

Standard Operating Procedure

Critical Workforce Disaster Re-entry Permits



June 2009

Summary

This document outlines a model Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for emergency response and management personnel at the state- and local-level in conjunction with critical infrastructure owners and operators (CI/OO) and their contractors, subcontractors, and assigns.

This SOP seeks to clarify the roles, responsibilities, and processes that will be followed during a disaster response to ensure that critical infrastructure providers are given timely and efficient access to hurricane-affected areas for the purpose of responding to life threatening hazards and repairing the critical infrastructure. This document is a product of joint federal, state, county, local and private-sector efforts to ensure citizen's safety and the timely functionality of critical infrastructure.

Process Overview

All participants agree that the following criteria are essential elements for access into a restricted area during a hurricane or other natural disaster:

For Critical Infrastructure Owners and Operators

- Employer-issued photo ID; and
- Marked company vehicle (company markings may or may not be permanently affixed to the vehicle but need to be sufficient in size and placement to easily demonstrate affiliation – non permanent markings must be officially issued by the CI/OO); or
- State of Georgia issued Critical Workforce Disaster Re-entry Permit (herein referred to as "re-entry permit(s)") for vehicles that are unmarked or otherwise unrecognizable as being affiliated with a CI/OO.

For Contractors, Subcontractors, and Assigns of the CI/OO

- Employer-issued photo ID; and
- State of Georgia issued re-entry permit – one per vehicle or group / fleet of vehicles traveling together.

The State of Georgia, through the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) will issue re-entry permits to coastal counties' Emergency Management Agencies (EMA) for issuance to any pre-identified critical workforce providers that exist solely within their jurisdiction. Additionally, GEMA will issue the re-entry permits directly to any requesting CI/OO entity with regional or statewide responsibility. The CI/OO will be responsible for the dissemination of these identifiers for its contractors, subcontractors, and assigns.

Re-entry permits will be issued on a tri-annual basis. The current series of re-entry permits will expire on December 31, 2010. Re-entry permits are continually issued and may be applied for anytime.

Purpose

The purpose of this SOP document is to describe in concept the State of Georgia's strategy to permit access into restricted areas during a disaster response to a hurricane impact in Georgia.

Concept of Operations

Identification Procedures

Federal, state, and local government agencies and law enforcement officials agree to recognize specific identification from CI/OO, and their contractors, subcontractors, and assigns as they seek access into a restricted disaster area.

In furtherance of this program, federal, state, local, and private-sector partners all agree to take action in support of this SOP. The following actions are required:

Critical Infrastructure Owner/Operators (for own employee base):

- Ensure company-issued photo ID for each employee;
- Ensure company vehicles are marked; and
- Promote the use of this SOP at the state and local-level.

Critical Infrastructure Owner Operator (for Contractors, Subcontractors, and Assigns):

- Obtain State-issued vehicle re-entry permit; and
- Ensure employer-issued photo ID for each employee.

Federal:

- Educate federal response personnel on the existence of the SOP.

State:

- Identify location and point of contact to obtain vehicle re-entry permits;
- Disseminate re-entry permits continually and during an event as needed; and
- Provide this SOP to state response personnel, and where appropriate, local response personnel.

Local:

- Educate personnel on the existence of the SOP; and
- Coordinate with CI/OO in their jurisdiction and provide them this SOP if re-entry permits are distributed to them.

Georgia Critical Workforce Disaster Re-entry Permits

GEMA will issue Critical Workforce Disaster Re-entry Permits (re-entry permits) to CI/OO and Georgia coastal counties' EMAs (for local distribution). These permits will be made available for companies to disseminate to their contractors, subcontractors, and assigns. Companies can use these permits for unmarked vehicles, or to support contractors, subcontractors, and assigns acting on behalf of the CI/OO responding to the crisis.

The State of Georgia will issue permits with serial numbers. The State will record the serial numbers issued to each county EMA, as well as individual CI/OO. The State requires that each county and CI/OO record serial numbers issued to individual companies or contractors. Hang tags are available from the GEMA Operations Division, Planning Section, Hurricane Planner (404) 635-7200.

County EMAs will be asked to provide GEMA with the number of permits needed for their jurisdiction no later than April 1 of each issuance cycle. Additional permits can be acquired anytime by official written request to the GEMA Operations Division, Planning Section, Hurricane Planner.

Restrictions:

- GEMA will only provide re-entry permits directly to the following:
 - County EMAs; and
 - CI/OOs with regional or statewide responsibilities.
- County Emergency Management Agencies are responsible for providing the re-entry permits to entities within their jurisdiction;
- CI/OO are responsible for providing the re-entry permits to their contractors, subcontractors, and assigns;
- Private companies or contractors not identified by a county or statewide CI/OO as a critical workforce provider should follow normally established methods of seeking access to disaster areas; and
- GEMA will provide a maximum of 500 permits to any single CI/OO. Exceptions to this restriction will be handled on a case-by-case basis if a CI/OO can provide

documentation that there is a critical need for an excess of 500 permits, or if an actual event depletes existing supply and exceeds planned expectations.

Outreach

This program is a part of the public-private partnership. As such, outreach obligations exist for all parties involved. Critical Infrastructure owners and operators are responsible for training their employees, contractors, sub-contractors, and assigns on protocols specific to this SOP. As disasters are local in nature, CI/OO entities are also responsible for outreach to local responders, to make them aware of this process.

At the state-level, GEMA will ensure that required state officials and responders are made aware of this SOP, and will disseminate this information to the local-level. County, local and municipal persons are responsible for partnering with CI/OO and state representatives in support of this initiative.

At the federal-level, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will work to ensure that all Federal protection representatives are aware of this SOP and will support dissemination of this SOP throughout the United States.