



COMDTINST 3025.1
30 SEP 2009

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 3025.1

Subj: USCG EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS LIAISON OFFICER (EPLO) PROGRAM

- Ref: (a) The National Response Framework, January 2008
 (b) National Incident Management System
 (c) U.S. Coast Guard Reserve Policy Statement
 (d) Reserve Policy Manual, COMDTINST M1001.28 (series)
 (e) Senior Reserve Officer Description of Duties, COMDTINST 1001.1
 (f) 2007 USCG Joint Field Office Support Teams Staffing Plan, CG-3R Memo dtd 19APR07
 (g) Personnel Manual, COMDTINST M1000.6 (series)

1. **PURPOSE.** This Instruction establishes the Coast Guard Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officer (EPLO) Program; defines program policy, organizational structure and responsibilities, and provides guidance for the support and coordination of EPLO assistance to other federal, state, and local authorities prior to and during disaster contingencies. Specific duties, qualifications, training and reporting requirements of EPLOs will be provided as an EPLO Roles and Responsibilities Guidebook under separate cover.
2. **ACTION.** Area, district, and sector commanders, commanders of maintenance and logistics commands, Commander Deployable Operations Group, commanding officers of headquarters units, assistant commandants for directorates, Judge Advocate General, and special staff offices at Headquarters shall ensure that the provisions of this directive are followed. Internet release is authorized.
3. **DIRECTIVES AFFECTED.** None.

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NON-STANDARD DISTRIBUTION: None

4. BACKGROUND.

- a. The terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 and Hurricane Katrina (August 2005) demonstrated the need for a more integrated and coordinated approach among federal, state, local, tribal, and private sector organizations to prepare for, prevent, respond to, and recover from terrorism, major natural and manmade disasters, and other major emergencies. References (a) and (b) provide the structure, processes, and protocols for integrating the capabilities and resources of various governmental jurisdictions, incident management and emergency response disciplines, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and the private sector into a cohesive, coordinated, and seamless national framework for domestic incident management. Coordinated federal support to state, local, and tribal incident managers during major disasters or emergencies is accomplished in part through a Joint Field Office staffed by representatives of the various agencies and organizations involved.
- b. The Coast Guard staffs numerous full-time liaison billets at various federal organizations such as the White House, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). However, there is no Coast Guard-wide process for developing and assigning dedicated Coast Guard liaison officers to regional, state and other emergency response organizations. A number of Districts and Sectors have responded to the National Response Framework (NRF) and FEMA's role in domestic emergency response by temporarily assigning active duty or reserve officers the collateral duty of Liaison Officer (LNO) on an as-needed basis.

5. DISCUSSION.

- a. Effective response during major incidents requires continuous coordinated planning, training, and exercising with response partners well before an incident occurs. To effectively support coordinated responses under the NRF, the Coast Guard should provide liaison officers to federal, state, and local emergency response organizations. These organizations include Regional Response Coordination Centers (RRCC), Joint Field Offices (JFO) and/or state and local emergency operation centers (EOC).
- b. The EPLO program establishes a service wide standard for dedicated liaison officer support to partner agencies in support of the NRF, particularly at the FEMA regional office level. The program provides operational commanders with liaison-trained senior reserve officers to support Coast Guard preparedness and response for all hazard contingencies. The EPLO liaises among an assigned District, the corresponding FEMA regional office, and state emergency response organizations.
- c. CG EPLO positions directly support the Commandant's three Reserve program missions per reference (c). These missions are:
 - (1) Maritime Homeland Security;
 - (2) Domestic and expeditionary support to National Defense; and

(3) Domestic, natural or man-made, disaster response and recovery.

d. EPLOs will work closely with their respective District EPLO Coordinator. They are assigned to foster exchange of information, promote cooperation and communication, and coordinate the planning and implementation of contingency plans with federal, state, and local emergency preparedness partners. EPLOs maintain a close relationship with their assigned FEMA regional office(s) and serve as an essential contact between FEMA and Coast Guard personnel. These well established relationships will facilitate Coast Guard deployment for an incident or event. As an example, when a Joint Field Office (JFO) team is deployed, the EPLO will serve as a CG point-of-contact familiar with the FEMA region who can introduce and help establish the JFO team. EPLOs are usually on scene at the outset of an event and are frequently requested to fill-in as a watchstander. EPLOs, however, should be relieved as soon as possible by designated watchstanders and/or the JFO team. Districts should consider designating LNOs as part of their JFO teams; however, EPLOs should not be members of JFOs.

e. This program is purposely designed to utilize our experienced senior Reserve officers in an inter-agency role which includes the Department of Defense (DoD). CG EPLOs realize a unique relationship with DoD EPLOS and leverage the acceptance and recognition of the EPLO title.

(1) CG EPLOs are assigned to CG Operational Commanders, have regional responsibilities and regularly work with DHS and civil authorities and partners. DoD EPLOs are assigned to state and regional DoD teams to enable Defense Support to Civil Authorities (DSCA).

(2) CG EPLOs drill independently.

(3) CG EPLOs work for the District Commander in close coordination with DHS and FEMA Regional personnel and CG operational commands and staffs; DoD EPLOs work in close coordination with the Defense Coordinating Elements (DCE) and their organization.

6. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE.

a. FEMA Regions and Coast Guard Districts do not coincide geographically. To address this, CG EPLOs will be assigned to each District per the following diagram (Figure 1).

(1) A SELRES Commander (05) will be assigned as the EPLO for each FEMA Region.

(2) District 1 and 8 will have a SELRES (06) assigned as a District EPLO Coordinator since more than one FEMA Regional office exists within the District boundaries.

- (3) The District EPLO Coordinator responsibilities for Districts 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14 and 17 may be assigned to an active duty member of the Dx or Dr staff. This is not intended to be a full-time equivalent (FTE) position.
 - (4) The FEMA Region EPLO reports directly to the District EPLO Coordinator in a “direct reporting” relationship. The District EPLO Coordinator works for the District Planning (dx) or District Response (dr) division depending upon the District Commander’s preference.
- b. Where staffing permits, EPLOs may be assigned at the Sector level.
- (1) It is recommended that EPLO roles be filled with a Sector SELRES O4/O5; however, the complement at each Sector may prohibit this, in which case the EPLO role may be assigned to an Active Duty officer. The EPLO title will be EPLO D (#)/Sector (*name*), i.e., EPLO D13/Sector Portland.
 - (2) The Sector EPLO shall not be the Senior Reserve Officer (SRO) at the Sector. The SRO has other responsibilities that preclude assignment as Sector EPLO. The Sector EPLO should work for the Deputy Sector Commander or the Contingency Planning/Force Readiness Shop.
 - (3) Sector EPLOs can be assigned to State EOCs and other responsibilities by the Sector Commander through coordination with the District EPLO Coordinator.
 - (4) Sector EPLOs shall keep the FEMA Region EPLO and District EPLO Coordinator informed of their actions, communications, needs and relationships with state and local authorities.

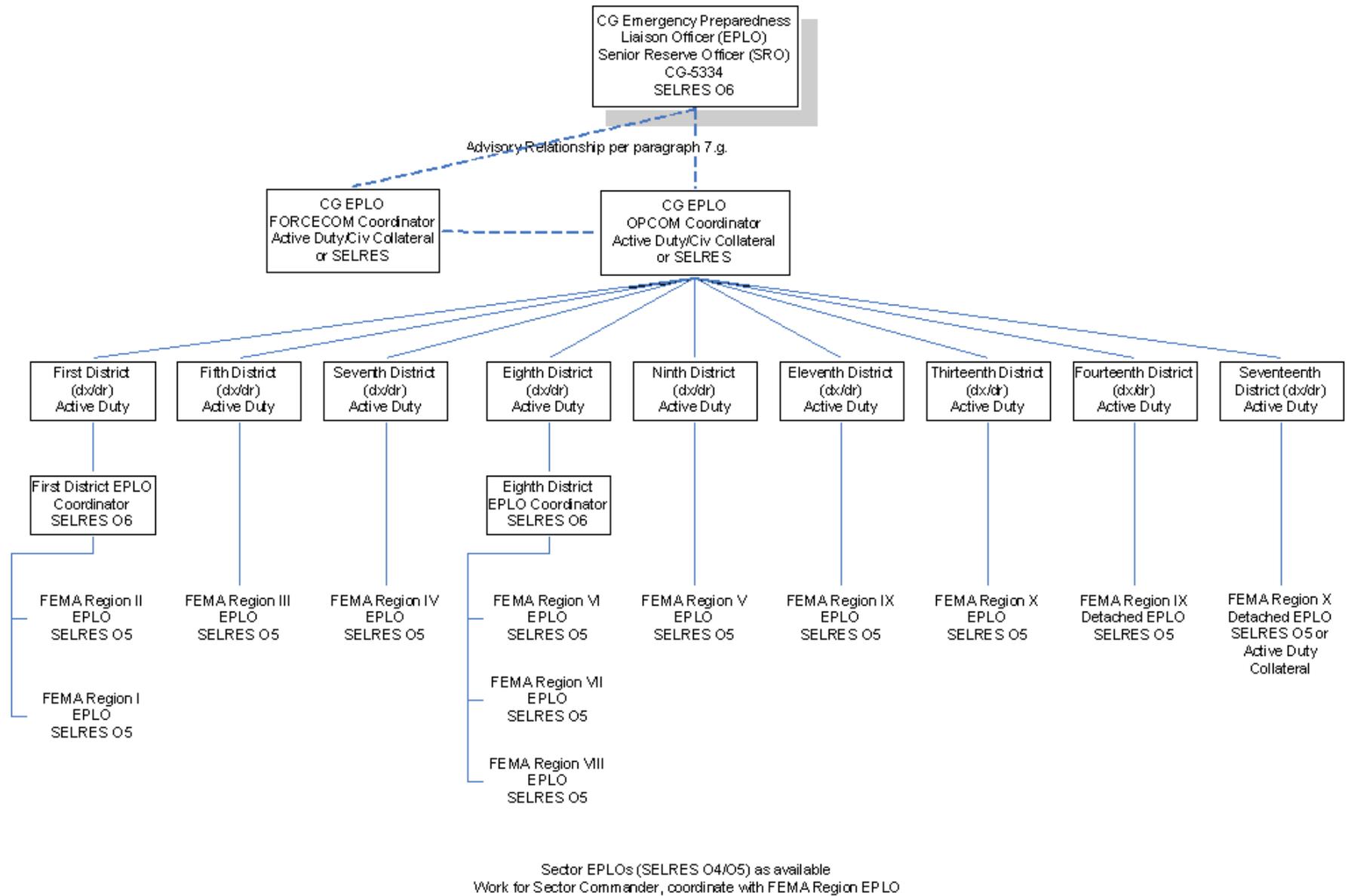


Figure 1 - EPLO Structure

Coast Guard District	Direct Reporting Relationship	Advisory/Consultative Relationship
D1 EPLO Coordinator (also FEMA Region I EPLO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEMA Region I EPLO (Designated also as D1 EPLO Coordinator) • FEMA Region II EPLO 	
D5 EPLO Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEMA Region III EPLO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEMA Region II EPLO • FEMA Region IV EPLO
D7 EPLO Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEMA Region IV EPLO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEMA Region II EPLO
D8 EPLO Coordinator (also FEMA Region VI EPLO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEMA Region VI EPLO (Designated also as D8 EPLO Coordinator) • FEMA Region VII EPLO • FEMA Region VIII EPLO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEMA Region III EPLO • FEMA Region IV EPLO • FEMA Region V EPLO
D9 EPLO Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEMA Region V EPLO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEMA Region II EPLO • FEMA Region III EPLO
D11 EPLO Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEMA Region IX EPLO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEMA Region VIII EPLO
D13 EPLO Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEMA Region X EPLO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEMA Region VIII EPLO
D14 EPLO Coordinator		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEMA Region IX EPLO
D17 EPLO Coordinator		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEMA Region X EPLO

Figure 2 – EPLO Relationships Table

7. TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

a. Commandant (CG-533).

- (1) Provide policy and program oversight. Assign and staff an EPLO Program Manager. This may be an active duty member, civilian FTE, or collateral assignment.
- (2) Annually fund EPLO program requirements for personnel, equipment, training, exercise participation, and response specified in this Instruction.

- (a) Provide budget oversight. This includes disbursement of allotted funds to OPCOM/LANT and FORCECOM, identification of under- and un-funded deficiencies, and initiation of action for supplemental funds as required.
 - (3) Manage the OER rating chain for CG EPLO Senior Reserve Officer (SRO).
- b. Commander CGPC-rpm: Manage billet assignments in accordance with reference (e).
- c. Force Readiness Command.
 - (1) Assign and staff an EPLO FORCECOM Coordinator. This may be an active duty member, civilian FTE, or collateral assignment.
 - (2) Provide doctrine, Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTP), and compliance requirements for the CG EPLO program.
 - (3) Establish duty qualification, training, and exercise participation standards and requirements for all CG liaison roles. This includes CG EPLO, agency-assigned, District and Sector liaisons.
 - (4) Ensure EPLO program equipment “Go Packs” are:
 - (a) Sufficiently equipped with appropriate Coast Guard-approved Automated Data Processing equipment configured for remote dial-in access. Current tools include a Treo personal digital assistant (PDA) and an approved wifi-enabled laptop.
 - (b) Technically supported with equipment training, repairs, updates, and replacements when appropriate. New or significantly upgraded equipment requirements shall be identified as part of the biennial review of EPLO program needs.
 - (c) Supplied with GETS (phone) card for each EPLO.
 - (5) Manage incident specific mobilization/demobilization process of EPLOs when requested by LANT/OPCOM.
 - (6) Develop and maintain an EPLO Roles and Responsibilities Guidebook.
- d. Operations Command.
 - (1) Assign and staff an OPCOM EPLO Coordinator. This may be an active duty member, civilian FTE, or collateral assignment.
 - (2) Contribute to the development of, and distribute an EPLO Roles and Responsibilities Guidebook published and maintained by FORCECOM.
 - (3) Ensure satisfactory execution of duty qualification, training, and exercise participation requirements for the CG EPLO program service wide.

- (4) Manage all assigned EPLOs in the program across Districts for appropriate nationwide, CG-wide support to federal disaster/emergency response. The value of EPLOs is a function of relationships, not training. Therefore, some degradation of effectiveness will occur if EPLOs are assigned outside of their region.
- (5) Provide annual budget estimate and expense report to Commandant (CG-533).

e. District Commands.

- (1) Assign a SELRES Captain (06), active duty member or civilian as the District EPLO Coordinator to ensure the proper utilization of the assigned EPLOs. Direct EPLO activities in accordance with this Instruction and as appropriate for operational needs within the AOR.
- (2) Coordinate, manage, and act as approval authority for Inactive Duty for Training (IDT), Active Duty for Training (ADT) and reserve readiness for assigned EPLOs.
- (3) Ensure satisfactory execution of CG EPLO duty qualification, training, and exercise participation requirements for assigned EPLOs.
- (4) Contribute to the development of, and distribute an EPLO Roles and Responsibilities Guidebook published and maintained by FORCECOM.
- (5) Manage the OER rating chain for assigned FEMA Region EPLOs.
- (6) Provide annual budget estimate and expense report to the OPCOM EPLO Supervisor.
- (7) Provide annual summary of EPLO actions, and exercise and response participation to the OPCOM EPLO Coordinator.

f. CG EPLO Senior Reserve Officer (CG EPLO SRO).

- (1) Ensure the Coast Guard EPLO program complies with national policies and guidance including references (a) and (b).
- (2) Engage with inter-agency partners (DHS, FEMA, etc.) to coordinate utilization of CG EPLOs; leverage training opportunities and synchronize contingency preparedness guidance.
- (3) Provide Coast Guard policy advice to CG- 533 and other headquarters directorates as applicable to the EPLO program.
- (4) Oversee distribution of annual EPLO program budget distribution.

- (5) Coordinate with the FORCECOM EPLO Coordinator to develop and communicate CG EPLO doctrine, Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTP), as well as training and compliance requirements for the EPLO program.
- (6) Coordinate with the OPCOM EPLO Coordinator to ensure consistent, CG-wide program execution. This includes equipment, budget, training, and readiness requirements. Advise District Commanders via OPCOM EPLO Coordinator on effective tactical employment and utilization of assigned EPLOs for enhanced unity of effort with federal, state, and local partners in the area of responsibility (AOR).
- (7) Provide leadership and guidance to EPLOs assigned to the program as detailed in reference (e).
- (8) As the Subject Matter Expert (SME) on EPLO matters, provide related briefings to Coast Guard flag officers and senior leaders as required.
- (9) Provide input on EPLO performance to supervisors and reporting officers.

g. CG EPLOs.

- (1) CG EPLOs are assigned as liaison officers. Their role is to maintain contact and intercommunication between elements of the Coast Guard and partner agencies to ensure mutual understanding and unity of purpose and action. CG EPLOs will:
 - (a) Anticipate response to large-scale events as outlined in the NRF's 15 National Planning Scenarios.
 - (b) Act as the Operational/District Commanders' trusted agent and as a principal, executive level advisor to their assigned FEMA region. CG EPLOs are not watch standers; they are advisors and facilitators.
 - (c) Ensure consistency of Coast Guard support and overall incident management effectiveness to the extent they serve as an advocate for:
 1. Coast Guard operational commanders in the region of response,
 2. FEMA's Federal Coordinating Officers (FCO);
 3. DOD's Defense Coordinating Officers (DCO);
 4. State Adjutant General (TAG);
 5. State Homeland Security Advisor; and
 6. State Emergency Management Director or agency representative.

- (2) A primary role of the EPLO is to build and enhance an integrated response by fostering steady-state emergency preparedness relationships with CG operational commands, senior reserves, and CG JFO team leads in accordance with reference (f). The EPLO may assist with the CG JFO team mobilization and integration into the response community in the affected AOR. The EPLO may be a resource for the Deployable Operations Group (DOG) and its Deployable Elements (DE).
- (3) The EPLO shall participate in emergency preparedness coordination activities with federal, state, and local emergency management organizations (i.e. Regional Response Team (RRT), Regional Interagency Steering Committee (RISC), RRCC activities, and other federal, state, and local response/preparedness training and exercises). EPLOs shall coordinate which meetings and other activities to attend with their District EPLO Coordinator. They should utilize IDT to satisfy these requirements.
- (4) EPLOs shall build their response community network by understanding the relevant emergency operation/response plans and organizations, and by collaborating with their counterparts in the FEMA Regions. EPLOs will facilitate and build local relationships. They will provide continuity, experience, and senior level leadership as a force multiplier for operational commands. As a representative of the Operational/ District Commander, EPLOs will maintain a working knowledge of the response community guidance. More specific duties are contained in the EPLO Roles and Responsibilities Guidebook.
- (5) Administration, communications and procedures.
 - (a) EPLOs shall request and perform IDT and ADT as directed by the District EPLO Coordinator.
 - (b) EPLOs shall complete recommended training as specified in the EPLO Roles and Responsibilities Guidebook, and as required by FORCECOM and/or the program manager.
 - (c) Perform other EPLO duties as may be assigned by the OPCOM EPLO Coordinator and/or District EPLO Coordinator when appropriate.
 - (d) Report status of training and readiness and provide a brief summary of participation in meetings or exercises in a monthly IDT report to the District EPLO Coordinator.
 - (e) Sector and FEMA Region EPLOs will submit projected fiscal year ADT and IDT travel requirements to their District EPLO Coordinator.
 - (f) FEMA Region EPLOs are District assets. Officer Evaluation Reports will be submitted in accordance with reference (g) and District directives. In order to maintain standardization across the CG EPLO Program, the EPLO Senior Reserve Officer should be afforded the opportunity to provide comments.

(g) Sector EPLOs, when assigned, are Sector assets. Officer Evaluation Reports will be submitted in accordance with reference (g) and Sector directives. In order to maintain standardization across the CG EPLO Program, the FEMA Region EPLO and District EPLO Coordinator should be afforded the opportunity to provide comments.

(6) Mobilization.

- (a) CG EPLOs will be mobilized in accordance with current mobilization directives and District procedures.
- (b) In the case of mobilization, EPLOs will be trained to perform liaison activities for the CG Operational Commander during actual emergencies or disasters at Joint Field Offices, FEMA Regions, State Emergency Operations Centers, DoD Joint Task Forces, or local operations centers as required.
- (c) Activation may be initiated as an involuntary recall (Title 10 or Title 14), or the EPLO may deploy under IDT, ADT, or ADSW orders.
- (d) EPLOs should be prepared to mobilize and execute liaison duties with 24 hours notice of activation under Title 10 or Title 14.
- (e) When operationally required to provide nationwide CG-wide support for federal disaster/emergency response, CG EPLOs may be reassigned to another District or FEMA Region by the OPCOM EPLO Coordinator.

8. QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING.

- a. Officers considered for selection to the CG EPLO position should meet the following criteria:
 - (1) Hold or be selected for the authorized EPLO rank. CG Reserve officers assigned to CG EPLO billets are LCDR/CDR/CAPT ranks.
 - (2) Have demonstrated superior performance throughout their careers and the ability to work effectively in a senior operations or staff environment. They must possess strong communications and interpersonal skills.
 - (3) Have sufficient service time remaining based upon age, years of commissioned service, and date of rank to qualify for a three (3) year assignment in the billet.
 - (4) Be able to perform IDT during the regular workweek when necessary. Ideally these individuals should reside within the state, district and FEMA Region of the billet.
 - (5) Maintain eligibility for a SECRET security clearance. Select CG EPLOs may require higher clearances to gain access to areas used for planning or execution of emergency response missions. The requirement for higher clearances will be situation/assignment dependent.

- (6) Have completed required training in ICS-100, 200, 300, 400 and FEMA IS-700 and IS-800.B (NRF).
 - (7) Have experience using the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Incident Command System (ICS) during a multi-contingency, multi-agency response operation, exercise, or planned event.
- b. Specific training requirements for EPLOs will be set by FORCECOM. These requirements will be contained in the EPLO Roles and Responsibilities Guidebook and promulgated under separate cover.
- (1) In general, EPLOs will be fully trained in the ICS curriculum and take advantage of FEMA Emergency Management Professional Development Series and Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA) courses as available.
 - (2) Annual participation in the National Joint EPLO Workshop, the CG Liaison Workshop and the Annual Contingency Planners Preparedness Summit is encouraged.
 - (3) Advanced training through FEMA, DSCA, the Joint Forces Staff College (JFSC) and the Certified Emergency Manager (CEM) program is also encouraged.
9. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS. Environmental considerations were examined in the development of this Instruction and have been determined to be not applicable.
10. FORMS/REPORTS. None.

J. T. Riker /s/
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Director of Response Policy