Emergency Support Function – 15 External Affairs

2020

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RECORD OF CHANGES

Each update or change to the plan should be tracked. The record of changes, usually in table format, contains, at a minimum, a change number, the date of the change, the name of the person who made the change, and a summary of the change. Other relevant information could be considered.

Change #	Date	Part Affected	Date Posted	Who Posted

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The record of distribution, usually in table format, indicates the title and the name of the person receiving the plan, the agency to which the recipient belongs, the date of delivery, and the number of copies delivered. Other relevant information could be considered. The record of distribution can be used to prove that tasked individuals and organizations have acknowledged their receipt, review, and/or acceptance of the plan. Copies of the plan can be made available to the public and media without SOGs/SOPs, call-down lists, or other sensitive information.

Agency	Name, Title	Date of Delivery	Copies

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INTRODUCTION

The emergency support function of External Affairs involves direction and coordination, operations, and follow-through during an emergency or disaster.

Purpose

ESF-15 External Affairs provides operational guidance to departments/organizations that are assigned to work within this ESF. The mission of ESF-15 is to ensure the provision of coordinated, accurate and timely information delivery to affected audiences, including members of government, local news media, the private sector and the general populace during an emergency or disaster event. This however is not a tactical response document. ESF-15 External Affairs establishes a framework for the prevention of inaccurate information dissemination, rumor control and the identification of necessary actions to be taken by the general public.

Scope

ESF-15 acts to meet the External Affairs and essential elements of information needs of operations through the establishment of a countywide public information program that establishes a unified voice across organizations and ensures the timely and accurate delivery of public information.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

General

During an emergency or disaster, ESF-15 may be activated to support operations and assist with the development of a common operating picture. The scope, scale and magnitude of the threat/incident will dictate which support agencies will be requested for the support of ESF-15 External Affairs in the EOC.

Preparedness

    a. Establish and maintain a media directory.

    b. Develop a public information program to educate the public regarding the effects of common emergency and disaster situations. This includes things such as the development of an emergency go-kit, understanding their evacuation zone and the explanation of watches/warnings.

    c. Establish plans/procedures to conduct a multi-agency/jurisdictional coordinated public information program during emergencies or disasters, to include the establishment of a Joint Information Center (JIC).

d. Establish plans/procedures for the coordination of public information with local, state, national and international media outlets before, during and after an emergency or disaster event.

e. Conduct training to educate news media outlets that ESF-15 External Affairs serves as the primary source for information during an emergency or disaster event.

f. Establish procedures to ensure a unified media release is utilized by support entities.

g. Designate a liaison to communication with local, state and federal governments and ensure proper handling of inquiries.

h. Support disaster public awareness initiatives through dissemination of information, news articles, Public Service Announcements and presentation of audio-visual materials.

i. Develop procedures to organize and operate a media briefing area and/or a JIC.

j. Develop and maintain pre-scripted emergency alert messages, news releases and public service announcements for all hazards to include tropical storm and hurricane information, rainwater flooding, storm surge watches/warnings and tornado watches/warnings.

k. Establish communication resources to provide people with sensory disability (e.g. visually and hearing impaired) and non-English speaking persons with critical information pertaining to the emergency or disaster event.

l. Ensure agencies and/or organizations that have functional support responsibilities coordinate the dissemination of essential public information with ESF-15.

m. Develop a briefing and reporting system to include an EOC briefing, situation report and public information request format in conjunction with ESF-5 Planning/Emergency Management.

n. Ensure necessary reporting information and formats are shared with agencies and/or organizations identified to have a primary functional support responsibility.

o. Ensure all ESF-15 personnel integrate NIMS principles.

Response

a. Maintain a system to ensure accurate dissemination of emergency information to include the location, type of hazard, extent of damage, casualties, operational shelters, evacuation routes and other identified protective actions.

b. Establish a timeframe for the notification and dissemination of information to local media outlets regarding an emergency or disaster event.

c. Establish procedures for the notification of entities whose personnel, equipment or other necessary resources may be utilized to support response and recovery operations.

d. Ensure timely and accurate emergency alert messages and news releases are disseminated to the general public utilizing common language and terminology.

e. Ensure the delivery of essential public information to identified vulnerable populations.

f. Execute a multi-agency/jurisdiction coordinated public information program to include the establishment of a Joint Information Center.

g. Establish an area for media briefings and/or press conferences and conduct briefings in a timely manner.

h. Identify appropriate spokespersons from local government, agencies and/or organizations and ensure the establishment of media responsibilities.

i. Ensure the timely and continuous dissemination of incident information updates throughout the emergency or disaster event.

j. Provide advanced media releases to the State Operations Center.

k. Prepare EOC briefings, situation reports and geographic data for mapping to keep local government and emergency management officials, state and federal agencies/organizations informed of the severity and magnitude of the incident.

l. Provide technical assistance information and analysis upon request of the CEMA Director or EOC Manager.

m. Supplement local emergency management public information operations when necessary and as resources allow.

n. Coordinate information dissemination with other jurisdictions that share the media market.

o. Ensure the proper recording and tracking of information that may be necessary for a disaster declaration.

Recovery

a. Continue provision of public safety and other necessary assistance information throughout the recovery phase.

b. Process and disseminate disaster welfare and family reunification information.

Mitigation

    a. Support and plan for mitigation measures.

Organization

The County EOC will be activated to coordinate a multijurisdictional level response.

Representatives from the applicable ESF-15 Agencies may be assigned to the EOC or alternate location, as best suited to meet incident needs and coordinate operations.

ESF Role Aligned to Core Capabilities

The following table lists the response capability that ESF-15 most directly supports, along with the related ESF-15 actions supporting the capability.

Core Capability	ESF-15 External Affairs

Public Information and Warning	• Deliver coordinated, prompt, reliable and actionable information to the whole community through the use of clear, consistent, accessible, and culturally and linguistically appropriate methods to effectively relay information regarding any threat or hazard, as well as the actions being taken and the assistance being made available, as appropriate. This includes but is not limited to:
	  ➢ CEMA Alert
	  ➢ Social Media
	  ➢ Press Conferences/Releases

Responsibilities

Coordinating Agency	Actions
Chatham County Public Information Office	• Establish a protocol for prioritizing response activities. • Identify and plan for public education campaigns throughout preparedness, response and recovery phases. • Ensure coordination with other ESFs for the timely and accurate dissemination of public information. • Coordinate with the Incident Commander to identify key messages that the public must be aware of and ensure regular communications throughout the incident. • Coordinate public information throughout the incident beginning with the initial notification and continuing into the final recovery information. • Coordinate media interviews and media inquiries. • Maintain contact with municipal public information officers to ensure the collection and sharing of information.

Coordinating Agency	Actions
Chatham County Public Information Office (Continued)	• Coordinate social media efforts to ensure accurate information is released, rumor monitoring is being conducted and timely information is being disseminated. • Maintain resources to establish a Joint Information Center if needed during an emergency or disaster event. • Provide support staffing to the EOC for the following position: ➢ ESF-15 External Affairs

Supporting Agency	Actions
All Supporting Agencies	• Attend at least quarterly meetings to ensure planning functions are carried out to support this ESF. • Identify Agency staff representatives to support this ESF and other operational practices during emergency and disaster operations. • Ensure the presence of resources (human and physical) are in sufficient numbers to support the Agency's responsibilities to this ESF. • Conduct recovery and restoration tasks in coordination with the EOC/RCC and federal assistance program guidance. • Annually evaluate Critical Workforce staffing needs and report sheltering and/or equipment staging locations as requested. • Coordinate pertinent disaster recovery information with the County Joint Information Center (JIC). • Identify damages and/or losses. • Maintain records of expenditures and document resources utilized during response and recovery operations. • Develop appropriate Plans, Procedures, Mutual Aid Agreements, Checklists, Go-Kits and other supporting documentation as needed to facilitate execution of the Agency's responsibilities to this ESF. • Prepare to support the EOC as necessary. • Participate in drills, exercises and other preparedness events to evaluate the Agency's readiness to support this ESF. • Ensure Agency staff maintain NIMS compliance and report compliance measurements annually as requested.

Supporting Agency	Actions

Chatham County Health Department	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public.
	• Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center.
	• Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event.
	• Provide support staffing to the EOC for the following positions:
	  ➢ Health and Human Services Branch
	  ➢ ESF-8 Health and Medical

Chatham County Police Department	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public.
	• Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center.
	• Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event.
	• Provide support staffing to the EOC for the following positions:
	  ➢ Public Safety Branch
	  ➢ ESF-13 Law Enforcement
	  ➢ EOC Security

Chatham County Sheriff's Office	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public. • Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center. • Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event.
Chatham Emergency Management Agency	• Conduct a situational assessment and determine the need for public information support. • Maintain an updated contact list for ESF-15. • Coordinate and maintain the Chatham County Public Information Officers Association.
Chatham Emergency Services	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public. • Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center. • Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event.

Supporting Agency	Actions

Chatham Emergency Services (Continued)	• Provide support staffing to the EOC for the following positions:
	   ➢ Emergency Medical Services
	   ➢ ESF-4 Firefighting

Chatham-Savannah Counter Narcotics Team	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public.
	• Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center.
	• Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event.
	• Provide support staffing to the EOC for the following positions:
	   ➢ Public Safety Branch
	   ➢ ESF-13 Law Enforcement

City of Bloomingdale	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public. • Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center. • Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event.
City of Garden City	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public. • Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center. • Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event.
City of Pooler	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public. • Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center. • Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event.
City of Port Wentworth	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public. • Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center. • Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event.
City of Savannah	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public.

Supporting Agency	Actions
City of Savannah (Continued)	• Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center. • Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event.
City of Tybee Island	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public. • Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center. • Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event.
CrimeStoppers Savannah	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public. • Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center. • Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event.
Georgia Port Authority	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public. • Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center. • Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event. • Provide support staffing to the EOC for the following position: ➢ GPA LNO
Georgia Southern University – Armstrong Campus Police	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public. • Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center. • Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event.
Georgia State Patrol	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public. • Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center. • Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event. • Provide support staffing to the EOC for the following position: ➢ Georgia State Patrol

Supporting Agency	Actions
Hunter Army Airfield Police Department	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public. • Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center. • Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event.
Memorial University Medical Center	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public. • Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center. • Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event. • Provide support staffing to the EOC for the following position: ➢ Hospitals
Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public. • Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center. • Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event. • Provide support staffing to the EOC for the following position: ➢ Private Sector Business LNO

Savannah Chatham County Public School System	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public.
	• Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center.
	• Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event.
	• Provide support staffing to the EOC for the following positions:
	    ➢ SCCPSS Transportation
	    ➢ SCCPSS Police and Facilities

Savannah College of Art and Design	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public. • Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center. • Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event.

Supporting Agency	Actions
Savannah Hilton Head International Airport	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public. • Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center. • Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event. • Provide support staffing to the EOC for the following position: ➤ SHHIA LNO
Savannah State University Police Department	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public. • Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center. • Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event.
Savannah Technical College Police Department	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public. • Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center. • Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event.
South University	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public. • Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center. • Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event.
St. Joseph/Candler Hospital	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public. • Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center. • Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event. • Provide support staffing to the EOC for the following position: ➤ Hospitals
Town of Thunderbolt	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public. • Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center.

Supporting Agency	Actions
Town of Thunderbolt (Continued)	• Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event.
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	• Provide support to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public. • Provide logistical and resource support during the establishment of a Joint Information Center. • Provide logistical and resource support if requested during a smaller event. • Provide support staffing to the EOC for the following position: ➢ USACE LNO

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