



## Fact sheet and Frequently Asked Questions

# FAA Requirements and Resources for Aviation Event Emergency Response Plans

### General Requirements and Recommendations

- New requirements are included in updated [FAA Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 6](#) and [FAA Advisory Circular 95-45 Waivers: Aviation Events](#).
- Dedicated emergency resources must be provided for all waived operations. If dedicated resources are redirected to other incidents or events, all flying should be suspended until they are back in position.
- Response time must be one minute or less for any aviation incident within the aerobatic box.
- The emergency response plan (ERP) should be based on a formal risk assessment and should consider the entire venue, not only aviation risks.
- Development of the ERP should be coordinated with local emergency response officials.
- The ERP must utilize the National Incident Management System (NIMS), including the Incident Command System (ICS).
- An operations-based emergency response exercise predicated on air show-specific objectives and scenario is required prior to the air show.

### References and Resources

- Advisory Circulars (AC), CertAlerts and FAA Orders
- Guidelines for Aviation Event Emergency Response Plans
- FAA/ICAS Aviation Event Risk Tool (AvERT)
- Training resource links (NIMS/ICS, aircraft emergency responder training, etc.)
- Sample Incident Action Plans and other documents

### Frequently-Asked Questions

1. *Why is FAA revising its emergency response plan requirements?*

The need for an effective emergency response capability for aviation and other incidents at air shows is critical to the safety of the participants and the public. The FAA and ICAS believe there is a need for comprehensive guidance for air show emergency response plans that is based on risk and that places stronger emphasis on operational readiness, rapid response and coordination of participants and stakeholders.

2. *What will specifically be required by FAA with regard to emergency response?*

A critical requirement is having appropriate and dedicated response resources for aviation incidents, properly trained, equipped and positioned to arrive at an incident within 1 minute of notification. Other recommendations include conducting an exercise involving air show operational personnel; use of the incident command system (ICS); and ensuring that the emergency response plan has been coordinated with appropriate local fire-rescue, EMS, law enforcement, public works, public health, and emergency management officials.

3. *Our air show is an annual event and has been successfully conducted for years, and our safety/response personnel know what to do. Why is it necessary to conduct an exercise every year?*

A good safety record over the course of past events does not necessarily guarantee good future performance. Each air show may involve new participants and performers, aircraft, response assets,

or changes to the venue, which may require changes to the ERP that will need to be validated and institutionalized. Conducting an effective exercise will not only inform stakeholders how the response will be executed, it will identify any gaps or deficiencies that need to be addressed.

4. *Our air show is fairly small compared to the larger air shows. Will the emergency response plan requirements be the same for us as for large events?*

Every air show, regardless of size or complexity, presents some level of risk – and consequently, every air show, regardless of size or complexity, needs an ERP that meets certain baseline requirements. The flexibility built into the risk management and emergency preparedness processes allows each event’s organizers to scale their efforts based on the size and complexity of their event. The ERP Guidelines and the Aviation Event Risk Tool designed to help air show sponsors and emergency officials evaluate a broad range of considerations and tools for inclusion as the event requires.

5. *Why is it necessary for non-responders to be familiar with NIMS/ICS?*

The Incident Command System is the standardized national approach used by public safety agencies to manage emergency incidents, and the use of NIMS/ICS is also a best practice for managing non-emergency special events of all kinds and sizes. It is important that air show officials, including air bosses and announcers, understand the system that will be used in the event of an emergency and their role in it. It is equally important that emergency responders understand the important roles that these individuals have in the event of an emergency, and that all actions are coordinated using shared practices, a formal command structure, common terminology, and plain language.

6. *What assistance or other resources are available for training and exercise/drill planning?*

In most communities, the local fire chief or emergency manager can provide valuable assistance in developing and evaluating emergency response training and exercises. The Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security is also a useful reference in developing exercises. Sample air show exercise materials are available from ICAS and other sources.

7. *The emergency response planning guidance and risk assessment tool documents are fairly comprehensive – is my plan required to include everything?*

The emergency response planning guidance document is just that – guidance. How extensive an ERP will be is directly dependent on the complexity of the event. The ERP Guidance is intended to be a practical, risk-based reference and not a prescriptive or inflexible template.

8. *The local volunteer fire department is able to provide on-site emergency aviation accident response during our air show, but it may be subject to response to other emergencies at the event or possibly off site. How does that affect the air show?*

The FAA requirement is to ensure that trained, operationally ready, and properly positioned emergency response resources are available to respond to an aviation incident while the air show is underway. If these resources are redirected to another incident or emergency, flying should be suspended until those resources are back in place.

9. *Why are all performers required to provide their extraction requirements prior to every airshow? What is the best way to accomplish this?*

In the event of an aircraft accident, the safe and rapid extraction of pilot/crew is critical. Since each aircraft may have unique canopy opening and pilot harness systems, emergency response crews need to become familiar with these systems prior to flight operations. ICAS has developed standard templates that capture the critical technical information about these systems for sharing with emergency response personnel.