



## Incident Specific Annex 4 Coal Mine Emergency



### Coordinating Agencies

West Virginia Office of Miners' Health,  
Safety and Training (WVOMHST)  
West Virginia Division of Homeland  
Security and Emergency Management  
(WVDHSEM)

### Support Agencies and Organizations

West Virginia Office of the Governor (GO)  
West Virginia Department of Commerce  
West Virginia Department of Military  
Affairs and Public Safety (WVDMAPS)  
West Virginia Department of Health and  
Human Resources (WVDHHR)  
Mine and Industrial Accident Emergency  
Operations Center (MIAEOC)  
Local Emergency Manager  
Local Mine Operators  
Private Sector/Local Mine Rescue Teams

### Purpose

This annex defines the organizational structure, operational concepts, responsibilities, and procedures to coordinate a rapid and appropriate response to coal mine emergencies.

### Scope

This annex applies to all departments and agencies of the State of West Virginia.

### Policies

- A.** This annex is intended to be consistent with the State of West Virginia Emergency Operations Plan (WVEOP), the National Response Framework (NRF), and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).
- B.** All agencies assigned responsibilities within this annex will develop and maintain the necessary plans, standard operating procedures, mutual aid agreements, and model contracts to successfully accomplish their tasks.
- C.** The WVDHSEM, in conjunction with the WVOMHST, are responsible for the development and maintenance of this annex. This should occur at minimum once every two years.

## Situation

A. When a mine emergency occurs, the first few hours after the emergency are the most critical and often determine the success of the mine rescue and recovery operations. Teamwork is not only essential between mine rescue teams, but also among company administrators, mine personnel, Federal, State, and local officials. These agencies and organizations comprise an entire rescue network designed to direct and support the entire operation, particularly the rescue teams, during a coal mine emergency.

B. The protection of life will always supersede the protection of property.

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## Planning Assumptions

A. A coal mine emergency has occurred that requires coordination and activation of the MIAEOC.

B. The Mine and Industrial Accident Rapid Response System (MIARRS) provides a critical connection between the Directors of the WVOMHST, WVDHSEM, Coal Mine Operators, local and regional emergency services organizations, and other responsible agencies and individuals.

C. The incident may involve mass casualties.

D. Mutual aid between jurisdictions and requests for assistance from state resources can be expected.

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## Organizational Structure

A. The WVOMHST is the lead state agency for incidents involving coal mine emergencies.

B. MIARRS provides a vital resource to the citizens of West Virginia by providing a critical connection among WVOMHST, WVDHSEM, local and regional emergency services organizations and other responsible agencies.

C. The Shift Leader, when the West Virginia State Emergency Operations Center (WVSEOC) is activated, will prioritize and staff requests for execution of operations.

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## Concept of Operations

### A. Chain of Command

1. Governor
2. Director, WVOMHST
3. Director, WVDHSEM

### B. Phases of Management

1. Preparedness
  - a. MIAEOC
  - b. Provide a 24-hour-a-day statewide telephone number, which provides emergency assistance and coordination to coal mine emergencies and industrial accidents.
  - c. Implement and operate MIARRS. On a quarterly basis, WVOMHST provides the MIAEOC with an updated mine emergency contact list.
  - d. Update changes to the mine emergency contact list and provide to the MIAEOC.
  - e. Continue to support training of mine rescue teams and support agencies through the WVOMHST.
2. Response
  - a. Coordinate emergency response assets, including industry inspectors, from regulatory agencies, response equipment, supplies, and other response data. This coordination may include electronic information manipulation, retrieval, and appropriate geographic information systems (GIS) information.
  - b. Report accidents or emergencies to WVDHSEM at the MIAEOC as prescribed by law.
  - c. Record all calls received on the published line for documentation purposes. Recording of calls is automatic.
  - d. Operate the MIAEOC, the official state government 24-hours-a-day communications center for dealing with coal mine emergencies.

- e. Respond with appropriate personnel and related support equipment to the site of a mine emergency; establish an incident command post in conjunction with the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), the WVOMHST and other responsible entities.
- f. Ensure that appropriate personnel are on site to secure the site, the command post, the mine command post and any other areas deemed appropriate by the incident commander.
- g. Establish a procedure on site to ensure proper briefings for families by representatives of the state, WVOMSHT, MSHA, and the federal government prior to the release of any information to the media or other persons. This is done in conjunction with the Governor’s Office of Communications.
- h. Establish a Joint Information Center (JIC) to provide periodic updates to the media. Briefings are conducted at times identified by the Incident Commander and shall include the State, Federal government and the mine company, to the extent possible. See ESF 15.

### 3. Recovery

- a. All departments and agencies involved will perform retrograde, maintenance, and demobilization operations in accordance with established standard operating procedures.

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## Agency Responsibilities Matrix

Supporting Agency	Acronym	Responsibilities
West Virginia Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management	WVDHSEM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assign an Incident Commander.</li> <li>Work in conjunction with the WVOMHST to maintain the Mine and Industrial Accident Emergency Operations Center.</li> <li>Implement and operate MIARRS.</li> <li>Coordinate and route requests for mining resources.</li> </ul>
West Virginia Office of the Governor	GO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide general direction and control of the WVDHSEM and is responsible for carrying out of the provisions of West Virginia Code Chapter 15-5-5.</li> <li>May assume direct operational control over the event of disaster beyond local control.</li> <li>Serve as the primary communicator with the operator, miners’ families, press, and the public.</li> </ul>
West Virginia Department of Commerce		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide assistance, direction, coordination, and oversight as required</li> </ul>

West Virginia Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety	WVDMAPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oversee the WVDHSEM and ensure coordination with all appropriate agencies during a mine emergency.</li> </ul>
West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources	WVDHHR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide assistance, direction, coordination, and oversight as required</li> </ul>
Office of Miners’ Health, Safety and Training	OMHST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with WVDHSEM to maintain the Mine and Industrial Accident Emergency Operations Center.</li> <li>Coordinate, on behalf of the State, all rescue-related activities.</li> <li>Provide the Mine and Industrial Accident Emergency Operations Center with a coal mine emergency contact list on a quarterly basis. In the event of any change in the information contained in the coal mine emergency contact list, such changes are to be provided immediately to the Emergency Operations Center. The coal mine emergency contact list includes the following:                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The names and telephone numbers of the Director of the Office of Miners’ Health, Safety and Training and his or her designee, including at least one telephone number at which the Director or designee may be reached at any time.</li> <li>The names and telephone numbers of all Inspector-at-Large or Assistant Inspector-at-Large, including at least one telephone number for each inspector at which each inspector may be reached at any time.</li> <li>A current listing of all regional offices or districts of the WVOMHST, including a detailed description of the geographical areas served by each regional office or district.</li> <li>The names, locations, and telephone numbers of all approved mine rescue stations, including at least one telephone number for each station that may be called twenty-four-hours-a-day and a listing of all mines that each mine rescue station serves.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Mine and Industrial Accident Emergency Operations Center	MIAEOC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notify, upon receipt of an emergency call regarding any accident, the following:                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Director of the WVOMHST or his/her designee</li> <li>The Inspector-at-Large or Assistant Inspector-at-Large in which region the accident occurred</li> <li>Local emergency service personnel in the area in which the accident occurred, if not already being dispatched locally.</li> <li>The Director or his/her designee of the WVOMHST determines the need for and contacts all mine rescue stations that provide rescue coverage to the mine in question.</li> <li>There are four (4) State approved mine rescue teams available to respond to mine emergencies. They are located in Westover, Oak Hill, Welch, and Danville.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Local Emergency Manager	LEM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate requests/resources between the local Emergency Operations Center and the State Emergency Operations Center (if activated).</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve as liaison between local mine operator(s) and local resources.</li> <li>• Ensure appropriate personnel are on site from the local level to assist with the command post, mine command center, and any other areas deemed appropriate by the Incident Commander.</li> </ul>
Local Mine Operators		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designate a person to work with local, State, and Federal officials during coal mine emergencies.</li> <li>• Evacuate the mine following a mine emergency that presents an imminent danger to the miners.</li> <li>• Notify the Mine and Industrial Accident Emergency Operations Center of any reportable situation.</li> <li>• Notify U.S. Department of Labor, MSHA when a mine emergency occurs.</li> <li>• Serves as the primary communicator until the event transitions to State Direction and Control.</li> <li>• Identify and notify at least two (2) teams to respond to the mine emergency within one (1) hour travel time of the mine.</li> </ul>
Private Sector/Local Mine Rescue Teams	MRT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide mine rescue teams to local mine operators. This is either by request or by standing mutual aid agreements/memorandums of understandings.</li> <li>• Send enough personnel to respond to the mine emergency. This requires one (1) team to be in the mine, one (1) team serving as backup to the team inside the mine, and one (1) team up on top of the mine to be ready to respond.</li> </ul>
Federal Level		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish and update every five (5) years criteria to certify the qualifications of mine rescue teams.</li> <li>• Assign an individual from the Department of Labor to be a liaison between the Department and the families of victims of mine tragedies involving multiple deaths.</li> </ul>

## **Authorities & References**

### *Authorities*

State of West Virginia Emergency Services and Disaster Laws

West Virginia Code §15-5B

West Virginia Code §22

West Virginia Code §22A

### *References*

State of West Virginia Emergency Operations Plan – Basic Plan

NIOSH – Protecting Emergency Responders Volume 3, Safety Management in Disaster and Terrorism Response

NIOSH IC9452 – An Underground Coal Mine Fire Preparedness and Response Checklist: The Instrument

NIOSH IC9481 – Fire Response Preparedness for Underground Mines

NIOSH – Innovative Strategies for Mine Fire Preparedness

West Virginia Code of State Rules, Title 170, Series 1, West Virginia Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Mine and Industrial Accident Rapid Response System

Mine Improvement and New Emergency Response Act of 2006 or the MINER Act, Section 316 of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 (30 U.S.C. 876) amended

Senate Bill S.2803 of the 109th Congress 2d Session

NIOSH IC9481 Information Circular 2005

NIOSH Publication No. 2006-105 Fire Response Preparedness for Underground Mines

NIOSH IC9471 Information Circular 2004, An Oral History Analysis of Mine Emergency Response