



# STATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (SERT) MEMBER SELECTION AND ROLES

## Emergency Management Officers (EMOs)

**What is an EMO?**

EMOs act as the primary liaison between their agency and the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA) to communicate and coordinate emergency management activities. EMOs have a lead role in ensuring their agency's compliance with emergency management preparedness requirements and readiness to respond to emergencies and disasters.

EMO Preparedness Duties:

- Channeling information from HI-EMA about plans, training opportunities, exercises and coordinating the department's participation.
- Ensuring primary and alternate representatives are assigned to all State Emergency Support Functions (SESFs) for which the department is a Primary or Support Agency.
- Understanding the state's emergency plans and organization and maintaining integrated departmental level plans.

EMO Response Duties:

- Serving as a bridge between the department and the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC), providing "need to know" information from the SEOC to department personnel.
- Sharing updates on the department's progress towards incident objectives and assignments with the SEOC via WebEOC.
- Providing oversight of the department's overall efforts to support from a Department Operations Center (DOC) or other central location.
- Ensuring the department's SESF representatives are activated.
- Coordinating with the department's SESF representatives to fulfill requests from the SEOC.

**How many EMOs do I need?**

Each department must assign 1 primary EMO and 2 alternates. Departments with attached agencies should decide if the attached agency needs its own EMOs. Considerations for appointing a separate EMO from an attached agency include:

- The attached agency has a significant role in emergency plans.
- The attached agency is fairly autonomous, and the department's EMO would not be able to speak to available resources, staff, plans or operations.
- During emergencies the attached agency coordinates its emergency operations independently from the department (e.g. does not operate from the Department Operations Center (DOC)).

**What criteria should I use to select an EMO?**

- Possesses a big picture understanding of the agency's structure, resources and capabilities
- Has authorization to speak on behalf of the department
- Demonstrates effective managerial, coordination and communication skills
- Accessible by phone after hours, able to respond on short notice and work extended hours
- Able to work well in stressful and chaotic environments

**What equipment is required?**

EMOs must be accessible after-hours. It is strongly recommended that EMOs be issued a state mobile device and laptop by their department to ensure they are reachable during an incident and can operate remotely, if needed.

## State Emergency Support Function (SESF) Representatives

<b>What are SESFs?</b>	<p>SESFs are groupings of agencies from the state, private and non-profit sectors into the key functional areas most frequently needed to provide state support during disasters or emergencies. SESFs facilitate planning and response among entities that may not work together closely during day-to-day operations but need to quickly coordinate and share resources during an emergency.</p>
<b>What is an SESF Primary Agency?</b>	<p>Primary agencies are responsible for coordinating SESF preparedness and response activities. Primary Agencies have significant authorities, roles, resources or capabilities for activities that are within the scope of the SESF. Primary Agency duties are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serving as the principal contact for HI-EMA on issues related to the SESF.</li> <li>• Providing leadership, expertise and resources to support mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery activities related to the SESF.</li> <li>• Overseeing development of plans and procedures required to execute SESF responsibilities.</li> <li>• Ensuring SESF agencies maintain operational readiness by having primary and alternate SESF representatives assigned who have completed required HI-EMA training.</li> <li>• Coordinating SESF participation in relevant exercises and meetings and implementing corrective actions identified in After-Action Reports from exercises or real-world events.</li> <li>• Sending staff to the State Emergency Operations Center and other incident sites, if requested.</li> <li>• Orchestrating state support within their functional area by activating department resources and plans or tasking SESF Support Agencies.</li> <li>• Ensuring financial and property accountability for SESF activities.</li> <li>• Working with their EMO to promote agency awareness, education and support of SESF duties and ensure SESF responsibilities are included in the Department's Emergency Operations Plan.</li> </ul>
<b>What is an SESF Support Agency?</b>	<p>Support Agencies have specific capabilities and resources that may assist the SESF. Duties include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participating in SESF planning efforts.</li> <li>• Providing staff to the SEOC and other incident sites, if requested.</li> <li>• When activated, coordinating department resources to support SESF missions.</li> <li>• Working with their department EMO to promote awareness, education and support of SESF duties and ensure SESF responsibilities are included in the department's Emergency Operations Plan.</li> </ul>
<b>How many SESF reps do I assign?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two (2) representatives must be identified for each SESF the department is assigned. The same representatives cannot be assigned to more than one SESF and cannot be the same as the EMO.</li> </ul>
<b>What criteria should I use to select SESF reps?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of department's structure, capabilities and processes as they relate to the SESF.</li> <li>• Sufficient technical or programmatic expertise in the SESF functional area to inform plans and response strategies.</li> <li>• Effective planning and coordination skills and ability to work effectively across agencies.</li> <li>• Accessible by phone after hours, able to respond on short notice and work extended hours.</li> <li>• Ability to work well in stressful and chaotic environments</li> </ul>
<b>What equipment is required?</b>	<p>SESF representatives must be reachable after hours. Primary Agencies should be issued a state mobile device and laptop by their department for use when working at the SEOC or other incident sites. It is strongly recommended this equipment is also issued to Support Agency reps.</p>