



# National US&R Response System Administrative Manual

Annex A – Advisory Organization

*June 2014*



**FEMA**

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# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This National Urban Search & Rescue (US&R) Response System (the System) Administration Manual Annex defines the System's Advisory Organization, its members, roles, responsibilities, and provides the policy and procedures by which it will function. The primary purpose of this essential element of the System is to provide advice and recommendations upon which System decisions are based. These decisions will be made through consensus, whenever possible.

## 1.1 OVERVIEW

The System is comprised of three Incident Support Teams and 28 task forces, Federally authorized and staffed by members from Sponsoring Agencies, Participating Agencies, and Affiliated Personnel. Organizationally, the System resides within the US&R Branch, a component of the Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency (DHS/FEMA), Office of Response and Recovery, Response Directorate, Operations Division. The continued growth and development of the System requires the involvement of subject matter experts from the local, State, and Federal levels. This Annex defines the System's Advisory Organization which is designed to support, facilitate, and ensure that involvement.

The Advisory Organization is comprised of three elements; the Strategic Group, the Advisory Group, (comprised of Senior Staff, and four Functional Group Leaders) and the Advisory Support Group (comprised of members of the four Functional Groups, Subgroups, Units, and Ad Hoc Groups). Each Group is responsible for developing and maintaining their respective areas and integrating them into the System. The members of the groups, both System and non-System personnel are chosen based on their management and/or technical expertise to provide advice and recommendations upon which decisions are based. These decisions will be made through consensus, whenever possible.

## 1.2 HISTORY

In the years following its inception, the System built an advisory structure, in 1993 convening an Advisory Committee comprised of Sponsoring Agency and Task Force Representatives. Federal advisory committees automatically expire every two years unless the original charter is renewed and the System's Advisory Committee was allowed to expire. The Operations Group and various Work Groups continued to conduct research and make recommendations absent of strategic oversight to the US&R Branch until the current Strategic Group was formed in 2011.

Building upon evaluations of the Katrina response, FEMA and the System re-instated an Advisory Organization to integrate strategic and operational (tactical) input from Sponsoring

Agencies and Task Forces. FEMA receives guidance and feedback from these stakeholders through an organization comprised of strategic, functional, and issue-specific groups. Recommendations brought to FEMA for consideration have been vetted through the National US&R Response System Advisory Organization.

## 1.3 DEFINITIONS

- I. **Ad Hoc Group** – A group temporarily established by the US&R Branch Chief for a specific purpose and period of time. The recommendation to convene an Ad Hoc Group will be generated through the Advisory Group. The composition, organization, Co-Chairs and membership of an Ad Hoc Group will be determined by the US&R Branch Chief and Advisory Group Chair, based on requirements.
- II. **Advisory Group** – Comprised of Senior Staff and the four standing Functional Group Leaders who are subject matter experts that are responsible for overseeing the four standing Functional Groups, assisting with development of strategy, and identifying resources and tactics to accomplish goals.
- III. **Advisory Group Chair** – A member of a System task force, appointed by the US&R Branch Chief to coordinate the activities of the Advisory Group and Advisory Support Group including; working with Senior Staff to assign tasks to specific Functional Groups, reviewing recommendations from the Groups, and forwarding supported recommendations to the US&R Strategic Group or US&R Branch for review and approval. The Advisory Group Chair is a voting member of the Strategic Group.
- IV. **Advisory Support Group** – Comprised of the four standing Functional Groups' members, all Subgroups, all Units, and Ad Hoc Groups as assigned. Members are functional area subject matter experts that are responsible for providing advice, recommendations, and command assistance and are in either an active or reserve status (see: Section, 1-3.X.).
- V. **Deputy Advisory Group Chair** – A member of a System task force, recommended by the Advisory Group Chair and appointed by the US&R Branch Chief. The Deputy is a member of Senior Staff and will act in the Chair capacity during all official functions in the absence of the Advisory Group Chair.
- VI. **Deputy Task Force Representative (Deputy TFR)** – A member of a System task force who is appointed by that task force's TFR, in concurrence with the task force SAC, to serve as Deputy TFR. A Deputy TFR will act in the TFR capacity during all official functions in the absence of the TFR. Each TFR, in concurrence with their SAC, will determine if any Deputy TFRs will be appointed for the task force, up to a maximum of two. The Deputy TFRs are approved additional points of contact for all formal System communications with their task force.
- VII. **Functional Groups** – Part of the Advisory Support Group and responsible for addressing issues of consequence within their functional areas and those assigned by the Advisory Group. The four Functional Groups (Operations, Logistics, Planning and Finance/Admin) are comprised of Subgroup Leaders and other technical experts.

Functional Group members are in either an active or reserve status (see: *Section, 1-3.X.*).

- VIII. Incident Support Team - Group Advisor (IST-GA)** – A current US&R Incident Support Team member (rostered or alternate), appointed to each Functional Group. The IST-GA is an SME in that Group's functional area that provides the IST perspective.
- IX. Incident Support Team – Representative (IST-R)** – A current US&R Incident Support Team (IST) Leader or Deputy IST Leader, recommended by the Advisory Group Chair and appointed by the US&R Branch Chief to represent IST interests in recommendations and work products submitted by various organizational levels within the Advisory Organization. The IST-R is a member of Senior Staff.
- X. Membership Status** – The status of a Group's members is based on the requirements of the taskings currently assigned to the Group.
- Active status is defined as when members are tasked to perform specific actions or tasks to meet goals and objectives of the System related to their functional areas of responsibility.
  - Reserve status is defined as when members are not tasked to perform specific actions during periods of time when there are little to no requirements of the group. Members in a reserve status are permitted to stay informed on group business and are permitted, but not required, to attend meetings. Incurring travel costs to attend meetings is at the discretion of the member's task force.
- XI. Quorums** – Sponsoring Agency Chiefs, Task Force Representatives, and/or members of the Advisory Organization, may meet formally or informally, at any time, to address business of the System. For all elements, a quorum (*defined as 50% of that element's membership plus one*) must be present for any official business to take place.
- XII. Senior Staff** – Comprised of the Advisory Group Chair (*only votes when there is a tie within this group*), Deputy Advisory Group Chair, TFR-D's (3), IST-R, and US&R Branch Section Chiefs (2). Part of the Advisory Group and responsible for coordinating activities, and reviewing recommendations and work products submitted by the various organizational levels within the Advisory Support Group.
- XIII. Sponsoring Agency Chief (SAC)** – The Chief (head) of the Sponsoring Agency of a System task force, who is ultimately the final authority for that task force.
- XIV. Sponsoring Agency Chief Representative – Divisional (SACR-D)** – A Sponsoring Agency Chief of a System task force who is elected by the SACs in their Division (*East, Central, or West*) to represent that Division on the Strategic Group.
- XV. Strategic Group** – Comprised of FEMA Operations Division Director and US&R Branch Chief, the three Divisional SAC Representatives, TFR-N and the Advisory Group Chair. Provides the US&R Branch with recommendations to establish priorities for the System on matters regarding policy, strategic goals, budget and any issue with a financial impact on System Sponsoring Agencies and task forces.

- XVI. Subgroup** – Part of the Advisory Support Group and responsible for performing specific functions or tasks assigned by the Functional Group to which it is assigned. Members are chosen for their interest, experience, and expertise in the various US&R disciplines and are in either an active or reserve status (see: *Section, 1-3.X.*). Each Subgroup will be assigned to one of the four Functional Groups and the Subgroup Leader is a voting member of that assigned Functional Group.
- XVII. Task Force Representative (TFR)** – A member of a System task force who is selected by that task force's SAC to serve as a Task Force Representative (TFR). TFRs facilitate the review of, and comment on, System developed products to ensure compatibility with task force and Sponsoring Agency requirements. Through their elected Divisional Task Force Representative, TFRs will recommend to the Advisory Group's Senior Staff changes in developed products for review and consideration. The TFR is the approved primary point of contact for all formal System communications with their task force.
- XVIII. Task Force Representative – Divisional (TFR-D)** – A member of a System task force, who has been selected by their task force SAC to serve as a TFR, or appointed by their TFR to serve as Deputy TFR, and who has been elected by the other TFRs in their US&R Division (*East, Central, or West*) to represent their Division's interests in the Advisory Organization. The TFR-Ds are members of Senior Staff (see: *Section, 1-3.XII*) but will also support the TFR-N and represent their Division by attending Strategic Group meetings as non-voting participants. TFR-Ds will ensure that all work products and decisions are shared with the TFRs of their Division, and that their input is given full consideration by the Advisory Organization.
- XIX. Task Force Representative – National (TFR-N)** – A member of a System task force, selected by that task force's SAC to serve as a TFR, or appointed by their TFR to serve as Deputy TFR, elected by the System's 28 TFRs to represent their interests and ensure that their input on issues is given full consideration in the Advisory Organization. The TFR-N is a voting member of the Strategic Group who provides consolidated input from, and coordinates the functions of, the TFR-D's.
- XX. Unit** – Part of the Advisory Support Group and responsible for performing specific functions or tasks assigned by the Subgroup to which it is assigned. Units are comprised of members from System task forces, and other non-System technical experts as required. Members are chosen for their interest, experience, and expertise in the various US&R disciplines and are in either an active or reserve status (see: *Section, 1-3.X.*). Each Unit will be assigned to one of the Subgroups and the Unit Leader is a non-voting member of that assigned Subgroup.
- XXI. US&R Branch Project Officer** – A US&R Branch staff member assigned to the Strategic Group, Senior Staff, or one of the Functional Groups who serves as that entity's Federal liaison, facilitates member elections and meeting logistics, provides the FEMA perspective to ensure Federal regulations, policies, procedures, current Agency and US&R Branch priorities, and fiscal considerations are considered and/or followed, monitors progress on assigned projects and facilitates the product review, approval, and distribution processes.



# CHAPTER 2: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This chapter defines the Advisory Organization's elements, membership, leadership, and roles and responsibilities.

## 2.1 ADVISORY ORGANIZATION ELEMENTS

The Advisory Organization consists of the Strategic Group, the Advisory Group, (comprised of Senior Staff, and four Functional Group Leaders) and the Advisory Support Group (comprised of members of the four Functional Groups, Subgroups, Units, and Ad Hoc Groups) (see: *Figure 1.*). Each of these groups is responsible for developing and maintaining their respective areas. Face-to-face meetings are recommended for each group; however, electronic meetings may be utilized at any time to address issues.

- I. **US&R Strategic Group** – The Strategic Group provides the US&R Branch with recommendations to establish priorities for the System on matters regarding policy, strategic goals, budget and any issue with a financial impact on System Sponsoring Agencies and task forces.

This seven member group consists of:

- FEMA Operations Division Director (Chair)
- US&R Branch Chief
- SAC-D's (3)
- TFR-N
- Advisory Group Chair

The Strategic Group will meet face-to-face at least bi-annually, with the goal of quarterly meetings (see: *Figure 2*).

- II. **Advisory Group** – The Advisory Group reviews tasks from the Strategic Group or US&R Branch and assigns them to specific Functional Groups as appropriate, coordinates activities, reviews recommendations and work products submitted by the various organizational levels and forwards supported recommendations to the Strategic Group or US&R Branch as appropriate.

This 12 member group consists of Senior Staff, and the Leaders of the four Functional Groups (Operations, Logistics, Planning, & Finance/Admin) (see: *Figure 3*).

- A. **Senior Staff** – This group is part of the Advisory Group and is responsible for coordinating activities and reviewing products submitted by the various organizational levels within the Advisory Group.

This eight member group consists of:

- Advisory Group Chair (*only votes when there is a tie within this group*)
- Deputy Advisory Group Chair
- TFR-D's (3)
- IST-R
- US&R Branch Project Officers – Section Chiefs (2)

## National US&R Response System – Administrative Manual – Annex A

### Advisory Organization Flow Chart

Comprised of the Strategic Group, the Advisory Group, and the Advisory Support Group. Develops and approves objectives, strategies and goals.

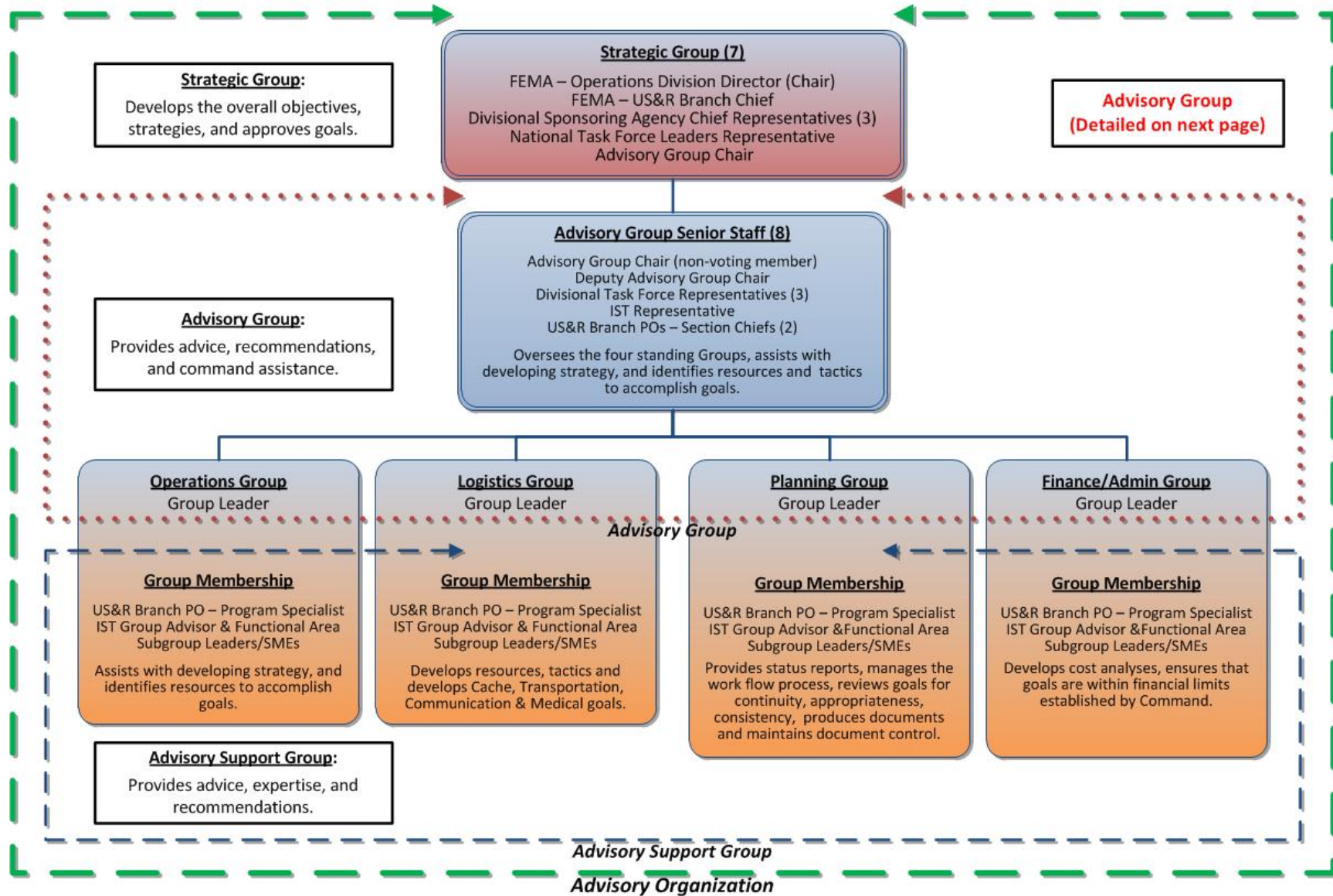


Figure 1: Advisory Organization Flow Chart

Sample Advisory Organization annual meeting timeline for the Strategic Group, Advisory Group, and Advisory Support Group.

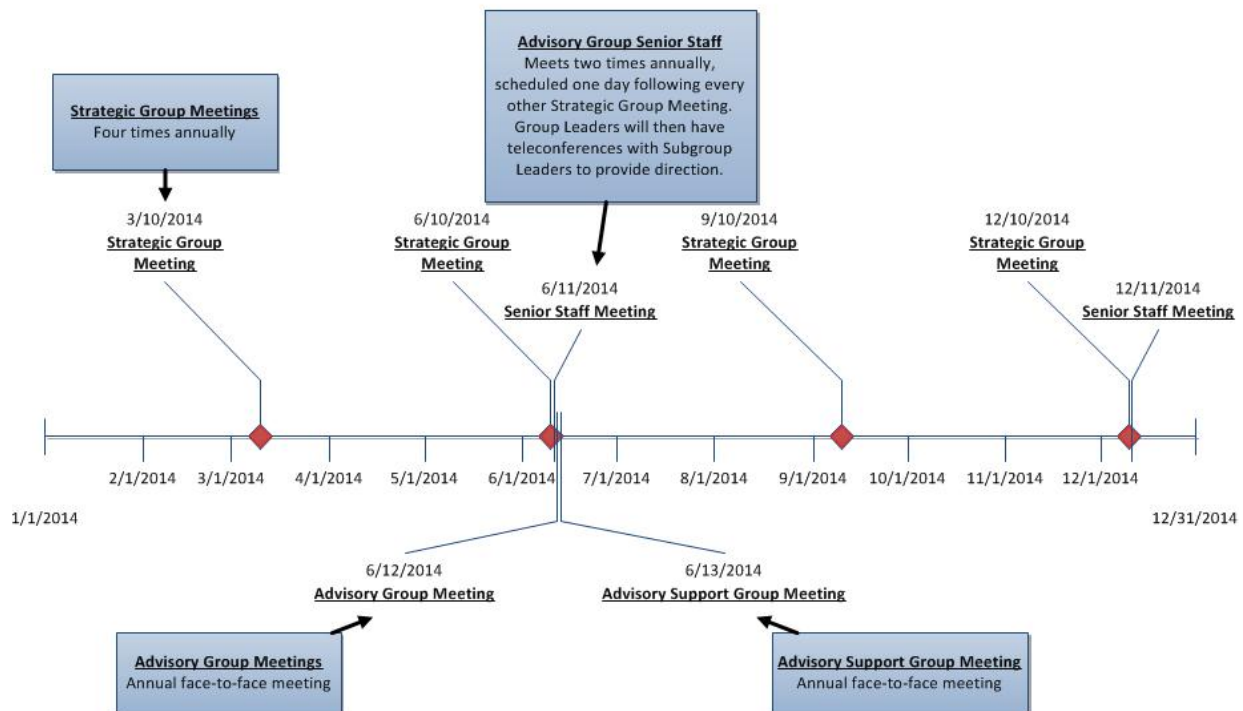


Figure 2: Advisory Organization Annual Meeting Timeline (Sample Year – 2014)

Senior Staff will meet face-to-face at least once per year, or as needed, subject to the availability of funding (see: *Figure 2*).

The US&R Branch Section Chiefs shall serve as the US&R Branch Project Officers on the Advisory Group. The Project Officers are non-voting members of Senior Staff.

**B. Functional Group Leaders** – The four Functional Groups each has a Leader who is selected annually by Senior Staff and approved by the US&R Branch Chief. Functional Group Leaders are voting members of the Advisory Group responsible for management of their Functional Group, determining the active and reserve status of members, determining additional Subject Matter Expert (SME) personnel requirements, and completion of assigned tasks.

**III. Advisory Support Group** – The Advisory Support Group is comprised of members of the four Functional Groups, all Subgroups, all Units, and Ad Hoc Groups (see: *Figure 4*). This group reviews tasks assigned by the Advisory Group, coordinates activities, and develops recommendations and work products to be submitted and forwarded for approval through their Functional Group Leader.

## National US&R Response System – Administrative Manual – Annex A

### Advisory Group Flow Chart

Comprised of Senior Staff and the four Functional Group Leaders.

Group members are functional area subject matter experts that provide advice, recommendations, and command assistance.

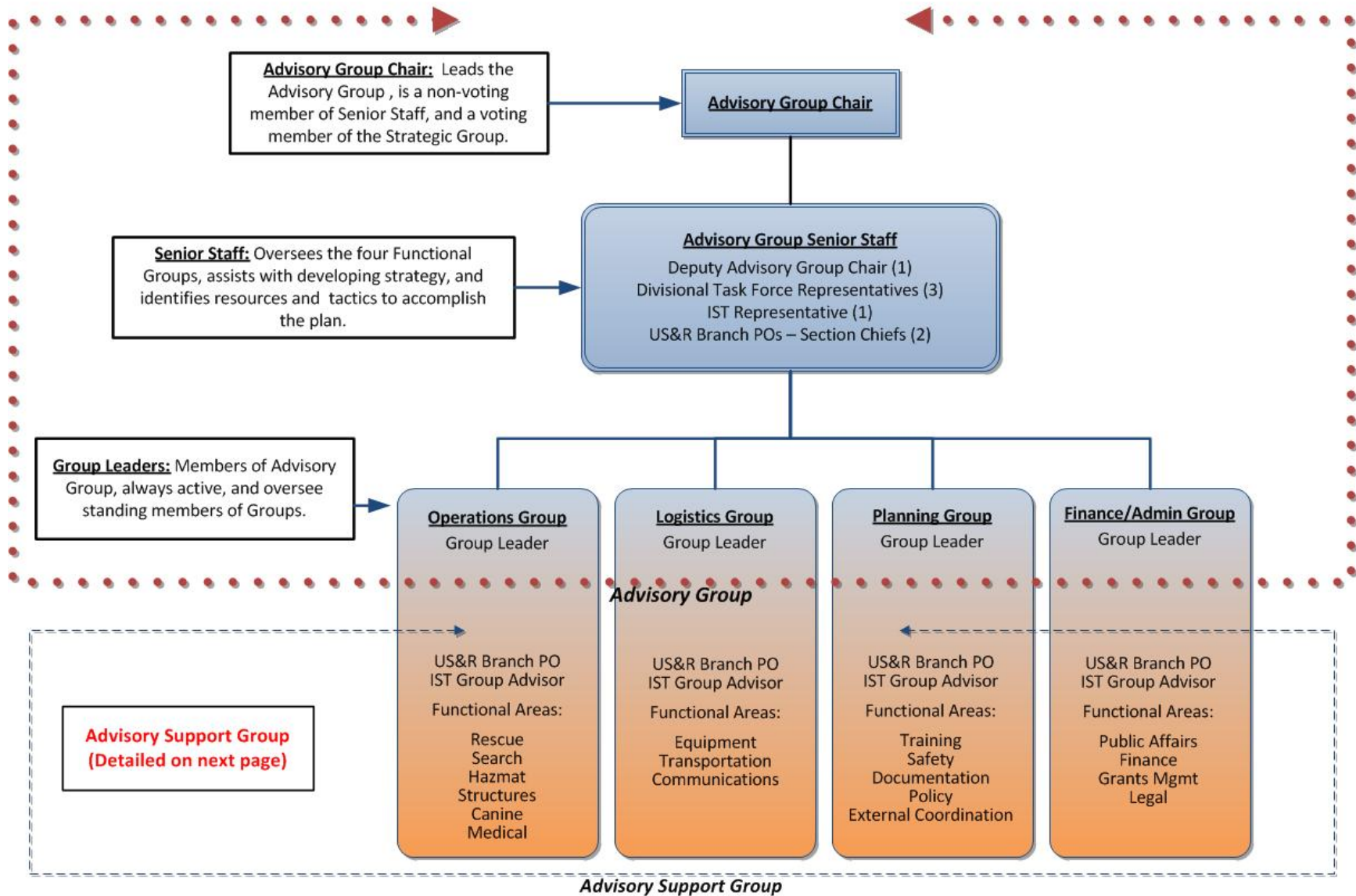


Figure 3: Advisory Group Flow Chart



**A. Functional Groups** – Four Functional Groups will address System task force and IST issues of consequence as assigned by the Advisory Group. The four Functional Group's areas of responsibilities may include:

- Operations Group
  - Rescue
  - Search
  - Hazardous Materials
  - Structures
  - Canine
  - Medical
- Logistics Group
  - Equipment
  - Transportation
  - Communications
- Planning Group
  - Training
  - Safety
  - Documentation
  - Policy
  - External Coordination
- Finance/Admin Group
  - Public Affairs
  - Finance
  - Grants Management
  - Legal

Functional Groups are each comprised of one US&R Branch Project Officer, the Leaders of the assigned Subgroups, and an IST Group Advisor. Functional Group members are part of the Advisory Support Group, with the exception of the Group Leaders who are members of the Advisory Group (see: *Section, 2-1,II.B.*).

The total number of members within each Functional Group may vary, and will be determined by the number of Subgroups assigned. A Group's members are in either an active or reserve status based on the requirements of the taskings currently assigned to the Group (see: *Section, 1-3.X.*).

The Functional Group Leaders are appointed by Senior Staff to manage the activities of the Operations, Logistics, Planning and Finance/Admin Functional Groups. The Group Leader is responsible for management of the Group, Subgroups, Units, and Ad Hoc Groups, determining the active and reserve status of members, determining additional SME personnel requirements, and completion of assigned tasks. A Deputy Group Leader is appointed by the Leader of each Group with the approval of Senior Staff.

Each Functional Group shall have one US&R Branch Project Officer, assigned by the US&R Branch Chief. Although considered a member of the Group, the Project Officer is not a voting member.

Functional Groups will meet face-to-face once a year (see: *Figure 2*). Additional face-to-face meetings are subject to justification and funding. Meetings will be open to observers but they may not participate in the business of the group, except by permission or request of the Leader.

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### Advisory Support Group Flow Chart

Comprised of four Group's members, all Subgroups, all Units, and Ad Hoc Groups as assigned.

Members are functional area subject matter experts that provide advice, expertise, and recommendations.

Members are active or inactive based on workload, and additional SMEs can be added temporarily as required based on taskings.

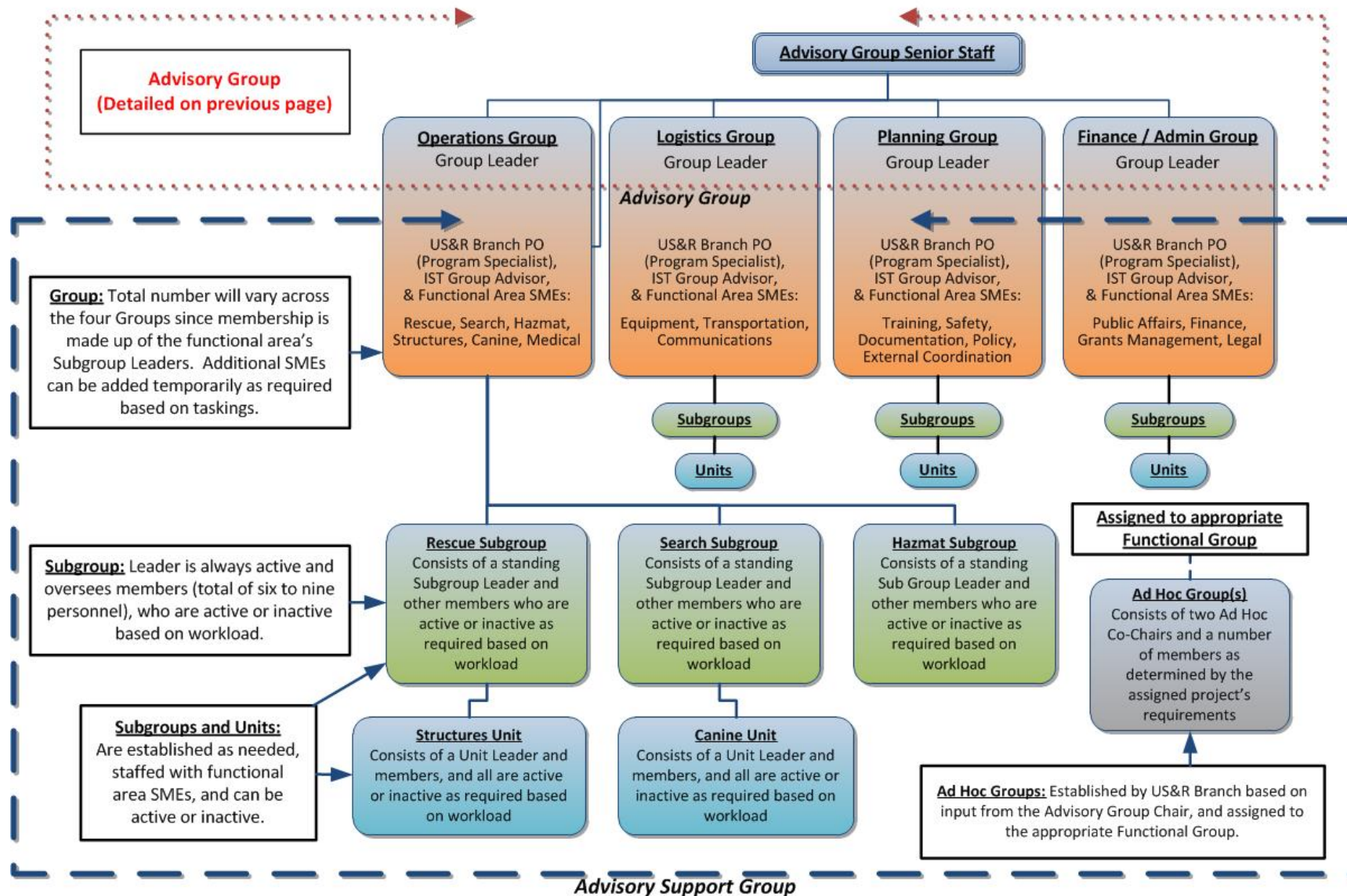


Figure 4: Advisory Support Group Flow Chart

Functional Groups will provide technical expertise and support to the Advisory Group, the Strategic Group, and the US&R Branch. Functional Groups will maintain working relationships with technical specialists, subject matter experts, US&R task forces, IST personnel, local, state, and Federal agency personnel in addressing System issues.

Functional Groups will ensure that System-developed products are compatible with regulations, mandates, operating guidelines and/or standards set for multi-disciplinary US&R operations, the National Response Framework (NRF) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Functional Groups will develop, maintain and recommend changes to System policy.

- B. Subgroup** – A Subgroup is part of the Advisory Support Group and is comprised of members from a System task force and other non-System technical experts as required, assembled to perform specific functions or tasks assigned by the Leader of the Functional Group to which it is attached. Subgroups will present recommendations and work product to their Functional Group Leader for consideration by Senior Staff.

Subgroup membership size shall be determined by Senior Staff to include a range of six to nine members including a Subgroup Leader with equal Divisional representation recommended. Each Subgroup should strive to fill at least one membership position with a System member who has IST experience.

The Subgroup Leader is selected annually by the members of the Subgroup and is approved by the Leader of its Functional Group. The Subgroup Leader is responsible for management of the Subgroup, determining the active and reserve status of members, determining additional SME personnel requirements, and completion of assigned tasks. Reports, status, and recommendations shall be sent forward through its Functional Group Leader. The Subgroup Leader is a voting member of the parent Functional Group, always considered active, and may attend Advisory Group meetings.

A Deputy Subgroup Leader is appointed by the Subgroup Leader with the approval of its Functional Group Leader.

When a Subgroup Leader needs to request additional Subgroup members, the request (including justification) must be submitted to its Functional Group Leader for approval by Senior Staff. All additional member requests must be submitted for re-approval no later than one year after the last approval date (see: *Section 3-3.III.*).

In the event that a Subgroup cannot reach consensus on a topic, its Functional Group Leader (or Deputy-Leader in the Leader's absence) will decide that issue.

Subgroups will meet face-to-face once a year (see: *Figure 2*). Additional face-to-face meetings are subject to justification and funding.

- C. Unit** – A Unit is part of the Advisory Support Group and is comprised of members from a System task force and other non-System technical experts as

required, assembled to perform specific functions or tasks assigned by its Subgroup Leader. A Unit will be attached to one of the Subgroups and the Unit Leader is a non-voting member of its parent Subgroup. Units will present recommendations and work product to their Subgroup Leader.

Unit membership size shall be determined by Senior Staff to include a range of six to nine members including a Unit Leader with equal Divisional representation recommended.

The Unit Leader is selected annually by the members of the Unit and is approved by the Leader of its Subgroup. The Unit Leader is responsible for management of the Unit, determining the active and reserve status of members, determining additional SME personnel requirements, and completion of assigned tasks. Reports, status, and recommendations shall be sent forward through its Subgroup Group Leader to its Functional Group Leader.

A Deputy Unit Leader is appointed by the Unit Leader with the approval of its Subgroup Leader.

When a Unit Leader needs to request additional Unit members, the request (including justification) must be submitted to its Subgroup Leader for approval by Senior Staff. All additional member requests must be submitted for re-approval no later than one year after the last approval date (see: *Section 3-3.III.*).

In the event that a Unit cannot reach consensus on a topic, its Subgroup Leader (or Deputy-Leader in the Leader's absence) will decide that issue.

Units will meet face-to-face once a year (see: *Figure 2*). Additional face-to-face meetings are subject to justification and funding.

**D. Ad Hoc Group** – A group that is temporarily established by the US&R Branch Chief for a specific purpose and period of time, and is part of the Advisory Support Group. A request to convene an Ad Hoc Group will be generated through the Advisory Group. The composition, organization, Co-Chairs and membership of an Ad Hoc Group will be determined by the US&R Branch Chief and Advisory Group Chair.

Each Ad Hoc Group will have two Co-Chairs, one a member of a System task force and the other will be a US&R Branch staff member (or other non-US&R Branch entity when a task requires). Membership will be for the duration of the task or assignment. The Ad Hoc Group shall meet as required to fulfill their mission and assignments, not to exceed two years, as determined by the Advisory Group Chair and the US&R Branch Chief. Upon a request from the Advisory Group, the US&R Branch Chief may extend the term of the Ad Hoc Group an additional two years. The Branch Chief may authorize it to become a standing Subgroup, Unit, or be disbanded.

Each Ad Hoc Group will be assigned to the appropriate Functional Group, as determined by the Advisory Group Chair and the US&R Branch Chief. Reports,



updates, and recommendations will be submitted to the Advisory Group Chair through its Functional Group Leader.

The Ad Hoc Group Co-Chairs shall be responsible for management of the group and the completion of all assigned tasks. The Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Group may attend Advisory Group meetings.

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# CHAPTER 3: MEMBERSHIP

This chapter describes guidelines for the membership of the Advisory Organization elements described in Chapter 2 including: general requirements; how each position is filled; how the status of members are determined, changed and shortfalls addressed; conduct of annual participation reviews; filling of unanticipated vacancies; and the removal process.

## 3-1. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

The National US&R Response System Advisory Organization is comprised of the Strategic Group, the Advisory Group, and the Advisory Support Group. Members are selected to ensure a balanced representation of expertise across the System.

- I. **System Members** – Members must be qualified to fill the goals and objectives as stated in the vacancy announcement of the position for which they are applying. Individuals must be from and supported by a System task force.
- II. **Non-System Members** – Non-System members must be qualified to fill the goals and objectives as stated in the vacancy announcement of the position for which they are applying. Additionally, without a Sponsoring or Participation Agency Letter of Support, they must demonstrate their ability to participate which includes identification of funding and the ability to complete administrative assignments. Non-System members may not be selected for a TFR-D, TFR-N, or Advisory Group Chair position.
- III. **Letter of Support** – Individuals must provide a letter of support to participate, signed by their TFR and Sponsoring Agency Chief. Members of task force Participating Agencies must also provide a letter of support from their Participating Agency Chief that must be submitted through the task force Sponsoring Agency. A completed letter of support indicates that the TFR and Sponsoring Agency Chief ensure financial support will be provided by their agencies' Cooperative Agreement for the individual to participate in the Advisory Organization.
- IV. **Code of Conduct** – With acceptance of an appointment, members agree to adhere to the policies, procedures, and the US&R Code of Conduct (see: *National US&R Response System – Operations Manual 12-001 – current version*) that govern the System. Failure to do so will result in a recommendation of removal for cause.
- V. **Ethics** – With acceptance of an appointment members agree to annually complete, and adhere to the ethical principles as described in, the current FEMA Ethics Orientation course specified in the System's General Training Requirements (see: *National US&R Response System – Training Program Administration Manual*). Failure to do so will result in a recommendation of removal for cause.
- VI. **Multiple Memberships** – Individuals may only serve on one Functional Group, Subgroup, Unit, or as a TFR Representative (National or Divisional) at a time. However, they may serve concurrently on Ad Hoc Groups.

- VII. **Change of Affiliation** – Members changing task force affiliation must submit a letter of support from their newly affiliated task force Sponsoring Agency through the appropriate TFR-D to the Advisory Group Chair.

## 3-2. SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT PROCESS

The US&R Branch, in coordination with the Strategic Group, is responsible for ensuring the approval and appointment of qualified individuals to fill vacancies such as the Advisory Group Chair, Functional Groups, Subgroups, Units, and Ad Hoc Group memberships using established timelines. All positions will require completed application packages which will include:

- An electronic version of the FEMA US&R Advisory Organization Resume (see: *Appendix A-1*) indicating their knowledge, skills, abilities, experience; and
- A Letter of Support (see: *Appendix A-2*) signed by the applicant's TFR, Participating Agency Chief (if applicable), and Sponsoring Agency Chief. (*Non-System members without a Sponsoring Agency must submit a letter specifying funding and support from the entity they represent.*)

- I. **Sponsoring Agency Chief Representatives (Divisional)** – The three Divisional Sponsoring Agency Chiefs (SACR-D) will be elected by the System's Sponsoring Agency Chiefs in each of their respective Divisions. The SACR-Ds will represent their Division's task forces for a three year term, not to exceed three consecutive terms. The terms shall begin on May 1<sup>st</sup> and be staggered so only that the term of only one SACR-D expires each year.

The TFR-N will facilitate the annual election for the SACR-D position expiring that year using the following process and timeline (see: *Figure 5*):

The three Sponsoring Agency Chief's Representative – Divisional (SACR-D) will be elected by the System's Sponsoring Agency Chiefs in each of their respective Divisions. The SACR-Ds will represent their Division's task forces for a three year term, not to exceed three consecutive terms. The terms shall begin on May 1<sup>st</sup> and be staggered so that the term of only one SACR-D expires each year.

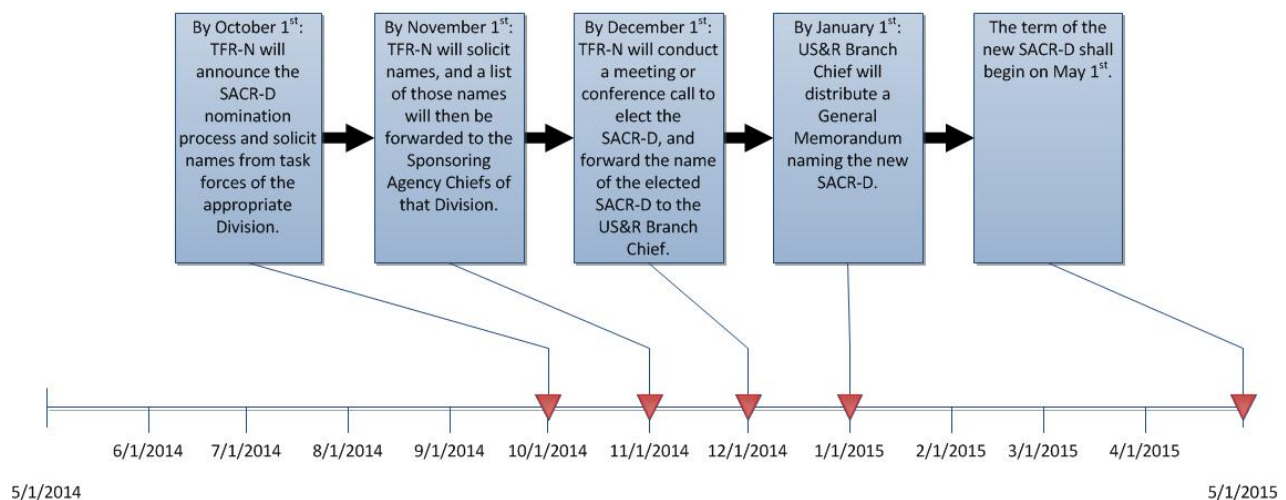


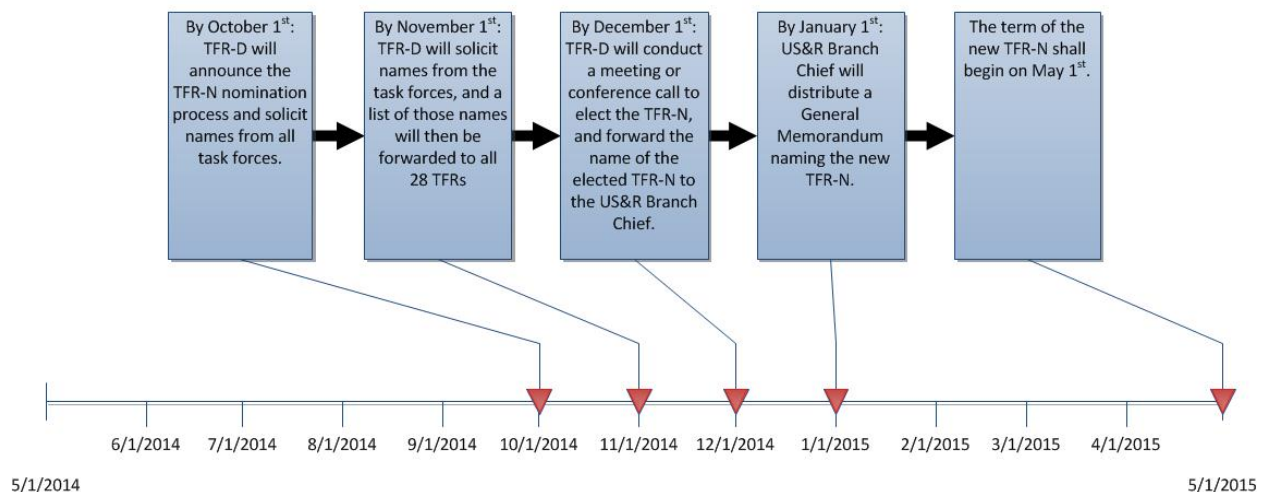
Figure 5: Sponsoring Agency Chief Representative-Divisional Selection Timeline

- A. By October 1<sup>st</sup>, the TFR-N will announce to the affected Division the nomination process for SACR-D and solicit names from the Division's task forces.
- B. Until November 1<sup>st</sup>, the TFR-N will solicit names from the Division's task forces, and a list of those names will then be forwarded to the Sponsoring Agency Chiefs of that Division.
- C. By December 1<sup>st</sup>, the TFR-N will conduct a meeting or conference call to elect the SACR-D, and forward the name of the elected SACR-D to the US&R Branch Chief.
- D. By January 1<sup>st</sup>, the US&R Branch Chief will distribute a General Memorandum naming the new SACR-D.

**II. Task Force Representative (National)** – The TFR-N position is elected by the System's Task Force Representatives for a three year term that shall begin on May 1<sup>st</sup>, not to exceed three consecutive terms.

With concurrence of the three TFR-Ds, one of the TFR-Ds will be appointed by the US&R Branch Chief to facilitate the TFR-N election process during the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the incumbent's term. The appointed TFR-D will facilitate election of the TFR-N position using the following process and timeline (see: *Figure 6*):

The Task Force Representative – National (TFR-N) will be elected by the System's Task Force Representatives for a three year term that shall begin on May 1<sup>st</sup>, not to exceed three consecutive terms.



**Figure 6: Task Force Representative-National Selection Timeline**

- A. By October 1<sup>st</sup>, the TFR-D will announce to the System the nomination process for TFR-N and solicit names from the System's task forces.
- B. Until November 1<sup>st</sup>, the TFR-D will solicit names from the System's task forces, and a list of those names will then be forwarded to the System TFRs.
- C. By December 1<sup>st</sup>, the TFR-D will conduct a meeting or conference call to elect the TFR-N, and forward the name of the elected TFR-N to the US&R Branch

Chief. At the appointed meeting or conference call, the TFR from each System task force shall cast the vote for their task force's TFR-N selection.

- D. By January 1st, the US&R Branch Chief will distribute a General Memorandum naming the new TFR-N.

**III. Advisory Group Chair** – The Advisory Group Chair is appointed by the US&R Branch Chief for a three year term beginning May 1st, not to exceed three consecutive terms using the following process and timeline:

- A. By December 1<sup>st</sup> of the last year of the three year term, the US&R Branch Chief will reappoint the incumbent or have conducted a formal application process using the Functional Group/Subgroup process to select an Advisory Group Chair (see: *Section 3-2.VIII*).
- B. By January 1st, the US&R Branch Chief will distribute a General Memorandum naming the Advisory Group Chair.
- C. Deputy Advisory Group Chair – The Advisory Group Chair will recommend for appointment by the US&R Branch Chief, a member of a System task force to serve as the Deputy Advisory Group Chair for a three year term beginning May 1st, not to exceed three consecutive terms. In the event the Advisory Group Chair vacates that position, the Deputy Advisory Group Chair will serve as the interim Leader until an official appointment can be made through the normal election process.

**IV. Task Force Representative (Divisional)** – The three TFR-Ds will be elected by the System's TFRs in each of their respective Divisions. The TFR-Ds will represent their Division's task forces for a three year term, not to exceed three consecutive terms. The terms shall begin on May 1<sup>st</sup> and be staggered so only that the term of only one TFR-D expires each year.

The TFR-N will facilitate the annual election for the TFR-D position expiring that year using the following process and timeline (see: *Figure 7*):

- A. By October 1<sup>st</sup>, the TFR-N will announce to the affected Division the nomination process for TFR-D and solicit application packages from the Division's task forces.
- B. By November 1<sup>st</sup>, the application packages must be returned to the TFR-N who will confirm that each includes an appropriate resume and Letter of Support and then forward the electronic packages to the TFR's of that Division.
- C. By December 1<sup>st</sup>, the TFR-N will conduct a meeting or conference call to elect the TFR-D, and forward the name of the elected TFR-D to the US&R Branch Chief.
- D. By January 1<sup>st</sup>, the US&R Branch Chief will distribute a General Memorandum naming the new TFR-D.

The three Task Force Representative – Divisional (TFR-D) will be elected by the System's Task Force Representatives in each of their respective Divisions. The TFR-Ds will represent their Division's task forces for a three year term, not to exceed three consecutive terms. The terms shall begin on May 1<sup>st</sup> and be staggered so that the term of only one TFR-D expires each year.

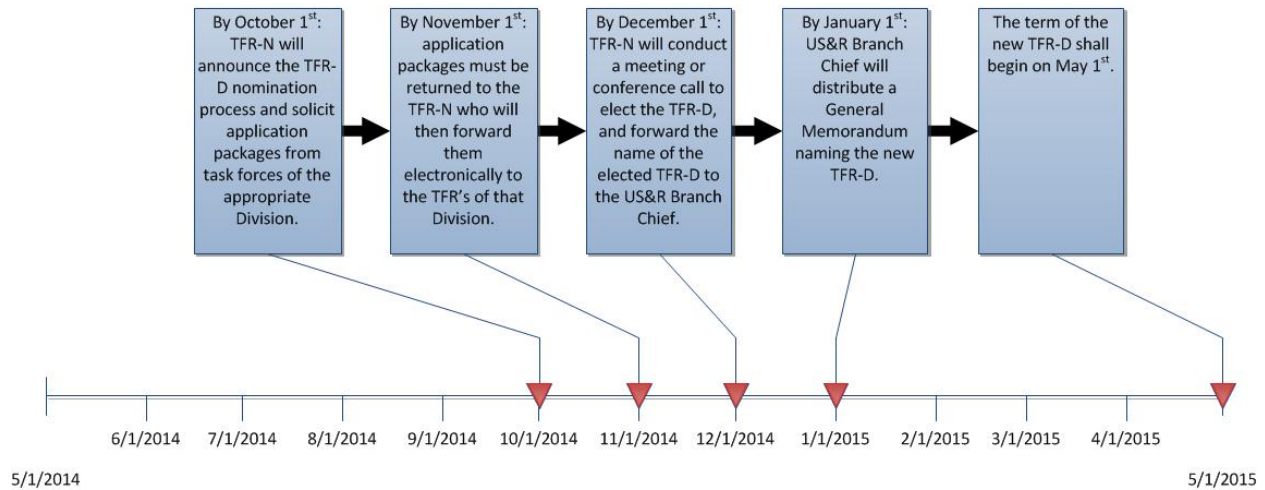


Figure 7: Task Force Representative-Divisional Selection Timeline

- V. **Incident Support Team Representative (IST-R)** – The IST Representative shall be selected by the Advisory Group Chair from a list of current IST Leaders or Deputy IST Leaders. The IST-R will represent the ISTs for a three year term that shall begin on May 1<sup>st</sup>, not to exceed three consecutive terms.

The Advisory Group Chair will facilitate filling the IST-R position expiring that year using the following process and timeline (see: *Figure 8*):

The Incident Support Team Representative (IST-R) shall be selected by the Advisory Group Chair from a list of current IST Leaders or Deputy IST Leaders. The IST-R will represent the IST's interests for a three year term that shall begin on May 1<sup>st</sup>, not to exceed three consecutive terms.

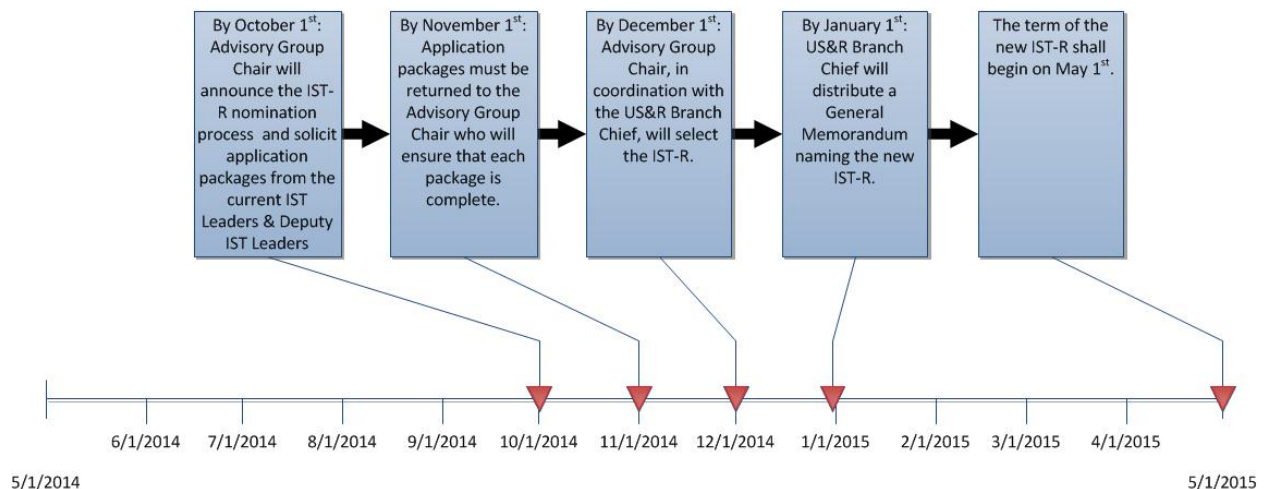


Figure 8: IST Representative Selection Timeline

- A. By October 1<sup>st</sup>, the Advisory Group Chair will announce the solicitation process for IST-R and solicit application packages from all current IST Leaders and Deputy IST Leaders.



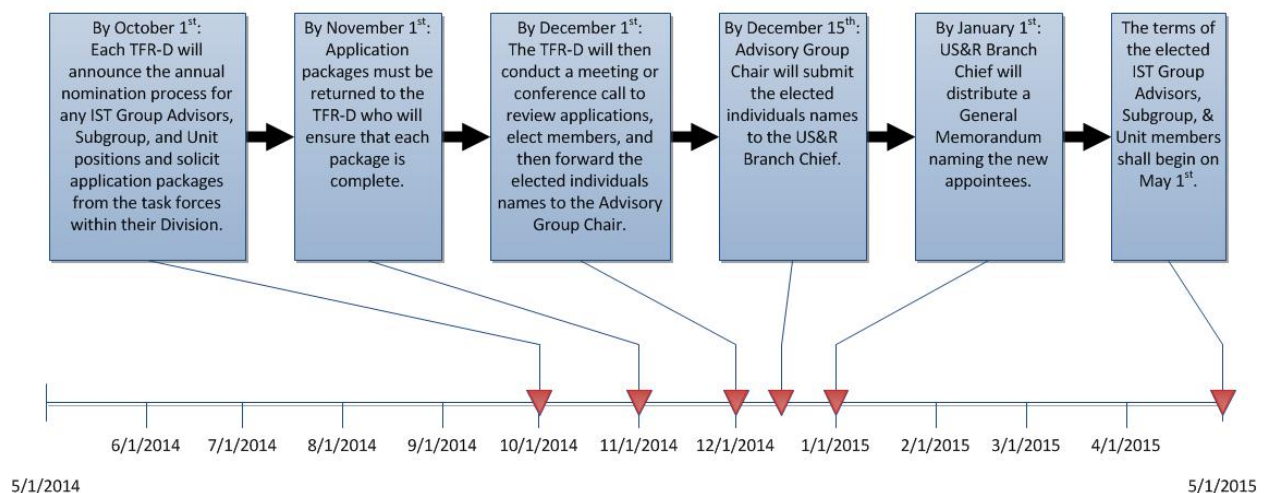
- B. By November 1st, the application packages must be returned to the Advisory Group Chair who will confirm that each includes an appropriate resume and Letter of Support.
- C. By December 1st, the Advisory Group Chair, in coordination with the US&R Branch Chief, will appoint the IST-R, and forward the name of the selected IST-R to the US&R Branch Chief.
- D. By January 1st, the US&R Branch Chief will distribute a General Memorandum naming the new IST-R.

**VI. Functional Groups** – Functional Groups consist of Functional Group Leaders, IST Group Advisors, leaders of the assigned Subgroups, and other technical experts. The number of members may vary between the four Functional Groups.

**VII. IST Group Advisors, Subgroups and Units** – IST Group Advisors, Subgroup and Unit members are elected for a term of three years, beginning on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Members are limited to three consecutive terms in any one Functional Group/Subgroup/Unit. The terms of one third of IST Group Advisors, Subgroup, and Unit members (with equal Divisional representation recommended) will expire each year, on April 30<sup>th</sup>. IST Group Advisors, Subgroup, and Unit openings occur when a member's three-year term expires, or when a member leaves during his/her term.

A call for nominations for the annual IST Group Advisors, Subgroup, and Unit vacancies shall be made in accordance with the following guidelines and timeline (see: Figure 9):

The IST Group Advisors, Subgroup and Unit positions are elected for a three year term, not to exceed three consecutive terms.  
The terms shall begin on May 1<sup>st</sup> and one-third of the IST Group Advisors, Subgroup and Unit positions expire each year



**Figure 9: IST-Group Advisor, Subgroup Member and Unit Member Selection Timeline**

- A. By October 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, each TFR-D will announce the annual nomination process for any IST Group Advisors, Subgroup, and Unit positions and solicit application packages from the task forces within their Division. This request will be based on information supplied by the Functional Group/Subgroup/Unit



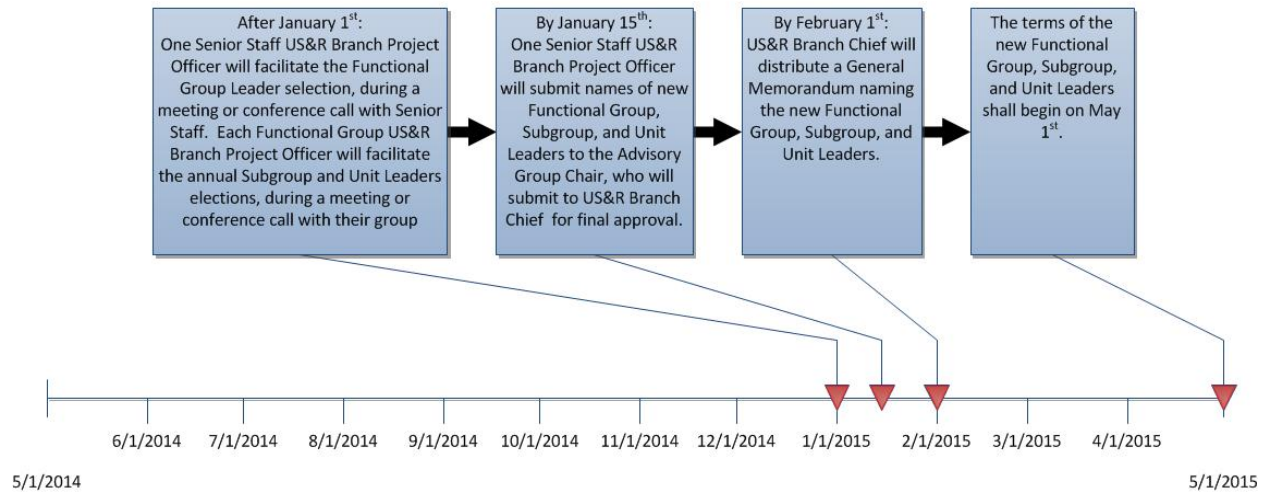
Leader identifying vacancies, requirements, and the names of members whose terms will expire.

- 1) To meet the certain unique requirements, a Functional Group, Subgroup, or Unit may have special requirements in membership. The appropriate Functional Group Leader and Advisory Group Chair may develop specific criteria in addition to the minimum qualifications (see: *Section 3.1*). Minimum qualification information and any specific criteria developed will be transmitted with the request for application packages.
  - 2) Any individual, filling an IST Group Advisor, Subgroup, or Unit position, may apply for another position without first resigning from their current position. If elected, their vacancy will be filled as an unanticipated vacancy (see: *Section 3-5.*), if not elected they will retain their current position.
- B. By November 1<sup>st</sup>, the application packages must be returned to the TFR-D who will confirm that each includes an appropriate resume and Letter of Support and then forward the electronic packages to the TFR's of that Division.
- C. By December 1<sup>st</sup>, the TFR-D will then conduct a meeting or conference call to review applications, elect members, and then forward the names of the elected individuals to the Advisory Group Chair.
- The criteria for IST Group Advisors, Subgroup, or Unit membership will be based on the applicant's background, experience, subject matter knowledge, level of participation and value to the System. Overall task force distribution of membership should be considered in the prioritization process.
- D. By December 15<sup>th</sup>, the Advisory Group Chair will submit the names of the elected individuals to the US&R Branch Chief.
- E. By January 1<sup>st</sup>, the US&R Branch Chief will distribute a General Memorandum naming the new appointees.

**VIII. Functional Group Leaders, Subgroup Leaders and Unit Leaders** – Functional Group Leaders are selected by Senior Staff and appointed for a three year term that shall begin on May 1<sup>st</sup>, not to exceed three consecutive terms. Subgroup Leaders and Unit Leaders are elected annually by each Subgroup's or Unit's members, and approved by the Leader of each group's parent group, for a one year term that shall begin on May 1<sup>st</sup>.

The US&R Branch Project Officers will facilitate the annual selection of Functional Group Leaders, and election of Subgroup and Unit Leaders using the following process and timeline (see: *Figure 10*):

Functional Group Leaders are selected by Senior Staff and appointed for a three year term that shall begin on May 1<sup>st</sup>, not to exceed three consecutive terms. Subgroup Leaders and Unit Leaders are elected annually by the members of each group, and are approved by the Leader of each group's parent group, for a one year term that shall begin on May 1<sup>st</sup>.



**Figure 10: Functional Group Leaders and Subgroup Leaders Selection Timeline**

- A. After January 1<sup>st</sup>, one Senior Staff US&R Branch Project Officer will facilitate the annual Functional Group Leader selection, during a meeting or conference call with Senior Staff. Each Functional Group US&R Branch Project Officer will facilitate the annual Subgroup and Unit Leaders elections, during a meeting or conference call with their group.
- B. By January 15<sup>th</sup>, each Functional Group US&R Branch Project Officer will forward the names of the elected Subgroup and Unit Leaders to one Senior Staff US&R Branch Project Officer, who will then forward the names of all selected Functional Group Leaders and elected Subgroup and Unit Leaders to the Advisory Group Chair. The Advisory Group Chair will then submit the names to the US&R Branch Chief for final approval.
- C. By February 1<sup>st</sup>, the US&R Branch Chief will distribute a General Memorandum naming the Functional Group, Subgroup and Unit Leaders.
- D. Deputy Leader – Each Functional Group Leader, Subgroup Leader and Unit Leader will select a Deputy Leader from their group's membership to serve in their absence. In the event a Functional Group Leader, Subgroup Leader or Unit Leader vacates their position, the Deputy Leader will serve as the interim Leader until an official appointment can be made through the normal election process.

- IX. **Ad Hoc Group** – The composition, organization, Co-Chairs and membership of an Ad Hoc Group will be determined by the US&R Branch Chief and Advisory Group Chair from a list of potential members developed by the Advisory Group. The members are appointed by the US&R Branch Chief for a term defined by the anticipated duration of the Ad Hoc Group. Membership terms shall begin on the date specified in the General Memorandum announcing the Ad Hoc Group's establishment.

Each Ad Hoc Group will have two Co-Chairs, one a member of a System task force and the other will be a US&R Branch staff member (or other non-US&R Branch entity when a task requires).

Once an Advisory Group's request to convene an Ad Hoc Group has been approved by the US&R Branch Chief, members will be appointed using the following process:

- A. Within 15 calendar days, each TFR-D will poll their Division's task forces for the names of potential members based on Sponsoring Agency support, time commitment, and the skills necessary to meet the intended Ad Hoc Group's requirements.
- B. Within the next 7 calendar days each TFR-D will submit their Division's list to the Advisory Group Chair for consolidation.
- C. Within the next 7 calendar days the Advisory Group Chair will conduct a call to review the consolidated list with the Advisory Group. Based on the intended Ad Hoc Group's requirements, the resulting final list developed for submission to the US&R Branch Chief will be prioritized to reflect the Advisory Group's recommendations.
- D. Within the next 7 calendar days the US&R Branch Chief and the Advisory Group Chair will identify the Co-Chairs and members of the Ad Hoc Group to be appointed by the US&R Branch Chief, using the list provided by the Advisory Group.
- E. Within the next 7 calendar days the US&R Branch Chief will distribute a General Memorandum establishing the Ad Hoc Group.

If the US&R Branch Chief and Strategic Group determine that due to extenuating circumstances (such as an issue with an immediate timeframe that may impact safety, budget, or is subject to political sensitivity) an Ad Hoc Group must be seated immediately and there is not time to use the process above, they may request from the FEMA Operations Division Director approval to use the process below:

- F. If the FEMA Operations Division Director approves the request:
  - 1) The establishment of a 90-day Ad Hoc Group will be authorized, allowing the process above to be either passed up or expedited.
  - 2) The US&R Branch Chief and the Advisory Group Chair will identify the Co-Chairs and members of the Ad Hoc Group to be appointed by the US&R Branch Chief, using a list they develop with the help of Senior Staff.

### **3-3. STATUS**

The System requirements of the Advisory Organization vary between each entity within it, and change over time. In order to be flexible enough to meet the needs of the System, while taking into consideration the impact on Sponsoring Agencies and System personnel serving

as Advisory Group members, Functional Groups, Subgroups, and Units need the ability to readily expand or contract membership.

To foster flexibility, while still identifying appropriate personnel, members of Functional Groups, Subgroups, and Units, will be considered to be in an active or reserve status based on current requirements of the group. Upon appointment to a Functional Group, Subgroup, or Unit, each new member will be placed at the bottom of the Membership Status List (*see: Appendix C.*).

- I. **Determining Status** – Functional Group, Subgroup, and Unit Leaders will determine the status of their personnel using the following criteria:
  - A. Members will be in an active status when assembled to perform specific actions or tasks related to their group’s functional areas of responsibility, to meet ongoing goals and objectives of the System.
  - B. Members not tasked to perform specific actions will be placed in a reserve status during periods of time when there are little to no requirements of the group. Members in a reserve status are permitted to stay informed on group business and are permitted, but not required, to attend meetings. Incurring travel costs to attend meetings is at the discretion of the member’s task force.
  - C. When a group receives a tasking, the Leader will assess it and determine what staffing will be required to meet the task.
  - D. When there are enough members of the group already in an active status to address the task, no further members will be moved from reserve to active.
  - E. When there are not enough members in an active Status to address the task, and there are members in reserve, the Leader shall use the process defined below (*see: Section 3-3.II*).
  - F. When there are not enough members in an active status to address the task, and there are not enough members in reserve, the Leader shall address the staffing shortage using the process as described above (*see: Section 3-3.III*).
  - G. All members will participate in any decision making process for their group whether in an active or reserve status.
  - H. Additional SME’s may be added temporarily as required based on the recommendation of the Functional Group Leader, to include length of temporary assignment. Extensions to the length of any approved temporary assignment may be requested by Functional Group Leader.
- II. **Changing Status** – As the requirements on Functional Groups, Subgroups, and Units change, Leaders will need to change the status of their personnel. When a change in member status is needed, the affected Leader will (*see: Figure 11*):

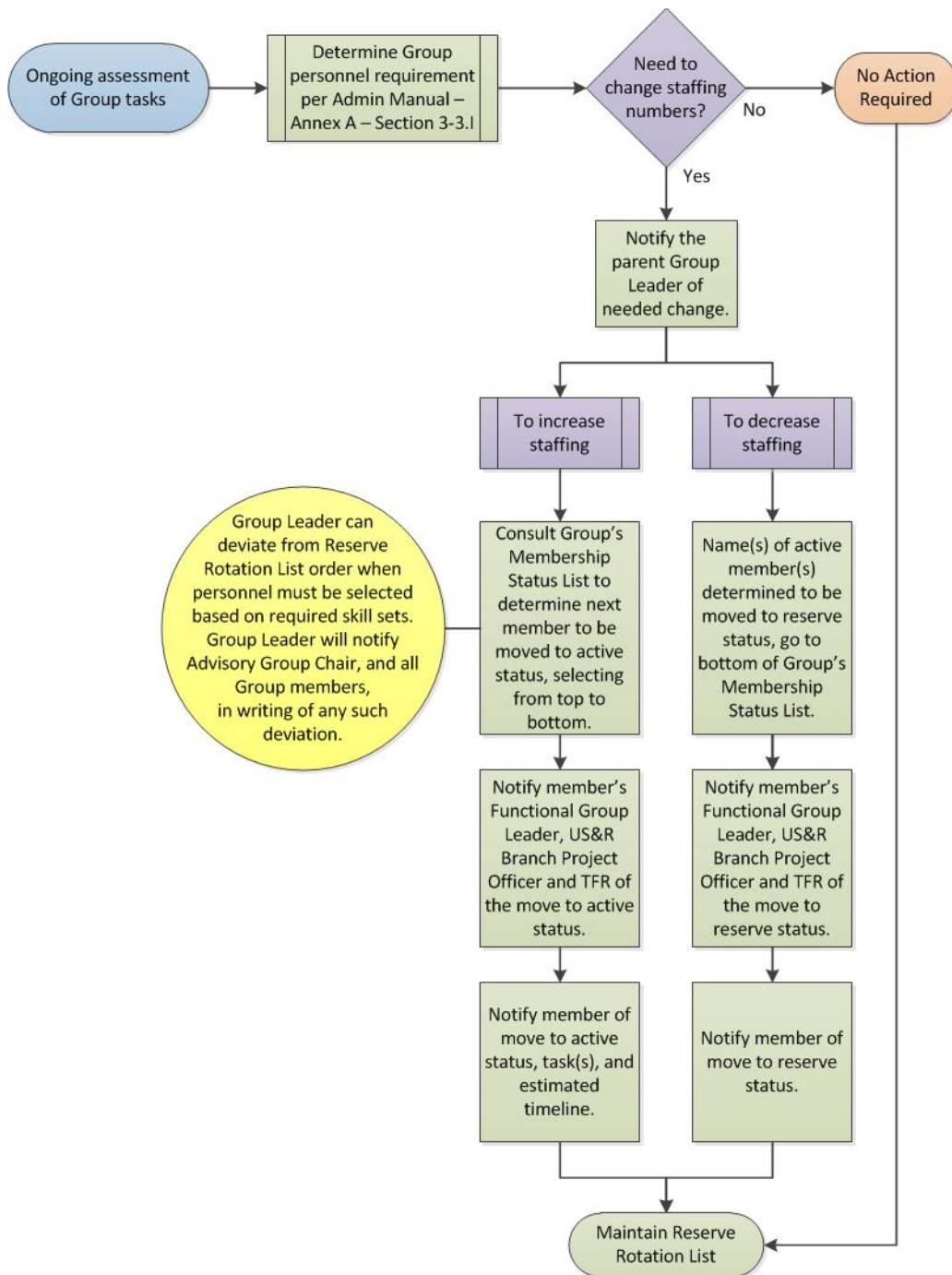


Figure 11: Advisory Organization Personnel Status Change Flow Chart

- A. Notify the parent Group Leader that the determined number of members needed to meet the tasking requirement (see: *Section 3-3.1.C*) will be activated from reserve status.
- B. Consult the Group's Membership Status List (see: *Appendix C*) to determine the next member(s) to be activated.

- 1) Each Group Leader must maintain a standing Group Membership Status List of all assigned personnel.
  - 2) When an Active member is moved to Reserve, their name goes to the bottom of the rotation.
  - 3) Any change in status from Reserve to Active results in the selection of the personnel on the Group Membership Status List in order from top to bottom.
  - 4) The Group Leader has the right to deviate from the Group Membership Status List order when personnel must be selected based on the skill sets required by the task(s) being addressed.
  - 5) The Group Leader will notify the Advisory Group Chair, and all Group members, in writing of any deviation from the Group Membership Status List providing the details of the task(s) and reason(s) for the deviation.
- C. Notify the identified member's Functional Group Leader, US&R Branch Project Officer and Task Force Representative of the change in status.
  - D. Notify the identified member that they are being activated, what their task(s) will be, and an estimated completion timeline.
  - E. Upon completion of the task, place any member not required to complete any other assigned tasks in reserve.
  - F. Notify the identified member's Functional Group Leader, US&R Branch Project Officer and Task Force Representative that member has been placed in reserve.

**III. Staffing Shortfalls** – Once required staffing is identified (*see: Section 3-3.1.C*), and if there are not enough rostered members in reserve to address a shortfall, the affected Group Leader will use the following process:

- A. The affected Functional Group/Subgroup Leader will submit a request to the Advisory Group Chair stating the number of, and justification for, non-Advisory Organization members needed to meet the tasking requirement.
- B. The Advisory Group Chair shall approve or deny all requests for additional non-Advisory Organization personnel and notify the requesting Leader.
- C. When a request is approved, the requesting Leader will identify a proposed list of personnel to be activated to meet the requirement and provide that list to the Advisory Group Chair.
- D. The Advisory Group Chair will submit the list of requested non-Advisory Organization personnel to the US&R Branch Chief for temporary utilization.
- E. The US&R Branch will work with the appropriate Sponsoring Agency or non-System organization to notify the identified personnel that they are being utilized, what their task(s) will be, and an estimated completion timeline.

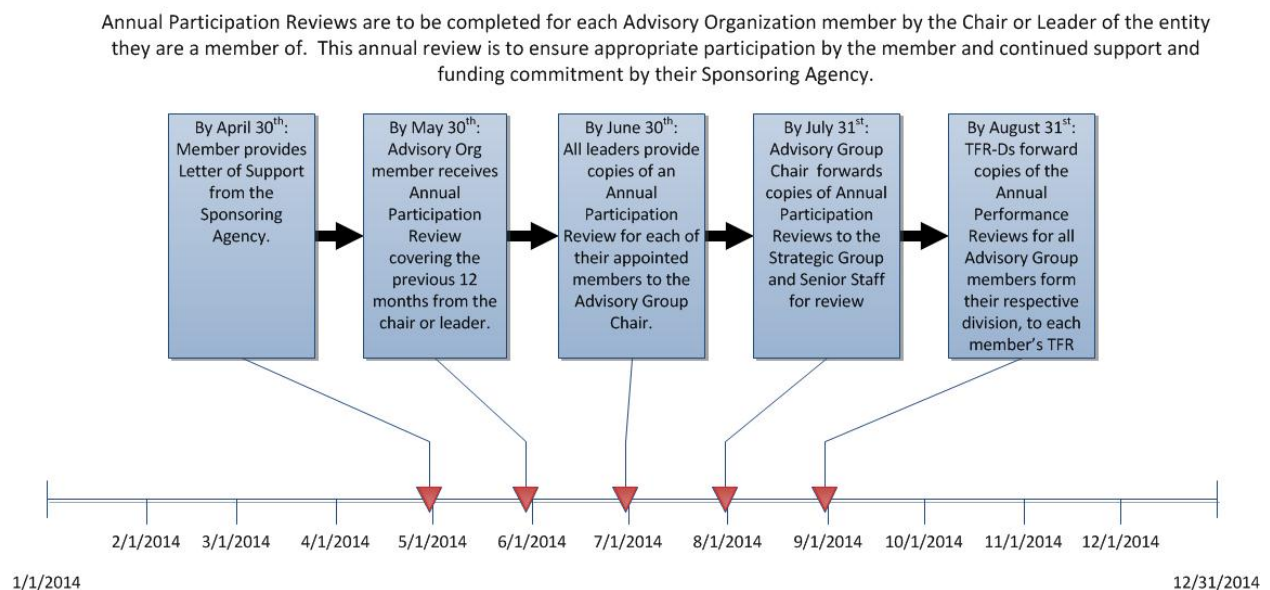


- F. All additional member requests must be submitted for re-approval no later than one year after the last approval date.
- G. Upon completion of the task, all non-Advisory Organization personnel activated to meet the request will be released.

### 3-4. ANNUAL PARTICIPATION REVIEW

Annual reviews are to be completed for each Advisory Organization member by the Chair or Leader of the entity to which they are a member. This annual review is to ensure appropriate participation by the member (based upon their status of active or reserve) and continued support and funding commitment by their Sponsoring Agency.

Annual participation reviews are to be completed using the following process and timeline (see: Figure 12):



**Figure 12: Advisory Organization Annual Participation Review Timeline**

- I. By April 30<sup>th</sup>, each Advisory Organization standing member will provide a letter from their Sponsoring Agency indicating a continued support and funding commitment for the member to a group/unit to the Chair or Leader of the entity of which they are a member.
- II. By May 31<sup>st</sup>, using the Annual Participation Review form (see: Appendix A-8) each standing Advisory Organization member must receive an Annual Participation Review covering the previous 12 months from the Chair or Leader of the entity of which they are a member. Leaders of Groups, Subgroups, Units and Ad Hoc Groups must receive an Annual Participation Review from their reporting entity's Chair or Leader.
- III. By June 30<sup>th</sup>, the Leaders of all Groups, Subgroups, Units and Ad Hoc Groups must provide copies of an Annual Participation Review for each of their appointed members to the Advisory Group Chair.

- IV. By July 31<sup>st</sup>, the Advisory Group Chair will forward copies of an Annual Participation Review for all Advisory Organization members to the Strategic Group and Senior Staff for review.
- V. By August 31<sup>st</sup>, the TFR-Ds will forward copies of an Annual Participation Review for all Advisory Organization members from their respective Division, to the each member's TFR.

The Annual Participation Reviews should be considered by TFRs when determining whether to approve reappointment of standing Advisory Organization members. This would especially come into play when members are seeking reappointment to a Group, Subgroup, or Unit.

### 3-5. UNANTICIPATED VACANCIES

A membership vacancy occurring outside of the annual process defined above is an unanticipated vacancy. When an unanticipated vacancy occurs, it shall be filled in accordance with the following guidelines:

- I. The affected Functional Group/Subgroup Leader will notify the Advisory Group Chair of the vacancy and of any special requirements.
- II. The Advisory Group Chair will notify Senior Staff of the vacancy.
- III. The vacancy will be filled in accordance to the IST Group Advisor/Subgroup/Unit process above (see: *Section 3-2.VII*).
  - A. When the term of the vacancy is less than one year, the appointed/elected member will complete the duration of that term, plus the next full three year term.
  - B. When the term of the vacancy is for one year or greater, appointed/elected member will complete the duration of that term.
- IV. When an unanticipated vacancy occurs on the Strategic Group or Senior Staff, the vacancy will be filled in accordance with the position appropriate selection process (see: *Section 3-2.*).
  - A. When the term of the vacancy is less than one year, the appointed/elected member will complete the duration of that term, plus the next full three year term.
  - B. When the term of the vacancy is for one year or greater, appointed/elected member will complete the duration of that term.

### 3-6. REMOVAL PROCESS

Any Member of the Advisory Organization may be removed from their position at any time for cause. This can include System Code of Conduct violations, ethical violations, unsatisfactory Annual Participation Review, the withdrawal of support (funding or otherwise) from the



Sponsoring Agency, or other cause determined by Senior Staff to be detrimental to the Advisory Organization.

When a vacancy occurs due to the removal of a member, the vacancy will be filled in accordance to the process described above (see: *Section 3-5*).

- I. **Withdrawal of Support** – A Sponsoring Agency can withdraw support for a member to participate in the Advisory Organization at any time. If that occurs, the following process will be utilized;
  - A. The SAC shall notify the US&R Branch Chief in writing of the withdrawal of support.
  - B. The US&R Branch Chief shall notify the Advisory Group Chair, who will notify Senior Staff, the member, the member's Leader, and the parent Functional/Subgroup Leader (if organizationally appropriate).
  - C. The member's participation shall terminate immediately or as requested by the SAC with no right of appeal.
- II. **Involuntary Removal** – If it is determined that there is a need to remove a member involuntarily, the following process will be utilized:
  - A. The member's Leader will notify the member, the parent Functional/Subgroup Leader (if organizationally appropriate), and the Advisory Group Chair of the request for removal.
  - B. The member identified for potential removal then has 15 days from the official date of notification to appeal the request for removal to the Advisory Group Chair.
  - C. The Advisory Group Chair will gather the facts of the situation and make a recommendation on whether or not to remove the member to Senior Staff and the US&R Branch Chief.
  - D. The US&R Branch Chief will make a determination on whether or not to remove the member and any appropriate action, based on the facts provided. If the US&R Branch Chief's decision is to remove the member, there is no appeal. The US&R Branch Chief is the Appointing Authority for the System.
  - E. The US&R Branch Chief will notify the member, the Advisory Group Chair, Senior Staff, the member's Leader, the parent Functional/Subgroup Leader (if organizationally appropriate), the member's TFR, and Sponsoring Agency Chief.

Complaints against the Advisory Group Chair, the TFR-N, or a TFR-D will be submitted directly to the US&R Branch Chief who will determine the best means by which to resolve the issue.

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# CHAPTER 4: DECISION PROCESS

This chapter describes the Advisory Organization process that governs the review of issues, the development of recommendations, and establishes the procedure for coordinated interaction between the US&R Branch, Advisory Organization, Sponsoring Agency Chiefs, and Task Force Representation.

## 4-1. PURPOSE

The System's Advisory Organization Decision Process is in place to provide a way to stay current with changes in technological, service demands and training, in order to maintain currency with changing expectations and provide the highest level of service.

This Decision Process is consensus-driven, making every attempt to come to general agreement on all interests and concerns. The Strategic Group will provide direction to the Advisory Group regarding policies, strategic goals, budgets, and issues impacting costs. The decision process uses a model that is similar in nature to the NIMS "Planning P" process (see: *Figure 13*).

The Advisory Group shall determine at the command level how to manage a recommendation, change, or request that is entered into the System. If subject matter expertise is required, the issue will be assigned to the appropriate Functional Group or Ad Hoc Group for action. Some issues will require input or action by multiple Functional Groups. In those cases, one of the Functional Groups the issue is assigned to will be designated as the primary Functional Group and will be responsible for coordinating with the other Functional Groups to develop a recommendation.

## 4-2. DECISION PROCESS

The following Decision Process shall be used by the System's Advisory Organization to process issues to a final determination of their status.

- I. **Submission of Issues** – Any source within the System may submit an issue for consideration through the decision process. All issues will initially be submitted to any member of the Advisory Group (see: *Section, 2-1.II.*) for classification as either strategic or tactical in nature.

Each issue will be classified based on the following criteria:

- A. **Strategic** – A higher level issue that pertains to plans, programs, procedures and activities.

- 1) This type of issue is usually broad in scope, and has potential impacts that are of great internal and/or external importance to the System.

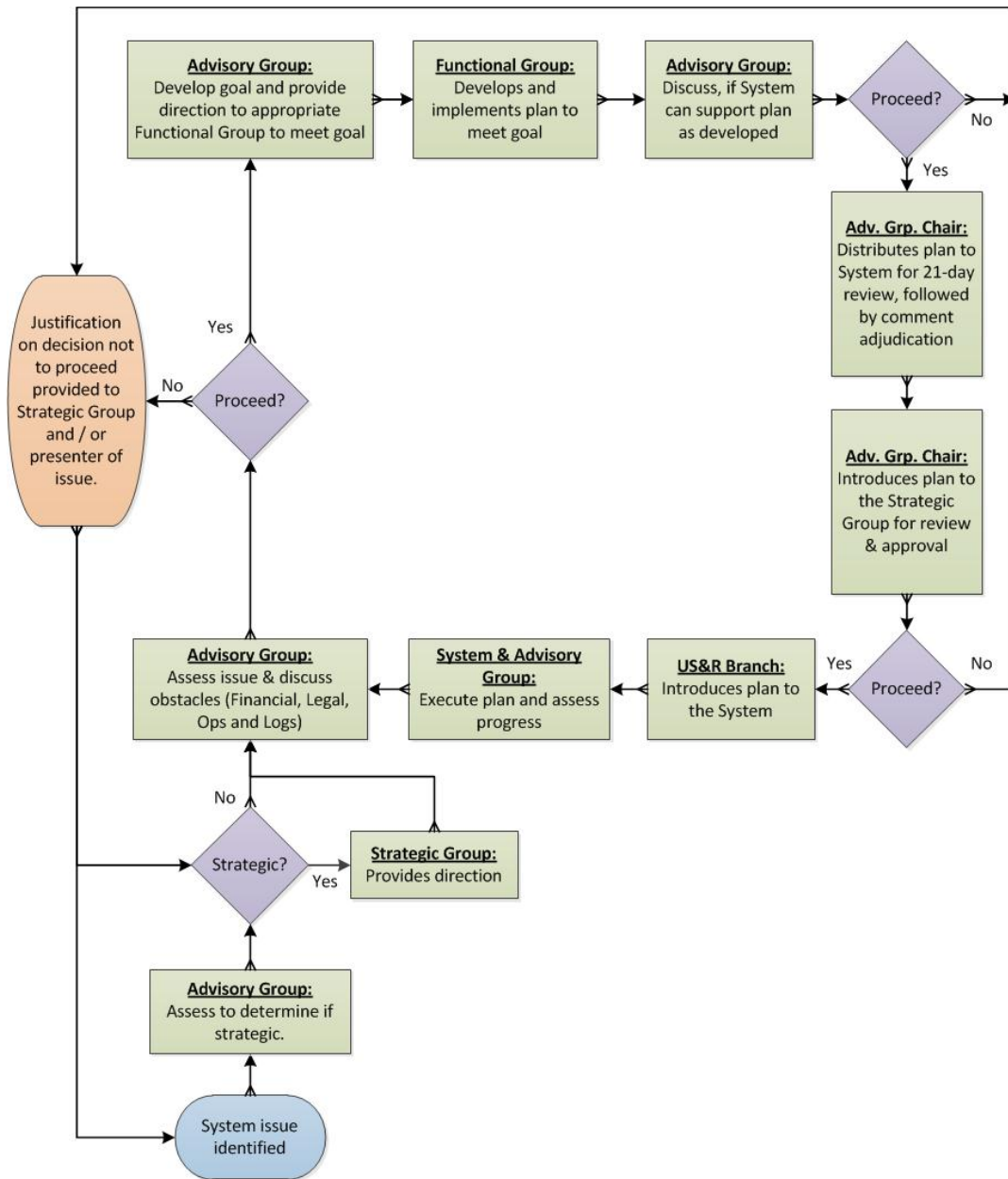


Figure 13: Advisory Organization Decision Process Flow Chart

- 2) The Strategic Group will provide direction and guidance to the Advisory Group on how to address a strategic issue. This includes whether or not the issue will proceed further through the Decision Process.

**B. Tactical** – A routine issue that addresses a task or function, usually short in duration.

- 1) This type of issue is normally narrow in scope and is carried out with an immediate end in view.

- 2) The Advisory Group will determine how to address a tactical issue. This includes whether or not the issue will proceed further through the Decision Process.
- II. Classification** – The Advisory Group will examine each issue and classify it as either strategic or tactical. If strategic, it will be sent to the Strategic Group for action, if tactical the Advisory Group will take it for action.
- III. Assessment** – Once an issue is assigned to the Advisory Group for action, they will assess it to determine the impacts to Sponsoring Agencies, task forces, Cooperative Agreements, operational effectiveness, and gauge influences to the System i.e., funding, timing of cooperative agreements, legislative documents, policies/procedures, and/or impacts to the System.
- IV. Initial Recommendation** – Based on its assessment of an issue, the Advisory Group will:
- A. Provide an initial recommendation to the Strategic Group on whether or not to move an issue forward in the Decision Process.
  - B. If it is determined that an issue will not move forward, notification of that determination will be provided to the original source of submission.
- V. Moving An Issue Forward** – If the determination is move an issue forward in the Decision Process, the Advisory Group will:
- A. Develop goals; identify performance measures, timelines and direction for the issue.
  - B. Assign the issue to the appropriate Functional Group for recommendation development.
  - C. Review recommendations and work product initiatives.
- VI. Recommendation Development** – Once assigned to the appropriate Group, that Group will be responsible for developing a recommendation for System consideration using the following process:
- A. The assigned Group will determine if the issue can be resolved at that level or if it should be re-assigned to an appropriate Subgroup, Unit, or Ad Hoc Group.
  - B. The Group, Subgroup, Unit, or Ad Hoc Group to which the issue is assigned will produce a recommendation to address that issue. The recommendation must identify a System need, impacts to System task forces or affected areas, identify any resulting process changes, consider budgetary impacts, and include a Course of Action with a work plan.
- VII. Recommendation Review** – The recommendation will then be submitted by the Functional Group to which the issue was initially assigned to Senior Staff for review by the Advisory Group.

- A. The recommendation will be reviewed, evaluated, and assessed to determine if it: addresses the needs of the System, identifies any process changes, improves development, considers budgetary impacts and includes a Course of Action.
  - 1) If the recommendation is supported, it will move forward to the next step.
  - 2) If further work is required for the recommendation to be supported it will be sent back to the Group that submitted it for additional work and resubmission.
- B. When a recommendation is supported, Senior Staff will distribute it to the 28 System TFRs for comment utilizing a 21-day review period.
  - 1) All 21-day review period comments for consideration shall be submitted by a TFR in the manner directed in the 21-day review period announcement, and in the format of the US&R Document Review Comment Form (see *Appendix E*)
  - 2) At the conclusion of the 21-day review period, each TFR-D will ensure that all TFRs in their Division have either submitted their task force comments for consideration, or acknowledged that their task force has no comments on the recommendation. The 21-day review will be followed by a 14-day comment adjudication period.
  - 3) Senior Staff will send all comments received from the 21-day review to the Functional Group the issue was assigned for adjudication.
  - 4) That Group (or the appropriate Subgroup, Unit, or Ad Hoc Group) will address each comment, to include entering how it is adjudicated on the US&R Document Review Comment Form.
  - 5) Once the comment adjudication process is complete, the Functional Group will resubmit the recommendation and the completed Document Review Comment Form to Senior Staff.
  - 6) The completed Document Review Comment Form will then be shared by the TFR-Ds with the TFRs in their Division for task force visibility on how all submitted comments were adjudicated.

**VIII. Recommendation Final Status** – Following the comment adjudication period, the Advisory Group Chair will introduce the recommendation to the Strategic Group for review and determination of its final status.

- A. The submission package will include the final version of the recommendation to be considered, and the completed Document Review Comment Form.
- B. The Strategic Group will review the recommendation package and make a determination of its final status.
  - 1) If approved, the recommendation will be forwarded to the US&R Branch for further action. If appropriate, the US&R Branch will distribute the information to the System using established System documents.

- 2) If further work is required for the recommendation to be approved, Senior Staff will return the document to the Group that submitted it with guidance on area(s) needing revision or improvement.
- 3) If not approved, Senior Staff will provide the reason(s) for that final determination to the Group that submitted the recommendation and to the original initiator if appropriate.

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# APPENDIX A: RESUME TEMPLATE

## FEMA National US&R Response System Advisory Organization Resume



**NAME:**

**TF: XX-TFX**

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1. **Phone:**
  - a. **Work:**
  - b. **Personal:**
2. **E-mails:**
  - a. **Work:**
  - b. **Personal:**
3. **Mailing Address:**
  - a. **Street**
  - b. **City, State & Zip**
4. **Position(s) Sought:**
5. **Summary of Qualifications:**
6. **Training & Education:**
7. **Relevant Experience:**
8. **Professional Memberships:**
9. **References:**
10. **Certifications / Qualifications:**
11. **Other Pertinent Information:**

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# APPENDIX B: LETTER OF SUPPORT TEMPLATE

## **FEMA National US&R Response System Advisory Organization Letter of Support**



Task Force:  
Participating Agency (if applicable):  
Sponsoring Agency:  
Date:

The on-going improvement of the National Urban Search & Rescue (US&R) Response System (the System) requires a support system driven by the expertise and commitment of individuals from local, state, and federal levels. The System's Advisory Organization consists of three elements; the Strategic Group, the Advisory Group, (comprised of Senior Staff, and four Functional Group Leaders) and the Advisory Support Group (comprised of members of the four Functional Groups, Subgroups, Units, and Ad Hoc Groups). These entities work in coordination synergistically to deal with issues facing the System and provide recommendations to move forward.

It is anticipated that members of the Strategic Group will meet quarterly, the Advisory Group will meet semi-annually, and that the Advisory Support Group will meet once a year. These meetings generally last two to three days (plus travel time) and members may also be called upon to participate in periodic conference calls to deal with urgent or time-critical issues. Additionally, members of the Strategic Group and Advisory Group are asked to attend a minimum of one Task Force Representative's Meeting each year. Individual members may only fill one position at a time within the Advisory Organization, but may serve simultaneously on one Ad Hoc Group or Unit. Costs associated with participation in Advisory Organization activities should be budgeted for, and be paid out of, the current US&R Readiness Cooperative Agreement funds. For some leadership positions within the Advisory Organization, a stipend may be provided through the task forces' Readiness Cooperative Agreement award to which that member belongs.

Participation is subject to support of the individual member's Task Force Representative and Sponsoring Agency Chief, and this stipulation applies to Affiliate members as well. If an individual does not work directly for a Sponsoring Agency, support should be obtained from his/her own Participating Agency Chief as well as the Sponsoring Agency Chief. This letter must accompany membership applications and be renewed for any subsequent term.

This letter authorizes (name of member) \_\_\_\_\_ to participate in the Advisory Organization, as a member of the (name of group) \_\_\_\_\_. This endorsement is valid from this date through the end of the member's term of appointment, a maximum of three years.

Task Force Representative: (print) \_\_\_\_\_ (sign) \_\_\_\_\_  
Participating Agency Chief: (print) \_\_\_\_\_ (sign) \_\_\_\_\_  
(If applicable)  
Sponsoring Agency Chief: (print) \_\_\_\_\_ (sign) \_\_\_\_\_

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# APPENDIX C: GROUP MEMBERSHIP STATUS LIST

National Urban Search and Rescue Response System Administrative Manual – Annex A – Appendix C  
Group Membership Status List (Functional Group, Subgroup, Unit)

**Group:** Sample Subgroup

**Revised:** 1/1/2014

Member:	TF	Term Start	Term End	Current Status	Date	Notes
Name (Leader)	XX-TF1	5/1/2014	5/1/2017	Active /	5/1/2017	
Name (Deputy)				Active /		
Name (IST Rep)				Active /		
				Active /		
Name	XX-TF1	5/1/2014	5/1/2017	Reserve / 1st Up	6/5/2013	Last active for cache list review.
				Reserve / 2nd Up		
				Reserve / 3rd Up		

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# APPENDIX D: PARTICIPATION REVIEW FORM



National US&R Response System  
Advisory Group  
Annual Participation Review Form



Evaluation Period: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Component: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_ Evaluation Type: **-Please Select-**

## Explanation of Ratings

N/A- Not applicable to job requirements

- 1- **Unacceptable.** Performance is consistently below expectations and fails to meet standards. Significant improvement is needed to correct performance including timelines.
- 2- **Improvement Needed.** Some standards are not being performed satisfactorily and improvement is needed. Member's performance is below average for this position and for the length of time in the position.
- 3- **Meets Position Requirements.** Duties and responsibilities are performed with satisfactory results for this position and for the length of time in the position.
- 4- **Exceeds Position Requirements.** Performance is usually above average and constitutes initiative including high quality and quantity. Member not only fulfills position requirements, but frequently contributes more. Results are commendable.
- 5- **Outstanding.** Performance is consistently characterized by work of exceptionally high quality. Member is repeatedly making significant contributions in all areas of position duties, which are far above expectations for the position and the assigned goals and objectives. Results are clearly outstanding.

Work Conduct	Rating
1 Dependability. Members' attendance and punctuality.	-Please Select-
2 Understands and complies with oral and written instructions.	-Please Select-
3 Maintains cooperative working relations with those contacted in the course of work.	-Please Select-
4 Ability to plan and organize work, independently and within the group.	-Please Select-
5 Conducts self within the framework of acceptable group rules and regulations.	-Please Select-
6 Performs with a minimum amount of instruction.	-Please Select-
7 Performs assigned projects in a manner consistent with currently accepted techniques, standards and procedures.	-Please Select-
8 Identifies and solves problems that occur in plans and work activities in a timely manner.	-Please Select-
9 Cooperates with other groups and colleagues.	-Please Select-
10 Demonstrates initiative when participating in group activities.	-Please Select-
11 Strengthens and reinforces a positive perception of the group by demonstrating ethical and professional behavior.	-Please Select-
Work Conduct Comment Section.	

Overall Performance Evaluation Rating. **-Please Select-**

Goals and objectives for next annual participation review period:



National US&R Response System  
Advisory Group  
Annual Participation Review Form



Reviewed member comments (optional):

Reviewed Member Name/ Date

Participation Reviewer/ Date

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# APPENDIX E: DOCUMENT REVIEW COMMENT FORM

## National Urban Search and Rescue Response System Document Review Comment Form

Document reviewed:							
Review comments adjudicated by:							
#	Task Force	Page #	Line #	Comment:	Recommended Solution Language: (Comments will be rejected unless solution language is proposed)	Classification: (A) = Admin (S) = Substantive (C) = Critical	Adjudication result: Concur (change made); Partially-concur (with explanation); or Non-concur (justification provided)
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