

RELATED TERMS

- Donations Coordination Center
- Long-Term Recovery Committee



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PRIMARY DISCIPLINES

- Volunteer and Donations Management
- Emergency Management

BEST PRACTICE

Volunteer and Donations Management: Donations Coordination Team

PURPOSE

Discusses the role of the Donations Coordination Team (DCT) for managing volunteers and donations during emergency response and recovery operations.

SUMMARY

The Donations Coordination Team is responsible for coordinating volunteer and donations management operations following an emergency. The DCT serves as a mechanism to coordinate efforts among the voluntary agencies, state and local governments, federal government, the media, and those in need.

DESCRIPTION

The DCT is established immediately following an emergency to coordinate volunteer and donations management functions during response and recovery efforts. The DCT consists of representatives from voluntary agencies, state and local government, and other supporting organizations within volunteer and donations management. The DCT is responsible for implementing the state volunteer and donations management plan and operating as a coordinating body for all agencies involved.

DCT Team Structure

A DCT consists of representatives from different agencies and organizations. Composition will vary according to state and the size and type of emergency. The typical DCT team members include:

- Local/state/county Donations Coordinator;
- Representatives from the local/state Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD);
- Representatives from other voluntary agencies;
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) representatives, including the regional FEMA Voluntary Agency Liaison (VAL);
- Local/state government representatives (ex. logistics, public information, communications, finance, transportation, etc.);
- Local/state emergency management agency representatives;
- Community-based organizations; and
- Local businesses and industry.

Donations Coordinator

The head of the state's lead agency for volunteer and donations management usually serves as the state's Donations Coordinator. In this capacity, he or she is responsible for establishing the DCT. In an emergency, the Donations Coordinator will activate the state

donations management plan and manage the DCT. The Donations Coordinator provides the critical leadership role of determining support requirements from other agencies and delegates responsibilities to the key players. The Donations Coordinator must also maintain a relationship between the DCT and the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC). If possible, the DCT should have a representative at the State EOC to enhance coordination.

Response and Recovery Functions

The DCT performs many critical functions during response and recovery operations.

Response functions of the DCT include:

- Acting as a liaison between donations management components;
- Managing the phone bank operations and assist the volunteers by processing offers of goods and services;
- Coordinating with agencies to determine and prioritize unmet needs;
- Communicating the community's unmet needs to the voluntary organizations;
- Working with donations management personnel to coordinate logistics, such as establishing and managing the volunteer reception center and distribution sites; and
- Helping transition the donations management efforts from the response phase to the recovery phase.

The DCT's functions during recovery operations include:

- Working with the local voluntary agencies and community organizations to shift the donations management effort to long-term recovery;
- Helping establish the Long-Term Recovery Committee;
- Ensuring that all remaining goods are distributed or disposed of before demobilizing;
- Working with the media during demobilization to provide long-term recovery information to the public; and
- Conducting a "hot wash" and produce an after-action report following demobilization.

Donations Coordination Center

The DCT operates out of the Donations Coordination Center (DCC). The Donations Coordinator should work with local businesses and government to find an area large enough to house the DCT members, support staff, and phone bank operations. If possible, the DCC should be located close to the State EOC to foster coordination between the DCT and the EOC staff. Potential DCC locations should be identified during the planning stage and included in the state donations management plan. By identifying possible sites ahead of time, the DCT operations can be established immediately after an emergency.

Supplies

The DCC must have the necessary supplies to operate effectively. The supply list will vary based on the location of the DCC and on the size of the operation. Some supplies to consider having on hand for a DCC include:

- Phones and phone lines
- Operator headsets
- Chairs
- 6-foot tables
- 4x8 foot display boards
- Copy machine and paper
- Fax machine and paper
- Laser printers and paper

- 6 computer workstations with internet hookup
- 100 state highway system maps

Location

During large-scale operations, the DCC is often located within the disaster field office so as to be close to the other emergency operations. The location will vary greatly depending on the size of operation and sites available. Emergency managers should consider choosing a location with multiple rooms, including one large room and several small rooms, so as to provide room for conference calls, training, and meetings.

Virtual Operations

In some circumstances, virtual operations are useful for coordinating member agencies of the DCT during response and recovery operations. Conference calls, websites, listservs, and emails are all convenient ways to communicate information to multiple agencies or states during a large-scale emergency. FEMA has a toll-free conferencing system that provides authorized participants a pin code to gain access to a specific call. Virtual operations are a valuable tool for sharing information among agencies and jurisdictions during a volunteer donations management operation.

Long-Term Recovery Committee

The Long-Term Recovery Committee (LTRC), also known as the “Unmet Needs Committee”, is usually formed by the DCT during demobilization and the transition from response to recovery operations. The LTRC seeks to address the long-term needs of those impacted by the disaster past the initial emergency response phase by working with donors to help rebuild victim’s lives and meet their needs. The National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster has developed [the Long-Term Recovery Manual](#) as a resource for long-term recovery operations and the establishment of LTRCs. LTRC members can include:

- Voluntary Agencies;
- City and County Emergency Management;
- Faith-Based Organizations;
- Community-Based Organizations;
- Local Businesses; and
- Human Service Agencies.

REFERENCES

- Emergency Management Institute, Federal Emergency Management Agency (<http://www.training.fema.gov/emiweb/>)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (<http://www.fema.gov>)
- National Emergency Training Center, Emergency Management Institute, Federal Emergency Management Agency, *State Donations Management Course: Student Manual and Toolbox*, February, 2003.

2004 Interstate Conference Calls

During the response to the 2004 hurricanes, representative from member agencies in Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, and Florida participated in a bi-weekly Interstate Donations Management conference call to keep each other up-to-date. Listservs and emails were also used to share information about the volunteer and donations management operation.

- National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster
(<http://www.nvoad.org>)
- Points of Light Foundation
(<http://www.pointsoflight.org>)
- Points of Light Foundation, *Managing Spontaneous Volunteers in Times of Disaster: The Synergy of Structure and Good Intentions*.
(<http://www.pointsoflight.org/downloads/pdf/programs/disaster/brochure.pdf>)
- Points of Light Foundation, *Preventing a Disaster within the Disaster: The Effective Use and Management of Unaffiliated Volunteers*
(<http://www.pointsoflight.org/downloads/pdf/programs/disaster/disasterbook.pdf>)

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