

To achieve this vision, AZ-TF1 must continually improve, innovate, and encourage fresh perspectives. The task force must be capable of performing operations in any SAR environment. The task force must continue to train and exercise members while refining equipment, technology, and operational procedures. At the same time, AZ-TF1 must proactively engage community partners at all levels to strengthen local capacity for SAR operations. AZ-TF1 will focus on responding to disasters and saving lives, while sharing knowledge and collaborating with the emergency response community.

I-4. Mission

To build, sustain, and improve the ability to provide structural collapse (urban) SAR response capability required to save lives and reduce suffering in local communities, and throughout the nation, that have been overwhelmed by the impact of a catastrophic event.

AZ-TF1 saves lives during structural collapse SAR using state-of-the-art strategies, techniques, equipment, and rapid response founded on careful operational and logistics planning, effective training, and exercising (e.g. MOBEX, Vigilant Guard Exercise, Diamond Plate Exercise). AZ-TF1 is capable of a wide variety of services and is equipped and trained to conduct the varying aspects of structural collapse operations:

- Reconnaissance to assess damage, needs and provide feedback to officials
- Wide Area and Technical Search
- Extrication of entrapped survivors
- Structural and hazard evaluations of buildings
- Hazardous materials surveys and evaluations
- Operations in water-inundated areas
- Operations in known, or suspected, Hazardous Materials/Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive (HAZMAT/CBRNE) environments

- Emergency medical care for entrapped survivors, task force personnel, and canines
- Evacuation of residents from hazardous settings
- Stabilization of damaged structures, including shoring and cribbing operations

The overall mission of AZ-TF1 is to train and equip its members to respond quickly, safely, efficiently, and effectively, to save lives in the disaster environment.

I-5. Strategic Goals

This strategic plan is organized around goals in four areas:

- **Response** – Provide regional and national response to a variety of emergencies which includes structural collapse SAR, floods, hurricanes and other disasters to save lives and protect property in an all-hazards environment.
- **Readiness** – Invest in, and maintain, AZ-TF1 human and physical assets to ensure optimal readiness.
- **Communication** – Effectively exchange information and promote awareness of AZ-TF1 through the National US&R Response System.
- **Collaboration** – Build strong and resilient partnerships across the emergency response community to share knowledge, build consensus, and enhance response capabilities.

CHAPTER 1: GOAL 1 – RESPONSE

Provide regional and national response to a variety of emergencies which includes structural collapse SAR, floods, hurricanes and other disasters to save lives and protect property in an all-hazards environment.

AZ-TF1 is a flexible and scalable rapid-response resource. It focuses on meeting the unique emergency needs of the community using various methods. In the case of a large-scale disaster with the potential to produce many casualties, the task force can rapidly deploy nationwide.

1-1. Objective 1.1 – Rapid Deployment

During disaster situations, the number of lives saved directly correlates to the amount of time required to arrive at the disaster scene and begin SAR operations. Goals have been established by AZ-TF1 to deploy by ground within four (4) hours and by air within six (6) hours after receiving an Activation Order. These goals are for no-notice, sudden-onset events (e.g. earthquake) as well as for advanced notice events, such as a hurricane.

I. Strategy 1.1.1

AZ-TF1 should continuously exercise, measure, and train to improve deployment times.

A. Performance Measure 1.1.1.1

Validate through mobilization exercises, the standard departure timeframes that have been developed to ensure that mobilization is accomplished within the appropriate timeframe. Deployment operations should be continually evaluated and revised as necessary to increase efficiency and improve performance.

Timeline: On-going annually

B. Performance Measure 1.1.1.2

Train, exercise, and continuously revise processes (e.g. updating the Mobilization Plan) to facilitate improved task force response.

Timeline: On-going annually

C. Performance Measure 1.1.1.3

Maintain and improve relationships with military and commercial airlift providers to reduce the time interval between task force activation and departure.

Timeline: On-going annually

D. Performance Measure 1.1.1.4

Continual assessment of the current system for task force alerting to develop a faster, more efficient notification.

Timeline: On-going biennial

E. Performance Measure 1.1.1.5

Produce an After-Action-Report (AAR) for each Mobilization Exercise, Training Exercise, and Deployment and ensure that analyses of operational shortcomings and gaps are fully considered and integrated into AZ-TF1's strategic planning process.

Timeline: As required

1-2. Objective 1.2 – Deployment Risk Management

SAR operations are inherently dangerous. An operational risk assessment should be performed upon accepting the mission. This assessment is created prior to any deployment and continuously updated throughout SAR operations. Any change in the mission or operational environment requires a reassessment and identification of factors that must be mitigated for successful operations. Task force personnel must be afforded adequate safety and security in terms of force-protection, perimeter/site security, personal protective equipment, hazard assessment, potential radiological exposure, and decontamination operations.

I. Strategy 1.2.1

Pre-Deployment Risk Management – AZ-TF1 should develop strategies for addressing potential operational risks during an incident.

A. Performance Measure 1.2.1.1

Update Mobilization Plans to specifically include potential risks and mitigation strategies during incidents.

Timeline: Annually

B. Performance Measure 1.2.1.2

Work jointly with the US&R HAZMAT Work Group to develop procedures for testing members' exposure to radiation before, during, and after deployments.

Timeline: Annually

CHAPTER 2: GOAL 2 – READINESS

Invest in and maintain AZ-TF1 to ensure optimal readiness.

AZ-TF1 consists of highly-trained specialists that are prepared to deploy and respond to regional and nationwide emergencies. Due to attrition, we continue to recruit and train new leaders and subject matter experts. The National US&R system developed a Readiness Assessment Program (RAP) that establishes standards and assesses task force operations, logistics and management readiness. A continuing investment in both physical and human resources is required to maintain AZ-TF1 in a state of operational readiness.

2-1. Objective 2.1 – Recruitment and Retention of Trained Members

A process is required to foster and enhance programs to recruit and retain personnel, and promote the health and safety of skilled and motivated task force members.

I. Strategy 2.1.1

Succession planning to recruit qualified task force personnel, including difficult-to-fill specialist positions such as Canine Search Teams, Physicians, and Structural Specialists.

A. Performance Measure 2.1.1.1

Develop successful techniques and best practices for recruiting personnel, including those needed for difficult-to-fill positions.

Timeline: Quarterly

B. Performance Measure 2.1.1.2

Implement successful strategies and best practices for recruiting purposes and for sustaining canine deployments, including passing qualification tests. Historically, the deployable life of a canine is considerably shorter than the deployable life of its handler.

Timeline: Quarterly

II. Strategy 2.1.2

Retain qualified personnel, including those preparing for roles as leaders and subject matter experts, to serve as members of Incident Support Teams, Operations Work Groups, and instructors.

A. Performance Measure 2.1.2.1

Develop successful techniques and implement best practices to develop leaders, instructors and specialists.

Timeline: Quarterly

B. Performance Measure 2.1.2.2

The task force's succession plan is to develop a process for identifying and developing individuals with the potential to fill key leadership positions.

Timeline: Quarterly

2-2. Objective 2.2 – Safety During Training, Exercises, and Disaster

I. Strategy 2.2.1

Ensure task force members' health and safety during and after training, exercises, and disaster deployments through comprehensive hazard assessments, personal protective equipment (PPE), and decontamination policies and procedures.

Timeline: Weekly and as required

A. Performance Measure 2.2.2.1

AZ-TF1, in conjunction with the Phoenix Fire Department Health Center, should review and update health and safety protocols for task force members including pre-deployment and post-deployment medical screening.

Timeline: Annually and as required

2-3. Objective 2.3 – Adequate, Sustainable Equipment Cache

A standardized FEMA/US&R equipment cache list provides inherent advantages in terms of training, interoperability, resource sharing, and mission readiness.

AZ-TF1 currently has two equipment caches that are transported by various fleet resources. The original cache (also called the first cache or old cache) was accumulated between 1990 and 2005 and is comprised of rescue, technical, communications, planning, medical, and logistics equipment. After 9/11, additional SAR specialty caches were added for operations involving HAZMAT/CBRNE and water safety. During 2005-2007, an additional cache (also known as the 2nd cache or new cache) was acquired by FEMA and distributed to US&R system task forces.

Historically, task forces have been permitted to utilize Readiness Cooperative Agreement funds to purchase and maintain transportation resources. However, in 2004-2005 each task force was provided with Federal funding specifically to acquire a more standardized transportation fleet, including prime movers, trailers, box trucks, and support/command vehicles sufficient to transport a Type I equipment cache and associated personnel. As requirements change the convoy plan should be re-examined and modified.

Furthermore, the current convoy plan does not include all of the support entities that accompany a task force cache, and with the addition of the water operations component, the development of an updated convoy standard is required.

I. Strategy 2.3.1

A. Performance Measure 2.3.1.1

Consult with the FEMA Work Groups to analyze and determine equipment needs and impacts through a mission gap analysis to ensure fiscal responsibility and member safety.

Timeline: Quarterly

B. Performance Measure 2.3.1.2

Consult with the FEMA Work Groups to evaluate the current equipment cache, support needs, and update the US&R system convoy plan, with consideration to present and future rolling stock additions.

Timeline: Annually

C. Performance Measure 2.3.1.3

Review each task force discipline's equipment needs with the goal of reducing duplication and overall cache size.

Timeline: 4th Quarter CY2017

II. Strategy 2.3.2

Most of the items in the equipment cache are consumable. These items are routinely replaced when they break, wear out, or are depleted. However, some items such as transportation resources, radios, shelter systems, atmospheric monitoring equipment, self-contained breathing apparatus, and defibrillators are capital assets. Capital assets have a higher unit cost, longer useful lifespan, may be highly specialized, and are typically repaired rather than replaced.

During 2003-2005, one-time supplemental Federal funding was provided to acquire capital assets and the task forces must develop a replacement strategy. Due to technological obsolescence, HAZMAT/CBRNE capital assets must be replaced every five years, however there is no existing replacement plan. AZ-TF1 must develop a strategy to finance capital asset replacement in the equipment cache and transportation fleet.

A. Performance Measure 2.3.2.1

Conduct a replacement life cycle analysis (unit cost, expected life) of the current task force capital assets.

Timeline: Quarterly

B. Performance Measure 2.3.2.2

Based on this replacement life cycle analysis, AZ-TF1 will work with the US&R program office to determine strategies to finance replacement of these capital assets.

Timeline: Annually

III. Strategy 2.3.3

Adequate Warehouse Resources – AZ-TF1 does not currently have adequate space to securely store the fleet resources inside of the warehouse. Currently, vehicles are stored in shaded areas to prevent long term weather damage.

A. Performance Measure 2.3.4.1

Utilize and improve the current infrastructure to provide fully enclosed parking for the rolling stock.

Timeline: As funding is available

CHAPTER 3: GOAL 3 – COMMUNICATION

Effectively share and exchange information and promote awareness of current events within the National US&R Response System and AZ-TF1.

Effective communication is important for the daily operation of any organization which improves program development, performance and is essential to the task force's continued success.

3-1. Objective 3.1 – External Communications

Effective external communications are required to establish the identity of, and convey information about, the task force to individuals (e.g., other task forces, general public, etc.) who have an interest in AZ-TF1 activities. Traditional external sources such as radio and television have been replaced and transformed by the Internet and social media that create interactive communication.

I. Strategy 3.1.1

Assess the use of the Internet and social media for opportunities to make communication more effective and responsive to the general public.

A. Performance Measure 3.1.1.1

Evaluate the effectiveness of the task force website and identify improvements to enhance the shared information with interested outside parties. The task force website is underutilized and a great deal of current information on the task force is outdated. The task force website should provide information of general interest to the public, as well as providing a means for interactive communication with members having protected access.

Timeline: End of 4th quarter 2017

3-2. Objective 3.2 – Internal Communications

During day-to-day operations, effective information dissemination ensures that task force members receive the latest data and changes related to US&R management and policy. In addition, provide SAR operational concepts, training, and equipment, which promotes interoperability within the US&R Response System and improves overall operational performance.

I. Strategy 3.2.1

AZ-TF1 should continuously assess methods to improve and expedite communications within the task force.

A. Performance Measure 3.2.1.1

Transmit current event information, upcoming training opportunities, and US&R System activities.

Timeline: Quarterly, as required

B. Performance Measure 3.2.1.2

Evaluate emerging technologies and develop a method of informal task force communication.

Timeline: Quarterly, as required

II. Strategy 3.2.2

Collaborate between the various AZ-TF1 position specific Leads, C&GS, program staff, Work Group/IST members, and TFR to maintain open communication and share valuable program information.

A. Performance Measure 3.2.2.1

Conduct quarterly meetings or conference calls to facilitate communication across the task force.

Timeline: Quarterly

B. Performance Measure 3.2.2.2

Schedule annual Sponsoring Agency Chief, TFR, and Program Manager meetings to share information and perspectives to review and revise this Strategic Plan.

Timeline: Annual

CHAPTER 4: GOAL 4 – COLLABORATION

Build strong partnerships across the emergency response community to share knowledge, collaborate and enhance response capabilities.

During disaster response and operations, it will be necessary for AZ-TF1 to interact with a wide range of Federal, state, and regional partners. In certain situations, interaction may result in joint SAR operations with non-Federal task forces, such as state US&R resources or the Department of Defense. In other circumstances, that interaction may be with an agency that provides specialized support, such as geospatial mapping or force protection. In anticipation of this interaction, AZ-TF1 should seek collaboration with these groups to develop SAR concepts of operation, conduct joint training and field exercises, and become familiar with the capabilities and assets of these partners.

4-1. Objective 4.1 – Building Response Partnerships

The levels of collaboration in SAR and support operations continue to evolve as synergistic capabilities are recognized, developed, and expanded at all levels throughout the entire emergency response community.

I. Strategy 4.1.1

Expand relationships with Federal, state, and regional partners such as the Arizona National Guard, Luke Air Force Base, Arizona Department of Emergency Management, and Arizona Department of Homeland Security, to strengthen integration of response and on-scene coordination during disasters.

A. Performance Measure 4.1.1.1

Proactively engage with Federal, state, and regional partners at all levels (including public and private agencies, organizations, voluntary associations, trade groups, and professional associations) to strengthen local capacity for search and rescue operations. Appropriate partners should be invited to participate in SAR-related training and exercises.

Timeline: Quarterly

B. Performance Measure 4.1.1.2

AZ-TF1, in conjunction with Arizona Department of Emergency Management (ADEM), should explore the idea of creating a State Urban Search & Rescue (SUSAR) task force to respond to large-scale emergency incidents that occur within the State of Arizona. Currently, the only available statewide emergency response resource is the Phoenix Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) Regional Rapid Response Task Force (RRTF). The RRTF has limited SAR capabilities as compared to AZ-TF1.

Timeline: Ongoing