

Remote Support Workflow - DRAFT

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this workflow is solely to define a process for remote support personnel to exchange data and communicate effectively. To be clear, this process does not define how the many different remote support tasks, such as map and task generation, use of mobility models, and others are to be carried out. The two underlying assumptions are that:

1. Personnel who are participating in remote support are qualified to provide such services if they were on-scene, and
2. When personnel have a functional communication structure, they will be able to discuss questions with their supervisor in order to determine proper approach to completing such tasks.

The workflow is broken into four logical steps: Notification, Mobilization, Operation and Demobilization. This document will outline the workflow in each phase of the operation with a focus on organization and the transfer of information. The workflow outlined below may at times reference certain products but it will not include procedures or processes for developing individual products.

Definitions:

- **Search Manager (SM)** - The individual on scene to whom authority has been delegated for all search activities, including the development of strategies and tactics and the ordering and the release of resources.
- **On-site** - Located at a facility established on the premises of the search area for the purposes of supporting the Incident Objectives.
- **Off-site** - Located at some location other than the Base, Incident Command Post, Camp, or other facility established on the premises of the search area.

- **Remote Support (RS)** - The offering of a service that supports the Incident Objectives, where resources providing support are located at some place other than the scene of the search.
- **Remote Support Unit (RSU)** - Functional unit that provides remote support services. This may be placed within the Planning Section or elsewhere in the ICS organization as appropriate.
- **On-Site Liaison (OSL)** - Person designated by and reporting to the Search Manager to manage the on-scene presence of the remote support unit. This person and their reports are responsible for facilitating the flow of information between On- and Off-Scene personnel, and ensuring that necessary on-scene equipment is available and functional.
- **Remote Support Unit Leader (RSL)** - The individual responsible for managing the activities of the off-scene members of the Remote Support Unit, and for maintaining communication with the On-Scene Liaison.
- **Remote Support Unit Member (RSM)** - An individual working within the Remote Support Unit, and reporting to the Remote Support Unit Leader
- **Assignments** - Tasks given to resources to perform within a given operational period, based upon tactical objectives in the Incident Action Plan.
- **Communications Channel** - A well defined method of communication that is accessible to all members of the Remote Support Unit.
- **Working Data Location** - A data storage location that is accessible to all members of the Remote Support Unit.

Essential technology: Every member of the RSU will have access to the Remote Support Google Drive in myasrc.org account.

2. Notification

1. Search Manager identifies a need for Remote Support
2. The Search Manager will identify and designate an On-Scene Remote Support Liaison. (OSL)
 - a. This may be the Search manager until a more appropriate choice is available.
 - b. The OSL will request Remote Support (RS) on behalf of the SM and Responsible Authority (RA)
 - c. The OSL will determine the on-scene ability to receive and process products from the ASRC RS Unit (RSU). If additional equipment is required, the OSL shall request it. (Refer to [Technology to Receive Remote Support](#). Equipment discussed further in Section 3 of this document.)
3. OSL will identify and confirm availability of Remote Support Unit Leader (RSL)

It is recommended that the OSL first alert all qualified RSLs via email. If no response is forthcoming, the OSL should consult the [Remote Support Status Worksheet](#), which contains a list of all qualified individuals and their individual contact information. It is possible, but not recommended, for the OSL and the RSL be the same person. Contact may be established by:

 - a. E-mail: [TBD EMAIL ADDRESS] - distribution list of RSL qualified individuals.
 - b. Phone: A voice or text message may be sent directly to a member of the ASRC RS Corps.
4. OSL and RSL will collaborate to determine which Remote Support services are best able to assist the mission objectives.
 - a. If possible and appropriate, Fill out the [Remote Support Request Form](#), available on ASRC RS Google Drive.
 - b. If it is not possible to submit a form, the following minimum information is required: name of OSL, contact information for OSL, Product requested – this may include a request to assemble the RSU and stand-by for further instructions.
5. The RSL or their designee will notify Remote Support Team Members that a search is in progress has requested remote support. If specific skill sets are required based on the information available, that will be included in the notification. A sample notification email can be found in [Appendix A](#).
 - a. This notification should be carried out using the RS Mailing List [TBD EMAIL ADDRESS].
6. Remote Support Unit Members shall respond with availability.
 - a. Preferred Method: RSMs should log into the [Remote Support Status Worksheet](#) and indicate their current contact information and availability, as well as listing any relevant comments on their availability or resources (Fields with blue headings).
 - b. Alternate method: RSMs may contact the RSL directly via phone, SMS, or email.

3 Mobilization

3.1 Remote Team Mobilization

It shall be the responsibility of the RSL to manage the Remote Team Mobilization. If needed, the role of RSL may be transferred to more experienced personnel as they become available.

1. Establish Working Data Location and Communication Channels
 - a. The RSL will copy the Mission Template from the RemoteSupport@myasrc.org Google Drive.
 - i. The template will be copied to the “Search” folder in the Remote-Support drive and renamed to mission number.
 - ii. If the actual mission number is unknown the following convention will be followed: XXYYYYMMDDA. Key: XX – two letter state abbreviation, YYYY – four digit year, MM – two letter month, DD – two digit day of the month, A – alphanumeric indicator representing number of instance in state XX that are occurring on the same day.
2. Establish staffing requirements and initial task priorities
 - a. The RSL will evaluate the request made by the OSL to determine staffing needs, and if necessary prioritize tasks for the staff available.
3. The RSL will communicate to the OSL the current RSU response capabilities and a time frame for delivering the requested products.
4. The RSL will notify available RSMs that task assignment is imminent and will begin briefing staff.
 - a. A sample mobilization email can be found in [Appendix B](#).

3.2 On-Scene Team Mobilization

The OSL or their delegates are responsible for establishing channels of communication with the off-scene team and acquiring the necessary on-scene equipment to allow remotely-generated work product to be provided to the on-scene team.

1. Establish Working Data location and Communication channels.

If access is not available at base, it may be appropriate to set up a working location where access is available, and have runners available to transfer data back and forth to base.

 - a. Data Connection
 - i. Minimum Requirements:
 1. Internet access - this may be via existing on-site infrastructure (i.e. wired or wireless service) or via cellular service. In general, the highest bandwidth reliable source should be used. This service

- should allow access to internet sites and other resources relevant to the search effort
2. Email account able to send and receive attachments of at least 10MB in size. Access must be reliable and constant.
- ii. Optional Requirements
 1. Dropbox - TBD
 2. Video - TBD
- b. Voice Connection
 - i. Minimum Requirements:
 1. Serviceable Telephone line with known phone number - this may be provided by traditional wired phone service, via a cellular network, satellite service, IPTelephony, or Radiotelephone but it must be able to receive phone calls made through any normal telephone exchange. Access must be reliable and constant
 - ii. Optional Requirements
 1. Conference Phone Line - A phone line or third party service that allows multiple parties to call in and speak with each other concurrently.
2. Procure required equipment as needed for the remote support tasks required. The minimum required equipment is listed below. Please refer to the [Technology to Receive Remote Support](#) document for a more comprehensive list
 - a. Data access device - this may be a computer, smart phone, tablet or other device that allows the OSL to access data provided by the Remote Support Unit.
 - b. Printer - this must be able to print documents from the data access device. A laser printer is highly recommended.
 - c. Other - any power or networking equipment required to support the operation of the Data Access Device and the Printer for the duration of the search.
 3. Inform RSL of communications status and limitations. All relevant contact methods and any difficulties with accessing data or producing paper copies should be disclosed to ensure that future work products can be successfully delivered to the OSL. This information should be entered into the [Remote Support Communications Plan](#)

3.3 Remote Support Unit Member Mobilization

Remote Support Unit Members (RSM) are responsible for the following mobilization process upon receiving a notification that remote support services have been requested.

1. RSMs should ensure that necessary equipment and communications (voice and data) are available for the RSM to use. At a minimum, they should have access to the following:
 - a. A reliable internet connection
 - b. A reliable phone number
 - c. Access to any necessary software or other tools that the RSM needs to provide remote support services.

2. The RSM should respond to the notification with availability (or lack thereof) and contact information. Directions for responding should be included in the notification. If no directions are included, RSMs are encouraged to contact the RSL by replying to the notification. Replies should include the following information:
 - a. Name
 - b. Best phone number
 - c. Best email address
 - d. Dates and times of availability
 - e. Any relevant comments on availability or resources
3. When contacted by RSL with details, log into mission folders and communication channels. RSMs are encouraged to download a copy of the [Remote Support Communications Plan](#) for reference.
4. The RSM should confirm readiness to accept assignments with RSL, and should follow the RSL's direction for further activities.
5. RSMs should follow the appropriate procedures to notify their respective team that the RSM is assisting in an incident via Remote Support.

4 Operations

4.1 On-Scene

1. The OSL is responsible for continuing to monitor the status of on-scene efforts and communicating the status of RSU efforts to on-scene personnel.
2. The OSL is responsible for monitoring tools and technologies available on-scene and notifying the RSL of any relevant changes.
3. The OSL collecting and relaying data and information to the RSU.
 - a. This may be performed by uploading data and information to the appropriate folder in the ASRC RS Google Drive or it may be uploading to common operating platform (e.g ArcGIS Online, SARTopo, etc).
 - b. As necessary the OSL (or appointee) will upload.

4.2 Communications Between On- and Off-Scene Personnel

1. Communications between On-Scene and Remote Support will be conducted as specified in the [Remote Support Communications Plan](#) that is developed by the OSL and the RSL. It is highly recommended that fallback communication channels and alternate contacts for the OSL and RSL be defined immediately.
2. Any change in OSL staffing will be reported to the RSL and Search Manager. Any change in RSL will be reported to the OSL immediately. In either case, the relevant sections of the [Remote Support Communications Plan](#) must be updated immediately.

3. The OSL will be responsible for scheduling periodic conference calls with the RSL. These calls should occur at least once per operational period, unless other arrangements have been made.
4. At least once per Operational Period (preferably during the conference call discussed above), the RSL and OSL shall review the priority of the each requested product.
5. The RSL and the OSL will continue to monitor the capabilities and the available technologies for on-site and off-site, respectively. As changes occur, the RSL and OSL will agree upon the appropriate tools and methods for relying data, information and products between on-site and off-site assets.

4.3 Task Assignment

The RSL is responsible for ensuring the proper allocation and timely completion of each task that is accepted from the OSL.

1. Tasks shall be tracked using the [RM_OpPeriodTaskLog](#) which is located in the root folder for the new mission.
2. RS Tasking will be based on the capability of the RSU members as not every member of the RSU will have the same abilities.
3. Tasks that cannot be completed in the required time should be broken into subtasks and distributed to several RTMs
4. The RSL is responsible for notifying the OSL of products that will not be completed within the required timeframe as soon as possible so that other arrangements can be made by the OSL and on-site resources.
5. If no member is available with the required skillset, the RTL will notify the OSL promptly. Such tasks may remain in the task log, but should be marked to indicate that they are awaiting suitable personnel.
6. Based on a continual assessment of capabilities, the OSL and RSL will agree upon the appropriate means of sharing data, information and products.
 - a. Completed products will be saved in the appropriate folder within the ASRC RSU Google Drive Searches Mission folder.
 - b. In addition, data, information and products may be shared through other platforms agreed upon by the RSL and OSL (e.g. ArcGIS Online, SARTopo, etc).

4.4 All-Hands meetings

The RSL may call one-time or recurring “All-Hands meetings” at which time all currently-active RSU personnel will be briefed on the current situation.

1. If the RSL convenes a voice or video conference with the responding RSU members, the RSL (or their appointee) is responsible for selecting the method of communication.
 - a. It is highly recommended that a service which all RTM’s are familiar with be selected. A selection of recommended services can be found in the [Remote Support Recommended Services](#) document.

- b. The communication channel information must be documented in the [Remote Support Communications Plan](#). After any such meeting is held, a summary of the meeting will be documented so that Remote Support personnel joining the effort afterwards have access to the most current information.
2. For each operational period, the OSL will provide an Operational Period summary (ICS Form 202) detailing the mission progress. The RSL will make this summary available as needed.

4.5 Intra-team Communication

RSMs may contact the RSL and each other directly as needed to complete tasks. All contacts should be in accordance with the [Remote Support Communications Plan](#)

4.6 Sign out/Transfer of duties

The following process is to be used when a member is signing out.

1. Notify Remote Team Leader of the following
 - a. Intent to sign out
 - b. Time at which member intends to sign out.
2. The Remote Team Leader (or their deputy) shall confirm signout request and request the following information as the RTM's departure time approaches.
 - a. Whether a replacement is needed.
 - b. Status of assigned tasks
 - c. Location of all completed deliverables
 - d. List of uncompleted tasks
 - e. Availability of member in the future.
 - f. Other information as appropriate to the situation
3. In the event that duties are to be transferred to replacement RSM, the departing RSM will brief their replacement if possible, otherwise it will be the responsibility of the RSL to brief the replacement.
4. Once the requested information is supplied, the Remote Team Leader will:
 - a. Sign the member out in the [Remote Support Status Worksheet](#)
 - b. Notify the Remote Support Unit that a member has departed and, if applicable, who their replacement is.
 - c. Update the Remote Support Task log as needed.
5. RSMs should follow the appropriate procedures to notify their respective team that the RSM is no longer assisting with an incident via Remote Support.

5 Demobilization

5.1 Remote Team Demobilization

5.1.1 Cleaning Workspaces

All online workspaces shall be cleaned in preparation for the next mission.

5.1.2 Data Archiving

1. RSL shall make a compressed archive of all deliverables, directories and other files in the Working Data Location and place it in the ASRC Data Repository. In addition, the RSL, with the help of the OSL, shall make arrangements to deliver a copy of this archive to the Search Manager.
2. Once the RSL has created an archived the data to the ASRC Data Repository the Working Data Location will be cleaned in preparation for the next incident.

5.1.3 Team Sign-out

All RSMs shall sign out using the process listed in [Section 4.6](#).

5.1.4 Remote Team Leader Sign-out

1. The RSL is responsible for notifying the OSL of the end of RS activities and providing an accurate account of the status of all requested tasks and products.
2. The RSL is responsible for ensuring all RSU members have been notified of the end of RS activities.
3. The RSL will note the sign-out time in the Resource Tracking Log (RS_ResourceLog (to be completed)) in order to track hours worked. This information will be provided to the SM.

5.2 On-Scene Demobilization

5.2.1 Equipment Cleanup

All data and work product generated by the search shall be removed from equipment used to access and store it before that equipment is demobilized. Any data or work product that should be archived, shall be turned over to the OSL for disposition.

5.2.2 Signing out

The OSL is responsible for notifying the SM of the status of all requested RS products and ensuring, with the help of the RSL, that the SM has access to the archived mission data from RS activities. The OSL will sign-out through the processes utilized on-site.

Appendix A: Sample Notification Email

Subject

URGENT: Remote Support Request Notification

Email Body

To whom it may concern,

This is a notification that Remote Support has been requested for an active incident located in _____.

[OPTIONAL SECTION]

The following remote resources have been requested:

- _____

[OPTIONAL SECTION]

Additional information from the RSL:

- _____

If you are available to participate in this incident, and have appropriate phone and data connectivity, contact the RSL with your availability.

- If possible, log into the Remote Support Status Worksheet using this link: http://drive.google.com/open?id=1R_dxZLM4H96JH5pWn3Xkm7guxBK940JIP59uL5OHGgw and fill out all the fields with blue headings next to your name.
- If you are unable to log into the worksheet, please contact the RSL directly with the following information:
 - Name
 - Best phone number and email address
 - Dates and times of availability
 - Any relevant comments on availability or resources

RSL Contact information:

Name: _____
Preferred Contact method: _____
1st Alternate Contact Method: _____
2nd Alternate Contact Method: _____

If applicable, please notify your Group Dispatch Officer that you are participating in a remote response for this incident.

Thank you,

Appendix B - Sample Mobilization Email

Subject

URGENT: Remote Support Request Mobilization

Email Body

To whom it may concern,

You have indicated that you are available to participate in remote support for the current incident in _____.

The following communication channels have been established for group use:

- Primary: [CHANNEL ACCESS INSTRUCTIONS]
- Alternate: [CHANNEL ACCESS INSTRUCTIONS]

The group Working Data Location is located here:

- [ACCESS LINK AND INSTRUCTIONS]

A briefing is scheduled at _____ on [CHANNEL], please plan to attend.

[OPTIONAL SECTION]

Additional information from the RSL:

- _____

RSL Contact information:

Name: _____
Preferred Contact method: _____
1st Alternate Contact Method: _____
2nd Alternate Contact Method: _____