

Clackamas Fire District #1



March 21, 2023

Representative Grayber, Chair
House Committee On Emergency Management
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street
Salem, Or 97301

Chair Grayber and House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government and Veterans:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2484, directing Department of State Fire Marshal to coordinate Urban Search And Rescue (USAR) function in the state. I am Greg Holland, Battalion Chief in-charge of USAR for Clackamas Fire District 1.

Clackamas Fire District 1 has a long history of highly trained firefighters who specialize in responding to incidents that require technical rescue training and certification. CFD1 USAR team was instrumental in the initial setup and planning of the Oregon State Fire Marshal (OSFM) USAR Oregon Task Force 1 Team in 2004. Since the decision was made to disband OR-TF1, CFD1 has remained committed to USAR response with district funds to meet the needs focused on all hazard's response.

With a diverse geographically challenged response area, Clackamas Fire District 1 has created a well thought out response plan in the event of a large-scale natural disaster like an earthquake scenario, or human caused catastrophe. With bridges, rivers, and freeway systems, Clackamas Fire Operations has a response plan for a North, South, and East technical rescue deployment model. CFD1 has one career staffed front line first out Heavy Rescue unit, HR305 from Station 5 in the North Battalion, and one career staffed first out tillered ladder Truck 316 in the South Battalion. Station 5 and Station 16 USAR Teams also deploy USAR Support Cache units to follow HR305 and T316 when responding to technical rescue emergencies. These support units allow our teams to deploy tools and equipment without delay. Squad 319 and HazMat 307, out of the East Battalion, provide technical support to our USAR teams with water rescue, rope rescue, and air monitoring. This response plan is designed to provide all hazards USAR and Technical Rescue coverage for the Fire District and surrounding communities. During every day technical rescue response needs, Clackamas Fire would be able to deploy two fully equipped four person teams of USAR Rescue Technicians, both responding on fully equipped apparatus and support vehicles. In addition to the on duty USAR teams, Clackamas Fire has USAR team members that can be called back to supplement and support in the event of a large-scale incident.

Below are just a few technical requirements of a USAR rescue incident where life safety is imminently threatened, and our teams will respond with the help of regional USAR teams in the Portland Metro area.

- Triage of damaged structures, reconnaissance duties, mark and identify streets and buildings.
- Assist in stabilization of damaged structures, including shoring and cribbing.
- Ability to lift, cut, and breach wood, steel, unreinforced masonry, and reinforced concrete.
- Ability to conduct physical and electronic search and rescue in damaged or collapsed structures.

Clackamas Fire District 1 has been committed to USAR in our fire district, our region, and our state. CFD1's commitment to maintenance training has been going on since 2004, when the state had OR-TF1, and has continued without deviation. The USAR technical rescue disciplines CFD1 strives to maintain and require for our technicians include but not limited to certifications in the following:

NFPA Structural Collapse Rescue Technician
NFPA Confined Space Rescue Technician
NFPA Trench Rescue Technician
NFPA Rope Rescue Technician
NFPA Vehicle Extrication, Heavy Vehicle Rescue, and Machinery Rescue Technician

All Team members must complete the 80-hour high level NFPA Structural Collapse Technician training that meets and exceeds the NFPA 1670 and 1006 standards based off the FEMA USAR Course taught to the national task forces.

USAR is a massive undertaking with large amount of training, equipment, and personnel required. There are departments in Oregon, much like CFD1, that are providing USAR. All of our departments need help, we need to gain efficiency with training dollars, we need to be able to utilize each other's resources, and we need to be supported with unified direction and organization. The coordination of training, response, and equipment has been absent since disbanding OR-TF1 in 2010. Individual departments have been left to figure it out for themselves and there is no framework to handle a major USAR emergency in the state of Oregon. It is time for the state to address USAR in the state of Oregon by giving direction to Department of State Fire Marshal. With OSFM directing USAR they would be able to coordinate and fund both maintenance and certification training, organize statewide drills to increase USAR interoperability, and develop a framework for response in the event of a major USAR disaster. As the Battalion Chief in-charge of USAR for Clackamas Fire District 1 and a representative of CFD1, I support HB 2484.

Greg Holland
Battalion Chief
Clackamas Fire District 1