



NEW HAMPSHIRE

STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER



EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNCTION 15 – PUBLIC INFORMATION

2019

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Acronyms

COO	Community Outreach Office
DOS	NH Department of Safety
EMAC	Emergency Management Assistance Compact
ESF	Emergency Support Function
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
HSEM	NH Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
IEMAC	International Emergency Management Assistance Compact
IFO	Incident Field Office
JIC	Joint Information Center
JIS	Joint Information System
LOA	Letter of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NRF	National Response Framework
PIO	Public Information Officer
SEOC	State Emergency Operations Center
SEOP	State Emergency Operations Plan
SME	Subject Matter Experts
SOP	Standard Operation Procedure



Lead Agency

Department of Safety, Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management (HSEM)

Support Agencies

NH 211

All other State ESF and Support Agencies

Introduction

Generation of timely public information coordinated with the appropriate level of government is essential to avoid or minimize loss of life and property if a disaster is imminent or has occurred.

Purpose

Emergency Support Function 15 - Public Information (ESF 15) provides a framework for coordination and collaboration with appropriate, Federal, state and local agencies regarding public information needs, issues, and activities before, during, and after a disaster or emergency in the State to ensure the delivery of timely, accurate, and accessible public messages.

Concept of Operations

This annex will be activated at the direction of HSEM when there is potential for, or an actual disaster situation, or planned event affecting the State of New Hampshire.

General

1. Coordinate ESF 15 activities in the SEOC during periods of activation by developing and maintaining the ESF 15 staffing schedule.
2. Coordinate evaluation and performance of mission/task requests.
3. Ensure Unified Command is used to manage assets in the field due to the number and variety of government and private sector organizations that may be involved.
4. ESF 15 will act as the central coordinating entity for receiving and disseminating public information during state disaster operations.
 - a. Information flow to the SEOC will occur directly from news media reports, social media, and from 211. Information will also flow from WebEOC inputs, the SEOC Planning Section, ESF 15 representatives in the SEOC, local officials, and Joint Information Centers (JIC)/Joint Information System (JIS) to the SEOC.
 - b. Information will flow from the SEOC in the form of media briefings, press conferences, press releases, social media messages, WebEOC, and Situational Awareness Statements.
5. ESF 15 will provide and/or coordinate press conferences, recorded messages, photographs, news accounts, statistics on injuries and fatalities, and other information to the news media as appropriate, to include information targeted for non-English speaking individuals and/or access and functional needs populations.
6. **Joint Information Center (JIC)**



- a. At the request of the SEOC Manager, a JIC may be activated. The JIC will serve as a single point to collect, verify, and disseminate information to the public.
- b. The State JIC will normally be located at the SEOC facility. However, based on the event or the site or hazard-specific plan, the State JIC may be located at a separate location or 'virtual.'
- c. In the event that the JIC is activated, all emergency public information activities, including media inquiries, will be coordinated through the JIC. The JIC will become the central coordination point for all emergency public information and external communications activities. To the extent possible, the JIC will be staffed with PIOs from all agencies and organizations involved in the event.
- d. There may also be other incidents that result in JICs being established and operated by another entity (such as nuclear power plants, certain law enforcement incidents, etc.) In this case, ESF 15 representatives will work within these other JICs, as appropriate, to coordinate public information.

7. Public Inquiry/Hotlines

- a. Depending upon the incident, Public Inquiry or “hot lines” may be activated to gather and provide information to the public. Call takers will be provided with the most up-to-date information available for public release. Public Inquiry personnel will document calls, including area of origination and types of calls/requests/comments. This information will be passed to the JIC to assist in determining appropriate messaging strategies to meet the needs of the public.

Organization

- 1. **Organizational Chart (Command & Control):** ESF 15 shall function under the direction and control of the SEOC Manager. *(See Organizational Chart in SEOP Base Plan).*
- 3. **Field Operations:** ESF 15 may serve in Field Operations for deployment or standby status. As activation of these activities usually occurs early in an event, its activation sequence should be prepared for in the first hours of an event.
- 4. **Federal Resources:** When ESF 15 anticipates or has a need for resources not otherwise available, action will be taken to secure such resources through the National Response Framework (NRF) or some other federal source. This request should be coordinated through the SEOC Operations Chief, and Logistics Chief, as required.
- 5. **Contracts and Contractors:** Resources that are available through ESF 15 may, at times, best be obtained through a contractor. State of NH contracts or private sector contracts should be facilitated through Logistics and ESF 7 – Resource Support.

Notification

- 1. HSEM will notify the Lead Agency points of contact when there is, or will be an SEOC activation requiring ESF 15 representation.
- 2. The Lead Agency will then notify the Support Agencies and determine coverage for the ESF 15 desk in the SEOC.

3. ESF 15 agencies will make notifications to their appropriate regions, districts, local offices, etc.
4. The above notification process will be utilized for all phases of activation and activities in which the ESF 15 will be involved.
5. The JIC may be requested to support an incident that may not result in the activation of the SEOC.

Event Reporting

1. WebEOC will be utilized to provide continuous situational awareness.
2. Position logs should be maintained by each ESF agency in sufficient detail to provide information on activities taken during the event.
3. Agencies are also expected to keep their Lead Agency updated upon all activities and actions.
4. The Lead Agency will be responsible for making periodic reports to the Operations Section Chief on activities taken by the ESF during the event and assure they are properly documented.
5. Lead and Support agencies must maintain financial records of all activities and costs during the event. The records will be turned into the Lead Agency when requested.

ESF Actions

Prevention/Preparedness Actions

1. Maintain situational awareness through coordination with ESF 15 support agencies for current inventories of available resources.
2. Participate in State exercises or conduct an exercise to validate this Annex and supporting SOPs.
3. Support the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) and International Emergency Management Assistance Compact (IEMAC) including training of ESFs on EMAC/IEMAC responsibilities, and pre-identification of assets, needs, and resources that may be allocated to support other states/provinces.
4. Annually review the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Core Capabilities and integrating tasks as appropriate.
5. Integrate NIMS principles in all aspects of planning for ESF 15.
6. Maintain notification systems to support emergency/disaster response.
7. Maintain personnel, listings, and resource contacts in a state of readiness appropriate to existing and anticipated emergency conditions.
8. Ensure training and personnel rosters for assignment to the SEOC during activation. Prepare for sufficient personnel for an extended and/or 24-hour activation period.
9. Develop a public information program to educate the public regarding the effects of common, emergency, and disaster situations.



10. Develop procedures to organize and operate the SEOC media briefing area and/or a JIC.
11. Develop and maintain social media engagement procedures for ESF's during activations of the SEOC.
12. Encourage the public to develop disaster plans and kits.
13. Provide training and materials for public inquiry lines, including methods for collecting and documenting calls received and appropriate response.
14. Maintain a current list of media contacts.
15. Implement a comprehensive public information program to include news conferences, news releases, fact sheets for media and local organizations, updates for websites and social media accounts, and outreach to those with access and functional needs.

Response Actions

1. Assign and schedule sufficient personnel to cover an SEOC activation for an extended period.
2. Provide information and status of public information to SEOC Manager via WebEOC. Obtain status reports, and keep the SEOC informed of progress of assigned tasks.
3. Provide updates and briefings for personnel reporting for ESF 15 duty.
4. Notify ESF 15 counterparts in the threatened or impacted areas.
5. Generate information to be included in SEOC briefings, situation reports, and/or action plans.
6. Consult with other ESFs that may need support from ESF 15.
7. Consult incident specific annexes for specialized actions.
8. Support requests and directives resulting from a Governor's State of Emergency Declaration and/or Presidential Disaster Declaration.
9. Evaluate and respond to ESF 15 mission/task requests including providing available resources, equipment, and personnel for fulfilling ESF missions. Maintain situational awareness of resources committed to an incident.
10. Provide EAS messages and news releases in common language and terminology to inform the public. Coordinate with established hotline systems.
11. Provide emergency information to the public to ensure public safety and health through a wide variety of methods.
12. Coordinate with news media regarding emergency operations and to disseminate emergency information to the public.
13. Execute a multi-agency/jurisdiction coordinated public information program.
14. Supplement local emergency management public information operations, as necessary.
15. Gather incident related information through direct communications links with operational units (on-scene personnel, local Emergency Management Directors and PIOs, local



government officials, and other local and state agencies/organizations) in the field and/or their appropriate coordinating entities.

16. Assess priorities and strategies to meet the most critical public information needs.
17. Monitor social media activity and media coverage of the incident and verify accuracy and consistency of information by consulting SEOC sources.
18. Ensure full coordination of activities with other groups within the SEOC to assist in the development and maintenance of a common operating picture.
19. Coordinate news conferences.
20. Coordinate with 211 to manage requests from the public for disaster related information.

21. Radiological Emergency Preparedness Actions

Refer to the ESF 15 section of the NH Radiological Emergency Response for Nuclear Facilities Incident Annex, Attachment A – Implementing Procedures for State Agencies.

Recovery Actions:

1. Continue public information activities to include updating the public on recovery efforts.
2. Ensure emergency information concerning safety and disaster assistance is provided to the public in coordination with each ESF utilizing available communications channels.
3. Maintain information and status of public information to SEOC Manager via WebEOC.
4. Continue to coordinate activities and requests with partner ESFs.
5. Prepare for arrival of and coordinate with FEMA ESF 15 personnel, as appropriate.
6. Generate information to be included in SEOC briefings, situation reports, and/or action plans.
7. Ensure ESF 15 Lead and Support Agencies document event related costs for any potential reimbursement.

Mitigation Actions

1. Provide input to the State Hazard Mitigation Plan as needed.
2. Support and plan for mitigation measures including monitoring and updating mitigation actions in the State Hazard Mitigation Plan.
3. Support requests and directives from the Governor and/or FEMA concerning mitigation and/or re-development activities.



Responsibilities

General

1. Agencies will provide Subject Matter Experts (SME's) to support ESF 15 in the SEOC.
2. Agencies will maintain inventories/databases, status of availability, and procedures to obtain access to and use of their resources and contracts.
3. Participate in the evaluation and mission assignment of ESF 15 resource requests submitted to the SEOC including resources that are available through mutual-aid agreements, compacts, contracts, etc.

Agency Specific

Lead Agency

Department of Safety, Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management (HSEM)

1. Identify, train, and assign personnel to staff ESF 15 in the SEOC.
2. Notify all ESF 15 supporting agencies upon activation.
3. Assign personnel to the ESF 15 duty schedule at the SEOC.
4. Develop a public information program to educate the public regarding the effects of emergency and disaster situations.
5. Develop plans to coordinate with news media and external agencies for emergency operations, before, during and after an emergency.
6. Develop plans to conduct a multi-agency/jurisdiction coordinated public information program during emergency and disaster situations.
7. Maintain fact sheets, instructions and procedures, and other readily available pre-scripted information on a wide range of all- hazards topics to support the rapid dissemination of public information. Pre-scripted information is verified on a regular basis to ensure that it is current and accurate.
8. Coordinate with state and local Public Information Officers on the dissemination of news releases and other public information materials.
9. Develop and maintain social media plans and procedures for the SEOC.
10. Develop messages for specialized populations and those with access and functional needs.
11. Determine the organization and implementation strategy of a Joint Information System and establishment of a Joint Information Center.



Support Agencies

1. NH 211

- a. Serves as the State’s primary information call center during times of emergency. 211 will respond immediately to field calls regarding the emergency and direct callers to services most appropriate for their needs.
- b. Provide situational awareness to the SEOC to include number of calls, nature of assistance requested, rumors, etc.

2. All other State Agencies

- a. Provide personnel to augment ESF 15 during emergencies and disasters.

Coordination with Other Emergency Support Functions

ESF 15 will coordinate with other ESFs through the SEOC by:

1. Notifying organizations of available resources.
2. Providing availability of subject matter experts for specialized requests.
3. Notifying ESFs and Support Agencies of any pertinent information that may impact their ability to carry out missions/tasks.

Mutual Aid

Lead and Support Agencies will maintain up-to-date agreements and Memoranda of Understanding/Letters of Agreement (MOU/LOA) with various other agencies, regions, states or countries, as appropriate. Each agency is responsible for keeping these documents updated and with appropriate points of contact. Support Agencies should keep the Lead Agency informed of any such agreements that may affect resources or capabilities during an emergency incident. The State of New Hampshire also maintains agreements and mutual aid compacts on behalf of various organizations. These may be activated as the situation warrants.

Resource List

The following are the physical resources for ESF 15:

Facilities

1. Incident Planning and Operation Center
 - a. 9-1-1 Conference Room (designated for establishment of Joint Information Center)
 - b. Media Room
2. Seabrook Station Incident Field Office

Equipment

1. Joint Information Center Kit

Contracts

1. Increase public preparedness for natural and human made disasters
2. Public awareness campaign for “See Something, Say Something”



Attachments

Plans

1. JIS Plan DRAFT

Listings/Maps

1. Media Contacts Lists
2. Agency PIO Contact Lists

Record of Update

Date	Title and Agency of ESF Lead Approving Update

