



## **ESTERO BAY Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)**

### ***Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's)***

#### **ARTICLE 1. AUTHORITY**

A. The Estero Bay Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) receives its direction and operates at the sole discretion of the City of Morro Fire Department, the Cayucos Fire Protection District, and the Los Osos Community Service District (South Bay Fire). Here after referred to as the “Fire Agencies”.

#### **ARTICLE 2. MISSION STATEMENT**

A. The Estero Bay CERT program will train individuals in neighborhoods, businesses and industries in emergency preparedness and basic disaster response techniques, thereby enabling them to prepare, as volunteers, to take an active role in providing critical support in a safe manner to emergency service personnel during emergencies/disasters.

#### **ARTICLE 3. NAME**

A. The name of this organization is the Estero Bay Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), formed June of 2014.

#### **ARTICLE 4. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

A. CERT is about readiness, people helping people, rescuer safety, and doing the greatest good for the greatest number. CERT is part of the National and California Citizen Corp effort endorsed by the Governor of California and the President of the United States and the Agencies of Homeland Security and the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services.

B. CERT is a positive and realistic approach to emergency and disaster situations where citizens may initially be on their own and their actions can make a difference.

C. CERT is designed to train, educate and inform the public regarding emergency preparedness.

D. CERT members may seek and apply for grants, with the prior permission and approval of the fire agencies, from state, federal and private organizations to fund the activities and objectives of CERT.

E. CERT members may be assigned other duties by the request of the Fire Agencies.

## **ARTICLE 5. LOCATION**

A. The principal office and for Estero Bay CERT shall be the City of Morro Bay Fire Department, 715 Harbor St, Morro Bay CA, 93442.

## **ARTICLE 6. MEETING DATES and LOCATIONS**

A. The CERT Program Coordinators will meet or make contact with a representative of the Fire Agencies every other month or not less than four times per year.

B. The CERT Team has established a goal of meeting every third Tuesday of the even months of the year. Meetings will provide for both training and the distribution of general information. Meetings may be rescheduled by the Program Coordinators to accommodate for holidays or training opportunities. Meeting and training locations will take place in a variety of community locations/areas served by the Team to assist in area familiarization.

## **ARTICLE 7. RULES OF CONDUCT**

A. Members of CERT serve at the sole discretion of the Fire Agencies.

B. CERT members are volunteers of the Fire Agencies. As such, their status as a volunteer is contingent on performing their assigned duties with the utmost care and consideration.

C. CERT members are not emergency services personnel as defined by state law and as such are not exempt from federal, state and local laws when responding to emergencies. Therefore, all CERT members must use due care, diligence, and appropriate safety measures when responding or reporting, as directed, to emergencies.

D. All participating volunteers must be trained and understand the coordinated command and control structure of CERT (see Article 11) and agree to operate within its constraints.

E. Members of CERT are prohibited from communicating with the media and/or making representations on behalf of CERT in any manner, without the approval of the Fire Agencies.

F. CERT members shall not carry or possess any firearms or be intoxicated or impaired while undertaking activities as a CERT member.

G. CERT members shall not engage in harassment or discrimination which occurs when prohibited verbal, visual or physical conduct is directed at individuals because of their race, religion, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnic or national origin and physical or mental disability.

H. CERT members shall conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. This includes avoiding or removing themselves from conflicts, and not discrediting the organization intentionally.

I. Training topics, subject matter or activities not covered by these Standard Operating Procedures or the CERT Citizen Corp Program must be approved by the Fire Agencies' CERT Coordinator(s) prior to undertaking.

J. All CERT members are subject to dismissal from the program for not adhering to the CERT Standard Operating Procedures at the sole discretion of the Fire Agencies. Some examples of actions that could result in removal from the CERT program are:

- a. Self-deployment to an incident or scene without following Article 9
- b. Unprofessional, aggressive, insubordinate, discriminatory or harassing behavior toward other CERT members, residents, first responders, or other authorities
- c. Failure to follow direction of public safety personnel
- d. Conviction of a felony, or a misdemeanor, including pleas of guilty or nolo contendere.

## **ARTICLE 8. MEMBERSHIP**

A. Both residents and non-residents of the Estero Bay Area may apply to be a member of the Estero Bay CERT Team.

B. Volunteer applicants must be a least eighteen years of age to apply. This age limit may also be at the discretion of the Fire Agencies. However, any applicants under eighteen years of age must attend the program with a parent or guardian, who must sign a Parent Permission Form. (See Article 9 regarding activation and minors responding to incidents.)

C. Applicant approval is at the sole discretion of the Fire Agencies.

D. All members of the Estero Bay CERT Team must read and sign this document (see last page: Standard Operating Procedures Agreement) and the Hold Harmless/Permission Request form, become a Disaster Service Worker (by filling out the appropriate form) and complete Incident Command System (ICS) 100.

Note: Members, who have completed the Training Program prior to the adoption of these Standard Operating Procedures must read and sign this document within 90 days of receipt in order to continue participation in the CERT Program.

E. CERT members must satisfactorily complete all modules, including the Skill's Session, of the CERT Training Program.

F. Members are expected to attend at least two training classes or meetings per year provided by (or in conjunction with) the Fire Agencies.

G. Members shall not use their CERT membership for personal gain.

H. Many members of CERT have skills beyond what is taught through the CERT program, e.g. physicians and other health professionals, heavy equipment operators, advanced search and rescuers, etc. While these skills may be helpful during an emergency or disaster, they are outside the CERT scope of practice as an Estero Bay CERT member.

I. The Fire Agencies shall respect the confidentiality of any personal information members provide. The Fire Agencies will maintain contact information (including home address, email and phone number) and will only release phone numbers and email addresses to Program Coordinator(s) and other appropriate team members for the purpose of communicating about CERT related topics or as otherwise required by law. At any time, a CERT member may choose to "opt-out" and will not be contacted unless they request it.

J. If a member leaves the CERT program for any reason, all Fire Agency issued equipment and identification shall be returned to the Program Coordinator within 30 days of notification.

## **ARTICLE 9. ACTIVATION**

The Team will be activate when any one of the governing Fire Agencies feel that the professional first responders need additional assets and or support that is within the scope of CERT training. The most likely event that will cause this activation would be a large scale earthquake or other area wide emergency. Members will be directed to report to one of the following three locations:

- 1) CAL Fire Station # 15  
2315 Bayview Heights Dr. (1 block above LOVRD)  
Los Osos
- 2) Morro Bay Fire Station # 2  
406 Bonita  
North Morro Bay (Cross Streets Main and Reno)
- 3) Cayucos Fire Station  
201 Cayucos Dr. (Just up from the base of the pier)  
Cayucos, CA

## **Team Members do not self activate.**

The most likely ways we would be activated are listed below:

1. An official announcement on local commercial television.
2. TV scroll on channel 20.
3. KVEC radio announcement, 920 on the AM dial.
4. A text message, e-mail message or phone call

**REMEMBER** - When you receive official activation notification, first take care of yourself, your family and your home, and then respond to the designated reporting location.

## **UPON ACTIVATION**

A. During an emergency, CERT member activation must be approved by the agency Fire Chief or his/her designee.

B. No member of CERT can self-activate. If a CERT member self-activates he/she will forfeit all protection from liability provided by the CERT program. Furthermore, the individual may be removed from the CERT program immediately.

C. CERT members shall follow the Estero Bay CERT Activation guidelines (noted above).

D. Any time a CERT member is activated; information regarding the extent of activation needs to be documented by an individual CERT member on ICS Form 214 – Unit Log. This information needs to be returned to the CERT Incident Commander at the conclusion of the operational period. At a minimum, this information should include:

- a. Name of CERT member
- b. Assignments given and actions taken
- c. Any outcomes, positive or negative, including injuries sustained

E. CERT members must operate within the scope of their CERT training, as well as comply with all federal, state and local laws when functioning as a CERT member.

F. Non-CERT trained volunteers are not to be recruited by Estero Bay CERT Members to perform CERT related duties during an emergency. If approached by non-CERT trained volunteers wanting to assist, please ask that they report to the SLO County VOAD representative at the County EOC.

G. When activated, CERT members under the age of 18 shall remain at the Incident Command Post. Minors are not permitted to participate in CERT field team activities during a disaster.

H. Any CERT member who suffers an injury while performing an assigned CERT task must immediately report the injury incurred to a supervising member of the activating Fire Department.

I. Failure to report injuries will jeopardize a CERT Member's ability to receive worker's compensation benefits, and any recovery for such injury is specifically and expressly limited to that available under the State of California's Worker's Compensation Insurance.

J. When activated, CERT members are covered under the State of California's Disaster Service Worker's program.

K. Once the emergency has been resolved, the supervising member of the activating Fire Department will deactivate the CERT members / teams.

## **ARTICLE 10. CERT ROLES DURING EMERGENCIES**

A. When a disaster occurs, CERT members are to first take care of themselves and their families, and conduct an initial size-up of their homes or workplace. CERT members must also reduce immediate dangers by turning off utilities, suppress small fires, evacuate their immediate area, and secure their family.

B. Once CERT members, their family and their home are secure, CERT members should report to the assigned fire station, gathering information along the way.

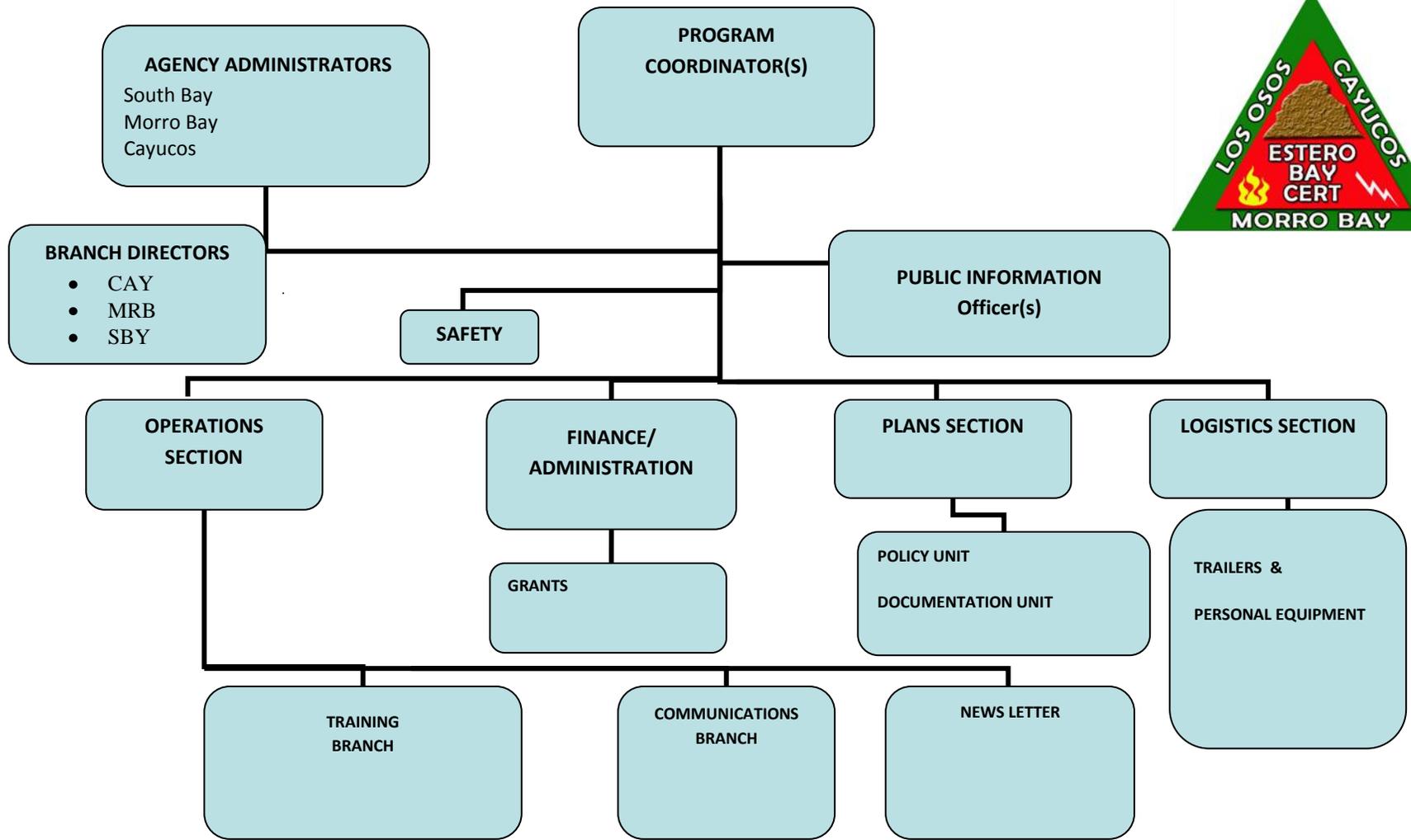
C. Form teams and utilizing the Situation Reporting Form found in each trailer collect damage information in the designated zones, reporting this information as instructed.

D. When requested, work with CERT members to establish a command post, staging area, and medical triage and treatment areas.

E. Apply their training to situations where CERT members can make a difference.

F. Establish and maintain communication with responders.

## **ARTICLE 11. ORGANIZATION (Chart Next Page)**



**ESTERO BAY CERT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**

## **ARTICLE 12. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **A. Program Coordinator(s)**

- a. Appointed by the Fire Agencies
- b. Terms normally last no more than 2 years. Terms may be extended by the Fire Agencies
- c. Meet with and provide updates to the Fire Agencies every other month or not less than four times per year
- d. Meet with the Branch Directors four times per year
- e. Provide guidance and support to the Branch Directors in the following areas:
  - i. Training
  - ii. Meetings
  - iii. Maintenance of records
  - iv. Recruiting
  - v. Other issues as they arise
- f. The role of Program Coordinators is administrative in nature, not operational in emergency situations. Coordinators may or may not be assigned roles in emergency management by the Incident Commander of an emergency operation.

### **B. Branch Directors**

(Note: These positions will be utilized as the organization grows - as of July, 2014 they are not utilized)

- a. Appointed by the CERT Coordinators
- b. Terms normally last no more than 2 years. Terms may be extended by the CERT Coordinators.
- c. Meet with Branch Directors four times a year
- d. Branch Director's role is administrative in nature, not operational in emergency situations. Branch Directors may or may not be assigned roles in emergency management by the Incident Commander.

### **C. Team Members**

- a. Comply with the standards established in these Standard Operating Procedures.

## **ARTICLE 13. IDENTIFICATION and APPARAL**

A. CERT identification must be worn on the outermost garment at all times. If the card is lost it will be the responsibility of the team member to request a replacement.

B. In emergency situations, members must wear the issued green CERT vest and hard hat. Members need to dress for the conditions and should always wear long pants and work boots. During non-emergency situations, members need to wear either the issued CERT vest or other purchased clothing containing the CERT logo. It is the responsibility of the team member to maintain all garments in a presentable manner. Purchased CERT apparel will not be worn in any inappropriate locations, such as bars. When wearing CERT apparel, members must maintain a professional demeanor.

C. Members can display a 3 x 5 CERT sticker in the bottom corner of the rear window of their vehicle. If a member chooses to utilize any other form of CERT signage/markings on their vehicles, it will only be allowed during official CERT functions. All driving laws must be followed when displaying CERT signage.

## **ARTICLE 14. PERSONAL EQUIPMENT**

Each CERT member, who wishes to operate in the field, must provide the following equipment. This equipment must be properly maintained and readily available for response to a situation. Members must bring equipment to the staging area.

### **CERT Equipment List**

#### **REQUIRED:**

- CERT vest
- CERT ID
- CERT Helmet w/chin strap
- Goggles
- Dust masks (N95 rated)
- Work gloves
- Latex gloves
- Flashlight(s) (w/batteries)
- Glow sticks
- Lumber crayons or marker
- Utility knife
- EMT shears/scissors
- Whistle

#### **SUPPLEMENTS:**

- CERT Field Operations Guide
- Poncho
- Carabineers
- First aid supplies

Hat (sun protection)  
Multi-tool  
Duct tape  
Gas/water wrench  
Paper w/pen-pencil  
Bottled water  
Food (energy bars)

## **ARTICLE 15. TRAINING**

A. The CERT training provided to members is in accordance with the current Federal Emergency Management Agency and California Citizen's Corps guidelines.

B. Each CERT member will receive a book or digital copy of the CERT Participant Training Manual.

## **ARTICLE 16. COMMUNICATIONS**

A cache of radios and batteries is maintained in the three CERT trailers.

The following rules of communication will apply to CERT team operations:

- a. The use of "10" codes will not be used
- b. Plain text will be used at all times
- c. Conversations should be clear, concise and short to minimize tying up the channel
- d. The words "CODE RED" should be announced over the radio when scene is no longer under control or personnel are in immediate danger

It is important when initiating a conversation on a radio system to first identify the unit being called by the unit calling. The radio identifier or "handle" for all Estero Bay CERT radio transmissions is "Estero".

Sample: "ECC 5 this is Estero Command, how do you copy?"

### **Radio Channels:**

Channel 1 = Tactical, High Power  
Channel 2 = Command, High Power  
Channel 3 = Tactical, High Power  
Channel 4 = Not utilized  
Channel 5 = Tactical - same as Ch 1, but lower power  
Channel 6 = Command - same as Ch 2, but lower power  
Channel 7 = Tactical - same as Ch 3, but lower power

The Tactical channels, 1 & 3, are reserved for field operations. Channel 2, Command, is reserved for communications with the ECC or other supervisory functions.

Notes:

- 1) Initiate conversations on the high power channels and when time or circumstances permit move to lower power channel if possible to save batteries. (Performance at the lower power will be reduced somewhat)
- 2) Only Channel 2 - Command, is monitored by the Emergency Communications Center at the Morro Bay Emergency Operations Center (ECC #5)
- 3) Channels 8- 16 not used at this time

#### **ARTICLE 17. FINANCES**

- A. All funds received by Estero Bay CERT, including but not limited to grant awards, donations, proceeds from fund raising will be deposited with and controlled by the San Luis Obispo County Sheriffs Advisory Foundation (SAF)
- B. All purchase requests shall be submitted in writing to the SAF for review and approval.

#### **ARTICLE 18. ELECTRONIC, PRINTED MEDIA AND INTERVIEWS**

- A. The Fire Agencies shall approve the substance and content of all electronic and printed media that is associated with or related to the Estero Bay CERT Program. Included is anything that is identified with the Estero Bay CERT logo or the Fire Agency's name or logo.
- B. The exception is personal e-mail, or correspondence between members.

#### **ARTICLE 20. ADDENDUMS**

- A. In order to address specific needs or future topics, addendums may be added to these Standard Operating Procedures.

#### **Standard Operating Procedures Agreement**

I have read and understand the CERT Standard Operating Procedures. I agree to follow these Standard Operating Procedures while participating in the Estero Bay CERT program. I understand that not following these Standard Operating Procedures may result in my removal from the program at the sole discretion of the participating Fire Agencies.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address