

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	NOAA Administrative Order 210-111	
NOAA ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER SERIES	DATE OF ISSUANCE July 01, 2019	EFFECTIVE DATE July 01, 2019
SUBJECT NOAA Staff Accountability		

### **SECTION 1. PURPOSE.**

.01 This Order defines the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) accountability for staff procedures during all-hazard emergencies and non-emergency steady-state operations. The procedures, roles, and responsibilities set forth herein assure NOAA staff are accounted for during emergency response activities.

### **SECTION 2. SCOPE.**

Staff accountability is a NOAA-wide responsibility. Federal Continuity Directive 1 (FCD 1) directs Federal agencies to account for the safety of its staff during an emergency (FCD 1, 2017, Annex H). Specifically, FCD 1 calls for:

*"[Organizations to] implement a process to contact all staff, including contractors, in the event of an emergency in the affected area..., [and] communicate how, and to the extent which, [staff] are expected to remain in contact with their organizations during any emergency situation."*

FCD 1 also requires each Federal agency to test its notification and accountability systems, although the extent and methods chosen are at the discretion of the agency. FCD 1 underscores the need to address accountability at various times and circumstances. All staff as defined in Section 3 are deemed subject to this accountability procedure and policy.

### **SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS.**

#### **.01 All-Hazards**

A term used in the context of preparing for a full spectrum of natural and artificial emergencies instead of tailoring to one type (FCD 1, Jan 2017).

#### **.02 Area of Impact (AOI)**

An area affected by an emergency in which an accounting of staff will be required.

### .03 Emergency

Any event requiring increased coordination or response beyond routine procedures in order to protect NOAA's people, mission, and infrastructure.

### .04 Emergency Notification System (ENS)

A tool that allows NOAA, in the field and at headquarters, to expeditiously broadcast consistent emergency information to affected employees via cell phone, email, text, and office phone.

### .05 Staff

All NOAA federal employees, contract support, temporary staff, interns, and all other non-federal NOAA personnel. Off-site contractor staff, such as those working exclusively in the corporate facilities, are not accountable.

## **SECTION 4. POLICY.**

### .01 Principles of NOAA Staff Accountability:

- a. An accurate headcount of NOAA staff will be maintained and accounted for efficiently.
- b. Accountability will continue as dictated by the circumstances of the emergency.
- c. Staff accountability requirements will be clearly communicated and understood by all staff via this NAO and annual reminders.

### .02 Triggers for Accountability:

- a. Accountability is triggered by NOAA's Homeland Security Program Office Director (HSPO) with oversight by the Deputy Under Secretary for Operations (DUS-O).
- b. Field offices are allowed to begin accountability efforts independently on a local scale, but shall comply with HSPO and DUS-O accountability regulations when tasked.
- c. The following is a non-exclusive list of example scenarios from FCD 1 that may trigger HSPO to begin accountability:
  - i. An organization, or the region in which the organization is located, receives notification of a credible threat that leads the organization to enhance its readiness posture and prepare to take actions as necessary;
  - ii. An organization experiences a disruption in normal operations due to an emergency; or,
  - iii. Mass evacuation of a large geographic area affected by a threatening emergency.

### .03 Mechanisms for Accountability:

- a. NOAA shall use the Emergency Notification System (ENS) as its primary staff notification and accountability mechanism.

- b. ENS relies on NOAA Staff Directory (NSD) contact information; therefore, the importance of maintaining current, accurate, and complete NSD data must be stressed and enforced within NOAA's safety culture.
- c. In the event that ENS and/or NSD are inaccessible or incomplete, alternative means available must be used to meet accountability requirements including manual calls to staff.
- d. A geographic information system (GIS) program such as the Office of Response and Restoration's (OR&R) Environmental Response Management Application (ERMA) will be utilized to visualize NSD data geospatially to determine an emergency's AOI and the number of accountable staff within the affected area.

**.04 Accountability Time Constraints:**

- a. Within 24 hours of triggering, initial accountability reports will be briefed to the DUS-O.
- b. Daily accountability reports are required to brief the DUS-O until 100% accountability within the designated AOI is achieved.

**.05 Accountability Policy Continued Awareness:**

- a. Awareness of this Order and an annual reminder message sent to staff to check the accuracy of their NSD information will include all existing and new NOAA staff (as identified in the NSD/ENS system).
- b. At a minimum, NOAA-wide ENS system tests will be conducted annually.
- c. New hires will be briefed on this policy within 30 days of onboarding.

**SECTION 5. RESPONSIBILITIES.**

**.01 Deputy Under Secretary for Operations (DUS-O):**

Overseeing authority of NOAA's accountability both during emergency and steady-state operations.

**.02 Director of the NOAA Homeland Security Program Office (HSPO):**

- a. Coordinates, on behalf of DUS-O, accountability via NOAA Operations Center;
- b. Provides situational awareness information to aid DUS-O accountability decisions;
- c. Identifies AOI and total number of NOAA staff with duty locations assigned within;
- d. Determines the timeframe in which to commence accountability unless otherwise directed by DUS-O;
- e. Coordinates ENS message broadcast to AOI;
- f. Ensures collection and report of accountability to DUS-O within time constraints stated in Section 4 above;
- g. Activates the NOAA Homeland Security Senior Management Team (HS SMT) members to follow up on NOAA staff non-responsive to ENS messaging or in need of assistance;
- h. Proctors at least an annual NOAA-wide ENS message test (may be tested regionally

- by local offices at their discretion);
- i. Sends awareness of this Order and an annual reminder message to staff to check the accuracy of their NSD information; and,
  - j. Develops and maintains this Order.

**.03 The NOAA Homeland Security Senior Management Team (HS SMT):**

- a. Acts as an executive steering committee to the NOAA HSPO, coordinating NOAA's HS-related policies and programs.
- b. Comprised of representatives appointed by the Assistant Administrators and Directors of NOAA's Line and Staff Offices (LO/SO).
- c. Monitors operational responsibilities and responds to emergencies where support from multiple line and staff offices is needed and the NOAA Operations Center within HSPO has been activated (either physically or virtually).
- d. Functions as liaison between respective LO/SO and HSPO;
- e. Takes active measures to locate and account for staff within their respective LO/SO; and,
- f. Reports as tasked by HSPO.

**.04 LO/SO Supervisors:**

- a. Orient new hires and temporary staff to this Order within 30 days of onboarding;
- b. Ensure direct reports are aware of annual accountability awareness message and that staff update their contact information within NSD at least annually;
- c. Maintain situational awareness of where direct reports are located;
- d. Inform LO/SO HS SMT when direct reports are in AOI;
- e. Support HS SMT in the accountability of their direct reports in the AOI; and,
- f. Encourage participation in, and stress the importance of, NOAA's accountability policy.

**.05 Staff:**

- a. Contact supervisor and respond to ENS messaging and as soon as possible if near or impacted by an emergency;
- b. Respond to HS SMT or Supervisor/Branch Chief if contacted for emergency information;
- c. Update contact information within NSD at least annually and immediately after a change in duty location; and,
- d. Keep apprised of HSPO's annual awareness message in regards to this Order.

**SECTION 6. REFERENCES.**

.01 Federal Continuity Directive 1. Jan 2017. <https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1486472423990-f640b42b9073d78693795bb7da4a7af2/January2017FCD1.pdf>

**SECTION 7. EFFECT ON OTHER ISSUANCES.**

.01 The Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Environmental Observation and Prediction Performing the duties of Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere signs because there is no delegation of authority for this NAO.

.02 An electronic copy of this Order will be posted on the NOAA Office of the Chief Administrative Officer website under the Administrative Programs' NOAA Administrative Issuances section via <http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~ocao/index.html>



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Performing the Duties of  
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Offices of Primary Interest:  
Office of the Chief Information Officer  
All NOAA Line and Staff Offices