Attachment B
Communications

Introduction

This function focuses on the communications systems that will be relied upon during emergency situations. The total communications system is discussed in detail and procedures for its use are outlined.

Developing a Communications Annex

Purpose

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

Situation and Assumptions

The Situation portion of this section identifies some broad considerations that apply to the kinds of emergency conditions that could occur and would require the activation of emergency communications systems to support the jurisdiction's response to the situation.

This section also describes the assumptions that are applicable to the communications system the jurisdiction will use during emergency operations. Typical assumptions may address:

➢ 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.

➢ Augmentation of local capability by higher levels of government.

➢ The support provided by the local chapter of RACES. If RACES is not available locally, other public service and private organizations in the community should be approached. These include such agencies as local industry, taxi and transit companies, citizens band radio groups (e.g., REACT), and local service agencies.

> ➢ Designation of specific response organizations to maintain operational control of their own communications systems, while coordinating with the EOC during emergency operations.

> ➢ The spontaneous voluntary support of ham radio operators, radio clubs, and private organizations with sophisticated communications equipment.

Concept of Operations

This section should describe the methods used to communicate between the EOC, field forces at a specific incident scene (operating under ICS or another direction and control system), control centers of emergency response organizations, mass care facilities (including shelters and feeding facilities), radio/TV stations, hospitals and ambulance dispatch points, amateur communications networks, adjacent jurisdictions and military installations, State EOC, and Federal and private sector organizations, as appropriate. It should address sourcing for primary and backup systems, the people that will operate the equipment, and detail the communications requirements for emergency response organizations.

Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

This section describes the specific communications responsibilities that are assigned to the tasked organizations. The following types of tasking should be assigned to the agencies, organization chiefs, and individuals listed in the left margin, below:

Chief Executive Official ("CEO")

Requires the Communications Coordinator to report to the EOC when notified of an emergency situation.

Communications Coordinator

> ➢ When notified of an emergency situation reports to the EOC.

> ➢ Manages the emergency communications section in the EOC and supervise the personnel (radio, telephone and teletype operators, repair crews, runners, etc.) assigned to it.

> ➢ Supports media center communications operations, as needed.

EOC Manager   ➢   Activates communications section in the EOC.

➢   Implements emergency communications procedures.

➢   Ensures communications section of the EOC has the capability to sustain operations around the clock.

Communications Section Team Members   ➢   When notified, report to the EOC, staff the communications section, and operate assigned communications equipment.

➢   Follow established procedures and radio protocol for voice transmissions and message handling.

➢   Screen and log information when appropriate, and route incoming calls to the appropriate section in the EOC.

Military Department   Provides communications support to include personnel and equipment (as directed by the Governor).

All Tasked Organizations   This includes the organizations (Fire Department, Law Enforcement, Public Works, EOC, Emergency Management Agency, PIO, Health and Medical, etc.) that are directly involved or support emergency response operations. During emergency operations, all departments should:

➢   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.

➢   Provide backup communications capabilities for the EOC.

➢   Provide a backup communications link between the EOC and mass care facilities, as needed, through use of mobile and portable radio units.

➢   Activate backup or alternate communications systems, as necessary.

> ➢ Maintain emergency communications systems as long as necessary.

> ➢ When practical, protect equipment against lighting strikes and electromagnetic pulse (EMP) effects.

> ➢ Phase down operations, as appropriate.

> ➢ Clean, repair, and perform maintenance on all equipment before returning to normal operations or to storage.

Administration and Logistics

This section addresses the support requirements of the communications function.

Administration

> ➢ This section addresses the administrative actions associated with satisfying the tasking in this annex. Specific areas to be addressed include:

> > • Record and report preparation and retention.

> > • Accounting and reimbursement procedures. For example, submit communications expenditure statements to appropriate authorities for reimbursement.

> > • Reference to the phone lists and radio frequencies in the SOP that should be followed to notify emergency personnel during emergency situations.

Logistics

This section addresses general support requirements. Specific areas to be addressed include: communications agreements with private organizations, mutual aid agreements with neighboring jurisdictions, and provisions to have damaged communications equipment repaired or replaced.

Plan Development and Maintenance

This section should identify who is responsible for coordinating revision of the jurisdiction's Communications Annex, keeping its attachments current, and ensuring that SOPs and other necessary documents are developed.

Authorities and References

Authorities and references should be cited as appropriate.