

**ORDER OF THE  
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS  
DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
CREATING RULES**

Relating to the establishment of standards for the adoption of the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System, also known as MABAS, that may be used for deploying fire, rescue and emergency medical services personnel and equipment in a multi-jurisdictional or multi-agency emergency response.

To create WEM 8

Analysis Prepared by Wisconsin Emergency Management:

Chapter WEM 8 establishes standards adopting the MABAS as a mechanism for the systematic deployment of fire, rescue and emergency medical services personnel and equipment during multi-jurisdictional or multi-agency emergency response to crises, natural disasters and manmade catastrophes. This administrative rule delineates the various levels of response types and provides a procedure and systematic plan for the provision of mutual aid as resources are exhausted. The rule establishes uniform compliance requirements for the types and classes of emergency response equipment and apparatus as well as minimum training requirements for emergency response personnel.

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Division of Emergency Management by ss. 166.03 (2) (a) 3., and 227.11 (2) (a), Stats., the Division of Emergency Management hereby proposes to create rules interpreting s. 166.03 (2) (a) 3., Stats., as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter WEM 8 is created to read:

Chapter WEM 8

MUTUAL AID BOX ALARM SYSTEM  
STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

- WEM 8.01 Purpose
- WEM 8.02 Definitions
- WEM 8.03 Levels of Response Types
- WEM 8.04 Procedure for Providing Mutual Aid
- WEM 8.05 Types and Classing of Resources
- WEM 8.06 Communications
- WEM 8.07 Coordinators
- WEM 8.08 Credentialing
- WEM 8.09 Limitations on Coverage
- WEM 8.10 Compensation
- WEM 8.11 Participation

**WEM 8.01 Purpose.** The purpose of this chapter is to establish standards for the adoption of the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System, also known as MABAS, by a local governmental unit as a mechanism

to be used for mutual aid for fire, rescue, and emergency medical services and associated special operational services as required in s. 166.03 (2) (a) 3., Stats.

**WEM 8.02 Definitions.** In this chapter:

- (1) "Aiding unit" means a MABAS member unit furnishing equipment, personnel or services to a stricken unit.
- (2) "Apparatus guidelines" means apparatus defined and incorporated into the MABAS general operating procedures.
- (3) "Chief officer" means the highest ranking officer within a fire, rescue or emergency medical services unit.
- (4) "Emergency" means an occurrence or condition in a stricken unit's territorial jurisdiction which results in a situation of such magnitude or consequence that it cannot be adequately handled by the resources of that unit, so that it determines the necessity and advisability of requesting mutual aid.
- (5) "Emergency medical services system" means the method for establishing a system for the appropriate management for the medical treatment and transport of the public in pre-hospital or interfacility settings or from facilities or institutions providing health services under ch. TRANS 309 and chs. HFS Chapters 110 to 113.
- (6) "Fire department" has the meaning given in s. 66.0314 (1) (c), Stats.
- (7) "Incident command system" has the meaning specified in s. 166.02 (6m), Stats. and follows the guidelines of the National Incident Management System, also known as NIMS.
- (8) "Local governmental unit" has the meaning given in 19.42 (7u), Stats., and also includes a tribe or band.
- (9) "MABAS, or 'Mutual Aid Box Alarm System' box card" means a printed form containing details of departments, specialized personnel and equipment to respond to a given geographical area, target hazard or specialized response within a community.
- (10) "MABAS, or 'Mutual Aid Box Alarm System' division" means the geographically associated MABAS member units which have been grouped for operational efficiency and representation of those MABAS member units.
- (11) "MABAS or 'Mutual Aid Box Alarm System' executive board" means a statewide oversight board comprised of one designated representative from each MABAS region.
- (12) "MABAS or 'Mutual Aid Box Alarm System' interdivisional card" means a MABAS box card designated for interdivisional mutual aid, listing a MABAS division's equipment available to respond based on the type of equipment and location.
- (13) "MABAS or 'Mutual Aid Box Alarm System' member unit" means a local governmental unit including but not limited to a county, city, village, town, tribe or band, emergency medical services district, or fire protection district, having a fire department recognized by the State of

Wisconsin which is a party to the MABAS agreement and has been appropriately authorized by the governing body to enter into such an agreement.

- (14) “MABAS or ‘Mutual Aid Box Alarm System’ region” means the WEM regional areas as identified by the Adjutant General under ss. 166.03 (2) 6. (b) 1., Stats.
- (15) “Mutual Aid Box Alarm System”, or MABAS, means a definite and prearranged plan whereby an aiding unit provides response and assistance to a stricken unit in accordance with the system established and maintained by MABAS member units, as amended from time to time. Management oversight of the system is handled by the MABAS executive board.
- (16) “National Incident Management System” or ‘NIMS’,” means a system mandated by Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 that provides a consistent nationwide approach for federal, state, local and tribal governments, the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations to work effectively and efficiently together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity.
- (17) “Stricken unit” means a MABAS member unit or a non-participating local governmental unit which requests aid in the event of an emergency.
- (18) “Tribe or band” has the meaning given in 66.0314 (1) (fe), Stats.
- (19) “WEM” means the Division of Emergency Management with the Department of Military Affairs.
- (20) “WEM duty officer” means an individual on-call 24 hours a day and seven days a week, as identified by WEM’s duty officer roster.

**WEM 8.03 Levels of response.** MABAS coordinates the effective and efficient provision of mutual aid during emergencies, natural disasters, or manmade catastrophes. In recognition of home rule, MABAS is not intended to relieve a local governmental unit from its responsibilities of providing adequate emergency services for all local emergencies, since all local governmental units should have their own first line of defense. When a local governmental unit exhausts its resources, MABAS can be activated by the stricken unit through a systematic plan at the following NIMS level response types:

- (1) A “local village, township, city or fire district level response type 5” is an emergency that is a routine day-to-day event utilizing resources listed on a MABAS box card with a minimum of three MABAS alarm levels which is triggered locally by the incident commander on the scene of an emergency.
- (2) A “regional city, county or fire district level response type 4” is an emergency that has exhausted “local village, township, city or fire district level response” capabilities and may utilize up to three MABAS interdivisional cards. A regional response is triggered locally by the incident commander on the scene of an emergency.
- (3) A “state or metropolitan area level response type 3” is an emergency that has exhausted “regional city, county or fire district response” capabilities and may utilize multiple MABAS interdivisional cards. A state response is triggered by a request to the WEM duty officer by the incident commander on the scene of the emergency. Responding resources will be coordinated by the WEM duty officer in coordination with the regional MABAS division coordinator.

- (4) A “national level response types 1 or 2” is an emergency that has exhausted “state level response” capabilities or is an event of national significance which is triggered by or transmitted to the WEM duty officer through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact under ss. 166.30, Stats.

**WEM 8.04 Procedure for providing mutual aid.** (1) The MABAS member units authorize their respective chief officer or designee to take necessary and proper action to render or request mutual aid from the MABAS member units in accordance with other policies and procedures established and maintained by the MABAS member units. The aid rendered shall be to the extent of available personnel and equipment that are not required for adequate protection of the territorial limits of the aiding unit.

- (2) Whenever an emergency occurs and conditions are such that the incident commander or designee, of the stricken unit determines it is advisable to request aid under MABAS, the incident commander or designee shall activate the number of aiding units deemed necessary in accordance with the policies and procedures established and maintained by the MABAS member units.

- (3) The chief officer, or designee, of the aiding unit shall take the following action immediately upon receiving a request for mutual aid:

- (a) Determine what predetermined equipment, personnel or services are requested according to the MABAS box card.
- (b) Determine if predetermined requested equipment, personnel or services can be committed in response to the request from the stricken unit.
- (c) Dispatch the predetermined requested equipment, personnel or services, to the extent available, to the staging location of the emergency reported by the stricken unit in accordance with the MABAS box card.
- (d) Notify the stricken unit if any or all of the predetermined requested equipment, personnel or services cannot be provided.

Note: MABAS policies and general operating procedures are available on request without charge from the Fire Services Coordinator, Wisconsin Emergency Management, 2400 Wright Street, Room 213, P.O. Box 7865, Madison, WI 53708-7865, telephone (608) 220-6049. MABAS policies and procedures may also be accessed from the Wisconsin Emergency Management webpage at: <http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov/>.

**WEM 8.05 Types and classes of resources.** All equipment and apparatus provided to the stricken unit shall comply with requirements based on National Fire Protection Association standards and s. TRANS 309 at the time of its original construction and shall be NIMS compliant. At the local response level, staffing guidelines shall be based upon the current local policy and practices. At the regional, state and national response levels, personnel provided by aiding units shall comply with all MABAS staffing guideline minimums.

Note: MABAS staffing guidelines are available on request without charge from the Fire Services Coordinator, Wisconsin Emergency Management, 2400 Wright Street, Room 213, P.O. Box 7865, Madison, WI 53708-7865, telephone (608) 220-6049. MABAS policies and general operating procedures may also be accessed from the Wisconsin Emergency Management webpage at: <http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov/>.

**WEM 8.06 Communications.** To facilitate radio interoperability during emergency response operations, designated MABAS VHF radio frequencies will be utilized by MABAS member units for on scene communications with MABAS mutual aid partners. This does not preclude fire, rescue and emergency medical services from utilizing other radio frequencies or radio bands for their own internal communications.

Note: Designated MABAS VHF radio frequencies are available on request without charge from the Fire Services Coordinator, Wisconsin Emergency Management, 2400 Wright Street, Room 213, P.O. Box 7865, Madison, WI 53708-7865, telephone (608) 220-6049. MABAS policies and general operating procedures may also be accessed from the Wisconsin Emergency Management webpage at: <http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov/>.

**WEM 8.07 Coordinators.** Each MABAS division shall have one division coordinator available at all times. Each MABAS region shall designate one division in its region to act as the regional coordinator. Each WEM region shall designate one MABAS division as a WEM regional coordinator.

**WEM 8.08 Credentialing.** Through December 31, 2009, all firefighters responding under MABAS shall meet the training standards and requirements of entry level firefighters trained under s. COMM 30.07. Commencing January 1, 2010, all firefighters responding under MABAS shall meet the training standards and requirements of firefighter I trained under s. COMM 30.07. Emergency medical services responders shall have a valid emergency medical services license as defined in s. HFS 110 through 113.

**WEM 8.09 Limitations on coverage.** (1) Personnel dispatched to aid a stricken unit under MABAS shall remain employees of the aiding unit. Personnel rendering aid shall report to the incident commander or designee of the stricken unit for direction and assignment at the scene of the emergency. The aiding unit shall at all times have the right to withdraw any and all aid upon the order of its chief officer or designee, provided that the aiding unit withdrawing such aid notifies the incident commander of the stricken unit of the withdrawal of such aid and the extent of such withdrawal.

(2) The rendering of assistance under MABAS shall not be mandatory. An aiding unit may refuse if local conditions of the aiding unit prohibit response. The aiding unit shall immediately notify the stricken unit of its inability to respond.

**WEM 8.10 Compensation.** Equipment, personnel or services provided under MABAS shall be at no charge to the stricken unit. However, any expenses recoverable from third parties and responsible parties shall be equitably distributed among aiding units. Nothing shall operate to bar any recovery of funds from any state or federal agency under existing state and federal laws.

**WEM 8.11 Participation.** An agency participating in the MABAS system must be either a MABAS member unit or have signed a memorandum of understanding directly with MABAS. Failure to do either does not jeopardize responses to a non-participating community at the direction of the WEM duty officer.

SECTION 2. EFFECTIVE DATE. This rule shall take effect on the first day of the month following publication in the Wisconsin administrative register as provided in s. 227.22 (2) (intro), Stats.