

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

NATIONAL URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE RESPONSE SYSTEM

A Component of the National Response Framework
Emergency Support Function # 9



WATER RESCUE SPECIALIST POSITION DESCRIPTION

August 2016

FEMA National US&R Response System

Task Force Position Description

Water Rescue Specialist

Position Specific Requirements:

The Water Rescue Specialist is responsible for performing water operations of the Task Force incident operation. The Water Rescue Specialist reports directly to a Rescue Squad Officer.

Description of Duties:

The Water Rescue Specialist is responsible for:

- Implementing technical skills and operating equipment necessary for completing the water rescue portion of the action plan in a safe manner
- Performing supervised water operations and providing periodic progress reports as needed
- The operation and routine field maintenance of watercraft and equipment
- Ensuring accountability and maintenance for all issued equipment
- Performing additional tasks or duties as assigned
- Evaluating and modifying water operational tactics as needed

Position Requirements and Criteria:

Individuals who meet the following requirements and criteria will be eligible to become Water Rescue Specialists in the DHS/FEMA National US&R Response System. The intent of these requirements is to select personnel fully capable of providing the water operational tactics and techniques required in a disaster environment.

Required Training:

The Water Rescue Specialist shall adhere to the following:

- Complete all Administrative and General Training requirements
- Complete GPS Awareness Course
- Meet requirements of NFPA 1006 (current edition) :
 - a. Chapter 5: Job Performance Requirements
 - b. Chapter 6: Rope Rescue (Level 1 & 2)
 - c. Chapter 11: Surface Water Rescue (Level 1 & 2)
 - d. Chapter 12: Swiftwater Rescue (Level 1 & 2)

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- Complete a minimum swim requirement. Example of a recommended swim requirement: Swim of 500 yards without stopping using a forward stroke and without using swim aids such as dive mask, swim goggles, fins, snorkel, or flotation device. Stopping or standing up in the shallow end of the pool at any point during the exercise will constitute a failure. To be completed within 19 minutes. (NFPA 1670, Annex A, 1670-51 Stamina Exercise #1)