

DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT  
VOLUNTEER POLICY FOR THE  
CITY OF CAPE TOWN

APPROVED BY COUNCIL : 07/12/06  
C 41/12/06

# DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT VOLUNTEER POLICY FOR THE CITY OF CAPE TOWN

Version 3 - Amended 12 July 2007

## GOAL

The goal of this policy is to standardise and formalise the recruitment, deployment and utilisation of Disaster Risk Management Volunteers managed by the City of Cape Town.

## BACKGROUND

Disaster Management Volunteers have been active in the City of Cape Town and the previous local authorities of which the City is comprised for many years, and has played an important role in many major incidents and disasters. A proud legacy has developed, and many volunteers have been contributing to communities for more than a decade.

Existing Disaster Management volunteer structures include:

- Area West / Plumstead Volunteer Corps (Plumstead)
- Atlantis Volunteer Corps
- Fish Hoek Volunteer Corps
- Grassy Park Volunteer Corps
- Happy Valley Volunteer Corp
- Macassar Volunteer Corps
- Melton Rose Volunteer Corps
- Melkbosstrand Volunteer Corps
- Milnerton Volunteer Corps
- Volunteers that assist with registration in communities after fires
- Wallacedene Volunteer Corps
- Khayelitsha Volunteer Corps
- Delft Volunteer Corps
- Belhar Volunteer Corps
- Elsies River Volunteer Corps

## LEGAL MANDATE

Section 44.(1) of the **Disaster Management Act**, 2002 (Act 57 of 2002) addresses the powers and duties of municipal disaster management centres, and in section 44(1)(g) prescribes that a municipal disaster management centre “must promote the recruitment, training and participation of volunteers in disaster management in the municipal area”.

**Regulations.** Draft regulations on disaster management volunteers have been published for comment. The reaction to the draft regulations was very negative and the National Centre has decided to reconsider the proposed regulations.

Section 1.5 of the NDMF stipulates that national guidelines outlining the criteria for the registration of volunteers must be provided by the National Disaster Management Centre. These guidelines are however not yet in place.”

Section 1.3.3 of the **National Disaster Management Framework** concerns the participation of volunteers in disaster risk management. In the section it is stated that in order to maintain an inclusive approach to the participation of volunteers in disaster risk management, volunteers are classified into three categories. These categories are:

- units of volunteers
- general volunteers
- spontaneous volunteers.

The categories are described as follows:

#### **Units of volunteers (section 1.3.3.1 of the NDMF)**

“In addition to the general provisions in the Act for the recruitment, training and participation of volunteers in disaster risk management in all three spheres of government, Chapter 7 of the Act provides a metropolitan and district municipality with the option of establishing a unit of volunteers to participate in disaster risk management in the municipality. This category provides for the participation and registration of individuals (or groups) who wish to become more actively involved in an organised structure for disaster risk management volunteers in the municipality. It includes individuals, groups or organisations that already have specialised skills, as well as those who undertake to be trained in specific skills in order to participate in this category.”

#### **General volunteers (Section 1.3.3.2 of the NDMF)**

In addition to the provisions relating to the option in Chapter 7 of the Act for municipalities to establish a unit of volunteers, sections 15(1)(g), 30(1)(g) and 44(1)(g) require disaster management centres to promote the recruitment, training and participation of volunteers in disaster risk management. This allows municipalities, especially those that choose not to establish a unit of volunteers, to recruit individuals (or groups of individuals) who are prepared to assist in the event of a disaster but do not want to participate in an organised structure such as a unit described in subsection 1.3.3.1 above or serve as active volunteers on an ongoing basis. This category provides a general pool of volunteers who can be drawn on by the municipality to perform a variety of functions that may or may not require specialised skills. Volunteers in this category must be registered and must meet minimum criteria set down in accordance with the national standard guideline.

#### **Spontaneous volunteers (Section 1.3.3.3 of the NDMF)**

“The Act recognises that people will always respond spontaneously in emergencies. Such humanitarian response should not be discouraged. However, municipalities must take cognisance of the problems and complications, including the possibility of injury and damage to property, that may result from the spontaneous, uncontrolled and uncoordinated actions of volunteers. Municipalities must take this matter into consideration and must make provision for it in their planning.”

The table below outlines the categories of volunteers and what is required to be in place for each category.

<b>“Units of volunteers” Active Volunteers</b>	<b>“General volunteers” General Volunteers</b>	<b>“Spontaneous volunteers” Temporary Volunteers</b>
<p>Minimum requirements</p> <p>Initial paper work Application form to be accepted as an active volunteer unit member Health questionnaire ID Card (Candidate Active Volunteer) Protective clothing Emblems and insignia</p> <p>Initial process Induction training and probation period Accepted / Probation extended / Rejected ID Card (Active Volunteer)</p> <p>Contact details in case of major incident or disaster Standby duties Regular duties Specialist skills (must be current in case of training that needs refreshing / can lapse) Command and control mechanism Indemnity form? Insurance Duty record Training record Maximum period of work</p>	<p>Minimum requirements</p> <p>Initial paper work Application form to be registered as a general volunteer Health questionnaire ID Card (Candidate General Volunteer) Protective clothing Emblems and insignia</p> <p>Initial process Induction training and probation period Accepted / Probation extended / Rejected ID Card (General Volunteer)</p> <p>Contact details in case of major incident or disaster Listed capabilities Command and control mechanism Indemnity form? Insurance Training record Deployment Record</p>	<p>Minimum requirements (determined by nature of incident or volunteer assistance offered)</p> <p>Initial paperwork Fast registration process which records personal details and services offered, and possibly skills and resources offered.</p> <p>Initial process Induction briefing Indemnity statement</p> <p>Command and control mechanism</p>

## **INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR CITY OF CAPE TOWN DISASTER MANAGEMENT VOLUNTEERS**

The City of Cape Town must have the following institutional and management arrangements in place for the recruitment and utilisation of Disaster Risk Management Volunteers:

1. Recruitment process and documentation
2. Enrolment process
3. A current register of disaster risk management volunteers
4. Code of conduct
5. Training requirements list, course material and records
6. Personal file per volunteer
7. Training Record
8. Service Record
9. Code of conduct
10. Mobilisation and duties procedures
11. Equipment
12. Transport to and from volunteer mobilisation centres, and during operations
13. Management and control measures to be put in place include
  - o Method of operations
  - o Dispatching and mobilisation protocols
  - o Reporting channels
  - o Logging calls
14. Insurance cover

15. Kit issue form
16. Standardised uniforms and protective clothing must be issued to volunteers. Protective clothing should be according to the prescriptions of the primary discipline they are assisting, but should not be marked so that it can be confused with the protective clothing of permanent members of the primary discipline. The word "Volunteer" must be displayed prominently on all protective clothing, uniforms and corporate wear.
17. Reimbursement for expenses incurred, including telephone expenses where possible.
18. Provision of meals, resting areas
19. A Volunteer Management Committee will be constituted including at least the following roleplayers:
  - o Manager : Training & Capacity Building and Volunteer Management
  - o DRMC Area Managers
  - o Volunteer Coordinators
  - o Elected representatives of volunteers
  - o Representatives of line functions with primary responsibility for the services provided by volunteers

This committee must meet regularly and will operate in a transparent and open manner, with any volunteer welcome to attend any meeting of the committee.
20. A quarterly reporting process will be instituted.
21. Possible volunteer activities and roles can include:
  - o Disaster Risk Monitors
  - o Early Warning
  - o Public Education and Awareness
  - o Training
  - o Communications
  - o Information management
  - o Mapping
  - o Impact assessment
  - o First Aid
  - o Traffic control
  - o Fire suppression and fire fighting
22. A reward and recognition system must be put in place.
23. Legislation such as the Fire Brigade Services Act, 1987 and the Health Act, 1977, etc. places primary statutory obligations on the Fire Services and Ambulance Services respectively to provide such services. Disaster Risk Management Volunteers will only assist with such statutory obligations and perform such services on the request of, and with the acknowledgement and endorsement of the professional services that have primary responsibility.

## **INTERFACE BETWEEN VOLUNTEERS AND AGENCIES WITH PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY**

1. In cases where volunteer formations assist with the duties of a discipline with primary responsibility for a risk or incident type, the volunteers will fall under direct control of the discipline or agency with primary responsibility (e.g. Fire & Rescue Services for fires, Emergency Medical Services for mass casualty incidents) and indirect control of the senior Disaster Management official involved;
2. In cases where volunteers perform a function for which no other discipline has primary responsibility, volunteer formations fall under direct control of the senior Disaster Management official involved in the project or incident
3. In cases where volunteers perform a function for which there is a discipline with primary responsibility, but the said discipline is not able to be present or does not have resources present to perform its function, volunteer formations will act within the operating guidelines of the primary discipline and fall under direct control of the senior disaster management official involved, who will be in constant liaison with the management of the discipline with primary responsibility who has jurisdiction over the area where the volunteer formations are working.
4. Where volunteers assist during major incidents, a representative will report to the incident commander and report what volunteer formations with what training and resources are available, and from then on be the liaison between the incident commander and volunteer formations to deploy volunteer formations according to the instructions of the incident commander. This representative could be a volunteer or a disaster management official designated for this sole purpose. The representative must at all times remain with the incident commander or at the incident command post from where the incident commander operates.

5. Where volunteers assist during major incidents, volunteer resources can be attached to existing primary discipline formations and act under control of the senior officer of that specific formation (e.g. a sector commander), or can be utilised as independent formations under control of the incident commander.
6. A disaster management official must at all times be aware of all volunteer deployments, even when volunteers are attached to the formations of primary disciplines.
7. The command structure of the primary discipline which is being supported by the volunteer formation must be informed about the training and equipment levels of the volunteer formation to enable realistic decisions on deployment and duties assigned to volunteer formations.

### **CONCEPT OF VOLUNTEER VS RESERVIST**

Unlike reservists, volunteers will receive no remuneration for volunteer work.

That no guarantee for priority appointment within the Fire Services and Disaster Management should be given to volunteers.