



WESTERN CAPE
SPECIAL OPERATIONS RESPONSE TEAM

S.O.R.T.

Strategic Plan

SPECIAL OPERATIONS RESPONSE TEAM Strategic Plan

Note:

SORT will reside under the auspices of Chief Fire Officers Committee and the Provincial Emergency Medical Services with direct support from the Provincial Directorate for Fire Brigade & Disaster Management Services.

Acknowledgement is given to the EMA, NZMCDEM& FS.

Previn Govender

Chairperson: Western Cape Chief Fire officers Committee
Chief Fire Officer: Breede Valley Fire & Rescue Service

Neville van Rensburg

Chief Medical Rescue Technician: Provincial Emergency Medical Services

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PART A

BACKGROUND SPECIAL OPERATIONS RESPONSE TEAM

- 1.01 The Special Operation Response Team (SORT) concept is not a new invention!
- 1.02 SORT is a philosophy based on international practices that encourage the use of multi-skilled, multi-agency resources in a deployable unit formation that can be mobilised to attend to internal emergency situations and/or emergency situations outside the primary area (home base); whether it is provincial, national or international need.
- 1.03 SORT philosophy is based on an “*ALL HAZARDS APPROACH*”.

THE PRINCIPAL S.O.R.T APPROACH

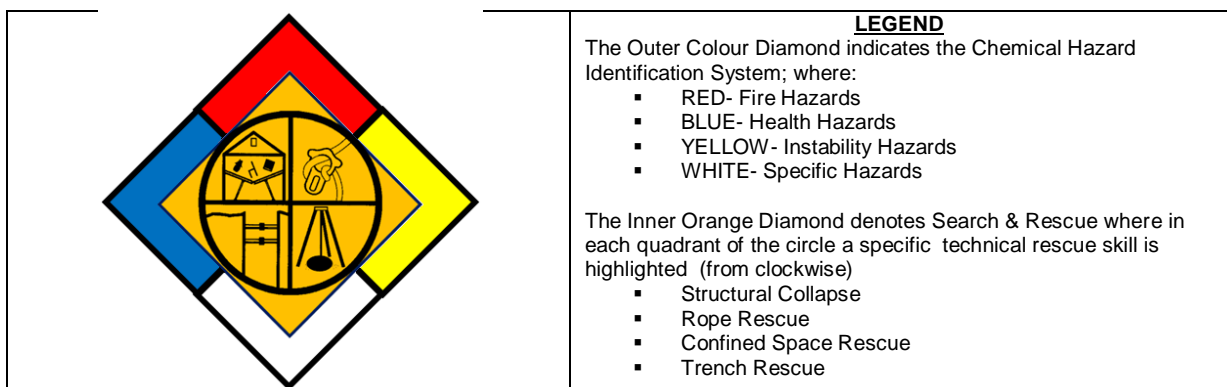
- 1.04 The principal SORT approach is as follows:
- Specialist multi-skilled units capable of undertaking specialist emergency services operations over extended period of time
 - Inter-agency training and standards consistent with international standards
 - Response mechanisms will enable the local teams and regional units to be integrated with local emergency services in any Province with the Republic; or in any other country should SORT assistance be required.
 - Appropriate co-ordinating structures at national and local levels that will ensure the sustainability of SORT

SORT STRUCTURE

- 1.05 Taking into account the common elements of the previous CBR-HAZMAT and USAR Structures (figures 2 &3); the SORT Structure caters for both these requirements through the creation of multi-skilled specialist positions being essential as part of the staff structure.
- 1.06 The SORT structure consists of basically two (2) teams of 8 appropriately skilled members that can be established in local areas that when combined, can function as a UNIT.
- 1.07 When activated as a UNIT, the SORT Structure enables a complete self-managed unit.
- 1.08 The SORT Structure provides for 17 multi-skilled persons qualified as hazardous materials technicians and rescue technicians (HRT's); 3 support staff (equipment, logistics and communications) and 2 medics. (See figure 4.)

SORT LOGO

- 1.09 The Special Operations Response Team logo is reflective of the key specialist response disciplines involved and the symbolism attached is internationally recognisable.



SORT KEY PERFORMANCE AREAS

- ✓ Development of a regional urban search and rescue response system made up of emergency responders from all municipality's emergency services and provincial emergency medical services and able to respond to incidents involving the Collapse of inhabited buildings, Major transportation accidents (Air or Land), Acts of terrorism and Major flooding disasters
- ✓ Development of a regional hazardous chemical and biological response system able to respond to incidents involving the accidental or planned release of hazardous chemicals into the environment which may pose an unreasonable risk to the health and safety of people or the environment, major transportation accidents involving hazardous materials (Air and land) and acts of terrorism involving the release of hazardous chemicals (i.e. Anthrax, Saran Gas)
- ✓ To ensure that all municipalities within the region are able to benefit from an integrated specialist operations emergency response system.
- ✓ Provision of a technical rescue and disaster response system able to address the needs of the Western Cape risk profile.

THE SORT WAY

- 1.10 The SORT rationale merges the existing requirements of HAZMAT and USAR team requirements by combining elements of skills and resources so as to formalise the establishment of stronger resilient Teams that would be able to be deployed as a stand-alone specialist resource capable of multi-skilled emergency services intervention.

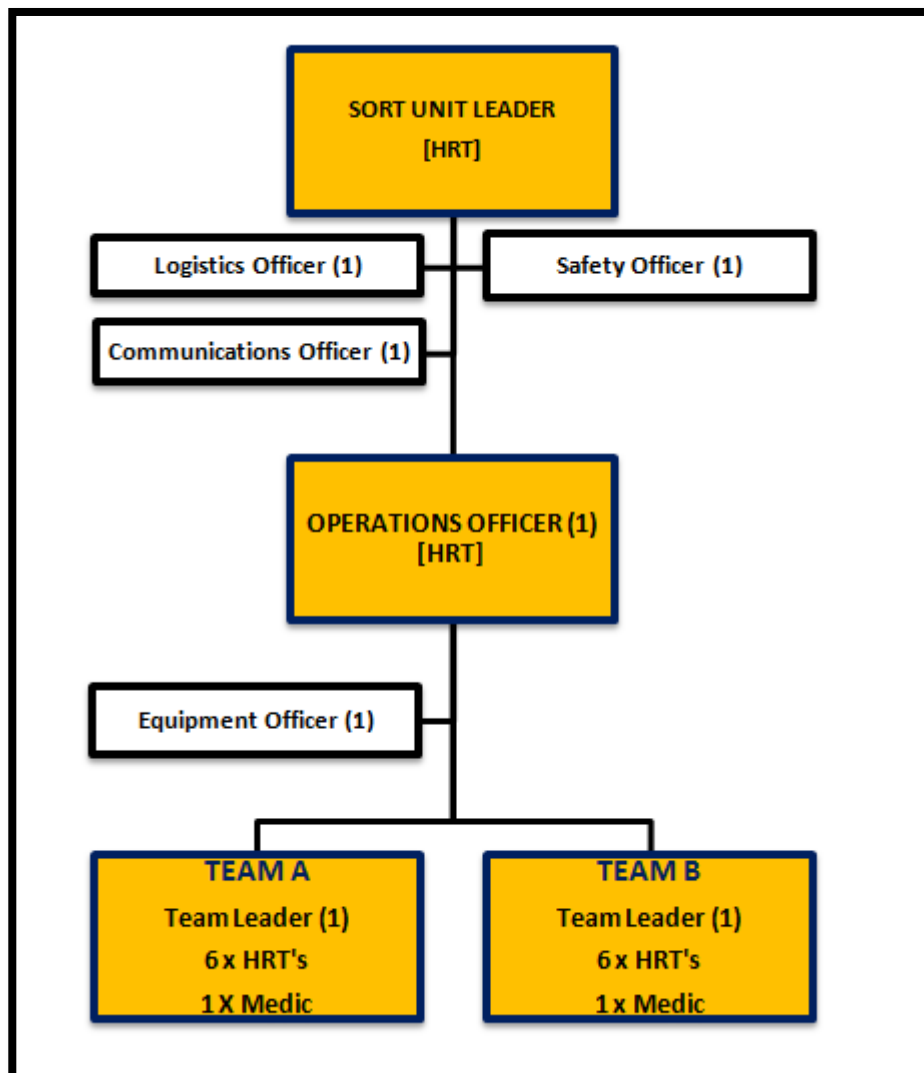


Figure 4: SORT Structure

SORT UNIT DISTRIBUTION

- 1.11 With the decentralised model that SORT suggests, where the strengthening of local inter-agency is fundamental; SORT Unit distribution can occur over wider area, and Teams can be formed at almost every town that has established FRS and EMS capacity.
- 1.12 Unlike the CBR-HAZMAT model that suggested four teams; or the USAR Concept that suggested six teams; SORT is able to realise more teams thereby covering almost every region of the Western Cape; where such coverage will guarantee almost immediate intervention and the assurance that there will be always be a Team or UNIT that can be deployed from outside the immediate affected area (see figure 5).



Figure 5: SORT UNIT Distribution

- 1.13 As part of the immediacy of need and as a measure of establishing the foundation for years beyond; it is envisaged that SORT Teams will be established as follows:
- a. City of Cape Town – 2 UNITS
 - b. Breede Valley (Worcester) – 2 UNITS
 - c. West Coast – 1 UNIT
 - Team A: Morreesburg
 - Team B: Langebaan)
 - d. Stellenbosch/Drakenstein – 1 UNIT
 - Team A: Stellenbosch
 - Team B: Paarl
 - e. Overberg- 1 UNIT

- Team A: Bredasdorp
 - Team B: Hermanus)
- f. Mossel Bay – 1 UNIT
- g. George – 1 UNIT

SORT TEAM REGISTRATION CRITERIA & IDENTIFICATION

- 1.14 Teams that wish register as part of the SORT Task Force System will be organisationally assessed against the NFPA 1670 for organisational capacity and personnel will have proved competency against the NFPA 1006 Standard.
- 1.15 The INSARAG Guidelines will also be used as a determiner of capacity.
- 1.16 To achieve registration a team has to reach required standards, and they are subject to regular audit to confirm their ability to maintain these standards.
- 1.17 There will be initially be 9 registered Task Force Units (TF-U's) identified as follows:
- SORT WC TF-U 1 Breede Valley (*Worcester*)
 - SORT WC TF-U 2 *City of Cape Town (City Bowl)*
 - WC SORT TF-U 3 *City of Cape Town (Peninsula)*
 - WC SORT TF-U 4 *Stellenbosch/Paarl*
 - WC SORT TF-U 5 *Mossel Bay*
 - WC SORT TF-U 6 *West Coast*
 - WC SORT TF-U 7 *Overberg /Overstrand*)
 - WC SORT TF-U 8 *George*
 - WC SORT TF – U9 *Breede Valley (Worcester)*

The teams within UNITS will be identified by the team code (e.g. Team A of TF-U5 will be simply identified as U5A and Team B of the same unit will be U5B)

SORT LOGIC

In appreciating the impact of the SORT concept, the logic therefore will mean that:

- ✓ There will be a total of **9 UNITS**
- ✓ 8 UNITS equals to **18 Teams**
- ✓ **1 Team can be deployed on its own to assist a UNIT** (thereby equalling to 3 teams within the UNIT) or;
- ✓ **1 Team can partner with another Team** from outside the local area to form a new UNIT (thereby **strengthening the convergence approach** to incidents)
- ✓ **1 UNIT plus another UNIT equals a TASK FORCE**
- ✓ A **TASK FORCE** will have **34 HRT's plus 6 Support Staff plus 4 Medics**
- ✓ The most senior UNIT Leader will assume role of TASK FORCE Leader.
- ✓ Other Support functions (canine, engineering, etc.) can attach itself to a TASK FORCE

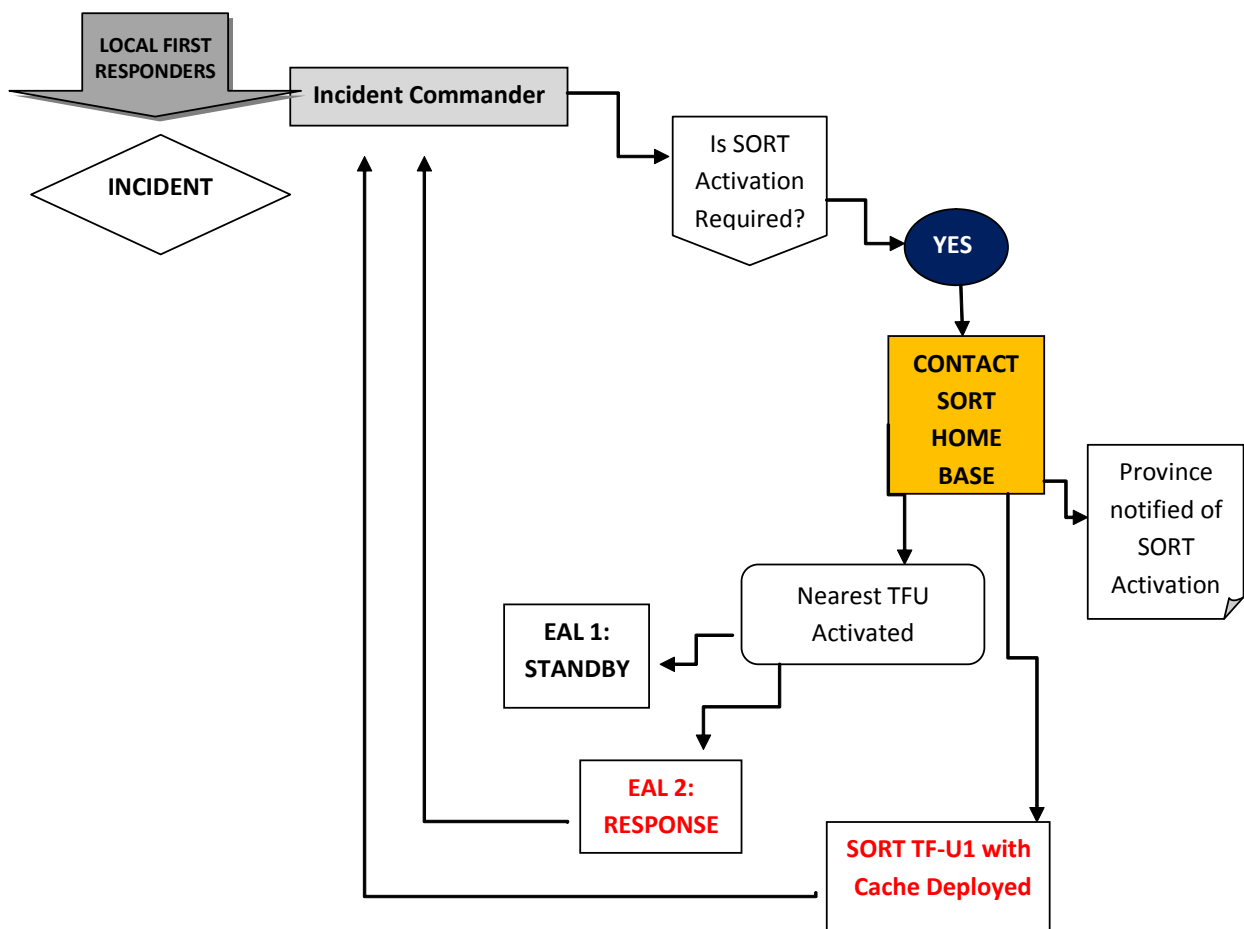
SORT ACTIVATION SEQUENCE – LOCAL INCIDENTS

1.18 Response within Local Area – Initial Team Activation

- Initial Team Activation will be according local Standard Operation Procedures
- Once a Local Team is active, the Local UNIT is activated.

1.19 Secondary Alert

- The Local UNIT Leader will communicate a Secondary SORT Alert to the SORT Home Base (Worcester) and ask for one of two SORT ALERTS:-
 - ALERT LEVEL 1-STANDBY MODE:** The nearest Team/UNIT will be contacted and requested to Standby at their respective Local Bases.
 - ALERT LEVEL 2-RESPONSE MODE:** The nearest team/UNIT will be requested to deploy to affected area and set up BoO (Base of Operations) and/or form TASK FORCE formation at BoO with another UNIT.



SORT ACTIVATION SEQUENCE – INCIDENTS OUTSIDE THE PROVINCE

1.20 Lines of Communication

Any request for deployment of a SORT UNIT or SORT TASK FORCE across Provincial boundaries will be processed via the Provincial Disaster Management Centre with such requests then processed via the SORT HOME BASE

PART B - STRATEGIC DIRECTION

LEGACY

- 1.21 The strategic common goal of the SORT Plan can be summarised as leaving a “lasting legacy “of a better integrated state of emergency response capability in the Province which ultimately is intended to foster increased community resilience.
- 1.22 SORT contributes towards the above goals by focusing on the following objectives:
- i. The development and maintenance of an urban search and rescue capability based upon national and international best practice.
 - ii. The development and maintenance of an integrated response strategy for the range of incidents requiring the intervention of a specialized hazardous materials team

STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND GOALS

- 1.23 The overall *Strategic Direction* of this plan is to ***unify the components of CBR-HAZMAT & USAR in the Western Cape Province***

- 1.24 The three *Strategic Goals* based on current AND future needs are:

- ✓ **Sustainable Arrangements**
- ✓ **Maximum Operability and Interoperability**
- ✓ **Stronger Integrated Teams, People and Partnerships at local, provincial and national level.**

These goals reflect both the practical requirements and the principal challenges experienced to date in developing this capability. The Strategic Priority Activities corresponding to these goals are summarised in the Table 1.

SORT MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

1.25 Steering Committee

- a. In order to ensure that there is a unified and informed approach in the establishment of the SORT UNITS in the province; a SORT Steering Committee with representation from the Fire & Rescue Service, Provincial Emergency Medical Services, SAPS, SANDF will be established.
- b. Agreed responsibilities of the Steering Committee will be outlined in a collectively approved Terms of Reference which will be focused on capacity and resilience building of UNITS within the Province.
- c. The suggested organisational structure of the Provincial SORT Steering Committee and Local Working Groups is depicted in the figure below.

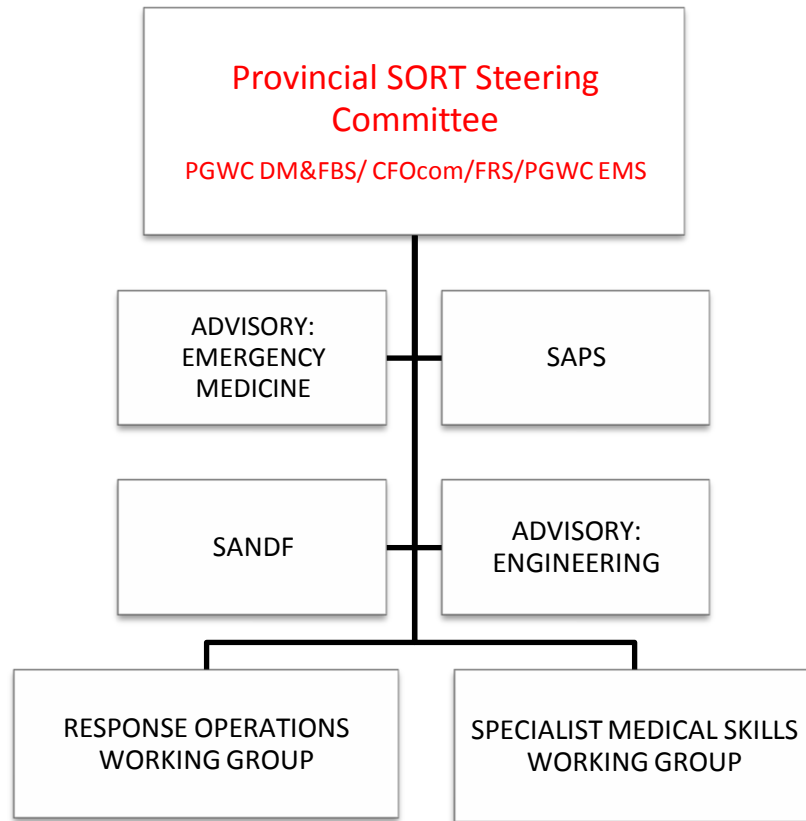


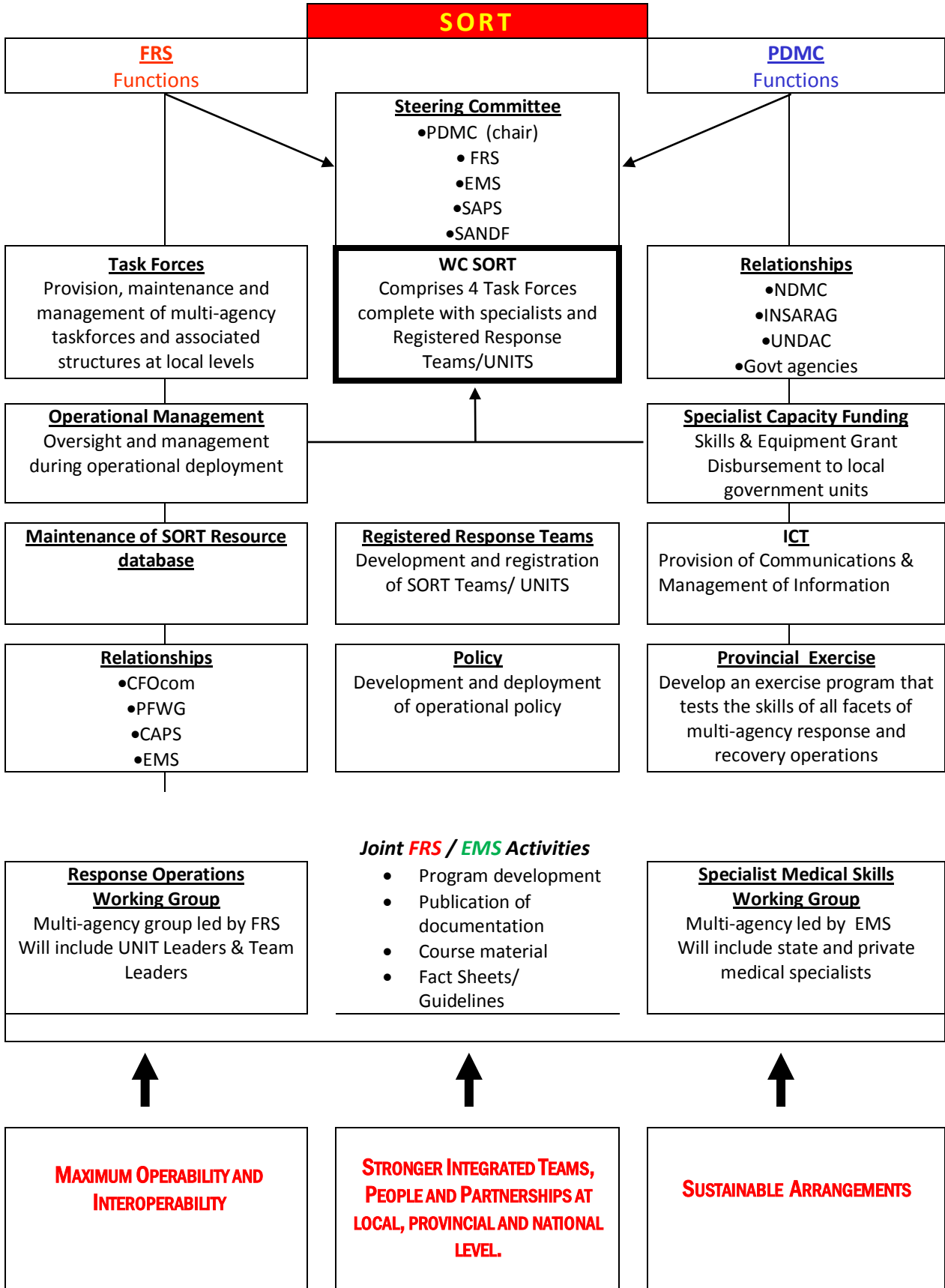
Figure 1: Provincial SORT Steering Committee

KEY ORGANISATIONAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1.26 In suggesting the format of the Steering Committee, the following is made clear:
- a. The Head: Provincial Disaster Management Centre is the logical independent facilitator at governmental level with respect to international linkages, in addition to having the statutory and functional links with Emergency Services Groups. It is therefore appropriate for the incumbent to function as Steering Committee Chair.
 - b. FRS should take a stronger role in leadership of the operational aspects of Hazardous Material and Technical Search & Rescue response, reflecting the role clarity and nature of resource provisioning that is made with the Fire & Rescue Service.
 - c. EMS should take a stronger role in leadership of Specialist Medical skills and resource provisioning required for specialist responses, thereby also reflecting the overarching role that EMS will play in terms of controlling and coordinating not only governmental medical resources but also the private medical resources that would be required or made available during specialist emergencies.

The relationship is further illustrated on a Relationship Matrix Chart the next page.

SORT RELATIONSHIP MATRIX CHART



- 1.27 With respect to the Steering Committee and Working Groups, the focus is summarised as follows:
- a. **Steering Committee** – strategic direction setting, project prioritisation and resourcing
 - b. **Working Groups** – delivery of operational capability and associated agreed outcomes and activities

KEY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INITIATING AGENCIES

1.28 Provincial Disaster Management Centre

➤ Relationships & Capability Development

- Maintaining international and national government level relationships and arrangements in accordance with INSARAG and UNDAC frameworks
- Managing the relationship across the SORT Steering Committee organisations as Chair of the Steering Committee, and maintaining communication with all SORT stakeholder organisations and individuals
- Monitoring strategic capability requirements and instigating new developments via sector linkages
- Maintaining Grant Funding mechanisms so as to enable resource and skills capacity development at Team/ UNIT level

➤ Provincial SORT Exercise Programme

- Develop and maintain an exercise programme that tests the skills of all facets of multi-agency response and recovery operations

1.29 Fire & Rescue Service (FRS)

➤ Operational Management & Policy

- Responsible for leading the operational and delivery aspects associated with SORT.
- Representation at the INSARAG Team Leaders Forum
- Leadership of the Response Operations Working Group
- Monitoring and review of SORT operational capability
- Maintaining the provincial SORT resource database

➤ Task Forces

- Provisioning, maintenance and management of multi-agency Task Forces and associated structures

1.30 Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

➤ Medical Skills Management & Policy

- Responsible for leading the medical management and resource provisioning associated with SORT
- Leadership of the Specialist Medical Skills Working Group; which may include private sector medical resources.
- Representation at the INSARAG Team Leaders Forum
- Monitoring and review of SORT Medical resource and provisioning capability.

1.31 Joint FRS/EMS

➤ Response Teams

- Development and registration of Response Teams including training frameworks











➤ Training

- Co-ordinating the development and maintenance of training standards and qualifications that are consistent across agencies and with international standards.





1.02 Strategic Priority Activities





Key:  would be perfect to get now!  Already in place  must really commit to process  now ongoing

Strategic Goal 1: SUSTAINABLE ARRANGEMENTS





Issues	Required Outcome & Action Plan	Responsibility	10/11	11/12	12/13
1.1 Development of sustainable management & systems					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance processes for reviewing and approving business plans and budgets 	PGWC to approve SORT Concept as a pilot for Western Cape.	PGWC-DM&FBS			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement of medium level USAR equipment and Hazmat resources Training 	PDMC/Unit Leaders/ Local Government			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual business planning, budget preparation, submission and reporting processes documented. 	Annual Business Plan and Work Programme; calendar of programmed events	Steering Com & WGs			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roles and responsibilities of Task Force Leaders, Support Team members, Response Team Leaders to be defined 	Management Manual prepared – (incl. delegations, Health & Safety), any additional sections progressively. To include update of deployment guidelines/ instructions	Response Operations WG			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capability audit process defined (paper based and physical review) 	Initially done by CFOcom and EMS -Will be annually initiated	Response Operations WG/Medical Skills WG			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic and operational risks identified and actively monitored 	Risk register established	Steering Com & PDMC			
1.2 Systematic provision and maintenance of equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DLG to allocate grant funding on annual basis for SORT through PGWC FBS SORT TF's to be systematically capacitated PPM schedules to be prepared 	Steering Com /Response Operations WG			
1.3 Succession planning framework for Task Forces	Prepare succession planning procedures for Task Forces, Specialist Skills strands and Registered Response Teams	Response Operations WG			
1.4 Succession planning framework for Specialist Skills strands		Specialist Skills WG			










Strategic Goal 2: Maximum Interoperability with Other Agencies & SAR Elements

Key:  would be perfect to get now!  Already in place  must really commit to process  now ongoing

Issues	Required Outcome & Action Plan	Responsibility	TARGET		
			10/11	11/12	12/13
2.1 Build knowledge of capability, delivery focus and operational mechanisms across agencies with incident management responsibilities	<p>Prepare a stakeholder management plan defining relationships with UNDAC, SASAR, SAPS RU, SANDF</p> <p>Develop a clear marketing & promotion programme to agencies with incident management responsibilities. Emphasis to be placed on the delivery focus and examples of interoperability with the wider rescue sector</p> <p>Prepare Fact Sheet which sets out the delivery focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Declared emergencies – SORT delivered to the community, Non-declared emergencies – SORT is delivered to the Emergency Services 	Steering Committee & DLG			
2.2 Comprehensive skills maintenance programme which integrates training with a national exercise programme	<p>Development of ongoing skills maintenance programme, training location(s) and arrangements</p> <p>Prepare national exercise programme (integrated with regional exercise programme)</p>	Response Operations WG / Med Skills WG			
2.3 Response Teams are not operationally linked to Task Force structures	<p>Integrate the deployment mechanisms between Task Forces and Response Teams</p> <p>Establish specific linkages between TF teams and Specialist Skills</p>	Response Operations WG			
2.4 Clarify international deployment capability and mechanisms	<p>Meet with key govt agencies</p> <p>Prepare paper on the logistical implications of mounting an international response, incl. costs</p>	Steering Committee			

Strategic Goal 3: Teams, People and Partnerships

Key:  would be perfect to get now!  Already in place  must really commit to process  now ongoing

Issues	Required Outcome & Action Plan	Responsibility	TARGET		
			10/11	11/12	12/13
3.1 Progress joint approaches with other Provinces & Countries	Finalise high-level agreement to exchange USAR information and the development of appropriate mechanisms	NDMC/ Steering Committee			
3.2 Mechanisms to maintain operational linkages with USAR practitioners in other countries	Develop & document an appropriate process (linked with the need for annual training engagement)	Steering Committee			
3.3 Medics – linking their developmental work in with the Health sector with respect to pre-hospital care	Meet Service providers plus Ministry of Health representative	Med Skills WG			
3.4 Canine Search – clarifying deployment mechanisms with respect to Task Forces and Response Teams	Produce an integrated deployment protocol and put appropriate agreements and arrangements in place	Response Operations WG			
3.5 Continued development of Information Technology	Define, resource and manage a work programme, including website development (promotional and operational sites) and maintenance of SORT database	Steering Committee/Response Operations WG			
3.6 Establish an appropriate research & development capability	Use international USAR /CBR agencies to (i) keep up with current developments and (ii) establish linkages with those who are leading the development of USAR	Steering Committee /WG's			

Appendix A – Responsibilities of the SORT Steering Committee

SORT Steering Committee

RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of the Committee are to provide strategic direction, governance and support to all elements of SORT to;

- 1) Ensure the development of policy and frameworks within which the objectives of the national and provincial capability can be met.
- 2) Establish the linkages between all of the agencies which contribute to the national and provincial capability.
- 3) Ensure that international and national best practice standards are implemented for specialist qualifications and training.
- 4) ensure that the approved SORT Units and other specialist skill assets are appropriately resourced and capable of being deployed; the Committee, as part of its responsibilities, will request that sufficient funding is available from government for that purpose
- 5) Ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for other provincial or international teams coming into Western Cape to give assistance, and for Western Cape SORT Units who may provide assistance overseas.
- 6) Establish and maintain an exercise programme to test and evaluate SORT capability.
- 7) monitor and report on the integrated capability to all stakeholders
- 8) Establish and maintain all the components of a comprehensive SORT capability.
- 9) Ensure operational readiness of all elements of the SORT capability.
- 10) Ensure integration of the SORT capability within FRS and EMS operational arrangements

Subject to a majority decision of its members, the Committee may from time to time alter or add to the above responsibilities.

