

Overview for Starting a Disaster Airlift Response Team at your Airport

Here's a quick overview of how to start and operate a DART (Disaster Airlift Response Team) at your airport.

- 1) Identify a person or team to lead the DART at your airport.
- 2) Make the DART part of an existing pilot organization if available. This helps to provide continuity over time and a broader base of support.
- 3) Decide how the team will operate. One example of a Disaster Airlift Response Plan (DARP) is available at http://www.southcountypilots.org/images/stories/DARP_Revision_2.0_16114.pdf (or current version). You should adopt or adapt this plan. The plan is available at no charge to those DARTs who agree to provide mutual support to other DARTs in their region. Editable versions of the plan are available for tailoring to your particular airport. There are three major benefits of everyone using essentially the same plan: a) no time is wasted by each new DART "reinventing the wheel", b) it is easier for regional DARTs to provide mutual aid to each other if they are all operating under the same set of procedures, and c) it is easier for the emergency management community to understand and accept the value and wisdom of working with DARTs if they understand that all DARTs operate in essentially the same way.
- 4) For more background information on how to operate a DART, take a look at SCAPA DART web page and all the documents that can be downloaded. You can get there by going to <http://www.southcountypilots.org/> and clicking on the SCAPA DART item at the left side of the page under User Menu, or you can go there directly at http://www.southcountypilots.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=143&Itemid=59
- 5) Solicit participation and/or support from pilots at your airport.
- 6) Inform and solicit the blessing of the owner and operator of your airport.
- 7) Have an annual exercise to practice mobilizing and operating your team.
- 8) Reach out to local disaster management organizations to
 - a. advise them of your capability,
 - b. monitor their activities and exercises, and
 - c. create the opportunity to work together in an annual exercise.

A good place to start are the CERT organizations in surrounding communities, the Offices of Emergency Services staff at surrounding cities, the surrounding county Office of Emergency Services Staff, state emergency and aviation staff, and any regional emergency management organization that connects and coordinates emergency managers. Prepare a one-page summary

sheet of your services offered and contact information for people who would like to request the service. Meet these people face to face and find a way to maintain contact with them. If they have a regional periodic meeting of emergency managers that you can observe, that is a good way of staying connected.

- 9) Increase the capability of your DART by fund raising and purchasing equipment needed to operate at higher capacity. See the Ideal Equipment List in the DARP listed above for a starting point of what you need. You will need forms to organize your work and service, material handling equipment for weighing and moving goods to be transported, and many other similar items over and above the planes that your pilots provide.
- 10) Reach out to pilots at neighboring and regional airports to advise them of your capability and learn of their capability for mutual aid.
- 11) Maintain contact lists for your members, emergency management professionals, and sources of mutual aid to use in an actual emergency.
- 12) Make the surrounding community aware of your capability.
- 13) Be prepared to provide emergency airlift service to your community and surrounding region in a disaster which impairs regional surface transportation. You can:
 - a. evacuate people who have lost their homes,
 - b. transport emergency workers to and from a disaster area,
 - c. transport ambulatory medical patients in ways that support the overall disaster response,
 - d. transport people in the local population to distant airports close to where they need to go when they are unable to drive to where they need to go on their own
 - e. airlift in needed supplies and food to organizations who can detail what they need from other organizations who can provide what is needed at remote airports.