Emergency Support Function – 16 Community Alerting

2020

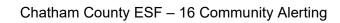THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY BLANK

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.

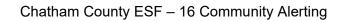| Change #	Date	Part Affected	Date Posted	Who Posted

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RECORD OF DISTRIBUTION

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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ESF – 16 Community Alerting

ESF COORDINATOR:
Chatham Emergency Management Agency

SUPPORT AGENCIES:
Chatham County Information and Communications Systems
Chatham County Public Information Office

INTRODUCTION

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

Purpose

ESF-16 Community Alerting provides operational guidance to departments/organizations that are assigned to work within this ESF. The mission of ESF-16 is to provide a framework of processes, organizational rules, communications protocols and behavioral standards that enable rapid decision making and effective communications during an emergency or disaster event. This however is not a tactical response document. ESF-16 Community Alerting serves as a platform for the coordinated, accurate and timely dissemination of emergency notifications, alerts and warnings prior to, during and after an emergency or disaster event.

Scope

ESF-16 acts to meet the Community Alerting and essential elements of information needs of operations through establishing governance, coordinating with stakeholders, embracing the whole community, developing policies and procedures, delivering actionable messages, conducting training/exercises and correcting misinformation.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

General

During an emergency or disaster, ESF-16 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-16 Community Alerting in the EOC.

Preparedness

a. Research and incorporate new technologies for the dissemination of emergency alerts and warnings.

b. Establish and maintain a countywide Emergency Alert System Plan.

c. Develop procedures identifying the proper chain of command for initiating, cancelling, and revoking emergency alerts and for rapidly correcting and updating alert information as additional details become available.

d. Ensure coordination with jurisdictional, state and federal stakeholders regarding the dissemination of alerts and warnings that relate to hazards affecting multiple jurisdictions.

e. Develop a countywide emergency alerting strategy that meets the needs of the whole community, including those with access and functional needs.

f. Obtain authority and tools for accessing federal warning systems as a Collaborative Operating Group via the FEMA Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS).

g. Ensure processes are in place to maintain security across all networks, devices, systems and user interfaces.

h. Conduct testing, training and exercises of alert and warning systems with stakeholders on a routine basis to ensure proficiencies.

i. Develop internal safeguards across the entire alert and warning lifecycle, including both human and machine, in order to protect against system misuse and prevent false messaging.

j. Ensure all ESF-16 personnel integrate NIMS principles.

Response

a. Coordinate with ESF-15 External Affairs to develop comprehensive, targeted and specific messaging to ensure that recipients receive actionable communications during an emergency or disaster event.

b. Maintain situational awareness throughout the emergency or disaster event to prevent the spreading of inaccurate information and to provide situational updates and necessary courses of action.

c. Establish communications with stakeholders to ensure the delivery of unified messaging when notifying, alerting or warning the public during an emergency or disaster event.

d. Identify and establish trigger points throughout the emergency or disaster event to eliminate alert and warning issuance and dissemination delays.

e. Utilize all available alerting and warning platforms to confirm the importance of the message and encourage the taking of protective actions.

f. Avoid alerting fatigue by only disseminating messages that pertain to the immediate threat of life, health, public safety, security or property and require immediate action.

Recovery

a. Maintain situational awareness and disseminate alerts and warnings that require immediate action to ensure the safety of life and property.

b. Coordinate with ESF-15 External Affairs to ensure that a unified message is being delivered, appropriate actions are being taken and misinformation is being corrected.

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-16 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-16 most directly supports, along with the related ESF-16 actions supporting the capability.

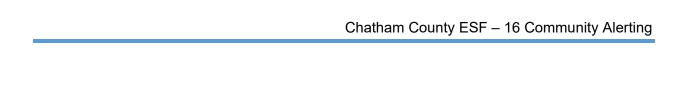| Core Capability	ESF-16 Community Alerting
Public Information and Warning	• Deliver coordinated, prompt, reliable and actionable information to the whole community through the use of clear, consistent, accessible, and culturally and linguistically appropriate methods to effectively relay information 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: ➢ Social Media ➢ CEMA Alert

Responsibilities

Coordinating Agency	Actions
Chatham Emergency Management Agency	• Maintain Situational Awareness to ensure the dissemination of emergency alerts and warnings that provide accurate and timely information, provide necessary protective actions and identify potential adverse impacts of the incident. • Develop policies and procedures identifying roles and responsibilities pertaining to the issuance and coordinated dissemination of alerts and warnings to the public. • Ensure whole community inclusion and understand the different methods by which individuals receive, interpret and respond to messages. • Incorporate internal safeguards to protect against system misuse and prevent false messaging. • Conduct regular tests, trainings and/or exercises to determine local capabilities and incorporate lessons learned into future operations. • Monitor misinformation and establish safeguards that err on the side of public safety throughout the emergency or disaster event.

Supporting Agency	Actions
All Supporting Agencies	• Coordinate with each support agency through 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 and prepare an action plan for recovery activities.

Supporting Agency	Actions
All Supporting Agencies (Continued)	• 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.
Chatham County Information and Communications Services	• Conduct a risk assessment and vulnerability analysis of the overall emergency alert system to include the network, software, and operational procedures to identify and mitigate cyber vulnerabilities, threats and risks. • Evaluate the likelihood and potential impact of cyber threats and prioritize mitigation efforts accordingly. • Develop security policies based upon a user's role. • Maintain policies on the installation and use of programs, devices and internet browsing. • Establish password policies regarding length, combination of letter cases and special characters, and expiration periods that will require users to change passwords on a regular, pre-determined basis. • Utilize multi-factor authentication processes. • Establish a review process of the alert and warning network in order to eliminate dissemination of erroneous information. • Provide support staffing to the EOC for the following position: ➢ Technology and Communications Support
Chatham County Public Information Office	• Ensure coordination for the timely and accurate dissemination of public information. • Coordinate social media efforts to ensure accurate information is released, rumor monitoring is being conducted and timely information is being disseminated. • Identify new and available platforms for the dissemination of emergency public information reflective of the whole community. • Develop and maintain pre-scripted emergency alert and warning messages.

Supporting Agency	Actions
Chatham County Public Information Office (Continued)	• Provide support staffing to the EOC for the following position: ➢ ESF-15 External Affairs

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