

COMMUNICATIONS ANNEX

I. PURPOSE

This annex provides information on establishing, using, maintaining, augmenting, and providing backup for all the types of communications needed during emergency response operations.

II. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

The communications and warning centers for Effingham County are located in the communications rooms at the Effingham City Police Department and the Effingham County Sheriff's Department. They are staffed on a 24-hour basis by dispatch personnel assigned to the Effingham City Police Department and the Effingham County Sheriff's Department. These centers are equipped with enhanced 911 electronic mapping. All dispatchers are well-trained to operate and distribute response information to emergency agencies. The back-up 911 center is from City to County and vice versa. The EMA Communications Center is equipped with a 911 800 MHz radio. The EMA Communications Center does have limited dispatch capabilities. The EMA Communications Center is in the EMA building with an EMA office, conference room, training room, lounge, resource information, and rest rooms.

A. *Situation*

1. In the event of a large-scale disaster, the normally used ETSB 911 800 MHz four-channel radio system may be overloaded by emergency response group radio usage. The use of private/public frequencies and radio systems may be necessary to maintain viable communications. Emergency response groups may need to rely on their own radio frequencies and utilize amateur radio and other communications systems to effectively respond to the disaster.

B. *Assumptions*

1. Recognition of the fact that large-scale emergency operations usually require a communications capability beyond the normal capacities of the equipment of a local government; therefore, the type required and sources (from the public and private sector) for the additional equipment needed to support response operations should be identified as a fundamental activity associated with developing this annex of the plan.
2. Augmentation of local capability by higher levels of government may be necessary.

3. Designation of specific response organizations to maintain operational control of their own communications systems, while coordinating with the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during emergency operations may be necessary.
4. The spontaneous voluntary support of Ham Radio operators, radio clubs, and private organizations with sophisticated communications equipment will be readily available.
5. Communications between emergency responders is essential for effective operations.
6. Radio frequencies have been established for the various emergency services (police, fire, rescue, EMS, etc.), including Illinois Terrorism Task Force (ITTF) VHF interoperability frequencies and Starcom 21.
7. The Effingham County Sheriff's Department operates and maintains the County's Communications Center at the County Office Building in Effingham. The Effingham City Police Department provides communications service for the various City of Effingham departments from the City Police Station.
8. Effingham County Emergency Telephone Systems Board (ETSB) provides and maintains all necessary 911 enhanced equipment for both communications centers.
9. All emergency services vehicles in the county are radio equipped with their assigned frequency.
10. Sufficient communications exist for most emergency situations.
11. During a large-scale disaster, communications may need to be augmented.
12. A large-scale disaster will require additional communications support from the public or private sector.
13. Communications support will be available in a reasonable time frame.

III. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. COMMUNICATIONS

1. The Effingham County Sheriff's Department coordinates county-wide day-to-day emergency operations activities from the Effingham County Sheriff's Department radio room using Effingham County's Emergency Telephone System (911) 800 MHz communications equipment. The Effingham City Police Department coordinates the same activities for the City of Effingham out of the

City Police Department Building using Effingham County's Emergency telephone System (911) 800 MHz communications equipment.

2. During a disaster, communications may fail requiring a need to expand communications capabilities. The Effingham County Office Building is the primary communication center. If it should fail, the back-up 911 center shall be used. Expansion of communications can be accomplished by installing additional telephone lines, utilizing Ham Radio and CB radio, using fax machines, portable phones, etc. Also many emergency service mobile radios are programmed with other emergency service frequencies, other than their own, to all inter-agency communication.
3. There are Ham Radio and CB operators in Effingham County who can be contacted to provide additional communications support. Requests for communications assistance should be directed to the EMA who maintains a listing of local Ham Radio operators.
4. The primary method of communication between emergency service units at the disaster site, and to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), will be by radio. Back-up methods would be by Ham Radio or CB radio, telephone, and messengers.
5. The EOC has radio capabilities on all local public service 800 MHz, UHF, VHF, HF frequencies as well as full Ham Radio frequency capabilities.
6. The private sector and voluntary organizations' primary method of communication would be by telephone with back-up methods provided by Ham Radio or CB radio, and messengers. Some also carry handheld radios.
7. EOC to the control centers will be by radio on the emergency response group frequency or Ham Radio frequencies or telephone/cell phone.
8. EOC to shelter/lodging/mass feeding facilities would communicate by telephone, with back-up methods provided by Ham Radio or CB radio, and messengers.
9. EOC to adjacent jurisdictions will be primarily by telephone/cell phone with fax being an alternate method.
10. Some agencies have the capability to communicate with other jurisdictions on mutual aid frequencies. These frequencies should be utilized to the fullest. The EOC also has Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) low-band 45.44 and EMA 155.025 in operation. Those having the same could communicate to the EOC by radio.

11. The EOC to ambulance shall be through the 800 MHz or telephone/cell phone or on 155.22 MHz or 155.34 MHz.
12. The primary EOC communications system source will be the radio room at the EOC with Ham Radio serving as backup.
13. The EOC manager will train all EMA volunteers in radio communications and operations.
14. All emergency response groups shall maintain their radio equipment including 800 MHz as well as their own radio equipment at the command post, their control centers, and their vehicles.
15. All other emergency communications facilities are responsible for ensuring continuous 24-hour manning of communications systems during emergency operations.
16. All responding emergency response groups and organizations shall provide one person for EOC duty to ensure communications capability to the incident.

IV. ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

A. The Chief Elected Official will:

1. Require the Communications Coordinator/EOC Manager to report to the EOC when notified of an emergency situation.

B. Communications Coordinator/EOC Manager will:

1. Activate communications section in the EOC.
2. Implement emergency communications procedures.
3. Ensure communications section of the EOC has the capability to sustain operations around the clock.
4. When notified of an emergency situation report to the EOC.
5. Manage the emergency communications section in the EOC and supervise the personnel (radio, telephone, repair crews, runners, etc.) assigned to it.
6. Support media center communications operations, as needed.

C. Telecommunication Operators (EMA Volunteers, Ham Radio Operators) will:

1. When notified, report to the EOC, staff the communications section, and operate assigned communications equipment.
2. Follow established procedures and radio protocol for voice transmissions and message handling.
3. Screen and log information when appropriate, and route incoming calls to the appropriate section in the EOC.

D. Illinois National Guard will:

1. Provide communications support to include personnel and equipment (as directed by the Governor.)

E. Sheriff's Department will:

1. Test, maintain, and repair communications and alerting equipment in the Sheriff's Department Communications Center.
2. Negotiate, coordinate and prepare mutual aid and other agreements, as necessary to support law enforcement operations.
3. Update communications annex, as needed, based on experience in emergencies, deficiencies identified through drills and exercises and changes in government structure and emergency organizations.
4. Assist in coordinating all police agencies to help when requested in notifying citizens of any emergency or disaster by whatever means most appropriate when requested to do so.

F. National Trail Amateur Radio Club will:

1. Provide Ham Radio communications support.

G. All Tasked Organizations will:

1. Maintain their existing equipment and follow established procedures for communicating with their organization personnel performing field operations. All organizations should keep the EOC informed of their operations at all times and maintain a communications link with the EOC.
2. Provide backup communications capabilities for the EOC.

3. Provide a backup communications link between the EOC and mass care facilities, as needed, through use of mobile and portable radio units.
4. Activate backup or alternate communications systems, as necessary.
5. When practical, protect equipment against lightning strikes and electromagnetic pulse (EMP) effects.
6. Phase down operations, as appropriate.
7. Clean, repair, and perform maintenance on all equipment before returning to normal operations or to storage.

H. All emergency response groups, both public and private, shall submit a list of their representatives who will report to the EOC when activated.

I. The Public Information Officer will assign one of his staff to the EOC if activated.

V. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS

A. Administration

1. A listing of reports and record forms are found in the Resource Manual.
2. IC/UC shall give hourly progress reports and immediate reports of significant events to the EOC.
3. Reports and records from the field shall be retained indefinitely.
4. Emergency Response Groups shall submit communication expenditure statements to the appropriate authorities (County Treasurer, EMA) for reimbursement.
5. A current phone list and radio frequencies used in Effingham County by government, emergency response groups, volunteer organizations are found in the Resource Manual.

B. Logistics

1. Presently, the only communication agreement with private communications is the 911 contract with Motorola for maintenance of the two 911 PSAPs. No other communications agreements are known of at this time.
2. All Mutual Aid Agreements are available at the EOC.

3. All emergency response groups shall be responsible for the repair and/or replacement of their communications equipment.

VI. DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF COMMUNICATIONS ANNEX

A. The responsibility for revisions, keeping attachments current, and developing necessary documents for the annex belongs to EMA.

B. The responsibility for revisions and maintaining SOGs belongs to the emergency response groups.

VII. AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES

A. The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended 42 U.S.C. 5121 *et seq.*

B. The Illinois Emergency Management Act (20 ILCS 3305).

C. County Ordinance relating to Emergency Management as adopted by the Effingham County Board on January 18, 2005.

D. *Guide for All-Hazard Emergency Operations Planning: State and Local Guide (101)*; FEMA April 2001

VIII. APPENDICES

A. Pre-Emergency Operations Checklist

B. Response Operations Checklist

C. Recovery Operations Checklist

▪ **APPENDIX A. PRE-EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CHECKLIST**

1. Analyze communications needs.
2. Train assigned communications staff and volunteer augmentees to perform emergency functions.
3. Test, maintain, and repair communications equipment.
4. Identify public, private, and voluntary organizations that can augment.
5. Develop procedures to warn areas not covered by fixed warning systems.
6. Identify special locations (schools, hospitals, nursing homes, major industries, places of public assembly, etc.) that need your warning information.
7. Review and update government officials alert list.
8. Update Communications Annex, as necessary.
9. Negotiate, coordinate, and prepare mutual aid agreements, as necessary.

▪ **APPENDIX B. RESPONSE OPERATIONS CHECKLIST**

1. Initiate EOC on-line procedures.
2. Alert emergency service units to the emergency.
3. Alert key government officials to the emergency.
4. Work with the Public Information Officer (PIO) to disseminate pertinent information to the public and media.
5. Provide information to special locations (schools, hospitals, nursing homes, major industries, and places of public assembly.)
6. Provide information for the hearing impaired, if applicable.
7. Request communications assistance from amateur radio operators.
8. Request assistance from state and federal government, if necessary.
9. Consult Public Information Annex for more information.

- **APPENDIX C. RECOVERY OPERATIONS CHECKLIST**

1. Maintain emergency communications operations as long as necessary.
2. Repair/maintain equipment.
3. Release unneeded personnel.
4. Support cleanup and recovery operations during disaster events.