

## **Emergency Support Function 2 Telecommunications, Information Systems, and Warning**

### **ESF Coordinator:**

Emergency Management

### **Primary Agencies for:**

Emergency Management  
Multi-Agency Communications Center (MACC 911 Dispatch)

### **Support Agencies:**

Law Enforcement  
Fire Services, Districts/Departments  
Emergency Medical Services (EMS)  
Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (RACES)  
American Red Cross

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. Purpose**

To provide guidance for rapid alert and warning to key public officials and the general public of an impending or occurring natural or human-caused emergency or disaster. To provide guidance for organizing, establishing, and maintaining the communications capabilities necessary to meet the operational requirements of local response and recovery efforts. To provide a continuous flow of information throughout an emergency or disaster.

### **B. Scope**

Emergency Support Function #2 describes the coordination of local actions to establish and maintain communications and warning systems to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies or disasters which may affect the citizens and operations of local government. Local government has organized, equipped, and maintains capable communication systems necessary to meet daily operational requirements, and to maintain these capabilities during emergencies or disaster response and recovery operations.

## **II. POLICIES**

- A.** Communications and warning support requirements which cannot be met at the lowest level of authority will escalate upward for resolution at the county level with provisions to declare an emergency and request assistance from the state and federal government.

- B. Additional policies relating to communications and warning systems are established by the Multi-Agency Communications Center Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual.
- C. Emergency public information is normally compiled by the designated Public Information Officer (PIO) at the EOC. Before these messages can be disseminated to the public, they must be approved by a Chief Elected Official (Grant County Board of Commissioners). If a Chief Elected Official is unavailable, the Emergency Manager, which may be the Director of Emergency Management, the Grant County Sheriff, or Mayor of an affected jurisdiction must approve messages before public distribution.

### III. SITUATION

#### A. Emergency or Disaster Conditions and Hazards

A natural or human-caused emergency or disaster may occur at anytime that requires dissemination of warning or notification of emergency information to local public officials and the general public. These warnings may originate from any level of government. Most forecasting resources are located within the federal government and may include warnings for natural and human-caused disasters. Communications will be one of our first concerns in the focus of life-saving activities. Emergency information to the public may include information about evacuation, sheltering-in-place, protective actions, food and water supply locations, transportation, relocation, contacting family and friends, and accessing lists of missing or deceased persons. It may also include information about accessing social and health services and where to find human and domestic animal shelters.

#### B. Planning Assumptions

1. The sudden and unexpected nature of a catastrophic incident will result in numerous requests from all levels of municipal government for services required to save lives, protect property, and preserve the environment.
2. At a time when the need for real time electronically processed information is greatest, the capability to produce it may be seriously restricted or nonexistent due to widespread damage to communications and power systems facilities.
3. Local jurisdictions will require accurate and timely information on which to base their decisions and focus their response actions.

## IV. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

### A. General

1. Communications capabilities, including daily communications, warning of impending events, response and recovery, search and rescue, and coordination with local public safety agencies and the state must be readily available for emergency operations.
2. National, regional, or state disaster warnings will occur through established National Warning System (NAWAS) points. Grand Coulee Dam monitors the NAWAS system and conducts emergency fan-out notification procedure to local points of notification.
3. Information and warning is received by MACC over (teletype) ACCESS, A Central Computerized Enforcement Service System, public telephone or radio. MACC dispatchers will notify the Emergency Manager. At the direction of the Emergency Manager, MACC dispatchers may also notify other key personnel within Grant County.
4. Public alert and warning may be accomplished through the Emergency Alert System for rebroadcast over commercial radio and/or cable television. Emergency Management maintains a radio communications system for broadcast of emergency alert messages.
5. Local Primary Station – 1 is KBSN/KDRM located in Moses Lake, WA. Local Primary Station – 2 is KWIQ located in Moses Lake, WA. For emergencies or disasters in southern Grant County, the Wahluke Slope is serviced by KNOA, located in Pasco, WA.
6. Warning capabilities include: siren, radio, pagers, telephone, commercial radio, cable television, mobile siren, and loud speaker notifications. Sirens are used for a three mile area around the Wheeler Road Industrial Corridor. Priest Rapids Dam uses a siren to warn the Wanapum Tribal Village. Alert and warning to the residents within the U.S. Department of Energy Emergency Planning Zone, Sector 5 in Grant County is provided by emergency alert radio. These radios are tone-alert activated with an Emergency Alert System message. Warning sirens strategically placed along the Columbia River can also be activated to alert the public in the Columbia River area of Hanford Site emergencies. (See ESF 10-B for more information).
7. The Emergency Alert System (EAS) may be activated from the Grant County EOC. State and other county governments may also activate this system. The system is connected to local area radio and television and can interrupt programming to disseminate a message. It is capable of

providing messages up to three minutes in duration, which may be repeated every fifteen minutes. For more information, please reference the Inland Northwest Emergency Alert System Plan.

8. Grant County is capable of accessing an internet based communications resource called the WEB-EOC. This system provides for various positions at the Grant County EOC to enter situation specific information such as situation reports, resource tracking, and log of events. It enables users to maintain contact with county representatives who may or may not be physically present at the Grant County EOC. This system also enables the user to know what is happening in adjacent counties, agencies and the state when they are also using the system. It provides for an alternate source of communication should other systems be overwhelmed or failed. It can also access a wireless system if necessary.
9. National, regional, or state disaster warnings will occur through established National Warning System (NAWAS) points. Grand Coulee Dam Power dispatch personnel will monitor the NAWAS system and then conduct an emergency fan-out notification procedure to local points of notification.

## **B. Organization**

### **1. Multi-Agency Communications Center (MACC Dispatch)**

MACC is a central communications center for county agencies, local jurisdictions, and the public. MACC is governed by a Board of Directors, elected by the users group, who in turn appointed a Director. The Director of MACC is designated the Communications Officer for the entire community of Grant County. This individual is responsible for the administration of and operations for emergency communications in the event of an emergency or disaster for 911 calls, and dispatching Emergency Medical Services, Fire Services and Law Enforcement. Should a disaster occur, primary public-safety dispatch and communications will be operated from the MACC. Radios, telephones, cellular phones, facsimiles and pagers may be used as alternate means of providing communications. The MACC is staffed 24 hours a day.

### **2. Emergency Management**

Emergency Management has a local Emergency Operations Center (EOC) where communications are supported through telephone, radio, internet, and cellular systems. The department keeps an EAS receiver near the EOC, which receives weekly tests of the system. It is aligned with an electronic reader board at the Multi-Agency Communications Center (MACC) so that dispatchers may read any messages that are received on a 24 hour basis. Emergency Management has the ability to record messages on the EAS for dissemination through public safety radio

system to local public broadcasters. The department also keeps updated contact information for the primary and support agency contacts identified in the Emergency Support Functions of this CEMP, which allows for timely notification of those who may have response duties at the EOC. Next to the EOC are two portable radios for communication with field operations.

### **3. Support Agencies – Law Enforcement, Fire Services, EMS, RACES**

These agencies are taking steps to continue to update portable and mobile radio equipment to meet interoperability and narrow band standards. Performance tests of equipment is a typical practice of these agencies to ensure reliable response for public safety.

## **C. Procedures**

1. Receive notification, alert, or warning of an accident, event or impending emergency or disaster.
2. Dissemination of warning information to the general public will be the decision of the Board of County Commissioners, Sheriff, Mayors, or the Emergency Management Director.
3. Public safety communications may be augmented by fielding teams of Amateur Radio Emergency Service Operators to handle radio traffic which is in excess of normal capabilities. The operators may provide their own equipment in the field, at the dispatch site, and EOC.
4. The EOC will maintain communications as applicable through the CEMNET radio system with the WA State Emergency Management Division. The CEMNET radio system is capable of relaying communications to neighboring jurisdictions through the WA State Duty Officer.
5. The NAWAS (National Weather Service) is capable of transmitting information at the state, regional, or nationwide level regarding natural and human-caused hazard events. Grand Coulee Dam Power Dispatch personnel monitor the NAWAS system and fan-out notification procedures commence if necessary. The typical process includes: A message is transmitted by the WA State Emergency Management Division to local Primary Warning Points (PWP), such as Grand Coulee Dam Power Dispatch. From Grand Coulee Dam, the message is sent to MACC Dispatch, who notifies the Emergency Manager or the Grant County Sheriff if the ACCESS system is down.

*Note: If the local PWP is at risk because of potential disaster, duplicate warning points have been pre-established around the state.*

## D. Mitigation Activities

### 1. Primary Agencies

#### a. MACC Dispatch

The MACC trains personnel for maximum use of available communications resources. It analyzes existing communications needs and the needs for a possible communications failure.

#### b. Emergency Management

The department coordinates with MACC staff in update and maintenance of this ESF. It identifies private and public service agencies that can augment communications and warning capabilities.

The department also conducts exercises at the EOC which include practicing Public Information Officer (PIO) duties. These duties include development of emergency public information messages, coordinating messages and information with a Joint Information Center (JIC), if one is assembled, providing situation reports (sit-reps) to the state, and providing updates to the media.

### 2. Support Agencies

#### a. Law Enforcement, Fire Services, EMS, RACES

These agencies assist MACC and Emergency Management in training, exercises, drills and communications tests. They help identify areas that are not covered within the range of fixed site warning facilities. They assist in the development of improvements for communications.

#### b. American Red Cross

Maintains responsibility for administration of Amateur Radio Emergency Service communications teams for "health and welfare" radio traffic.

## E. Preparedness Activities

### 1. Primary Agencies

#### a. MACC Dispatch

Conducts periodic testing of all permanently installed, mobile, and portable radio equipment. The agency also conducts periodic testing of backup power for emergency communications. It assists Emergency Management in the development of plans, including failure of equipment. It stockpiles supplies and additional equipment and develops contingency plans for equipment failure.

**b. Emergency Management**

EOC training for response agencies is coordinated through Emergency Management. It coordinates with state and regional plans to ensure operational readiness of communications. It maintains an operational EOC with emergency communications capabilities and operational procedures. (Refer to the EOC Plan for more information on operations). Emergency Management also participates in the Regional Interoperable Communications Plan with the counties of WA State Homeland Security Region 7. This includes the counties of Chelan, Douglas, Grant, Kittitas, and Okanogan. For more information, please see the Regional Interoperable Communications Plan, published separately.

**2. Support Agencies**

All agencies involved in emergency operations should be able to provide essential staff for the emergency or disaster, while non-essential staff should be placed on stand-by.

**F. Response Activities****1. Primary Agencies****a. MACC**

MACC coordinates with all agencies to provide the equipment and materials which may be needed to maintain the communications system through emergencies or disasters. MACC dispatchers, upon receipt of alert, disseminate information to Emergency Management. MACC Dispatch will be the primary center for 911 calls during an emergency or disaster in Grant County.

**b. Emergency Management**

The Director of Emergency Management or the Grant County Sheriff instructs MACC personnel regarding implementation and activation of the EOC. Emergency Management activates warning systems such as the Emergency Alert System with radio and television broadcast media. It designates a PIO to develop emergency public information, for release upon appropriate authorization. Emergency Management collects and provides essential information the situation of emergencies or disasters. It accesses willing local volunteers such as Local Amateur Radio Operators to support emergency communications as a backup and augmentation resource.

## V. Responsibilities

### 1. Primary Agencies

#### a. MACC

The MACC Director accomplishes administration relative to emergency communications. The agency maintains the operational capability of radio communications on primary public-safety including fire, police, emergency medical services and LERN frequencies. It is responsible to augment backup public radio communications systems in the event of failure or reduced effectiveness of primary systems. It maintains emergency power capability for communications.

#### b. Emergency Management

The department coordinates emergency communications for the EOC located at 6500 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave. NE, Suite 911, Moses Lake, WA. It coordinates communications and warning plans and assists the Communications Officer with additional personnel to relay information such as charts, maps and situation updates throughout an emergency or disaster. It is responsible to provide the encoder and decoder for the EAS at the EOC.

### 2. Support Agencies

Support agencies may operate their respective tactical radio frequencies. Citizen's Band (CB) radio may also be used for emergency communications, however, current planning has not incorporated this capability. RACES and American Red Cross will implement "Health and Welfare" communications using the sponsored National Traffic System.

## VI. RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

### A. Telephone

Commercial, private and leased lined telephone, cellular phone and facsimile may be used. The NAWAS (National Warning System) is based on land lines. The NOAA (National Oceanic Atmospheric Association) weather wire through ACCESS teletype land lines.

### B. Radio

CEMNET, (Comprehensive Emergency Management Network) two-way VHF radio systems for coordination and backup communication. RACES and two-way radio systems through HAM frequency bands can also provide backup communications. The radio frequencies used for response and recovery by the various agencies within Grant County who utilize MACC Dispatch.

### C. Internet

WEB-EOC can be accessed through the internet. Emergency Management may use wireless internet for WEB-EOC when other systems fail.

**VII. REFERENCES**

*see Appendix 2 of the Basic CEMP*

**VIII. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS**

*see Appendix 1 of the Basic CEMP*