

**N**

**Functional Annex –  
Mass Fatality Management**

Final (March 3, 2025)

This page left blank intentionally

# Table of Contents

- 1. Purpose.....6**
- 2. Situations and Assumptions.....6**
  - 2.1 Situation .....6
  - 2.2 Assumptions.....7
- 3. Authorities.....7**
  - 3.1 Federal .....7
  - 3.2 State.....8
  - 3.3 Local.....8
  - 3.4 Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) ..8
- 4. Concepts of Operations.....8**
  - 4.1 Definitions .....8
  - 4.2 Activation & Notification.....9
    - 4.2.1 Mass Fatality Incident Criteria – Activation Triggers 9
    - 4.2.2 Activation Procedure.....9
  - 4.3 Incident Command Organization ..... 10
    - 4.3.1 Command..... 10
    - 4.3.2 Planning..... 11
    - 4.3.3 Operations..... 11
    - 4.3.4 Logistics..... 12
    - 4.3.5 Finance..... 13
  - 4.4 Coordination..... 13
  - 4.5 Communications..... 14
    - 4.5.1 Communication Between Responders..... 14
    - 4.5.2 Investigative Reporting..... 14
    - 4.5.3 Communication with Families of Deceased..... 14
    - 4.5.4 Communication with the Public and Media..... 14
    - 4.5.5 Messaging Sequence..... 15
  - 4.6 Specific Mass Fatality Response Considerations..... 15
    - 4.6.1 Temporary Interment..... 15
    - 4.6.2 Post-Incident Death Processing 15
  - 4.7 Responder Mental Health..... 16
  - 4.8 Available Resources..... 16
    - 4.8.1 Local Assets..... 16
    - 4.8.2 Regional Assets..... 19
    - 4.8.3 State Assets..... 19

4.8.4 Federal Assets..... 20

4.9 Demobilization.....21

    4.9.1 Incident Site .....22

    4.9.2 Morgue.....22

    4.9.3 Family Assistance Center.....22

**5. Organization and Assignment of Responsibility            22**

5.1 Task Assignments.....22

    5.1.1 County..... 22

    5.1.2 Cities and Special Districts.....25

    5.1.3 State Government.....26

    5.1.4 Support Agencies.....26

    5.1.5 Federal Government.....26

**6. Administration.....27**

**7. References and Supplemental Documents.....27**

7.1 References.....27

7.2 Supplemental Documents .....27

    7.2.1 Attachments.....27

    7.2.2 Appendices..... 28

This page left blank intentionally

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this annex is to outline the means, organization, and process by which Washington County will respond to a mass fatality incident (MFI). This plan addresses a broad spectrum of mass fatality management (MFM) issues including: scene to EOC coordination, specialized equipment needs, information sharing with impacted families, and demobilization guidelines. This plan can also be utilized to manage cemetery repatriation following large-scale disruption to cemetery grounds. It is applicable to Washington County and jurisdictions within Washington County participating in the plan.

This plan can be activated in parts or in whole following an incident resulting in fatalities that exceed the normal operating capacity of the responding agencies within the geographic boundaries of Washington County. This plan applies to all local officials, departments, and agencies in that area.

## 2. Situations and Assumptions

### 2.1 Situation

- A mass fatality incident may occur anywhere within Washington County as the result of a natural, accidental, or intentional incident.
- A mass fatality incident may be a standalone incident or part of a larger response.
- A mass fatality incident is not solely defined by the number of fatalities; other factors include the condition of remains, accessibility of the scene, complexity of recovery, and resources available for response. Additionally, the event may involve one or more of the following complications in terms of scene safety and management, victim identification, and management of human remains:
  - Biological, infectious, chemical, radiological or toxic agent exposure events resulting in contamination of the scene, victims and/or human remains
  - Bombing or high-energy explosive events or transportation accidents resulting in burned or fragmented human remains.
  - Weather conditions and loss of critical infrastructure resulting in delays securing human remains.
- Mass fatality incidents have the potential to quickly overwhelm the resources of a medical examiner's operation depending on the capacity of the facility and the number of fatalities. The Washington County Medical Examiner's Office (MEO) currently (2024) consists of one Chief Medicolegal Death Investigator, five full time Medicolegal Death Investigators (MDI) who are available 24 hours a day, one part time MDI, a full-time program specialist, and one program supervisor.
- Mass fatality incident response will require significant logistical resources and coordination with local agencies and organizations; the Washington County MEO will be expected to retain control and authority over fatality management, even when the response is supported by regional, state, or federal assets.

- Victim identification is a lengthy process that requires accuracy and attention to detail to ensure that each victim is correctly identified.

## 2.2 Assumptions

This plan is based upon the following assumptions:

- An information management system will be an essential component of mass fatality management. The system should have the capacity to track the movement and storage of victims and manage data needed to accomplish identification and disposition.
- All efforts will be made to ensure interment of deceased individuals meets the next of kin's requirements and adhere to the individual's cultural requirements.
- Temporary interment, although a last resort, will likely be implemented in the event of catastrophic incidents with vast numbers of fatalities or when the surrounding infrastructure is severely compromised.
- Catastrophic incidents will likely involve implementation of alternate standards of death care regarding the processing and identification of victims.
- Incidents resulting from an act of terrorism will involve the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as the lead investigative agency and will require close cooperation and coordination with local authorities.
- Mass fatality incidents will draw attention from media and curious bystanders. These events will demand extensive public information and support.
- Family members and friends will make numerous calls and inquiries to authorities regarding their loved ones – approximately 100 inquires per number of victims – during the course of the incident.
- Families will press for the quick identification and release of their family members; identification expectations must be managed early in the response.
- Family members and close friends of decedents will require a secure location to give and receive accurate, timely, and credible information; a Family Assistance Center (FAC) will provide for these needs.
- The County MEO will have a limited number of available resources to assist in the FAC.
- Many of the specialized positions on-site, in the morgue, and at the Family Assistance Center (FAC) will be filled by external agencies.

## 3. Authorities

### 3.1 Federal

- Aviation Disaster Family Assistance Act of 1996
- Foreign Air Carrier Family Support Act of 1997

- Rail Passenger Disaster Family Assistance Act of 2008
- National Response Framework (NRF), Emergency Support Function 8 (ESF-8)

### 3.2 State

- [ORS Chapter 146](#) Investigations of Deaths, Injuries and Missing Persons
- [ORS 146](#) Defines the duties and responsibilities of the State Medical Examiner (ME)
- [ORS 97](#) Directs the disposition of human remains
- [ORS 692](#) Oversight for funeral service practitioners, embalmers, cemetery and crematorium operators
- [ORS 433.449](#) Defines the role of the State ME during a public health emergency with mass fatalities
- [ORS 146.090](#) Deaths requiring investigation

### 3.3 Local

- Refer to the 2024 Washington County Emergency Operations Plan for local authorities.

### 3.4 Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)

The HIPAA Privacy Rule that restricts disclosure of patient information is not suspended during emergency response because of an MFI.

However, providers can share information during emergencies in order to identify, locate, and notify family members, guardians, or anyone else responsible for the individual's care. That includes providing the individual's location, general condition, or notification of death.

Providers are also permitted to share information with disaster relief organizations without obtaining the patient's permission if not doing so would interfere with the organization's ability to respond to the emergency. The disaster relief organizations are not inhibited by the HIPAA Privacy Rule and can therefore share patient information if necessary.

More detailed information regarding HIPAA compliance during emergency situations can be found at: <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/disclosures-in-emergency-situations/index.html>

## 4. Concepts of Operations

### 4.1 Definitions

- **Cemetery Repatriation:** Liquefaction has been known to compromise cemeteries by unearthing caskets and causing them to float away. Recovering caskets, identifying the casketed remains, re-casketing, and returning the remains to their rightful resting place is commonly referred to as casket repatriation.
- **Complicated fatality:** a fatality which involves one or more of the following: a CBRNE element, extensive search and recovery operations, possibility of mixed remains,



existence of limited/unidentifiable remains, and/or investigation of the single fatality that takes multiple hours to complete by one person.

- **Decedent:** A deceased individual
- **Decedent storage:** a secured, refrigerated, forensically appropriate storage and does not involve interment.
- **Human remains:** bodies and body parts that are recovered and examined after an incident
- **Interment/Temporary Interment:** The placement of a corpse in a grave. Temporary interment is short term storage of a body, usually in through mass burial, until permanent interment can occur.
- **Standard fatality:** a fatality whose circumstances fall within normal bounds for county medical examiners

## 4.2 Activation & Notification

### 4.2.1 Mass Fatality Incident Criteria – Activation Triggers

Any incident consistent with one or more of the following criteria may require the activation of this plan or portions of this plan:

- Any incident with four or more complicated fatalities or 10 or more standard fatalities.
- Any incident involving a protracted or complex decedent recovery operation.
- Any situation in which there are remains contaminated by chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or explosive agents or materials.
- Any situation in which there are more decedents than can be recovered and examined by the Washington County MEO or their associated resources within a reasonable timeframe.
- Any incident or other special circumstance requiring a multi-agency or regional response to support MFM operations.

### 4.2.2 Activation Procedure

The Washington County MEO will be notified of an incident, through routine channels of communication, by the Sheriff's Office, and/or other local law enforcement departments.

Upon notification of a mass fatality incident, the County MEO will immediately notify the Oregon State Medical Examiner, Washington County Department of Health and Human Services, Oregon Health Authority (OHA), and the District Attorney's Office. Upon arrival at the incident site, County MEO will:

- Contact the on-scene Incident Commander (IC) and establish Unified Command
- Conduct an initial size up to determine what level of activation is required
- Establish initial operational requirements for the site, morgue, and/or Family Assistance Center

- Establish an on-scene location to manage investigation activities and temporary morgue consistent with State-level OM-FIT and national D-MORT operational standards.
- Request OM-FIT activation as quickly as possible, if necessary.
  - On-scene Medical Examiner, in consultation with other experts and incident leaders, will determine if D-MORT activation is necessary, and request it as quickly as possible.

The Washington County MEO will evaluate the site for the following information:

- Potential or actual number of fatalities
- Condition of human remains
- Size and accessibility of the incident site
- Level of difficulty in recovery
- Possible chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or high-energy explosive (CBRNE) hazards
- Forensic evidence requirements

Any time the MFM Plan is activated, the Washington County EOC will be activated. See the EOP Basic Plan for details on activation levels.

A member of the County MEO will report to the EOC as the Fatality Management Liaison. This individual will communicate with on-scene responders to determine and report:

- Type and number of personnel and equipment needed for human remains search and rescue, recovery, and transportation
- Location of temporary morgue (if needed) and type and number of personnel and equipment needed for processing and identification of human remains

### **4.3 Incident Command Organization**

On-scene Incident Command, the County EOC, and the city EOC will have shared incident responsibilities. See Attachment 1 for options on organizational charts of on-scene operations and EOC operations.

#### **4.3.1 Command**

On-scene operations will be managed through a Unified Command of Law Enforcement, Fire, and Medical Examiner Office.

City and County EOCs will be managed by an EOC Incident Commander. For the County EOC, the incident commander will be a high-level employee from the department most aligned with the incident. For example, if the incident is solely mass fatality focused or is part of a Public Health related emergency, the Incident Commander will be staffed with a Health and Human Services employee. If mass fatality is part of a larger incident response, the Incident Commander may be staffed through the Sheriff's Office, Land Use and Transportation, or Emergency Management.

For incidents that are Mass Fatality focused, the County EOC's Command group will include a Fatality Management Liaison who is responsible for:

- Consistently communicating with, coordinating with, and supporting the ME's Incident Site Unified Commander
- Coordinating death investigation procedures and progress, and
- Coordinating with FAC group supervisor (if activated) on FAC operations.

For larger events where mass fatality management is one aspect of response, this liaison will sit within the Operations Section.

### **4.3.2 Planning**

Planning Sections may be active on scene, in the County EOC and/or City EOC.

The Planning Section on scene will focus on incident action planning, situation and resource status; and mapping of site layout;

The Planning Section in the City and/or County EOC will focus on gathering and maintaining situational awareness across Washington County response agencies, mapping of countywide response operations, maintaining status of deployed resources to the Family Assistance Center, and advanced planning, especially for events where mass fatality is part of a larger response.

### **4.3.3 Operations**

On-scene Operations Section may include:

- Fatality management site operations
- Scene security
- Incident investigation
- Fire and hazmat response
- Morgue operations

Fatality management site operations group will expand to support the level of identified or assumed deceased and may include:

- Victim identification
- Human remains (HR) recovery
- Human Remains Transport Unit
- Personal effects collection and management

The Morgue Operations branch will expand to support the level of identified or assumed deceased and may include:

- Human remains admitting and processing
- Forensics Unit

- Disposition

Detailed lists and procedures for on scene operations, including fatality management site operations are found in Appendix 1. More information on the various roles and responsibilities of Morgue operations are found in Appendix 2.

FAC operations, covered in detail in Appendix 3, will be managed out of the Family Assistance Branch in the County EOC.

#### **4.3.4 Logistics**

Significant resources will be required at the incident site, morgue, and Family Assistance Center. The Logistics Sections on scene and in the County EOC and/or City EOC are responsible for acquiring, managing, and demobilizing resources necessary for response.

Resources at the incident site may include but are not limited to:

- search and rescue vehicles and equipment capable of coping with the incident environment,
- personal protective equipment (PPE) for responders,
- cadaver dogs,
- communications equipment,
- global positioning systems (GPS),
- body bags,
- vehicles for body transport,
- drinking water, and
- food.

If an incident requires decontamination of human remains, additional and specialized equipment will be needed. These resources will be requested/sourced through the on-scene Logistics Section.

Resources for morgue operations may include but are not limited to:

- electricity, running water, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, lighting,
- temporary storage,
- medical equipment, expendable medical supplies, PPE,
- computer hardware and software,
- view blocking barriers, and
- biohazard waste containers.

These resources will be requested/sourced through the on-scene Logistics Section. If the on-scene Logistics Section has difficulty acquiring these items, the MEO's Incident Site Unified Commander will work through the Fatality Management Liaison and County or city EOC logistics section.

Resources for the Family Assistance Center may include but are not limited to:

- communications systems (telephone, radio, public address system, and internet access),
- computer hardware and software,
- furniture (desks, chairs, sofas, etc.),
- paper goods (cups, tissues, etc.),
- food (meals and snacks),
- copy machines and paper,
- general office supplies,
- signage, and
- badging.

These resources will be requested/sourced through the County or city EOC Logistics Section.

#### **4.3.5 Finance**

Each responding agency is responsible for tracking their own costs and submitting it to the Finance Section. Finance is responsible for creating and communicating incident-specific cost codes, tracking purchases, preventing duplication of purchases, maintaining accurate records of purchases, monitoring personnel time recordkeeping, overseeing financial input for demobilization procedures, and ensuring documentation is consistent with state or federal reimbursement standards. Any deficiencies in financial documentation and accountability in response to a mass fatality incident could jeopardize funding streams for reimbursement.

#### **4.4 Coordination**

During initial response to the scene - including site size up and security, emergency medical response, fire suppression, hazmat response, and initial decedent operations - very little information will be received by the city or County. As operations stabilize, situational status will be reported:

- To the Fatality Management Liaison by the ME Incident Unified Commander
- To an agency DOC or City EOC by Law Enforcement or Fire Incident Unified Commander

The County EOC will release an incident communications plan, host regular coordination calls, and utilize Liaison Officers to support coordination within the response.

The County EOC will remain in regular contact with Oregon Department of Emergency Management, Oregon Health Authority, and Oregon State Police to provide situational awareness and request support as needed.

For events that require federal agency involvement, the responding agencies will determine who is responsible for coordinating and communicating with each involved federal agency.

## **4.5 Communications**

### **4.5.1 Communication Between Responders**

Responding agencies will follow their normal communications protocols. Given the complexity and number of agencies involved in a mass fatality response, there are likely to be agencies that cannot communicate directly with each other. The Communications Unit Leader at the County EOC or on scene can assist in resolving any communications issues and relay information between agencies if necessary. The responsible agency will utilize alternate communication methods (i.e. email, WebEOC, amateur radio) to provide updates to the EOC in the event of outages in everyday communication systems. More information regarding communications interoperability can be found in Annex D Communications.

### **4.5.2 Investigative Reporting**

Medicolegal Death Investigators will utilize standard communication tools to report the incident and establish a case number. Frequent reports should be issued during response to provide information on the known or approximate number of fatalities, victim identification, and actual/confirmed number of fatalities. If standard communication tools are offline, these reports will be filed using the Rapid Access Information Line (RAIL) system, a radio communication system that provides backup communication support in the morgue.

### **4.5.3 Communication with Families of Deceased**

Private briefings for families and friends will be held on a regularly scheduled basis at the FAC to report on the progress of recovery efforts, identification of victims, the investigation, site visits and memorial services (if appropriate), return of personal effects, and a description of other services available at the FAC. These briefings should begin within 24 hours of FAC operations activation. Briefings should be held even if there is no new information to report. Greater detail regarding family briefing procedures can be found in Appendix 3: Family Assistance Center Operations Guide.

### **4.5.4 Communication with the Public and Media**

Information reported to the general public may include but is not limited to:

- details about the incident,
- search and recovery efforts and expectations,
- phone numbers and websites for missing person reporting,
- reunifications efforts,
- volunteer opportunities, and
- donations.

The MEO will not provide information about victims to the public or media. Though HIPPA rules may be more flexible in an emergency, personal information will remain protected and will not be shared with the media. The State Medical Examiner's Public Information Officer has final say over what information is shared.

A large media presence is expected at the incident site. On-scene Public Information Officers (PIO) will work quickly to establish a media staging location away from response operations. On-scene PIOs will be part of the Countywide joint information system (JIS) and work closely with County and State PIOs to ensure coordination and approval of messages and talking points, reduce misinformation, and protect personal information.

#### **4.5.5 Messaging Sequence**

It is imperative that critical information regarding the event (i.e.: details of the investigation, progress of recovery efforts, identification of victims, etc.) is shared in this order:

1. Fatality management responders
2. Victim family members and friends (i.e. FAC patrons) at briefings
3. General public and media

Families must receive information from responders prior to the media. This is essential to the success of the response.

### **4.6 Specific Mass Fatality Response Considerations**

#### **4.6.1 Temporary Interment**

Temporary interments are a last resort and may not be a necessary precaution in response to large numbers of fatalities from a catastrophic incident. However, pandemic, CBRNE, and/or catastrophic earthquake incidents may produce fatalities of a magnitude that makes it impossible to complete identification before interment is required.

Temporary interment may also be necessary when infrastructure is severely compromised. The location of a temporary interment site should be chosen carefully and addressed in concert with the Board of County Commissioners.

Based on the extent of the incident and the status of transportation within the county, body collection points may be necessary to collect and move the deceased to interment locations more strategically. Locations for Body Collection Points will include cold storage and Conex Containers if available.

Specific guidelines for mass interment are detailed in Appendix B of Department of Defense Joint Publication 4-06, June 2006.

#### **4.6.2 Post-Incident Death Processing**

MFI victims who die hours, days, or even weeks after the incident should be processed as part of the MFI response if their death was a direct result of injury or medical conditions resulting from the incident. These bodies fall under the Medical Examiner's jurisdiction and will be numbered in accordance with the MFI numbering system.

Post-incident deaths are usually witnessed by family or may even occur under medical care at a medical facility. These remains should be transported to the MFI morgue and processed. If a family attempts to deliver a deceased family member to a hospital or funeral home, they should be diverted to the morgue or a designated body collection point. Arrangements can be made with the Human Remains Transportation Team to receive and transport the remains.

## **4.7 Responder Mental Health**

Acknowledging and supporting responder mental health will be critical during response to a Mass Fatality Incident. On-scene responders will be faced with potentially gruesome images and situations. Family Assistance Center responders and volunteers may experience compassion fatigue and secondary trauma while supporting family members of the deceased. EOC responders will deal with long hours, high pressure, and potentially secondary trauma and compassion fatigue. Responder mental health support should begin immediately during response and continue after response has ended.

During response, mental health support will be available for responders. On-scene, fire or law enforcement agencies may staff a chaplain or behavioral health specialist and may offer critical incident stress debriefings at the end of shifts.

A Behavioral Health Monitor position will be staffed in the County EOC to help recognize the signs of compassion fatigue and burnout, direct to resources, and provide guidance on methods for maintaining mental resiliency.

After response, responders should be directed to their Employee Assistance Program to continue receiving support. Agencies should provide Critical Incident Stress Debriefing opportunities, like the Washington County Sheriff's Office's Critical Incident Protocol.

## **4.8 Available Resources**

Regional, state, and/or federal assistance may be required past available local assets to provide adequate resources to manage an MFI. Requests for these resources must be coordinated through the County EOC.

### **4.8.1 Local Assets**

Locally, Washington County has access to a wide variety of subject matter experts and response teams to support response to and cleanup of a mass fatality incident. Many of the resources rely on similar staffing and equipment, so activation of resources will be dependent on availability of staff and equipment. Assets include, but are not limited to:

#### **4.8.1.1 Incident Management Team**

Team members deploy various special team vehicles to an incident and provide operational, logistical, and planning support on tactical callouts, major crime team callouts, agency requests, and community events. Team members have been trained in the Incident Command System and the National Incident Management System.

#### **4.8.1.2 Forensic Science Unit**

Comprised of a group of highly trained crime scene investigators who use a variety of specialized technical skills, chemicals, tools, equipment, and software to forensically



detect, enhance, identify, preserve, collect, and analyze physical evidence from crime scenes. FSU staff receive specialized training in the recovery of human remains in different states of decay and environments (i.e., clandestine burials, scattered, burned, disarticulated, etc). Analysts within the unit are further qualified as Latent Print Examiners with access to local, regional, and national Automated Biometric Identification Systems.

#### **4.8.1.3 Mobile Field Force**

The Mobile Field Force team responds to incidents that may threaten the security of facilities, transportation, and communications systems throughout the county. They deploy during riots or political demonstrations to contain those involved to designated areas and ensure those not involved are able to enter or exit surrounding areas without being harmed.

#### **4.8.1.4 Search and Rescue**

Specially trained group of volunteers able to support Search and Rescue missions for lost people, downed aircraft, and evidence in major crimes.

#### **4.8.1.5 Canine (K-9) Team**

The Canine Team consists of dogs paired with patrol or corrections handlers, each trained in tracking or narcotics detection, or dual certified in both disciplines.

#### **4.8.1.6 Air Support**

The Air Support Unit operates a fixed-wing aircraft equipped with communications and surveillance equipment including a FLIR (forward-looking infrared camera). The airplane is capable of loitering over crime scenes providing recorded aerial video or still photos, quickly transporting individuals during natural disasters when land-based routes are closed, and discretely surveilling vehicles or persons during high-risk investigations. The aircraft has a range of 500 miles or time aloft of 5 hours before refueling.

#### **4.8.1.7 Remote Operated Vehicle Team**

A group of professionals who assist various interagency teams and investigative groups in the Washington County area by deploying and operating remotely controlled robots, small unmanned aircraft systems (sUAS), and other specialized equipment.

#### **4.8.1.8 Community Violence Reduction Team**

The Washington County Community Violence Reduction Team is a proactive investigative unit comprised of investigators and crime analysts from various local and federal law enforcement agencies. This team investigates violent incidents and criminal organizations responsible for violent crimes, particularly those involving the use of firearms.

#### **4.8.1.9 Tactical Negotiations Team**

Housed within the Sheriff's Office, this is a group of highly trained individuals who respond to critical incidents and use negotiation skills to resolve them peacefully. They are equipped with specialized tools and techniques to de-escalate dangerous situations.

**4.8.1.10 Crisis Negotiation Unit**

Members respond to support first responders in resolving crisis incidents. Responsibilities may include communicating with suicidal persons, barricaded suspects, high risk search warrant services, and other tactical incidents. Members may also be assigned to gather intelligence information to support negotiations.

**4.8.1.11 Digital Forensics Laboratory**

Comprised of a group of investigators who use a variety of highly specialized software and technical skills to forensically analyze computers and other digital / data storage devices such as smart phones, tablets, storage devices/ drives, and cloud computing systems and applications.

**4.8.1.12 Property & Evidence Unit**

Civilian Evidence Officers are responsible for the preservation, destruction, and release of items of evidence, found property and property held for “safekeeping” placed in their care. Evidence Officers are trained in storage techniques to ensure that the integrity of evidence is maintained.

**4.8.1.13 Crash Accident Reconstruction Team**

A group of specialized professionals who investigate the scene of a vehicle collision, analyzing physical evidence like skid marks, impact points, and vehicle damage to determine the sequence of events leading up to the crash.

**4.8.1.14 Major Crimes Team**

The Washington County Major Crimes Team is comprised of detectives from law enforcement agencies throughout the county and is coordinated by the Washington County District Attorney’s Office. The team responds to major crimes that occur in Washington County.

**4.8.1.15 Arson Investigators**

Arson Investigators are responsible for examining fire scenes to determine whether a fire was accidental, natural, incendiary, or undetermined. This role requires a combination of investigative skills, fire science knowledge, and forensic analysis to collect and interpret evidence, identify the cause of fires, and support legal action when necessary. Arson Investigators work with deputy fire marshals, and prosecutors to ensure that fire-related crimes are thoroughly investigated and prosecuted.

**4.8.1.16 Westside Interagency Narcotics (WIN)**

A task force comprised of personnel from the Beaverton and Hillsboro Police Departments, Washington County Sheriff’s Office, Oregon National Guard Counter-Drug Program, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) who’s mission is to target all drug traffickers in and around the Washington County area and provide continued training in the areas of illegal drug laboratory activity and recognition, basic drug identification, and the symptoms of its use.

#### **4.8.1.17 HazMat Team**

Hazardous Materials (HazMat) response for Washington County is provided by Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue (TVFR), designated as a State of Oregon Regional Response Team. The team staffs 7-8 HazMat Technicians daily and specializes in addressing chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear incidents. They offer expertise in hazardous substance identification, air monitoring, sampling, containment, and decontamination. Equipped with advanced technology and extensive training, the HazMat Team is prepared to mitigate complex hazardous materials incidents.

#### **4.8.2 Regional Assets**

Washington County may request resources and staff from other counties within the Portland Metro Region. Washington County will work with regional partners first to meet a resource need. If the resource request cannot be met through local and regional assets, Washington County EOC will request it from the State of Oregon.

#### **4.8.3 State Assets**

Requests for state assistance for local mass fatality incident response must be processed through the County EOC. The County Emergency Manager, or EOC if activated, is responsible for making resource requests to the State. Specific resources by category, kind, and type, including size, capacity, capability, skill, and other characteristics must be requested through current resource request processes.

##### **4.8.3.1 Oregon Mass Fatality Incident Team (OM-FIT)**

Washington County participates in the statewide mutual aid group, OM-FIT. This team can provide trained mortuary services employees and medicolegal death investigators.

##### **4.8.3.2 Oregon State Medical Examiner / Oregon State Police**

The Oregon State Medical Examiner is housed within the Oregon State Police. The State Medical Examiner can support Mass Fatality operations as a subject matter expert and decision maker. The office has access to a mobile morgue to help identify decedents and reunite them with their families as soon as possible.

##### **4.8.3.3 Oregon Health Authority (OHA)**

Oregon Health Authority can provide health and medical related resources and support. OHA can provide staff for response including but not limited to: EOC staff, on-scene support, radiological experts, and family assistance center general and specialized staff.

##### **4.8.3.4 Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS)**

The Office of Resilience and Emergency Management (OREM) within ODHS can provide support, supplies, and staff for a Family Assistance Center. The County EOC will work closely with OREM, as the state lead for ESF-6 Mass Care, to operate an effective Family Assistance Center.

##### **4.8.3.5 Oregon Mortuary and Cemetery Board (OMCB)**

The OMCB is a professional organization made up of multiple individuals that work in different aspects of the death care industry. They exist to inform and educate the

cemeteries, cremationists, funeral directors, suppliers, the public, and government of the industry's needs. During response, the OMCB may provide specialized staff, evaluate operations, and/or support information sharing.

#### **4.8.3.6 Oregon Department of Emergency Management (ODEM)**

Oregon Department of Emergency Management can coordinate resources and services from state and federal agencies and support situational awareness.

#### **4.8.3.7 Oregon National Guard (ORNG)**

The Fatality Search and Recovery Team (FSRT) within the Oregon Air National Guard is a team trained to assist with search and recovery efforts including identification, processing, documentation, and transportation of remains. FSRT members are also trained to respond to Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) events as part of CBRN Enhanced Response Force Package. Missions are directed by the Commander-in-Chief of the Oregon Military Forces (Governor of Oregon) and commanded by the Oregon Adjutant General.

#### **4.8.3.8 Oregon Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (ORVOAD)**

The Oregon Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster is a state organization that assists in providing volunteers and support services in emergency response. ORVOAD can provide survivor and family support, food for responders, and mental health and chaplaincy care. Local community based and faith-based organization within Washington County may also be able to provide these resources and services.

### **4.8.4 Federal Assets**

Federal entities may have direct or indirect responsibilities for mass fatality incidents that occur locally. Their response role may be direct management and coordination of the response or a supporting role to local authorities. Federal assistance may be predicated upon a federal emergency declaration.

#### **4.8.4.1 National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB)**

The National Transportation Safety Board has authority for investigating all public transportation fatalities including civil aviation, railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline accidents in the United States. In the absence of suspected criminal activity, NTSB is the lead investigative agency for transportation incidents. The Aviation Disaster Family Assistance Act of 1996 mandates transportation carriers meet the needs of aviation disaster victims and their families. These needs include victim identification, providing a Family Assistance Center, and crisis counseling.

#### **4.8.4.2 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**

Federal resources for MFI response are within the control of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Their MFI resources, both equipment and manpower, are in the Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team (DMORT). Equipment resources include three portable morgues, one of which is located in California. DMORT teams are located throughout the U.S. and each team has SMEs

for every discipline of morgue operations. Members are fully credentialed and accredited by HHS and are recognized as having appropriate training and experience in MFI operations. County response will prioritize requesting DMORT assistance quickly when needed because in-house and in-state staffing will quickly limit response capabilities. Oregon is located in DMORT Region X.

#### **4.8.4.3 National Guard Bureau (Title 32 Forces)**

The National Guard Bureau's Air National Guard maintains a Fatality Search and Recovery Team (FSRT) capable of recovering decedents from contaminated field settings under the authority, direction, and supervision of the local medicolegal death investigating authority. This capability is part of the NGB CBRNE Enhanced Response Force Package and can be activated as either a state (Title 32) or federal (Title 10) asset and can be used to support civilian MFI response.

#### **4.8.4.4 Department of Defense (DoD; Title 10 Forces)**

Title 10 Forces refers to Active Component soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines. Under routine circumstances these resources *cannot* be used for civil support. However, Title 10 Forces may be called upon as part of a DoD activation of its Joint Task Force-Civil Support in response to a CBRNE incident due to weapons of mass destruction. DoD Directive 1300.22, Mortuary Affairs Policy, requires a Title 10 mortuary affairs force structure capable of providing support for search, recovery identification, evacuation, and, when required, temporary interment, disinterment, decontamination, and re-interment of (among others) U.S. noncombatants.

#### **4.8.4.5 Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)**

The FBI is the lead federal investigative agency for any mass fatality incident resulting from or suspected of resulting from domestic terrorism or other criminal acts. More detailed information regarding the management of terrorism incidents is found in the County EOP, Annex V.

#### **4.8.4.6 Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF)**

The ATF also participates in conducting investigations involving acts of arson and bombings, illegal use of firearms and explosives, and acts of terrorism.

### **4.9 Demobilization**

The demobilization process will be coordinated between on-scene unified command, the City EOC and the County EOC to ensure re-assignment of resources if necessary and to prioritize critical resource needs during demobilization. Within the ICS structure, the responsibility for demobilization falls upon the Planning Section.

Demobilization of the active response sites can occur at various times during response if the site is no longer needed to support operations. The following guidelines can be used to determine if a location is ready for demobilization.

#### 4.9.1 Incident Site

- All human remains (HR) and personal effects (PE) have been located and removed from the site
- The agencies responsible for investigation have released their control of the site
- All HAZMAT issues have been addressed
- The Sheriff's Office's standard Incident Management team process has thresholds for demobilizing incident scenes and can be utilized to help make this decision

#### 4.9.2 Morgue

- Individual Subject Matter Expert(s) (SME) requirements are completed and approved for dismissal by the Washington County MEO authority
- All HR have been recovered from the site and processed through the morgue to the degree that ongoing operations can take place at the Washington County MEO
- Identification processes have concluded to the degree that ongoing operations can take place at the Washington County MEO
- Temporary storage issues for HR have been addressed
- Release of identifiable HR has been accomplished
- Disposition of unidentified HR has been addressed

#### 4.9.3 Family Assistance Center

- Daily briefings are no longer needed
- Rescue, recovery, investigations, and identification issues have decreased to the degree that ongoing operations can take place at the Washington County MEO
- Memorial services have been arranged for family and friends
- Provision for the return of personal effects has been arranged
- Ongoing case management and/or a hotline number has been established (if needed)

The Family Assistance Center, City EOC, and/or County EOC may shift to disaster recovery operations instead of demobilizing completely. See in Washington County's Local Disaster Recovery Framework for more information.

## 5. Organization and Assignment of Responsibility

### 5.1 Task Assignments

#### 5.1.1 County

- The County MEO is responsible for identifying victims or determining the cause or manner of death during an MFI.

- The County will activate an EOC to handle: Countywide situation status including briefing policy makers, family assistance center activation and operation, Joint Information System management, resource sourcing support, and community services coordination and provisioning.
- Based on the scope of the situation, Washington County could declare a local emergency.

#### 5.1.1.1 County Administrator

- Lead the County Policy Group to coordinate administrative policies, priorities, and public messages.
- Direct partial or full activation of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
- Coordinate with the leaders of other jurisdictions regarding policies, priorities, and messaging.

#### 5.1.1.2 Washington County Emergency Management and EOC

- Activation
  - Activate EOC
  - Staff EOC as appropriate
  - Request personnel and/or equipment as needed
  - Communicate MFM operational activities to assisting and cooperating agencies.
- Response Operations
  - Staff EOC
  - Coordinate resource and information support for MFM operations
  - Develop daily situation reports for use by responder personnel and local officials and for family briefings
  - Manage asset requests
  - Provide the necessary communications hardware and technology needed to effectively manage an MFI. These items may include:
    - Voice and data connectivity to support MFM operations
    - Technical support for MFI-related call centers
    - Information Technology (IT) infrastructure to support antemortem and postmortem data collection systems
    - Interoperability between MFI branches and the Washington County Sheriff's Office, local fire departments, Washington County Search and Rescue, etc.
  - Manage the Joint Information System

- Coordinate with local community-based organizations and service providers to support community needs
- Demobilization
  - Terminate EOC operations, when appropriate
  - Continue coordination with city, county, state, federal agencies
  - Notify PIO/JIC of demobilization timeline as soon as possible
  - Notify all response agencies of demobilization timeline and strategy
  - Conduct transition meeting with federal support agencies
  - Coordinate After Action Review (AAR) process with all necessary participants
  - Arrange facility and asset demobilization
  - Manage recovery operations

#### **5.1.1.3 Washington County Health and Human Services**

- Provide staff to the EOC (examples include Incident Commander, Fatality Management Liaison, Family Assistance Center Branch Director, Behavioral Health Monitor, Public Information Officer, and other positions as needed)
- Determine Family Assistance Center (FAC) location and needs as part of EOC's Family Assistance Center Branch
- Open and manage the Family Assistance Center (working in partnership with state and regional agencies and organizations like the Red Cross)
- Organize critical incident stress debriefing for responders

#### **5.1.1.4 Washington County Medical Examiner's Office**

- On-scene
  - Assess incident site
  - Begin formulating investigative approach in concert with agency or the agencies that have investigative interest in the event
  - Act as Unified Commander with Law Enforcement and Fire
  - Identify and communicate MFM response needs
  - Formulate MFM incident objectives
  - Coordinate victim recovery process in concert with other necessary agencies
  - Coordinate long-term operations for identification and storage
  - Assess operations that can be accomplished with routine procedures in house
- County Offices/EOC



- Provide subject matter expertise as needed/requested to Incident Commander, Operations Section (including Family Assistance Center Branch and FAC operations), and/or Public Information Officers
- Communicate resource requests to EOC Logistics
- Coordinate long-term operations for identification and storage
- Identify MFM activities that can be accomplished in house with routine procedures

#### **5.1.1.5 Law Enforcement**

- Activation
  - Serve as initial on-scene Incident Commander, if applicable
  - Serve as part of on-scene Unified Command, if applicable
  - Establish security protocols and perimeters for incident site, morgue, and Family Assistance Center
  - Formulate investigative approach in concert with Washington County MEO
- Operations
  - Serve in Unified Command
  - Update Incident Command/Planning Section Chief daily with a situation report
  - Maintain incident site and control access
  - Coordinate security in/around morgue from media, bystanders, general public, families, etc.
  - Secure FAC from media, bystanders, general public, etc.
  - Collect evidence from site and morgue triage station
  - Preserve evidence and establish chain of custody

#### **5.1.2 Cities and Special Districts**

- City agencies and special districts have no responsibility for identifying victims or determining the cause or manner of death but may have resources available to assist the County ME in these tasks.
- City police will be responsible for investigation of criminal acts and city fire department/district personnel will investigate for fire cause.
- City agencies may open an EOC to assist with situational awareness, resource sourcing and tracking, and FAC activations and operations, etc.
- Following activation of this plan, cities or special districts may transfer Incident Command responsibilities to a more appropriate agency (e.g., County or State Medical Examiner, Health and Human Services, Law Enforcement, Public Works, etc.) or activate a Unified Command

- Fire agency personnel may or may not maintain a presence on scene to assist the ME in handling the mortuary process after completing fire suppression and hazmat operations

### 5.1.3 State Government

- The State ME may respond to an incident site at the request of the County ME to assist with on-scene operations. Other state agencies may be involved in the investigation of suspicious deaths and fire cause (i.e., those involving criminal acts, fires, industrial accidents).
- The State ME retains sole rights and authority for discussing the deceased with the media including, but not limited to official body counts, number of deceased identified, number still unidentified, issues of commingled remains, etc.
- Oregon Department of Transportation may manage traffic flow on state roads around incident if applicable.
- ODHS Office of Resilience and Emergency Management and OHA will support FAC operations

### 5.1.4 Support Agencies

- The Oregon Funeral Directors' Association, in conjunction with its national organization, may provide resources to assist during local mass-fatality incidents. Acquisition of these resources does not require an emergency declaration.
- The American Red Cross and The Salvation Army are both available to assist the County in organizing the feeding, housing, and other support functions for emergency workers. In addition, both organizations are available to help the County establish Family Assistance Centers.
- The Red Cross has been specifically designated by the Federal Government, in the Aviation Disaster Family Assistance Act of 1996, to be the lead agency for family care and mental health during aviation-related mass-fatality incidents.

### 5.1.5 Federal Government

- The federal government is automatically involved and in charge of mass fatality incidents when they are transportation or terrorist based.
- The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) may help as part of the Aviation Disaster Family Assistance Act of 1996.
- In a presidentially declared disaster, the federal government may aid state and local governments in a mass-fatality incident under Emergency Support Function #8 (Health & Medical Services) of the Federal Response Plan.
- National Disaster Mortuary Teams (a part of the National Disaster Medical System) may be dispatched to the scene of an incident to support state and local governments during declared emergencies involving mass fatalities. The teams will assist in the identification of victims, determination of cause of death, and disposition of remains.
- Other federal agencies may be involved in the investigation of suspicious deaths.

## 6. Administration

Plan Management:

- The Mass Fatalities Plan will be co-administered by the County Medical Examiner's Office with support from the Washington County Department of Health and Human Services.
- The ME on a biennial basis will initiate review of this Plan and its associated protocols.

## 7. References and Supplemental Documents

### 7.1 References

- A. ORS 146 - Investigations of Deaths, Injuries, and Missing Persons: [https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills\\_laws/ors/ors146.html](https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills_laws/ors/ors146.html)
- B. Oregon Funeral Directors' Association Disaster Mortuary Plan
- C. Aviation Disaster Family Assistance Act of 1996: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/104th-congress/house-bill/3923/text>
- D. Washington County Notification Form
- E. Management of Dead Bodies after Disasters: A field Manual for First Responders: [https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/assets/files/other/icrc\\_002\\_0880.pdf](https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/assets/files/other/icrc_002_0880.pdf)
- F. Pan America Health Organization, Infectious Disease Risks from Dead Bodies Following Natural Disasters: <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/infectious-disease-risks-dead-bodies-following-natural-disasters>
- G. DoD Joint Publication 4-06 Mortuary Affairs in Joint Operations: <https://www.adph.org/CEP/assets/34MortuaryAff4-06.pdf>
  - Appendix B: Mass Internment: page 150
  - Appendix C: Religious Support to Mortuary Affairs: page 154
- H. MCOME Morgue Protocols: [https://cascom.army.mil/g\\_staff/g3/TTD/Products/QM-How-to-Handbook-MortuaryAffairs.pdf](https://cascom.army.mil/g_staff/g3/TTD/Products/QM-How-to-Handbook-MortuaryAffairs.pdf)
- I. DoD DNA Registry Guidelines for the Collection of Specimens Requiring DNA Analysis: <https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/550514p.pdf?ver=2019-08-12-134611-547>

### 7.2 Supplemental Documents

#### 7.2.1 Attachments

- Attachment 1: Organizational Chart Examples
- Attachment 2: Mass Fatality Incident Site Forms
  - Search and Recovery Log

- Transportation Area – Body/Body Part Log
- Transportation Area – Personal Effects Log
- Victim Report
- Staging Area Log
- Site Entry Log
- Attachment 3: Morgue Forms
  - Morgue Reception Log
  - Mortuary Process Tracking Sheet
- Attachment 4: Family Assistance Center Forms
  - FAC Registration and Assistance Form
  - Next of Kin Interview Sheet

**7.2.2 Appendices**

- Appendix 1: Mass Fatality Management Field Operating Guide
- Appendix 2: Mass Fatality Morgue Operations Guide
- Appendix 3: Family Assistance Center Operations Guide