

## Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

At the national level VOAD is a consortium of recognized national voluntary organizations active in disaster relief. Its mission is to foster more effective service to people affected by disasters.

After Hurricane Camille in 1969, it became clear to several organizations who regularly helped disaster victims that their services were frequently duplicated and uncoordinated. For example, two organizations would be feeding disaster victims on opposite corners. Representatives from seven organizations began to meet on a regular basis to share their respective activities, concerns, and frustrations in disaster response.

This developed into the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster or National VOAD, which now has more than thirty member organizations, including the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, the disaster relief programs of most major religious organizations, and of course, the American Radio Relay League.

Kentucky VOAD is the Kentucky state chapter of National VOAD. It consists of organizations active in disaster response throughout the state of Kentucky.

VOAD bases its mission on these four values:

1. Cooperation: By this we mean that we need each other that no member organization has all the answers for the challenges we face. We treat members as partners.
2. Communication: Here we mean the regular sharing of information about our member organizations-their capacities, accomplishments, and commitments. We try to maintain good channels for sharing information, listen carefully to each other, and deal openly with concerns.
3. Coordination: We commit ourselves to work together and not competitively toward our goal of effective service to disaster victims. We seek to match services to need. Through planning and preparation, we equip our organizations to behave in a coordinated fashion in time of disaster.
4. Collaboration: We dedicate ourselves to work together to achieve specific goals and to undertake specific projects at disaster sites. We form partnerships during the disaster response.

VOAD is committed to the idea that the best time to train, prepare, and become acquainted with each other is prior to the actual disaster response. VOAD itself is never a service-delivery organization - all disaster response services are provided by the member agencies, under their own organization structure and policies. VOAD's role is to bring the organizations together enable them to understand each other and work together more smoothly. To accomplish these goals, Kentucky VOAD meets four times each year and encourages member organizations to share information and training opportunities.