

*Kansas State Association  
of  
Fire Chiefs*



***KANSAS FIRE SERVICE  
MUTUAL AID PLAN***

**(August 13, 2012)**

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## **Purpose**

The purpose of the Kansas Fire Service Mutual Aid Plan (hereafter known as the Plan) is to provide local fire officials with easy access to vast quantities of fire service resources that may be needed in a major fire, disaster or other emergency. The Plan is based on a series of observed occurrences and shared experiences during recent disasters and major emergencies throughout the State of Kansas. It is also an evolution of our past experiences in dealing with the day-to-day incidents that continually challenge the resource management of large and small departments. Most importantly, it is a practical approach to provide any type of mutual aid resources in quantities beyond the means of any single agency.

Response capabilities across fire departments in Kansas vary widely. The local fire service agency is the first tier of defense in responding to the ravages of a disaster. No community has the resources sufficient to cope with all emergencies. Although cities and counties are expected to handle most local incidents with their own resources, the need for mutual aid is situation-specific and cannot be pre-determined. In disasters, most logistical support for an agency comes from a local Emergency Operations Center and the surrounding jurisdictions where existing mutual aid agreements fill the resource needs for an overwhelmed ESF (Emergency Support Function)

The Kansas State Association of Fire Chiefs recognized the need for a coordinated effort across Kansas and created the Plan to provide for the systematic mobilization, deployment, organization, on scene management, and demobilization of fire service resources to assist local agencies in a major fire, disaster or other major emergency.

## **Concept**

The whole concept Kansas has adopted originated out of necessity and vision that each homeland security region could provide support for those jurisdictions in the region and had previously done so in a less coordinated fashion. The idea uses a regional approach based on the development of functional response teams to locate and send resources as requested. EMS formed in 2001 as Major Emergency Response Group - EMS (MERGe) and the Fire Service formed in 2007 as Fire Operations Response Coordination (FORCe).

The original concept for the fire service was developed by the South Central Kansas homeland security region. A statewide Intrastate Mutual Aid System (IMAS) working group formed with the assistance International Association of Fire Chiefs. The working group identified the MERGe and FORCe models as solid tested systems and worked to extend these statewide. The concept with this plan has the overarching purpose of assisting Incident Commanders /Authority Having Jurisdiction (IC/AHJ) whose department(s) had encountered an event that overwhelms their capabilities and exceeds the resources or capabilities of existing mutual aid agreements within the normal operating area. The need to get immediate assistance with simple telephone call is the key to making this plan work.

The current response plans are generally modeled in a tiered approach; the initial mutual aid response is requested and coordinated in the following order:

- a. Adjoining Counties = Tier 1: FORCe participating departments in counties contiguous to the affected county, if they have the capability and agree to provide assistance;
- b. Regional Response = Tier 2: Response includes resources and support from counties throughout the region; and
- c. Multi-Regional or Statewide Response = Tier 3: Response includes mutual aid from other regional FORCe Groups in Kansas or municipalities from other states.

## **Scope**

The scope of the Plan under the mutual aid framework of the IAFC Intrastate Mutual Aid System (IMAS) is limited to the immediate and self-sustained deployments for up to 72 hours. The extension of such services and/or support of any deployed resources must be negotiated between the requesting entity and the appropriate AHJ or FORCe group.

- This plan does not replace existing written or oral automatic or local mutual aid agreements among fire departments;
- Fire departments are encouraged to continue to engage in direct mutual aid agreements with departments, municipalities or other entities.

Kansas is susceptible to natural and man-made disasters, therefore accentuating the need for this level of coordination and preparation. The effective management of emergency response personnel during the incipient stage of any major incident and throughout its extended operations will by far, have the most significant impact on life loss and the severity of injuries to the affected population. The Plan provides for the rapid activation and response of aid to a community in the event of a localized disaster. These events can include a major fire, train derailments, hazardous materials incidents, wildland fires, domestic terrorism and other events that may overwhelm the local fire department serving the community and its normal mutual aid resources. The following table indicates FEMA/DHS typed incidents where the PLAN could be used:

Type of Incident	FORCe Group Activation	Local Mutual Aid	State Assistance	Federal Assistance
Type 5 Incident		x		
Type 5 Incident (multiple)	x	x		
Type 4 Incident	x	x		
Type 3 Incident	x	x	x	x
Type 2 Incident	x	x	x	x
Type 1 Incident	x	x	x	x

The Plan will serve as the mechanism to commit local fire, EMS, and special resources to emergencies beyond the scope of their normal mutual aid systems.

## **Key Concepts of the Plan**

The Plan is directed towards enhancing the capability of the local, county, and state level of government to access available resources by:

1. Providing a simple method to immediately identify large quantities of fire, EMS and specialized personnel and resources.
2. Notify and dispatch mission ready resources without being hampered by a lengthy request process.
3. Establishing the positions, roles, and responsibilities necessary to activate and maintain this plan.
4. Complimenting other disaster plans at the local and state level.
5. Utilizing the Incident Command System (ICS) and the principles of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) which have been adopted by the State of Kansas .

## **Situation**

Mutual aid is a common and often a day-to-day practice among fire departments in Kansas. Fire departments have in place and regularly activate automatic mutual aid agreements, many of which are verbal;

- All fire departments in the State are able to request resources under the plan under the state mutual aid statues without a written agreement for participation;
- Local fire departments are the first line of defense in responding to natural and man-made fire events and retain the responsibility for managing the incident.

## **Assumptions**

- Every fire department may request resources under the plan
- Individual departments that allow resources to be deployed in the plan are considered participating departments.
- Natural disaster(s) could cause multiple catastrophic events, including fires;
- The vast majority of all fire/rescue-related incidents can be resolved locally by initial response, mutual aid among fire departments from the same jurisdiction/county;
- Actual expenses incurred by mutual aid resources activated under this Plan during the mutual aid phase of an incident are the responsibility each agency. █
- Reimbursement for direct response costs incurred in fires caused by criminal acts or accidents (such as hazardous materials spills) may be made by the responsible party;
- Fire departments and firefighters responding not-for-profit under the provisions of this plan are considered to be volunteers under the State of Kansas “Good Samaritan Law”;
- Local resources should be identified and regularly updated in the mutual aid database identified as Mutual Aid Net;
- This plan is not intended to replace or limit the affected entities’ ability to utilize contract resources;
- State resources may assist the local authority or authorities having jurisdiction, as outlined in the State Emergency Operations Plan or agency specific protocols for response without a state declaration;
- Participating departments will conduct training and engage in exercises to satisfy the needs of the Plan.
- Nothing in this plan prohibits the local jurisdiction from recovering any and all of their expenses and costs generated during the incident.

## **Training Competencies/Physical Capabilities**

All personnel responding to a plan activation shall have the requisite certification for the position they are filling. At minimum, they will have met the following minimum requirements:

- Personnel training, certifications and skills maintenance will be determined by the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ).
- The NIMS credentialing system will be the guide for credentialing personnel for FORCe Group deployment.
- Medical personnel will have appropriate State of Kansas certification

Additionally, personnel responding to a plan activation shall be in physical condition commensurate with the expected tasks to be performed and conditions to be faced.

### **Relationship with State Emergency Operations Center**

The basic concept of the Plan is the lowest level of government shall have initial responsibility for emergency response and relief, attempting to mitigate the situation with the resources available at that level. Requests for assistance from the next higher level of government will be made when the magnitude of the disaster either exceeds the resources of the local level of government or the resources needed are not available at the local level.

Each county government is to operate an emergency management agency for the purpose of coordinating disaster relief efforts in that county. Upon exhaustion of resources at the county or local area level, requests for State assistance will be made to the Kansas Department of Emergency Management Agency (KDEM). Based on this or other information, the Governor may declare a state of emergency exists, and direct state resources into the affected area.

The State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) would be activated at this time and will provide direct liaison to the County EOC regarding the coordination of state resources operating and/or responding into the affected area.

State agencies will provide resources to local government according to the functional responsibilities outlined in the state Mutual Aid Plan for each respective emergency support function (ESF). below. Each function has a designated agency that has the primary responsibility and will provide resources and leadership relating to that ESF.

### **Plan Maintenance**

Kansas State Association of Fire Chiefs Mutual Aid Plan Committee

The coordination of the Kansas Fire Service Mutual Aid Plan, including its development, revision, distribution, training and exercising is the responsibility of the Kansas State Association of Fire Chiefs (KSAFC). The KSAFC Mutual Aid Plan Committee will oversee this process. The committee will be composed of the following:

KSAFC State Plan Coordinator (Chairperson); Selected by KSAFC Executive Board  
 KSAFC Assistant State Plan Coordinator (Vice-Chairperson); Selected by KSAFC Executive Board  
 KSAFC Regional Coordinators, one representative from each of the KSAFC districts unless represented above  
 State of Kansas , Division of Emergency Management (KDEM), Response and Recovery Branch Director  
 Kansas Forest Service, Fire Management Division, one representative  
 State of Kansas , Division of State Fire Marshal's Office, one representative  
 Kansas MERGe, one representative

The State Coordinator may recommend to the President of the KSAFC that the membership of the committee be altered as deemed necessary for the success of the Plan. The President will consider and approve/disapprove all such recommendations.

### **Key Positions in the Maintenance of the Plan**

**State Plan Coordinator:** Appointed by the Executive Board of the KSAFC and is responsible for chairing and directing the Mutual Aid Plan Committee. The State Plan Coordinator shall be either an active or retired fire service official, preferably with experience in the coordination of local/regional mutual aid systems. The State Plan Coordinator shall be a member of the Kansas State Association of Fire Chiefs. The State Plan Coordinator shall recommend to the KSAFC President candidates for the positions of Assistant State Plan Coordinator. The State Plan Coordinator is

responsible for training, operational readiness and exercising of the Plan on the state level.

Assistant State Plan Coordinator: Appointed by the Executive Board of the Kansas State Association of Fire Chiefs and serves as vice-chairperson of the Mutual Aid Plan Committee. The Assistant State Plan Coordinator shall be either an active or retired fire service official, preferably with experience in the coordination of local/regional mutual aid systems. The Assistant State Plan Coordinator shall be a member of the Kansas State Association of Fire Chiefs. The position is responsible for assuming the role of Plan coordinator when necessary and fulfilling assigned duties as designated.

Regional Plan Coordinators (RPC): District representatives of the KSAFC assume this responsibility with their selection. They coordinate Plan maintenance at the regional level and verify and obtain resource inventories and contacts with the assistance of the county plan coordinators when assigned. There are eight RPC who identify an assistant RPC. The RPC is responsible for training, operational readiness, and exercising of this plan on the regional level. Upon plan activation, Regional Coordinators will be assigned to obtain resources or respond to the incident to function as plan representative to the local incident commander or assigned agency.

County Plan Coordinator (CPC): The RPC may designate CPC's to assist in managing their responsibilities in their region. This person may be a chair of a county fire chiefs organization or anyone intimately familiar with the resources in a particular county. They coordinate Plan maintenance at the county level and verify and obtain resource inventories and contacts. The CPC may also assist the RPC for training, operational readiness, and exercising of this plan on the regional level.

## **Revision Process**

August: The KSAFC Mutual Aid Plan Committee members are requested by the committee chair to solicit their respective areas for recommended revisions to the Plan. These individuals will provide written comments to the chair prior to the convening of the annual KSAFC conference.

October: At the KSAFC annual conference, the State Coordinator summarizes the recommended revisions to the Plan. The KSAFC board of directors provides preliminary direction as to the scope of the proposed changes and sends it back to the Mutual Aid Plan Committee for final draft.

January: The KSAFC Mutual Aid Plan Committee prepares a final draft of the Revised KSAFC Mutual Aid Plan for distribution to the board of directors. The board of directors will review the revisions and adopt the KSAFC Mutual Aid Plan at the March meeting.

April: The Revised KSAFC Mutual Aid Plan Committee will be distributed to all Mutual Aid Plan members and any revisions affecting training and/or operations will be incorporated into the Mutual Aid Plan training packages and distributed accordingly. The updated KSAFC Mutual Aid Plan will be posted on the Kansas State Association of Fire Chief's Association Web site.

All changes to the KSAFC Mutual Aid Plan will be documented and included in a plan revision log.

## **Activation of the Plan**

### **Request for Assistance**

When a local jurisdiction is affected by an emergency situation locally, the incident commander will initially request additional assistance by utilizing the local mutual aid system. The Plan recognizes that there are several variations of the local mutual aid systems throughout the State of Kansas. When a local jurisdiction is no longer able to obtain adequate additional assistance or specialized resources through the local mutual aid system, they may activate this plan. For immediate need responses the request may normally be made by the incident commander or his/her designee to the Central Dispatch Center (CDC) at 1-800-HELP-KS3 (1-800-435-7573). Upon the activation of the local county Emergency Operations Center (EOC), planned response requests for assistance shall be channeled from the Incident Commander to the local EOC when possible.

Upon receiving a request for assistance, the CDCenter will complete the Request for Assistance Form identifying exactly what resources are being requested, what area(s) resources have already been utilized from, the anticipated duration of the mission and nature of the mission to which those resources will be assigned. The Central Dispatch Center will then notify the appropriate FORCe or MERGe Duty Officer's who will implement the procedures outlined in their respective activation guidelines. During any major incident, inter-agency coordination is essential, especially when both Fire and EMS resources are both being requested.

When requested, KSAFC Mutual Aid Plan Committee representative(s) will staff the SEOC as required to interface between the KSAFC and the State EOC and the State Fire Marshal. Regional Coordinators will generally be responsible for this staffing.

## **Resource Inventory**

Each department will maintain an updated inventory of the equipment, vehicles and personnel which are available for response within the scope of the Plan. The participating agencies will review the resource inventory section for completion and submit to their RPC or CPC, who will gather the resource sheets and enter the information into the Mutual Aid Net database.

The Kansas State Association of Fire Chiefs has developed a method of typing resources. The list of available resources is updated regularly.

## **Completing the Resource Inventory**

Departments should include resources that are available for response to an emergency elsewhere, without reducing your own capabilities to an unacceptable level. The RCP is responsible for reviewing this information and verifying a department is not over-committing themselves.

## **Deployment of Resources**

### **Time Frame for Deployment**

**Immediate Need Response:** In many emergency situations, a more rapid deployment may be deemed necessary and authorized as a Immediate Need Response. Time frame for deployment of these missions shall be as soon as possible but preferably within thirty (30) minutes of notice from the RPC. Unless otherwise stated, the anticipated duration of the deployment will be less than 24 hours. Deployed resources shall respond to the designated Staging Area as identified by the incident commander. It is anticipated that an Immediate Need Response will peak rapidly and will terminate within a shorter time frame, thereby allowing for a shorter preparation time.

**Planned Deployment Response:** Unless specified otherwise at the time of request, the standard for a planned deployment of fire service resources shall be within three (3) hours of notice from the RPC. Unless otherwise stated, the anticipated duration of the deployment will be a maximum of 72 hours. Deployed resources shall respond to the designated Staging Area.

### **Self Dispatch**

Fire Department units and/or individuals shall not self dispatch to plan activations. To ensure proper dispatch procedures and to maintain security of the incident, a codeword shall be issued to responders. The incident codeword shall remain confidential throughout the incident. Units or individuals that can not provide the codeword shall not be deployed and will be instructed to return to their respective communities. It will be the position of the KSAFC to take aggressive action to insure that such resources are not utilized and the denial of funding or reimbursement to self dispatched units or personnel.

### **Resource Tracking**

Resource tracking begins at the time of dispatch and is recorded in the Mutual Aid Net system. Resource tracking continues at the incident following NIMS and ICS guidelines in accordance with the established incident command system. Resource tracking will end when the deployed resource is recorded as having returned to their respective home base.

## **Documentation**

Teams or vehicles which are identified by participating agencies to respond as a part of the Mutual Aid Plan are to be equipped with a mission book. Such books should include the following:

1. Copy of all ICS forms (multiple copies of ICS 214, Unit Log).
2. Emergency Contact Form.
3. Copy of all vehicle/apparatus registrations.
4. Copy of basic vehicle/apparatus inventory.
5. Copy of "Immediate Need" and "Planned Response" response guide sheets.
6. Access to a participating agency credit card to cover unanticipated en-route expenses.

Prior to responding or while en-route the officer in charge will insure completion of the ICS 214 and the Emergency Contact Form and them available to, present when arriving at Staging.

Once requested resources arrive in the designated Staging Area, it is critical that the documentation process begin. Documentation is important in order to receive funds should the incident become eligible for reimbursement at the State or Federal level. The documentation process is the responsibility of the requesting jurisdiction. The requesting jurisdiction must complete a "Deployment Form" The local jurisdiction will then forward such information to the Regional Coordinator. The Deployment Form shall contain the following information on each individual that has been deployed:

**Incident #** - to be issued by Duty Officer.

**Staging Area Location** – as set by the requesting jurisdiction.

**Date/Time Deployed** – available through Mutual Aid Net.

**Date/Time Demobilized** - to be updated as the mission is completed on Mutual Aid Net.

**Full Name** - as it would appear on payroll, social security, etc.

**Agency** - Assisting department.

**Position** - to indicate position within strike team, task force or position filled resource request. (May also indicate fire service rank)

**Unit Designation** - apparatus number/designation individual is assigned to.

**Comments** - to provide additional information such special skills.

**Emergency Contact** - the name of a family member/friend and 24-hour contact number for each team member deployed.

## **Demobilization**

Demobilization from incidents will be relayed through appropriate channels to notify home base of release of their resources. All assigned resources must follow established demobilization procedures for the incident assigned. Demobilization checklist should be completed for each unit.

## **Logistical Support**

### **Self Contained**

The logistical support of mutual aid resources is critical in the management of a emergency or disaster effort. It is believed a tiered resource response might be necessary. Logistical support will be established as soon as possible and will be maintained by the agency requesting the resources. Responding personnel should bring clothing and personal hygiene items to support up to 24 hours for an immediate and 72 hours for a planned mission. The assisting department should ensure logistical support and provide it if necessary based on the complexity of the incident.

## **Communications**

The key to the successful operation of the various resources into a region will depend heavily upon the ability of these agencies to communicate effectively among themselves. It is realistic to assume that in the wake of a major disaster, the existing communication system in the affected area will be inoperable or severely compromised. Future considerations may include disaster network communications; however at this time, it remains the responsibility of the requesting jurisdiction to make arrangements for effective communications. Plain language for all voice transmissions must be utilized. NIMS guidelines shall be used for formal and informal communications.

## **Force Protection**

Protection of responders will be coordinated with the local incident commander or ESF 16 (Law Enforcement and Security) based on the nature of the mission and extent of risk to those responders. This protection shall include but not be limited to:

- Protection of personnel and equipment while in transit
- Security at the Base of Operations
- Protection during search & rescue operations
- Protection during rescue operations

The primary mission of the force protection resources is to assess and detect hostile activity before it becomes a risk to operations. The law enforcement officer must assess, evaluate, and then advise the Leader or the senior operations officer, regarding risk associated with criminal or hostile individuals or groups.

## **Organizational Liability**

### **Workers' Compensation Coverage**

Each participating organization will be responsible for its own actions and those of its employees and volunteers and is responsible for complying with the Kansas workers' compensation laws.

### **Automobile/Vehicle Liability Coverage**

Each participating organization will be responsible for its own actions and those of its employees and volunteers and is responsible for complying with the Kansas vehicle financial responsibility laws.

### **General Liability, Public Officials, and Law Enforcement Liability**

To the extent permitted by law and without waiving sovereign immunity, each participating organization will be responsible for any and all claims, demands, suits, actions, damages, and causes for action related to or arising out of or in any way connected with its own actions, and the actions of its personnel in providing mutual aid assistance rendered or performed pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Plan.

## **Code of Conduct**

This Code of Conduct consists of the rules and standards governing the expected demeanor of members of agencies responding as part of the Plan. Each system member is both a representative of their response team and their sponsoring agency. Any violation of principles or adverse behavior demonstrated will be looked upon as unprofessional. Such behavior may discredit the good work that the resource completes and will reflect poorly on the entire team's performance and its sponsoring agency.

## **General Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the sponsoring agency to prepare its system members before deployment regarding conduct expectations. Each deployed member is bound by their sponsoring agency's rules, regulations, policies, and procedures.

It is the responsibility of the Kansas Fire Chief's Association Mutual Aid Plan Committee to reinforce the Code of Conduct during all planning sessions, team meetings and briefings and to monitor compliance. Any violations must be documented with appropriate follow up action taken by the Kansas Fire Chief's Association Mutual Aid Plan Committee and the sponsoring agency.

At no time during a mission will system members take personal advantage of any situation and/or opportunity that arises.

It is the responsibility of each system member to abide by this Code of Conduct.

### **Individual Responsibilities**

As a basic guide, system members will base all actions and decisions on the ethical, moral and legal consequences of those actions. It is in this manner that positive and beneficial outcomes will prevail in all system events. Accordingly system members will:

- Keep the value of life and welfare of the victim constantly in mind
- Remain cognizant of cultural issues including race, religion, gender and nationality
- Abide by all local law enforcement practices, including its policy regarding weapons.
- Abide by all regulations regarding the handling of sensitive information
- Follow local regulations and agency protocols regarding medical care and handling of patients and/or deceased
- Follow prescribed direction regarding dress code and personal protective equipment
- Not carry firearms
- Not be in possession of non-prescribed or illegal substances
- Will not consume alcoholic beverages while on duty or subject to call back
- Only procure equipment through appropriate channels
- Follow AHJ and federal regulations or restrictions regarding taking and showing pictures of victims or structures
- Not remove any items from an operational work site as a souvenir
- Not deface any property
- Transit only via approved roadways and not stray into restricted area
- Demonstrate proper consideration for other teams' capabilities and operation practices
- Not accept gratuities to promote cooperation

### **Reimbursement**

Agencies responding to incidents under the Plan may or may not be reimbursed for their expenses. Reimbursement may be provided by the local entity requesting assistance or by the federal government if the incident occurs on federal land, or the incident may be covered by other statutes concerning reimbursement (e.g. hazardous materials incidents). In any case, by participating in the Kansas Mutual Aid Plan, agencies assume full responsibility for tracking their costs. Furthermore, without valid documentation, no reimbursement will be made.

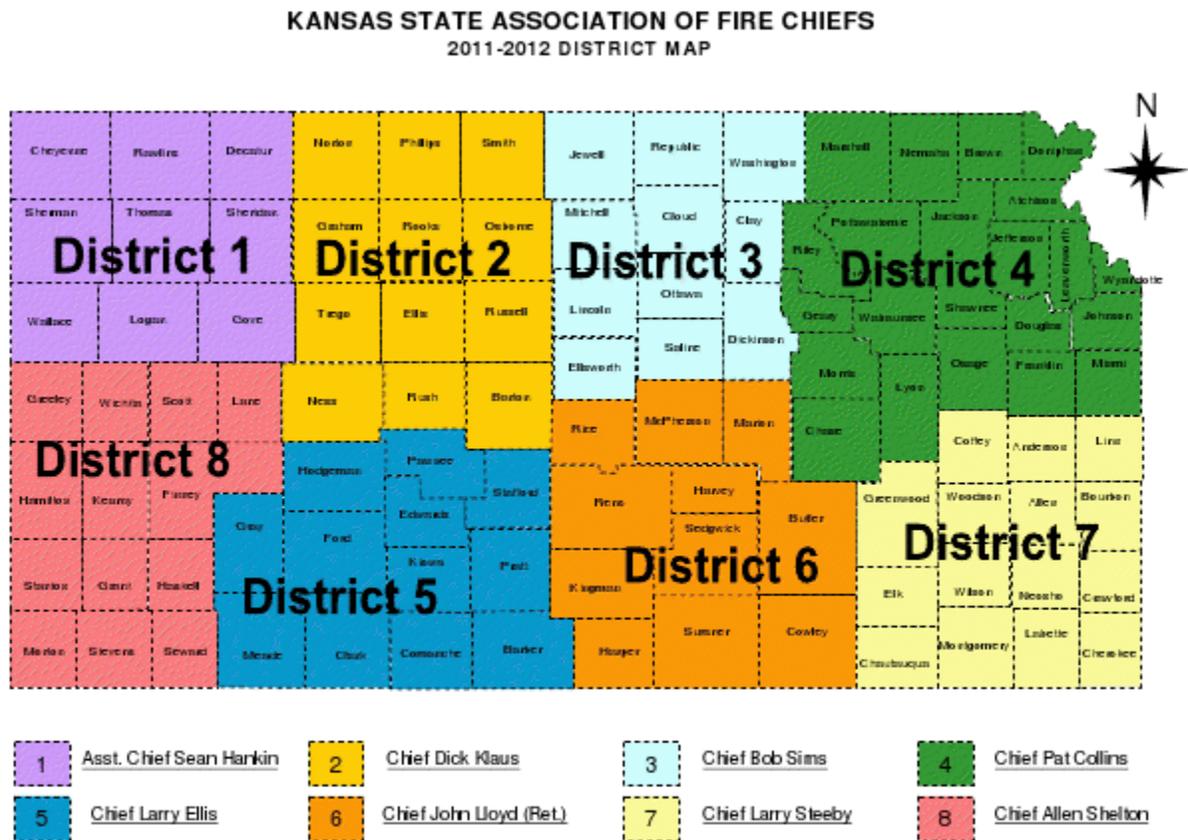
### **Documenting Cost**

Following a major disaster, federal funding may be available to help local governments repair or replace damaged facilities. The primary reason that local governments fail to receive reimbursement is the lack of properly documented disaster costs. Since federal payments are based on Project Worksheets, final inspections and audits, the proper documentation of costs is an absolute requirement. It is not enough just to complete the disaster-related work - that work must be fully and accurately documented! See Appendix C for specific documentation procedures.

### **Organizational Structure**

The state is divided into eight regional response areas that parallel the Districts of the KSAFC. The regions are designated as numerals 1-8 as shown on the following map (figure 1). Within each region, a Regional Plan Coordinator is appointed. Depending on the complexity of the region the regional plan coordinator may designate a county coordinator to assist with mutual aid management in the region. Each regional coordinator is responsible for verifying and maintaining an operational knowledge with the assistance of county coordinator's, if assigned, in their regions. The Kansas homeland security region ma and EMS region maps are included for reference purposes.

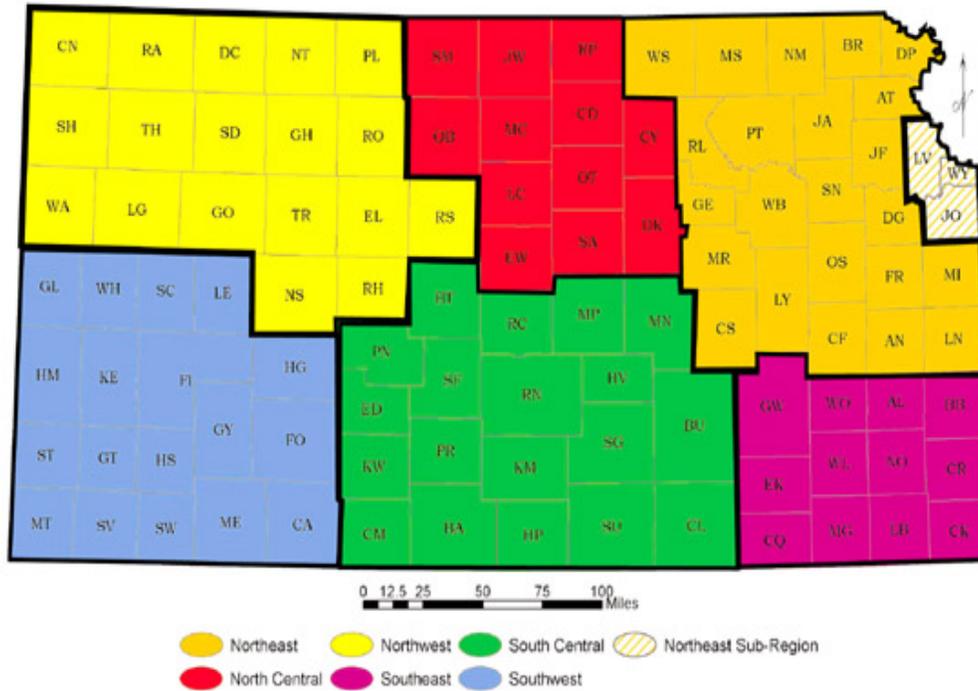
**Figure 1**



President: Chief Robert McLemore || Vice President: Chief Brad Smith  
 Secretary/Treasurer: Chief Bill Walker (Ret.) || Past President: Chief Jeff Hudson (Ret.)

Updated 01/31/2012

## Kansas Homeland Security Regions



Source: U. S. Census Bureau, Kansas Division of Emergency Management

Kansas Adjutant General's Department  
Geographical Information Systems

## STATE OF KANSAS EMS REGIONS

