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ESF 2 – Communications

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ESF 2 Tasked Agencies	
Primary Agencies	Department of County Assets
Supporting Agencies	Multnomah County Emergency Management (MCEM) Multnomah County Sheriff's Office (MCSO)
Cooperating Agencies	Bureau of Emergency Communications (BOEC) Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) General and special purpose call centers Private Sector Communications Service Providers

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Scope

Emergency Support Function (ESF) 2 coordinates governmental and non-governmental organizations that provide the communications and information technology capabilities necessary to support response efforts, facilitate the delivery of information to emergency management decision makers, and stabilize and re-establish systems and applications following natural and human-caused incidents.

This ESF also outlines the structure and operation of the warning systems used to alert key officials and the general public of a potential or occurring emergency or disaster. This function emphasizes the technical considerations of communication functions. Collection, control, and dissemination of emergency public information are covered by ESF 14 – Public Information.

1.2 Relationship to Other ESF Annexes

ESF 2 works closely with other County ESFs as a part of coordinated response and recovery activities. The following ESFs support communications activities:

- **ESF 3 – Public Works and Engineering.** Coordinates debris clearance and removal for access to communications infrastructure.
- **ESF 7 – Resource Support.** Coordinates provision of temporary or replacement communications equipment.
- **ESF 16 – Law Enforcement.** Aids in the prevention of or response to cyber-attacks.

1.3 Policies and Agreements

The following policies and agreements are currently in place to support communications activities during an emergency:

- None at this time.

2 Situation and Assumptions

2.1 Situation

A disaster condition may result from a significant natural or human-caused incident that generates extensive damage and/or results in a high volume of requests from all levels of government for services required to save lives and alleviate human suffering. The authorities receiving such requests require accurate and timely information on which to base decisions and guide response actions. However, at a time when the need to convey information quickly is greatest, the infrastructure needed to facilitate efficient communication may be damaged or overloaded. In such situations, all functioning telecommunications assets of the various levels of government, augmented by extra-regional assets, will be needed immediately to ensure a proper response to aid those in need.

2.2 Assumptions

- Local jurisdictions will require accurate and timely information on which to base their decisions and focus their response actions.
- Routine, day-to-day modes of communication will continue to be utilized to the degree that they survive the disaster.
- There are identified frequencies that will be used for primary direction and control.
- Normal forms of communications may be severely interrupted during the early phases of an emergency or disaster.
- The loss of some or all telephone service will reduce or eliminate the effectiveness of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) public information lines as well as the majority of the County departments.
- The management and logistics of communications support is highly situational and requires flexibility and adaptability.
- Significant incidents may require evacuation of significant numbers of affected populations. Such evacuations may require extensive coordination of inter- and intra-County communications and may exceed normal radio communication capabilities.

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- In the event of an emergency or disaster that damages the County's digital radio system, a backup analog system may be utilized.
- Local amateur radio operators have the ability to set up field communications to support or augment public safety operations, as appropriate. One use of this amateur radio system may be for providing communications between the EOC and community shelters.
- 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.
- If electronic emergency information systems are not available, paper logs may be used to record events, communications and messages, damage assessments, situation reports, resources utilized, staff hours expended, etc.

3 Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities for each department in support of emergency services will vary depending on the type of resource, the length of the warning period, and the duration of the incident.

3.1 Primary Agency

The primary agency for each ESF is assigned based upon the agencies coordinating responsibilities, authorities, functional expertise, resources, and capabilities in managing incident activities. The primary agency may not be responsible for all elements of a function and will work with supporting agencies and cooperating agencies to ensure a coordinated response. The primary agency for ESF 2 is the Department of County Assets.

3.1.1 Department of County Assets

- Provide repair and maintenance support for County communications systems.
- Ensure redundant communications are established between the County Emergency Operations Center and backup facilities.
- Coordinate data processing and computer capabilities for continued operations in the EOC.
- Support the use of information services and applications in the EOC to build a common operating picture.

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- Ensure emergency communications capability through use of County fixed and mobile telephone systems.
- Provide support in the ECC to maintain connectivity and communications systems.

3.2 Supporting Agencies

Supporting agencies for each ESF are those County entities that have substantial support roles during major incidents. Supporting agencies that support ESF 2 include:

3.2.1 Office of Emergency Management

- Coordinate the County's amateur radio program.
- Ensure 24 hour Duty Officer readiness to employ emergency alert systems.

3.2.2 Sheriff's Office

- Maintain interoperable communication systems and mobile communications capabilities.

3.3 Community Partners

The County is supported by a variety of community partners that provide support through coordination of emergency functions within their own authority/jurisdiction, or are able to provide additional resources to support County response activities. Community partners that support ESF 2 include:

3.3.1 Bureau of Emergency Communications (BOEC)

- Provide emergency communications and dispatch support.

3.3.2 ARES

- Provide communications support when primary systems are disrupted.

3.3.3 General government and special purpose call centers

- Ensure that redundant communications systems are established to support communications between the County Emergency Operations Center and general public.

3.3.4 Private Sector Communications Services Providers

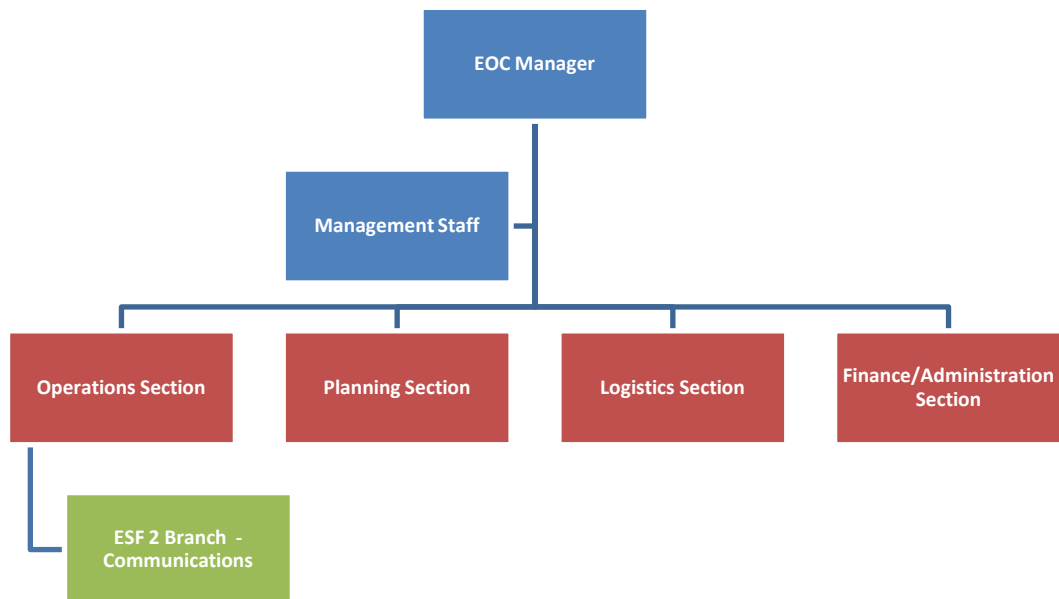
- Coordinate repair and restoration of private communications infrastructure.

4 Concept of Operations

4.1 General

- In accordance with the Basic Plan and this ESF Annex, DCA is the primary agency responsible for coordinating emergency communications activities. Plans and procedures developed by the primary agency and supporting agencies provide the framework for carrying out those activities.
- Requests for assistance with communications resources will be generated one of two ways: they will be forwarded to the County EOC, or they will be issued in accordance with established mutual aid agreements.
- The County EOC Operations Section Chief, with input from primary and supporting agencies will provide guidance for the coordination of communications resources.
- If the incident requires additional support for transportation operations, the Operations Section Chief may activate ESF 2.
- Communications support requirements that cannot be met at the local level should be forwarded to the State for assistance. If needed, Federal assistance may be requested by the Governor.

Table 1 Multnomah County ESF 1 Organization



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4.2 Notifications

- The Duty Officer will notify DCA and supporting agencies of EOC activations and request that representatives report to the EOC to coordinate communications activities, and staff ESF 2 if activated.
- As additional EOC staffing needs become apparent, other support and partnering agency personnel may be asked to report to the EOC to assist with communications activities.

4.3 Actions by Phase of Emergency Management**4.3.1 Preparedness**

- Develop plans, procedures, and protocols for communications in accordance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS), State and local ordinances, and existing agreements.
- Ensure that alternate or backup communications systems are available.
- Coordinate common communications procedures.
- Develop and test emergency procedures.
- Develop written mutual aid agreements as needed to ensure regional coordination.
- Develop and/or review procedures for the crisis augmentation of communications resources.
- Develop and conduct training to improve all-hazard incident management capability for response communications.
- Develop exercises and drills of sufficient intensity to challenge management and operations and to test the knowledge, skills, and abilities of individuals and organizations for response communications.
- Participate in emergency management training and exercises.
- Develop and maintain a communications resource inventory.

4.3.2 Response

- Implement incident communications interoperability plans and protocols.

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- Collect impact and damage assessment information from all private and public communication providers.
- Ensure that all critical communications networks are functioning.
- Establish and maintain response communication and connectivity systems between field responders, supporting coordination centers and the EOC.
- Implement procedures for inspecting and protecting communications equipment.
- Ensure that redundant communications circuits/channels are available for use.
- Make arrangements to ensure that emergency communications equipment can be repaired on a 24-hour basis.

4.3.3 Recovery

- Phase down operations, as appropriate.
- Continue to perform the tasks necessary to expedite restoration and recovery operations.
- Clean, repair, and perform maintenance on all equipment before returning to normal operations or storage.
- Coordinate and conduct a post-disaster situation analysis to review and determine the effectiveness of the pre-established tasks, responsibilities, reporting procedures, and formats to document crucial lessons learned and to make any necessary changes in this ESF Annex to improve future operations.

4.3.4 Mitigation

- Test all communications and warning equipment to ensure its workability.
- Develop and maintain back-up systems, including back-up power ability.
- Attempt to construct/place new equipment away from possible hazards.
- Ensure that methods are in place to protect communications equipment, including cyber and telecommunications resources.

4.4 Access and Functional Needs Populations

County emergency communications services will be provided in such a way that populations with access and functional needs receive adequate and timely warning and emergency information.

5 ESF Annex Development and Maintenance

DCA will be responsible for coordinating regular review and maintenance of this ESF Annex. Each primary and supporting agency will be responsible for developing plans and procedures that address assigned tasks.

6 Supporting Documents

The following plans and procedures are currently in place:

Multnomah County

- Portland UASI Region Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan

State of Oregon

- State of Oregon Emergency Operations Plan
 - ESF 2 - Communications
 - ESF 14 – Public Information

Federal

- National Response Framework
 - ESF 2 – Communications
 - ESF 15 – External Affairs
- National Emergency Communications Plan
- National Infrastructure Protection Plan
 - Communications Sector-Specific Plan
 - Information Technology Sector-Specific Plan

7 Appendices

- Multnomah County Tactical Communications Plan
- MC ARES Activation Procedures