

RESCUE SPECIALIST

Position Description

The Rescue Specialist is responsible for performing the rescue function of the task force incident operation. The Rescue Specialist reports directly to a Rescue Squad Officer.

Description of Duties

The Rescue Specialist is responsible for:

- Implementing technical skills and operating equipment necessary for completing the rescue portion of the action plan.
- Performing rescue operations under the direct supervision of a Rescue Squad Officer and providing periodic progress reports as needed.
- Applying appropriate US&R tactics and techniques such as rope rescue operations, confined space rescue, shoring and stabilization, breaching, trench rescue, heavy rigging, heavy lifting operations, victim packaging, and extrication
- The safe and effective operation and routine field maintenance of rescue tools and equipment
- Adhering to all safety procedures
- Accountability, maintenance, and minor repairs for all issued equipment
- Performing additional tasks or duties as assigned during a mission

Position Requirements and Criteria

Individuals who meet the following requirements and criteria will be eligible to become Rescue Specialists in the FEMA US&R Response System. The intent of these requirements is to select personnel fully capable of providing the rescue tactics and techniques required in the urban disaster environment. The requirements and criteria for the position are identified in the following categories:

Knowledge

Skills

Abilities

Knowledge

1. Must have successfully completed the First Responder Operations Level for Hazardous Materials as per OSHA Standard 29 CFR 1910.120 Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response
2. Current in a State-sanctioned Emergency Medical Technician - Basic certification or equivalent

3. Knowledge of safety considerations during US&R operations, including the possibility and consequences of earthquake aftershocks and factors contributing to soil and structural instability

4. Basic understanding of heavy equipment and rigging operations and capabilities per Structural Collapse Technician course:

- Understanding of standard terminology
- Basic understanding of the capabilities and limitations of various cranes
- Knowledge of hazards and safety precautions during crane operations
- Basic knowledge of rigging techniques and equipment (chains, blocks, harnesses, cable, etc.).
- Basic knowledge and application of related construction equipment in support of US&R operations (loaders, conveyors, dump trucks, and backhoes)

5. Basic understanding in search unit strategy, tactics, techniques, and equipment (Structural Collapse Technician course):

- Understanding of search terminology
- Basic understanding of the use, capabilities, and limitations of a canine/handler team
- Basic understanding of canine search procedures
- Basic understanding of the use, capabilities, and limitations of technical and electronic search devices (acoustic, sonic, seismic, fiber optic/video, etc)

6. Basic understanding of various building construction types and the associated collapse patterns of each type.

7. Must have completed the FEMA Structural Collapse Technician course with all of the prerequisites

Skills

1. Proficient in basic fire extinguishment techniques per NFPA 1001 Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications or the standards of the sponsoring agency

2. Proficient in rope rescue techniques (per NFPA 1607 Technician level):

- Familiar with rope use and maintenance per NFPA 1983 Standard on Fire Service Life Safety Rope and System Components
- Understanding of rope rescue terminology
- Proficient in set-up and use of rappelling system(s)
- Proficient in set-up and use of belay and lowering system(s)
- Proficient in set-up and use of mechanical advantage raising and tensioning system(s)
- Proficient in set-up and use of ascending system(s)
- Proficient in self-rescue technique(s)
- Proficient in patient packaging, litter rigging, and removal (including stokes and sked).
- Proficient in the set-up and use of traversing system(s)

3. Proficient in confined space rescue techniques as per the OSHA Standard 29 CFR 19 10.146 Permit Required Confined Spaces

- Understanding of the definition of a confined space
- Understanding of confined space rescue terminology
- Working knowledge of confined space hazards (physical, contaminated, and deficient atmospheres, etc.).
- Proficient in hazard control techniques (monitoring and ventilation)
- Proficient in the use of breathing apparatus systems (S.C.B.A., supplied air systems, etc.).
- Proficient in the application of entry and egress rope systems and special patient removal techniques
- Proficient in support operations (lighting, personnel rotation, air supplies, etc)
- Proficient in the use of communications equipment for confined-space rescue

4. Proficient in shoring and stabilization techniques (per FEMA Structural Collapse Technician course):

- Understanding of shoring and stabilization terminology
- Proficient in the set-up and use of shoring equipment:
 - A. Wood
 - B. Air bags (high and low pressure)
 - C. Mechanical (screw jacks, hydraulic, pneumatic shores)
 - D. Ellis clamps
- Working knowledge of weight estimation “rules of thumb” for construction materials
- Working knowledge of utilizing of on-scene materials

5. Use of specialized extrication equipment (per manufacturers’ specifications):

Understanding of specialized extrication terminology

- Proficient in the set-up and use of:
 - A. Hydraulic tools (spreaders, cutters, rams, breaking and breaching, core drilling, etc.)
 - B.. Electric equipment (generators, lighting equipment, etc.).
 - C. Cutting tools (rotary, chain, ring and reciprocating saws, etc.).
 - D. Pneumatic tools (air chisels and hammers, etc.).
 - E. Gas operated tools.
 - F. Burning equipment (oxyacetylene, exothermic, etc.)
 - C. Hand tools.
 - H. Winching equipment
 - I. Rigging equipment
 - J. Bolting equipment
- Working knowledge of safety and routine field maintenance procedures for specialized extrication equipment

6. Proficient in rescue strategy, tactics, and operations at collapse sites (per Rescue Systems I or equivalent):

- Understanding of collapse rescue terminology
- Working knowledge in the use and application of collapse site search and hazard markings
- Ability to recognize and mitigate hazards at collapse sites
- Ability to utilize or integrate with local resources, and other US&R task forces and rescue components
- Understanding of the construction features and conditions that contribute to a high probability of victim survival in collapsed structures (stairwells, elevator shafts, hallways, basements, underground garages, voids, etc.).
- Working knowledge of the escape considerations and evacuation procedures for US&R personnel (signaling personnel control, etc)
- Ability to properly utilize equipment and tools, and apply techniques to achieve victim extrication and removal
- Understanding and working knowledge of general US&R mission operational procedures.

Abilities ([see general requirements](#))