North Gila County CERT Policies and Procedures

July 2015

GENERAL POLICIES

Direction & Control

The NGCC, Inc. (North Gila County CERT, Inc.) Executive Committee will set all policies and operational procedures. Policy
direction of CERT is influenced by the following documents:

1. All applicable State, County, and City laws with respect to emergency or disaster response and related liability protection,
2. NGCC, Inc. Bylaws,
3. Policies and procedures of Gila County, Towns of Payson, Pine & Strawberry and partnering departments.

These policies and procedures are intended to govern activities before, during and after emergencies and include training, exercises, activities, response, recovery, and meetings.

Duty to Act

As a volunteer, no CERT member has a legal duty to act and is not required to
respond to incidents in their immediate area nor to calls for team activation. However,
once they have responded, volunteers must follow directions from authorized leadership and follow safe and effective practices at all times. Volunteers who abandon their posts, act outside their training or responsibility, or otherwise violate policies or codes of conduct are subject to termination.

Insurance and Liability

CERT volunteers are required to maintain their own insurance for health to maintain membership in the organization. Volunteers are authorized to operate any motor
vehicle in carrying out their duties as CERT volunteers and are responsible for any vehicle insurance in accordance with Arizona State law.

CERT volunteers are subject to liability legislation as adopted by the State of Arizona. No liability protection exists for negligence or wanton disregard. CERT volunteers are
instructed to always remain within their scope of training, assigned responsibilities, and act as any other reasonable person would act in similar circumstances.

CERT Functions (not an all-inclusive list)
- **Major Disaster Operations - (within the limits of CERT training)**

  - Light Search and Rescue
  - Damage Assessment
  - Light Fire Suppression
  - Logistical support
  - Disaster Medical Operations
  - Communications and Coordination
  - Documentation
  - EOC staffing/Reception Area
  - Traffic and Crowd Control

North Gila County CERT Policies and Procedures

July 2015

- **Non Disaster Operations**
  - Training
  - Exercises
  - Public education & outreach
  - Assist partner organizations
  - Service and community projects

Training

The CERT Basic Training Course, as defined by FEMA curriculum, is the foundation of CERT training and the minimum requirement for membership. Additional training made available to CERT members by partner organizations is intended to increase their awareness, knowledge and abilities, but does not authorize members to work outside their role as CERT volunteers. Membership, training or experience in other organizations does not allow the volunteer to work outside the CERT mission as a CERT volunteer.

Required Training

- CERT Basic Training

  - Basic training will be provided at least twice a year based on available participants in the area.

  - The Course Manager and instructors for *CERT Basic Training* must complete *CERT Train-the-Trainer.*

    Note: Individuals who conduct only one or two of the units may do so without taking the *CERT Train-the-Trainer* course. However, they should be briefed on CERT, the *CERT Basic Training* course*,* and how the unit they are teaching fits into the course.

Recommended Training

- FEMA IS-100.b: *Introduction to Incident Command System (ICS)*

- FEMA IS-200.b: *ICS for Single Resources*

- FEMA IS-700: *National Incident Management System (NIMS) Introduction*

- FEMA IS-800.b: *National Response Framework Introduction*

- CPR/AED: Cardiopulmonary resuscitation/automated external defibrillator training

  - Note: The FEMA Independent Study courses can be completed online at http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is.

CERT Supplemental Training Modules

- *Animal Response I:* General animal behavior, disaster planning for your animals, animal issues in emergency management

- *Animal Response II:* Knowledge and skills a CERT member would need when handling and caring for animals in an emergency

- *CERT Emergency Communications:* Emergency modes and technologies, proper radio use, how a CERT member participates in Net Operations

- *CERT Traffic and Crowd Management:* Hand signals and communication skills when working with traffic and crowd situations, maintaining safety when managing traffic and crowds

- *Flood Response for CERTs:* How emergency management responds to floods, working safely around floodwaters, how to fill and move sandbags and build a sandbag barrier correctly and safely

- *CERT Tools for Leadership Success:* The characteristics and responsibilities of team leaders and team members, team interactions, leadership styles, and how to lead successfully

Other CERT Training

- **FEMA IS-317:** *Introduction to Community Emergency Response Teams*
  (**A**n introduction to CERT for anyone interested in CERT or as a refresher for current team members) is available online.

- Search and rescue tutorial on CERT Web site

Training That May Be Arranged by Local Program

Local public and private agencies may have training that, if modified, would be useful for CERT volunteers (utility companies, Humane Society, ARES/RACES [amateur radio], police departments, National Weather Service, mental health departments, and more).

EXERCISES

Just providing the initial training is not the end of the story. For skills to stay current they must be practiced. Skills can be practiced at:

- Periodic meetings of CERT members

- An annual refresher training with multiple CERTs

- Exercises of all types conducted specifically for CERT members and teams

- Large-scale municipal or regional exercises

All types of exercises will help maintain and expand CERT members' skills and team capabilities. Exercises include:

- Discussion-based exercises

  - Tabletop exercises

  - Functional exercises

- Operations-based exercises

  - Drills

  - Full-scale exercises

- Gaming exercises (e.g., "CERT rodeo")

North Gila County CERT Policies and Procedures

All Exercises should be "HSEEP Compliant". (See Appendix A)

Public Education & Outreach

CERT volunteers are an effective and informative resource in promoting emergency preparedness and public education information. CERT volunteers are encouraged to participate in events, activities and presentations sponsored by the CERT, Citizen Corps Council or partner organizations.

Equipment

All equipment, identification, and materials issued to the CERT volunteer are the property of North Gila County CERT and must be returned upon request. CERT volunteers are encouraged to supplement their equipment ensemble with items they feel are useful and appropriate. Equipment that is determined to be outside the scope-of- practice of CERT is not authorized for inclusion in the volunteer's equipment bag.

CERT volunteers are expected to maintain their equipment in proper working order and to bring the equipment to all necessary training sessions, exercises and incidents. Equipment that is lost, stolen or broken is to be reported immediately to the CERT leadership. Remnants of broken equipment should also be returned.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE POLICIES

Spontaneous Response

The Gila County CERT recognizes that a volunteer may find themselves suddenly involved in an emergency that happens in their home, neighborhood, workplace or immediate area, or they may come upon an emergency in the course of normal activities. In such spontaneous incidents, CERT volunteers:

- o should ensure that emergency response authorities have been contacted with accurate information,
- o identify themselves as a CERT volunteer to 911 operators and emergency responders when appropriate,
- o may render assistance within their current training and abilities,
- o shall relinquish command of the scene to proper authorities upon their arrival and may render assistance as requested by officials in authority.

Inappropriate Self-Deployment

CERT volunteers are prohibited from self-deploying to routine emergencies in which they are not immediately involved nor requested. Such inappropriate self-deployment is a barrier to proper emergency response and may result in immediate suspension and/or termination.

North Gila County CERT Policies and Procedures

Activation

CERT volunteers may often be notified before specific response needs are determined. This is to enable local authorities the opportunity to assess the resources available, stage and deploy these resources. The North Gila County CERT recognizes three levels of activation to be made by the authorizing authority.

Level 1- Advance Notice

This level requires no immediate response action by CERT volunteers. This is an advisory that CERT team leaders have been notified of an emergency management activity which may require CERT assistance. Team leaders will give their members a "heads-up" notice via phone or email and determine the status of all volunteers as "available" or "unavailable". This information will be forwarded to the authorizing authority contact or notifying official as soon as possible.

Level 2 - Alert /Prepare/Standby

CERT team leaders and volunteers are to prepare for full deployment within 2 to 4 hours and will remain on standby until notified as an assignment. Upon Level 2 or Standby notification, CERT leaders will contact their volunteers via phone or email to advise them of the pending situation and determine their availability and status. Team leaders will report the status of their team members (who are ready to respond) to the appropriate contact or notifying official as soon as possible. Personal equipment and supplies, vehicles and kits of food, water and clothing should be checked, assembled and packed for deployment.

Level 3 - Immediate Deployment

Immediate deployment is authorized for CERT volunteers to proceed without delay to their normal assembly point or other area as designated by the authorizing authority. Team leaders will notify all volunteers on their team to deploy and provide a status report of member's availability back to the appropriate contactor notifying official as soon as possible. Once the team is operational and on-scene, the team leader will notify the appropriate contact or notifying official with an updated status and await further instructions.

Team Activation Process and Deployment Protocols

1. Team leaders will be notified by an authorizing authority to activate their team to Level 1, 2 or 3. If it is not possible for authorizing authority to contact the team leader, the team leader can activate their team to Level 1 (be aware and stand ready to deploy as directed)
2. Team leader notifies each team member via phone call out tree to meet at their designated meeting location or staging area or the incident scene depending on the situation.
3. City and County map coordinates will be used to determine location of emergency scene or incident.

4. Based on NIMS training, the first CERT members on scene will select the "on-scene" team leader.
5. Teams do not leave the staging area until adequate resources (personnel and equipment) are assembled.
6. Establish communications with all team members and the authorizing authority.
7. Always utilize established protocols and checklists during activation.

NIMS and CERT

All CERT activities will follow the principles of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Incident Command System (ICS). CERT volunteers will report to the designate authorizing authority upon arrival and await assignment. All operations will fall within the established command structure. CERT volunteers will report, prior to departure, for demobilization following their assignments. When working with authorized responders, CERT volunteers will fall into the ICS system as requested by the Incident Command.

On-Scene CERT Management

If a team is deployed and their "primary" team leader and co-leader are not available on scene, the on scene CERT Responders will select an "on-scene" leader and co-leader with the following responsibilities:

On-Scene Leader Duties (unless otherwise delegated), reference Field Operations Guide

- Conduct response planning activities.
- Act as the single point of contact for all communications and coordination between their team members and the Incident Commander first responders. Size-up situation with assistance from team members and report status to Incident Commander.
- Determine capabilities and limitations of CERT volunteers on scene.
- Organize team and assign tasks to individual team members as they arrive at staging area.
- Align resources and response activities with Incident Commander.
- Establish demobilization procedures.
- Conduct post-incident debriefing for their team.
- Establish on-scene radio communications capabilities.
- Check availability of individual member's equipment.
- Determine location of team equipment and deploy to scene.
- Conduct needs assessment for logistics support.
- Act as team Safety Officer.
- Collect "Accountability badges" from each team member as they arrive on scene and ensure they are returned when member leaves the scene.
- Maintain personnel logs (member's time in, assignment and time out of scene) and other resource documentation as required.
- Ensure all members have a "buddy" assigned.

- Resource management of team member - rotate and replace personnel.

Safety

The safety of responders and the general public are of primary importance and all CERT activities must first ensure that additional injuries are avoided. Volunteers shall report all unsafe situations, activities, or practices immediately and take appropriate protective action for themselves and bystanders.

Reporting injuries and Accidents

Any activated CERT member who suffers or witnesses an injury while performing an assigned task shall immediately report it to the Incident Command through ICS/Team Leader.

Restricted Activities

Many CERT members have skills beyond what is taught through the CERT program (e.g. medical and health professionals, heavy equipment operators, etc.). While these skills may be helpful during an emergency or disaster, and can be utilized in other programs, they are outside of the CERT scope-of-practice and are not authorized activities as a CERT volunteer.

Other unauthorized activities include:
- Possession or use of a firearm
- Inappropriate self-deployment to routine emergencies

Volunteers found working outside of their CERT mission or engaging in restricted activities or otherwise acting contrary to the code of conduct are subject to immediate removal from the incident and termination.

Communications

CERT volunteers are encouraged to utilize effective communications procedures, including the use of Cell Phones, issued radios or FRS handheld radios, for ensuring proper communications between team members and with local responders.

Documentation

CERT team leaders should maintain the following documentation:
- Current team member contact numbers
- Preliminary Damage Assessment Form
- Communication Log & Message Forms
- Personnel Accountability
- Medical/Triage Log
- ICS Logs and Forms

Credentialing & Identification

Vests and ID badges are means of readily identifying CERT volunteers. As with all other

issued equipment, these credentialing accountability tags are property of the NGCC, Inc. The following policies apply to all current and future credentialing systems used by the CERT.

During Spontaneous Response
Members are encouraged to wear their vest and other identification as a means of ready identification whenever they act as a CERT volunteer, and when such identification is readily available. Wearing the vest and presenting the ID to responders will help ensure responders are aware of your presence on scene.

During Official Activation
- CERT Responders are required to present current ID badges to their team leader or incident command when responding to an incident.
- Official CERT vests shall be worn during all CERT activations/events for ready identification during deployments. Helmets are considered protective equipment and are mandatory, along with other protective apparel, in any disaster scene/hazard area.
- During official activation, personnel must were CERT logo apparel

Members may not wear CERT uniform items (vest/helmet) or display CERT identification badges unless performing in an official capacity (training, events, deployments, etc.)

CERT Logo apparel (hats, shirts, jackets, etc.) issued to CERT members are considered official uniform items and may be worn in day to day use. CERT members are encouraged to remember their surroundings and not wear the CERT Logo apparel in places that might bring discredit to the CERT organization.

RESIGNATIONS and TERMINATIONS

- **VOLUNTARY-**-any member may be terminated by voluntary resignation.

- **TERMINATION**

    o Any member may be removed from membership in the organization for cause. Cause shall include, but is not limited to:

        ▪ Committing any act which is deemed detrimental to the organization

        ▪ Violation of NGCC, Inc bylaws, or violation of Gila County Sheriff's Office General Orders

        ▪ Inappropriate self-deployment

        ▪ Failure to follow established safety procedures

- Participation in unauthorized or unlawful activities

- Action contrary to the code of conduct

- Failure to follow instructions of authorized personnel

   o The concerned member may appear at a hearing before the Board of Directors to state his/her case, after which the Board, in executive session, shall vote on the termination.

   o The Gila County Sheriff's Office shall be made aware of all information relating to the termination as well as the recommendation of the Board. Final disposition shall be at the discretion of this agency without appeal.

- **CLAIMS AND LIABILITIES**--Termination of any member shall not preclude any claim or right which the NGCC, Inc. may have against the member, until the indebtedness to the organization is paid in full and the obligation for the return of CERT **property has been fully discharged.**

  Charges may be filed by the Sheriff's Office if all NGCC, Inc property (badges, I.D. card, patches, radio, etc.) are not returned within ten days of termination.

North Gila County CERT Policies and Procedures

July 2015

Appendix A

What Does It Means to Be "HSEEP Compliant"?

HSEEP compliance involves four steps:

1. Development and maintenance of an annual Training and Exercise Plan Workshop (T&EPW) and Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan, to include use of the National Exercise Schedule (NEXS)
2. Planning and designing exercises in accordance with HSEEP Volumes I-IV, to include the development of documentation and following of planning timelines
3. Development and submission of an After-Action Report (AAR)
4. Implementation of action items identified in the Improvement Plan

These four steps are cyclical and lead to the successful implementation of a self-sustaining exercise program. Below is an overview of tasks that must be accomplished for an entity to be HSEEP compliant.

Training and Exercise Plan Workshop (T&EPW)

Every State and Urban Area must conduct an Exercise Plan Workshop each calendar year. As a result of the T&EPW, each State or Urban Area will develop/update its Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan. The Training and Exercise Plan will include the State or Urban Area's training and exercise priorities (based on the homeland security strategy and previous year improvement plans), associated training and exercise capabilities, and a multi-year training and exercise schedule. The schedule should reflect all exercises that are being conducted throughout the State, not just those that are sponsored by Preparedness Directorate. The new Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan must be submitted to Preparedness Directorate within 60 days of the workshop.

All exercises included in the Training and Exercise Plan must be entered through the NEXS system. This list must be updated at least quarterly to reflect schedule changes. States are responsible for ensuring all exercises are placed on the schedule; this includes exercises conducted using Preparedness Directorate-approved direct support.

Exercises

The scenarios used in Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP)-funded exercises must focus on validating existing capabilities (e.g., training, equipment, plans) and must be large enough in scope and size to exercise several tasks and involve multiple jurisdictions and disciplines. Exercise scenarios should be based on the State or Urban Area Homeland Security Strategy, including threat and vulnerability assessments. The type of exercise selected should be based on the Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan. Exercises must be capability and performance based. Every State and Urban Area is required to follow HSEEP Volumes I-IV for the development of exercise documentation. Exercises should adhere to HSEEP planning timelines. Exercises must be National Incident Management System (NIMS)-compliant, as outlined in the

"State and Territorial Compliance Activities: Federal Fiscal Year 2006" and "Tribal Government and Local Jurisdiction Compliance Activities: Federal Fiscal Year 2006" documents

North Gila County CERT Policies and Procedures

July 2015

After-Action Reporting

After-Action Reports (AARs)/Improvement Plans created for exercises are required to comply with the guidance set forth in the HSEEP Volumes and to use the report template provided. AARs/Improvement Plans must be based on information gathered through Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEGs) found in the HSEEP Volume IV Library. States and Urban Areas must conduct an After-Action Conference, in which key personnel and the Exercise Planning Team are presented with findings and recommendations from the draft AAR/Improvement Plan. AARs/Improvement Plans must be provided to Preparedness Directorate within 60 days of each exercise. The AARs/Improvement Plans should be submitted via the HSEEP Web page.

Improvement Planning

Improvement Plans must include input from the affected jurisdictions, usually captured at the After-Action Conference. Action items for inclusion in the Improvement Plan must include the following characteristics:

- They must be measurable.
- They must have a deadline.
- They must have a designated lead (either by name or by agency).
- They must be tracked to completion.

From FEMA, Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program Web site
(About HSEEP, Frequently Asked Questions)
https://hseep.dhs.gov/pages/1001_HSEEP5.aspx#q14