

National US&R Response System Strategic Plan

2024-2027



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An Introduction to the National US&R Response System Strategic Plan

On behalf of the nearly 6,000 members of the National Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Response System (the System), the 2024 Strategic Group presents the System's 2024 to 2027 Strategic Plan. The System is a framework for structuring local emergency services personnel into integrated Federal response resources with the partnership of the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The 28 System Sponsoring and various Participating Agencies employ the tools, equipment, skills, techniques, and personnel necessary to maintain US&R resources. FEMA's Operations Division can deploy these resources to assist state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) governments to rescue survivors of structural collapse and wide-area disaster incidents or to assist in other search and rescue activities.

This strategic plan identifies key objectives, strategies and performance measures that branch from the FEMA Strategic Plan, utilizing momentum that was created from the 2016-2020 FEMA US&R Strategic Plan, and utilizing those elements that are incumbent to the System. Namely the ability to rely on the strengths and abilities of our members to ensure the System is continually evolving, changing, and progressing.

The strategic plan presents the System's vision for advancements in:

- Instilling equity as a tenet and component of the System
- Guiding and leading the System in climate awareness and resilience
- Advancing and sustaining a ready and prepared System

Utilizing the various partnerships and stakeholders that we frequently rely upon within the federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial governments, and agencies, we are closing perceived and realized gaps that have been identified within stakeholder, system member, and external surveys. This strategy ensures that we are in a steady state of readiness and that we are prepared, trained, and responsive to needs that are required nationally.

Implementing this strategic plan will better enable the System members to carry out the System's critical mission and serve the Nation.

Respectfully,

The Strategic Plan Ad Hoc Group

Federal Emergency Management Agency

Mission

FEMA's mission is helping people before, during and after disasters, and our core values and goals help us achieve it.

Goals



Goal 1: Instill equity as a foundation of Emergency Management

Goal 2: Lead Whole of Community in Climate Resilience



Goal 3: Promote and Sustain a Ready FEMA and Prepared Nation

Find the 2022-2026 FEMA Strategic Plan [HERE](#) or at <https://www.fema.gov/about/strategic-plan>

2024-2027 National US&R Response System Strategic Plan Overview

Vision

To deliver the most advanced urban search & rescue response capabilities to any all-hazard incident.

Mission

The Mission of the National Urban Search & Rescue (US&R) Response System (the System) is to provide specialized response, coordination, capabilities, and resources to support state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) entities during all-hazards incidents.



Building from the previous *National US&R Response System Strategic Plan* and working in conjunction to the *2022-2026 FEMA Strategic Plan*, the System is working on creating collaborative stakeholder relationships, identifying areas for improvement, anticipating future needs, and expanding upon our strengths.

The vision of the System is **to deliver the most advanced urban search & rescue response capabilities to any all-hazard incident**. This is an element that will bring all facets of our current and expanding responsibilities to the forefront of responding to national-level needs while reviewing current and anticipated changes to the operational posture and incorporating future technologies.

The Mission of the National Urban Search & Rescue Response System is to provide specialized response, coordination, capabilities, and resources to support state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) entities during all-hazards incidents. Our mission statement is what we do, and is why the System exists. This is critical to the function and needs of the Nation during any notice or no-notice incident that occurs. We are constantly reviewing how we respond and what we bring to the table for our stakeholders and continually updating what and how we do things to have the most effective urban search and rescue capability.

The *2024-2027 National US&R Response System Strategic Plan* is divided out into three primary strategic goals, and eight strategic objectives.

STRATEGIC GOALS	<p>FEMA US&R Goal 1:</p> <p>Instill Equity as a Tenet and Component of the National US&R Response System</p>	<p>FEMA US&R Goal 2:</p> <p>Guide and Lead the National US&R Response System in Climate Awareness and Resilience</p>	<p>FEMA US&R Goal 3:</p> <p>Advance and Sustain a Ready and Prepared National US&R Response System</p>
	OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Enhance and sustain current National US&R Response System resources and response capability. 1.2 Ensure a full-System approach to timely, accurate, and transparent communications. 1.3 Account for the increasing needs of System Members' Behavioral Health and Wellness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Identify, utilize, and leverage technology to identify and forecast changes in the US&R response and capability models. 2.2 Ensure the System is prepared to respond to an increasingly complex disaster environment.

Strategic Framework

The framework that the Strategic Plan is based off allows the System to fulfill its mission and strive towards its vision. One of the inherent strengths of having a Strategic Plan is that it provides both strategic direction and operational focus. This in turn allows us to be better stewards of the System's budget and continue with one direction while still being a part of 28 disparate task forces—united in direction, training, education, and equipment.

The overarching strategic goals are divided into the following three areas:

- **Instill Equity as a Tenet and Component of the National US&R Response System:** Ensuring that the System's Advisory Organization reflects the diversity of the System members. This involves cultivating an environment where diversity, equity and inclusion are valued in our decision-making process.
- **Guide and Lead the National US&R Response System in Climate Awareness and Resilience:** Ensuring that the System is prepared to face the impacts of climate change on training, equipment, and response. This is including how increasing frequency and severity of natural disasters. This includes recognizing how low-income, minority, and historically underserved populations are disproportionately affected by these extreme weather events.
- **Advance and Sustain a Ready and Prepared National US&R Response System** – The image of the System is determined by the credibility and influence we have with our stakeholders. We must fully engage our System members in the development and implementation of qualifications systems and new standards that meet the changing environment and promote the professional development of our personnel to respond to all-hazards incidents.

Conclusion

From its early beginnings and formation, the purpose of the National US&R Response System is to assist our Nation’s (and in some cases—international) local urban search and rescue resources when there is a need for help or when they become overwhelmed due to the size and scope of the response efforts. Although the System is built out of local fire agencies, law enforcement agencies, and specialized contractors that bring a large basis of understanding and large-scale incident management—it remains a resource to assist in times of need.

Deployments have become more frequent and broader in their scope and complexity. Our continued efforts in the Strategic Goals and Objectives will only help lead us forward. There are still many identified gaps and areas of concern that the System will need to continue to identify, track, and create solutions for. These elements are also many times financially based fixes, which is a continual challenge to do more with less and continue a relevant and sustainable national US&R response model. The roughly 6,000 members that comprise the National US&R Response System continue to provide their time, knowledge, expertise, and professionalism in creating a more robust and ever ready System.

We are ever grateful for the sacrifices of those that had the foresight and knowledge to create the National US&R Response System, which exists to respond when our Nation is in need. We are ever mindful for those that have passed while responding to—or because of—this important and sacred service.





2024-2027 National US&R Response System Strategic Plan