

FOREIGN DISASTER RELIEF/ EMERGENCY RESPONSE (FDR/ER)

Mission: DoD Components participate in FDR/ER activities 1) when directed by the President, 2) with the concurrence of the Secretary of State and 3) in emergency situations in order to save lives. DoD plays a key role in disaster situations by offering unique assets for timely and effective response to foreign nations. The US military obtains substantial training, access, and readiness enhancing benefits when providing relief to areas of need. All responses to such crises are coordinated with the Department of State (DoS), the Agency for International Development, its Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and other relevant agencies. 10 USC 404 and 2561 and DoD Directive 5100.46 authorize DoD to conduct FDR/ER activities.

DoD FDR/ER may be conducted upon receipt of an official request for assistance from DoS and after OFDA receives a disaster declaration cable from the US Ambassador and/or Chief of Mission. The cable will demonstrate that three criteria have been satisfied: 1) the disaster is beyond the ability of the host nation (HN) to respond, 2) the HN has specifically requested or indicated it will accept USG assistance, and 3) the response is in the interests of the USG.

This FDR/ER authorization supports the ability of the Department, through the combatant commanders, to respond to natural and manmade disasters “when necessary to prevent loss of lives or serious harm to the environment”¹ and to manage the humanitarian considerations of security crises. The Combatant Commanders may provide immediate life-saving assistance when there is not sufficient time to seek prior concurrence from the DoS/OSD. Other emergency response activities include services and supplies for transportation¹ of emergency assistance, logistical support, search and rescue, medical evacuation, and refugee assistance. Projects also assist recipient countries and Non-Government Organizations (NGO) in building capabilities to respond to emergencies (such as training of first responders), thus, reducing the potential need for US military involvement in crisis response.

DoD can also provide low-cost, nutritionally viable, easily delivered, humanitarian daily rations (HDR) for use in foreign countries to alleviate hunger after manmade or natural disasters. The HDR nutritional content is tailored for people who are moderately malnourished or fleeing from catastrophe to a safer haven and need to eat enroute or until conventional relief programs or targeted feeding can resume. Each meal has 2,300 calories, weighs 30 ounces, and is fortified with vitamins and adequate for the widest range of cultural or religious dietary restrictions –it is meatless.

DSCA Responsibilities: The Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) manages and coordinates the funding of FDR/ER activities with the Interagency and appropriate Defense Components. DSCA provides funding from the Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid (OHDACA) appropriation to claimants to support DoD foreign disaster relief and emergency response to foreign governments and their citizens after policy approval from OSD.

HDM Responsibilities: HDM action officers work with the OSD Policy Cluster, the combatant commanders, DoS-PM, USAID-OFDA, and other DoD Components to facilitate disaster assistance and emergency response missions and to procure and deliver HDR to the affected region. Once the Office of the Secretary of Defense approves DoD participation, DSCA and the Director, Joint Staff are notified to execute the mission.

Note 1: 10USC404 (a)

Note 2: Per 10USC404 transportation services may be provided “only if other sourcesare not readily available.”