

USGS Workforce Accountability: Roles and Responsibilities

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Issue/Challenges:

The USGS workforce is our most vital resource in carrying out daily business and ensuring the continuation of mission essential functions after a disaster or national emergency. In March 2010, through Emergency Management Policy Guidance Bulletin 2010-1, the Department of the Interior mandated that bureaus establish procedures for employee accountability and provide guidance to employees regarding their responsibility for reporting their status to supervisors or alternate reporting points on a timely basis during emergencies. In 2012, the USGS established the Emergency Alert and Response System (EARS), an accountability system powered by Send Word Now. Through EARS, the USGS has the capability to contact the full workforce, including employees, contractors, and volunteers, in compliance with Departmental requirements and to provide bureau-wide accountability. Prior to EARS program, a variety of methods, including call trees and contracted services, were employed by many science centers. Some of these alternatives remain in place, especially in locations where field work occurs well outside of stable electronic communications. EARS requires extensive training of group managers, recurrent drills, and a cultural acceptance but provides a robust, automated method for contacting and recording responses from our workforce. While EARS is the primary program, local processes will need to be considered and best practices incorporated into any full workforce notification and accountability system.

Challenges moving forward:

1. What are strategies for promoting EARS (Send Word Now) functionality as an effective accountability tool?
2. How do we best engage our workforce to support and participate in accountability drills performed through EARS (Send Word Now)?
3. What are best practices of legacy methods in place across the bureau, which can be incorporated into a holistic accountability program?
4. What are strategies for streamlining accountability under the USGS matrix management, where members of the workforce are geographically displaced from their supervisors? Should geographic location or organization be the primary driver of responsibility of accounting for workforce members in an emergency?

5. Who should be group managers and what other personnel should be involved in the EARS/accountability program (for example, Science Center Directors, Safety Officers, Regional Managers, Administrative and/or Human Capital personnel)?
6. In an actual emergency, what is the obligation of a supervisor when informed of an employee in need of assistance?
7. When EARS was initially set up, group manager access to data and tools was set to a low level of access under advisement of the EARS Working Group with input from managers around the bureau. More robust functionality and ability to access data is available with a higher level of access to the system. Should group managers be given higher access, along with requisite training? Should a tiered approach be considered with regional group managers having higher access over local group managers?

Background Material/Resources:

1. [DOI Emergency Management Policy Guidance Bulletin 2010-1](#) (link)
2. [USGS EARS SharePoint Site](#) (link)
3. [USGS EARS Toolbox](#) (link)
4. [Send Word Now Guide: Best Practices for Personnel Accountability in a Crisis](#) (link)
5. Matrix on SWN account access levels and functionality (attachment)

Expectations:

Develop creative ideas on the challenges posed above. These ideas may include:

1. A communication plan that will build buy-in, promote the benefits of a robust accountability system, and demonstrate the necessity and functionality of EARS.
2. A policy proposal for consideration by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT).
3. A pilot project with a Region and/or Organization to test new concepts.

What are the available permission levels?

	Administrator privileges in Multiple Accounts	Access the Import Wizard	Send Alerts	Send Self Update Notifications	Schedule Alerts	IMS Access	Mobile Clients Access	IVR Designer Access	Add Contact Records	Modify Contact Records	Delete Contact Records	Access to All Groups	Access to assigned groups ONLY	Access to assigned groups and own groups ONLY	Add Groups	Modify Groups	Delete Groups	Select Feature by Accounts	Define Feature specific default settings	Define Account-wide alert defaults	Assign User Credentials	Access ALL messages sent from all users	Access messages sent from their account ONLY	Contact Export Report	Call List Report	Contact List Report	Group Member	Message Detail Reports
Super Administrator	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Administrator		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Group Manager 2			X		X	X	X			X			X										X		X	X	X	X
Group Manager 3			X		X	X	X						X										X		X	X	X	X
Group Manager 5			X		X	X	X						X	X	X	X							X		X	X	X	X
Group Manager 6			X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X			X	X	X				X	X			X	X	X	X