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ESF 15 – External Affairs

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ESF 15 Tasked Agencies	
Primary Agencies	Public and Government Affairs/Public Information
Supporting Agencies	Clackamas County Communications Lake Oswego Communications Washington County Consolidated Communications Agency Emergency Management Local Fire Agencies Health, Housing and Human Services Local Law Enforcement Agencies

1 Purpose and Scope

This annex outlines policies and responsibilities for emergency public information, including alert and warning messages, risk communications, and information updates. See Emergency Support Function (ESF) 2 – Communications for information regarding communications systems.

2 Policies and Agreements

None at this time.

3 Situation and Assumptions

During emergencies, Public and Government Affairs (PGA) is responsible for the County Public Information Officer (PIO) function and coordinates with Clackamas County Emergency Management (CCEM), On-Scene Command, and EOC staff to deliver timely and accurate emergency public information to inform the community, minimize confusion, recommend protective measures, and quell rumors. EOC Command and the lead PIO jointly identify incident-specific emergency public information objectives, and the lead PIO activates the County Joint Information Center (JIC) to perform those functions necessary to achieve the designated information objectives.

Clackamas County will use all available communication methods to provide timely and consistent information to County officials and employees, access and functional needs populations, citizens at large, cities, and neighboring jurisdictions.

PGA partners with print and electronic media to get emergency information to its target audience. Electronic media enable rapid public notification of impending threats and recommended protective actions. Print media provide more detailed information for slowly developing threats and extended emergency response and recovery activities.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

All agencies tasked under this annex will develop and maintain written internal operating plans and implementing procedures and will train employees in their use.

4.1 Primary Agencies

4.1.1 Public and Governmental Affairs

- Serve as the lead/EOC PIO.
- Advise On-Scene and EOC Command on all public information issues.
- Coordinate timely, consistent information with participating agencies and jurisdictions.
- Provide staff for field PIO and JIC activities.
- Develop and operate the Joint Information System.
- Prepare and obtain Command approval for all incident information releases sent to media, employees, and city and regional partners.
- Keep employees and the public updated on incident status.

4.2 Supporting Agencies

4.2.1 Clackamas County Communications

- Serve as the County Warning Point for receiving and disseminating warning information and notifying appropriate officials.
- Provide Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) back-up services to Lake Oswego Communications (LOCOM).
- Operate as one of two PSAPs in the County system.
- Operate the Clackamas County Emergency Notification (CCENS).
- Activate the Emergency Alert System (EAS) for Clackamas County in conjunction with CCEM.

4.2.2 Lake Oswego Communications

- Operate as one of two PSAPs in the County.
- Provide PSAP back-up services to C-COM.
- Back up C-COM as the County Warning Point.

- Operate the Code Red community notification system for the LOCOM areas that contract for those services.

4.2.3 Washington County Consolidated Communications Agency

- Operate as the PSAP in the designated West County area of responsibility.
- Activate the EAS for Clackamas County as requested.

4.2.4 Clackamas County Emergency Management

- Activate the EOC.
- Operate CCENS in conjunction with C-COM.
- Activate the EAS in conjunction with C-COM.
- Coordinate with city, regional, and State counterparts.

4.2.5 Local Fire Agencies

- Participate in on-scene PIO and EOC JIC activities.
- Assist in disseminating emergency public information.
- Collaborate with PIO staff to develop and disseminate alert and warning messages.

4.2.6 Health, Housing and Human Services

- Participate in PIO/JIC activities.
- Helps develop risk communications messages.
- Assists in identifying and contacting functional needs populations.

4.2.7 Law Enforcement

- Participate in on-scene PIO and EOC JIC activities.
- Assist in disseminating emergency public information.
- Collaborate with PIO staff to develop and disseminate alert and warning messages.

5 Concept of Operations

5.1 General

PIOs conduct emergency public information activities every day, usually in an agency or jurisdiction specific role (e.g. representing fire or law enforcement agencies or city officials). Field PIOs report directly to On-Scene Command, and the EOC lead PIO reports directly to EOC Command. PIO staffs and operates a JIC comprising PIO representatives from participating agencies and organizations, with staffing requirements based on incident specific need.

PIOs must obtain Command approval prior to the release of any incident information.

5.2 Alert and Warning

Local, State, or Federal authorities may issue alert and warning messages to warn officials, County employees, residents, neighboring jurisdictions, and others of an impending emergency. C-COM is the 24/7 Warning Point for the County. When C-COM receives warning of severe weather or other potential hazards, it notifies appropriate officials, such as CCEM, law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical responders in the field and the on-call PGA information officer.

5.2.1 National Warning System

The National Warning System (NAWAS) is a government-to-government warning system that connects the National Warning Center to each state and, in turn, to the designated warning points in each county. As the 24/7 Warning Point for Clackamas County, C-COM continuously monitors NAWAS.

5.2.2 Emergency Alert System

The County uses EAS when a life-threatening hazard requires immediate protective action, with participating broadcast stations and cable operators transmitting the emergency alert over their networks. EAS messages may not exceed two minutes and are designed to provide a brief, initial warning to be followed by more detailed information. The EAS may be activated by C-COM or CCEM. See the EAS activation protocol provided in the EOC library.

Citizens are encouraged to monitor local radio and television broadcasts for emergency information. The North American Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Weather Alert Net also provides effective emergency warning for weather-related hazards.

5.2.3 Sirens

Clackamas County does not have a County-wide siren warning system. Vehicles with sirens may be used to get the public's attention in localized emergencies.

5.2.4 Mobile Public Address Systems

Most police and fire vehicles are equipped with public address systems that may be used to warn the public in localized emergencies.

5.2.5 Door-to-Door Warning

Door-to-door warning may be required in some emergencies, especially when actions such as evacuation are necessary. Emergency responders and other agency workers or volunteers may visit individual households, apartments, or structures to provide emergency information/instructions.

5.2.6 Telephone Warning – Community Notification System

The County may use CCENS to warn the public in areas at risk. Messages will inform citizens of the incident and the protective actions they should take.

5.2.7 County Website

The County will post warning and ongoing emergency information on the County website at www.clackamas.us/emergency/

5.2.8 Internal Employee Notification System

PGA uses an Internal Employee Notification System to provide emergency information to county employees, including

- **In-house hotline:** Employees call a pre-designated phone number for recorded emergency information messages
- **Countywide e-mail:** PGA sends an e-mail message simultaneously to all personnel in the system.
- **Countywide voice mail:** PGA transmits emergency information to all employees on the voice-mail system.
- **Countywide fax:** PGA transmits emergency information to all county fax machines.
- **Courier service:** PGA may also use couriers to deliver emergency information.

The PIO Handbook provided in the EOC library provides detailed instructions for activating the Internal Emergency Notification System.

5.3 Dissemination of Ongoing Emergency Public Information

The PIO collects, coordinates, and disseminates emergency information, and advises On-Scene and EOC Command on information and media issues. The PIO advises County officials and responds to media and public inquiries. The PIO

uses an established JIS structure and procedures to coordinate incident information and staffs the JIC based on incident-specific needs.

The PIO may use the Public Inquiry Center to assist in preventing or correcting public misinformation about an incident. The PIO will coordinate with EOC staff to identify a single telephone number for the public to call for emergency information. This line is staffed by call-takers trained to handle citizen calls and knowledgeable about current incident status. Clackamas County also has cable television and internet web teams that post information on their respective media.

5.4 Functional Needs Populations

The PIO coordinates information outreach activities to functional needs populations with agencies/organizations that have an ongoing relationship with these groups and service their functional needs on a day-to-day basis. These organizations assist in disseminating alert and warning and ongoing emergency information to the elderly, hearing or vision impaired, non-English speaking, homeless, and citizens with physical or mental challenges, or homebound or with other functional needs. C-COM, LOCOM, and Washington County Consolidated Communications Agency (WCCCA) have TTY/TDD capability and access to language line services for communicating with non-English-speaking individuals on a one at a time basis (not a wholesale notification method). CCENS can transmit Baudot tones to generate notifications to deaf or hard of hearing individuals.

Human Services is the County point-of-contact for information on contacting clients, functional needs facilities, and alternative methods of reaching functional needs populations.

6 Direction and Control

6.1 Cities

Cities have primary responsibility for warning residents of hazards. When time permits, cities should coordinate emergency public information activities with the county EOC PIO/JIC. If urgency precludes prior coordination, they should advise the EOC PIO/JIC as soon as practical of the emergency situation and the public information released to their citizens.

Cities are encouraged to develop a local JIS/JIC system to coordinate emergency public information activities with the County and neighboring cities.

6.2 County

On-Scene Command performs emergency public information functions unless a PIO has been designated. Normally, the lead fire or law enforcement agency provides the on-scene PIO.

During EOC activation, CCEM will request that PGA staff the EOC PIO position that reports directly to EOC Command. The PIO will coordinate incident information with all agencies and jurisdictions involved in the incident, following Clackamas County JIS Plan guidelines. A copy of the JIS Plan is available in the PIO Handbook provided in the EOC library.

The EOC PIO will determine the level of EOC JIC staffing required to manage incident-specific emergency public information that may range from a single information officer on scene to a full activation of the county JIC. Initial configuration of the EOC JIC is normally two shifts, comprising one lead PIO, one media monitor, and one or more writers and news gatherers.

The PIO will ensure that all incident-related information—including media releases, advisories, public service announcements, public education pieces, talking points, and any other information created for public or government consumption—is approved by On-Scene or EOC Command before it is released.

6.3 Special Districts

During incidents impacting their area of responsibility or services, special districts are expected, when requested, to assign a PIO representative to the EOC JIC.

6.4 Regional

The Portland Urban Area Security Initiative region has developed a regional JIS/JIC concept of operations.

Clackamas County is a participant in the Inter-County Omnibus Mutual Aid Agreement, which provides a framework for counties to request mutual aid from each other in emergencies. A copy of the agreement and updated information regarding current participants is available in the EOC Library.

The Intra-State Mutual Assistance Compact provides for non-reimbursable assistance among local governments. To receive reimbursement for resource assistance provided under this statute, participants must agree to a reimbursement request in writing before resources are dispatched.

6.5 State and Federal Assistance

Clackamas County PIOs will coordinate with their counterparts at the State and Federal level, sharing incident information at all levels on a regular basis. The County PIO will integrate state and federal emergency public information activities into the county JIS/JIC.

7 Emergency Support Function Development and Maintenance

The Director of Public and Government Affairs, and the Emergency Management Department Director, will review and update this annex and supporting plans

every two years or when changes occur, such as lessons learned from exercises or actual events.

8 Supporting Plans and Procedures

The following plans and procedures are currently in place:

- Clackamas County Emergency Operations Plan
 - ESF 2 – Communications
- EOC Library
 - PIO Handbook/JIS Plan (FOUO)
 - EAS Activation Protocol (FOUO)
 - CCOM/CCEM Community Alerting System Policy
- State of Oregon Emergency Operations Plan, ESF 15 – External Affairs
- National Response Framework, ESF 15 – External Affairs

9 Appendices

None at this time.

Support Annexes

