



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission  
Division of Law Enforcement

**TITLE: ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSE TEAM (ERT)**

GENERAL ORDER	EFFECTIVE DATE	RESCINDS/AMENDS	Applicability
64	January 11, 2017	N/A	ALL MEMBERS

References

**1 POLICY**

- A** The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Division of Law Enforcement (Division), in conjunction with the Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Emergency Response (OER) conduct criminal environmental investigations, protect Florida's natural resources and provide emergency response services for oil and hazardous material releases. Due to the potential for criminal acts to occur which may involve intentional or accidental chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive (CBRNE) incidents, the OER and FWC, in conjunction with other state and local agencies established the Environmental Response Team (ERT). The ERT provides the capability for entry into a contaminated environment to collect evidence and assist with remedial actions.
- B** Team members are selected from within the Division in consideration of their law enforcement capabilities, self motivation, and physical fitness. Assignment to the ERT is a secondary duty and will be voluntary.

**2 RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A** The ERT operates under a joint leadership system with OER and the Division is responsible for fulfilling one "team leader" position which will be selected by the Operational Support Captain in conjunction with the Statewide Environmental Investigations Coordinator.
- B** The ERT is responsible for preparing for and responding to a possible or actual emergency resulting from a CBRNE event.
- C** ERT members are responsible for providing technical assistance as well as investigative and forensic support at an event in which an environmental pollution incident or public health threat, outlined under Chapters 403 and 376, Florida State Statutes, has occurred.
- D** ERT members are required to maintain all issued ERT equipment which will be in ready status and available to deploy at anytime.

**3 PROCEDURES**

- A** Division members interested in serving on the ERT will notify the Operational Support Section Major or designee via their chain of command of their interest in becoming a team member. Potential team members must be in excellent mental and physical condition to withstand the rigors of training and deployment. The Operational Support Section Major or designee will have final approval for selection of team members.

## **B ERT Member Qualifications**

- (1) Potential ERT members must meet the following criteria:
  - (a) At least one year of satisfactory law enforcement service with the Division, including completion of the member's Field Training Program and initial employment probationary period.
  - (b) Free from any injury or disability which could adversely affect his/her physical performance and prevent the sworn member from performing the essential duties.
  - (c) Not presently on light duty status or administrative leave.
  - (d) Not had a suspension for disciplinary reasons for a minimum of one year.
  - (e) If selected to be a member of the ERT, the member must undergo a medical monitoring physical and be approved for participation by a physician.
  - (f) Must have the ability to work with the general public and advance a positive image of the Division.

## **C Recruitment and Selection**

- (1) Division members may be recruited for the following positions:
  - (a) Team Leader
  - (b) Assistant Team Leader
  - (c) Liaison Officer
  - (d) Safety Officer
  - (e) Planning Officer
  - (f) Logistics Officer
  - (g) Assessment and Collection Unit member
  - (h) Decontamination Unit member
- (2) Selection Process
  - (a) Applicants must submit to an oral interview. The interview board will be appointed by the Operational Support Section Major or designee in conjunction with the Statewide Environmental Investigations coordinator. The interview board will consist of (at a minimum) the "Team Leader" or "Assistant Team Leader" from the Division, and two other ERT members regardless of their position held, and preferably of longstanding tenure on the team.
  - (b) Upon completion of the interview process, applicants may be awarded team status or placed on an ERT reserve list which may be drawn from for a period of one year to fill team vacancies.
    1. If an applicant is not awarded team status during the one year reserve status, the applicant must reapply through the interview process.
    2. The selection process will be held based on ERT vacancies and needs.

## **D. Training**

- (1) All ERT members will be trained to the OSHA HAZMAT Technician level as identified in OSHA 1910.120(q)(6)(iii). The only exceptions are skilled support personnel or specialist employees as identified in OSHA 1910.120(q)(4)(5).
- (2) ERT members shall, at a minimum, attend an eight hour annual OSHA refresher training to retain his or her certification as an OSHA HAZMAT technician.

- (3) ERT members shall be required to participate in a medical monitoring program to assess their fitness for duty on the ERT.

**E. Activation and Deployment**

- (1) The ERT may be either wholly or partially activated upon a request from any Regional Major or his or her designee to the Operational Support Section Major or his or her designee.
- (2) The ERT may be either wholly or partially activated upon a request from the director or his or her designee of OER.
  - (a) The director or his or her designee of OER will notify FWC's Operational Support Section Major who will, in turn, coordinate with the Statewide Environmental Investigations coordinator to begin the notification process of ERT members via the chain of command.

**F. ERT Standard Operations Guide**

- D (1) Refer to the ERT Standard Operations Guide (SOG) for additional information.

**4 FORMS**

FORM NUMBER	FORM TITLE
N/A	N/A