Emergency Support Function 2 (Communications) Annex to Georgia Emergency Operations Plan

2023

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Record of Change

Change #	Date	Part Affected	Date Posted	Who Posted
1	1/28/2020	Support Agencies Assignment of Responsibilities	4/19/2020	Teresa Beecham

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

Emergency Support Function (ESF) 2 Communications, supports the restoration of the communications infrastructure, facilitates the recovery of systems and applications, and coordinates communications support to response efforts during incidents requiring a coordinated State response. Also provides communications support to State, and local government agencies and first responders when their systems have been impacted.

1.2 Scope

ESF-2 Communications members have a wide array of responsibilities which include, coordinates State actions to assist industry in restoring the public communications infrastructure and to assist State and local governments with emergency communications and restoration of public safety communications systems and first responder networks.

2.0 Concept of the Operation

2.1 General

ESF-2 Communications, supports state agencies and numerous commercial telecommunication service providers that have a wide array of responsibilities during an event. Including planning for tactical communications support and conducting activities to aid in the restoration of landline and wireless telecommunications infrastructure damaged during an event. Numerous pre and post disaster activities must be undertaken to accomplish these responsibilities including:

- Pre-event planning and coordination with supporting agencies and private industry.
- Supporting continuity of operations and continuity of government plans specifically, to provide and/or help restore communications capabilities at an alternate State government administration site and/or alternate State Operations Center (SOC) site.
- Support of State agencies and State response teams, such as Incident Management Teams and Search and Rescue teams, in response to a State of Emergency, to include incident command locations and functions (specifically, to provide and/or help restore communications capabilities at Incident Command Posts (ICP), Forward Operating Bases (FOB), forward tactical operating areas, and state staging areas.)
- Support Emergency Management Assistance Compact requests to and from surrounding states in Federal Emergency Management Agency Region IV.
- Support training classes for the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA/HS) as sponsored All Hazards Communications Leader (COM-L) and Communications Technician (COM-T) classes and for the GEMA/HS-sponsored Interoperability and Disaster Response Exercises.

- Support the State in response to planned and unplanned major events that must be managed to prevent and/or reduce incidents of an emergency nature.
- Coordination of and assistance in restoration of commercial communications infrastructure.
- Publish situational updates, status reports and related information routinely during an event.
- Support State of Georgia agencies in the following:
  - Repatriation operations where assistance is requested by a requesting state or federal agency.

  - National Disaster Medical Systems operations to include Disaster Medical Assistance Teams, Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Teams, National Veterinary Response Teams, National Medical Response Teams, and Strategic National Stockpile operations where assistance is requested by the State.

2.2 Plan Activation

GEMA/HS activates ESF-2 Communications when a significant impact to the communications infrastructure is expected or has occurred. When activated, ESF-2 Communications performs tasks that can be categorized within three primary functions. These functions may include, but are not limited to, Tactical Communications, Infrastructure Restoration, and Communications Planning.

The Tactical Communications function includes the following activities:

- Identifying emergency communication requirements for incidents based on existing plans and information provided immediately prior to or during incidents.
- Identifying available emergency communications frequencies, services and equipment based on existing plans and resource database(s).
- Distributing available emergency communication equipment to incident personnel pre- deployment in existence with existing plans; with potentially limited distribution outside existing plans and/or post-event.

The Infrastructure Restoration function includes the following activities:

- Coordination with private industry partners to restore the commercial communications infrastructure.
- Synchronizing efforts between private sector communication service providers and response and recovery operations.
- Assist with coordinating access, security, and staging for essential communication service providers' crews and equipment.
- Reporting status of outages and restoration efforts to the Communications Planning Branch as reported by communication service providers.

The Communications Planning function includes the following activities:

- Pre-event communications planning.
- Developing communications input to the Incident Action Plan during an event.
- Gathering and consolidating data for situational reporting during an event.

3.0 Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

The ESF-2 Communications Coordinator is GEMA/HS.

ESF-2 Communications coordinates planning, preparedness, response, and recovery activities along with the ESF-2 Communications support agencies.

3.1 ESF Coordinator

ESF-2 Communications will ensure the following:

- Designate Primary and Alternate Emergency Coordinators. The designees shall represent the agency in an emergency or disaster and provide operational support in the SOC when requested.
- Sustain operational readiness through regular contact with primary and support agencies.
- Participate in planning meetings and exercises.
- Develop Standard Operating Guide (SOG) to support emergency and disaster operations.
- Coordinate with GEMA/HS for training of staff that support ESF-2 Communications.
- Coordinate operational support for ESF-2 Communications support agencies.
- Monitor the communications infrastructure and act as the principal source of information for threats or incidents to the infrastructure.
- Identify, procure, prioritize, and track communications resources that are requested to support or are utilized for emergency or disaster operations.
- Conduct impact assessments within impacted areas.

3.2 Primary Agency Assignment of Responsibilities

Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency

- Plans and coordinates preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation activities pertaining to Communications.
- Conducts ongoing ESF-2 Communications meetings and/or conference calls.
- Supports and participates in planning meetings and exercises relating to ESF-2 Communications.
- Maintains ongoing contact with ESF-2 Communications primary and support agencies.
- Acts as a liaison between ESF-2 Communications and external entities.
- Directs requests for assistance to the appropriate ESF-2 Communications agencies.
- Directs unmet requests for assistance to ESF-5 Emergency Management, Information and Planning.
- Provides information on the status, threats, impacts, or restoration of the communications infrastructure or services in conjunction with ESF-3 Public Works and Engineering, ESF-5, ESF-7 Logistics, ESF-12 Energy, ESF-13 Public Safety and Security, and GEMA/HS Critical Infrastructure Protection Program personnel.

- Provides updates on the status of ESF-2 Communications mission assignments to ESF-5, the Planning Section Chief, and other entities external to ESF-2 Communications.
- Generates information to be used in briefings, situation reports, and incident action plans when the SOC is activated.

3.3 Support Agency Assignment of Responsibilities

American Radio Relay League, Inc.

- Personnel.
- Equipment.

Board of Regents of the University System of GA

- Provides use of property and utilities to temporarily host fixed/portable communications equipment.
- Provides use of portions of network for voice/data transport when hosting fixed/portable communications equipment.

Department of Administrative Services

- Establishes pre-disaster contingency contracts for anticipated critical equipment, supplies and services needed to support state disaster response and recovery operations.
- Conducts emergency leasing, rental, purchasing and contracting for critical equipment, supplies and services to support state response and recovery operations.
- Provides state purchasing cards to state personnel to support state disaster response and recovery operations.

Department of Defense

- Provides equipment and personnel and executes several core capabilities in support of state disaster operations including command and control; transportation; communications; aviation; logistics; staging areas; power generation; and security.

Department of Natural Resources

- Provides facilities to serve as temporary sites for fixed/portable communications equipment. Provides personnel, equipment, and vehicles to support such sites.
- Provides access to Land Mobile Radio (LMR) system(s) for disaster response communications.

Department of Public Safety

- Provides COM-L and COM-T subject matter expertise, cache radios, and other communications equipment.
- Provides security, traffic control and transport services for communications equipment and personnel responding to disaster incident locations.
- Provides access to LMR system(s) for disaster response communications.

Department of Transportation

- Aids with coordinating the emergency movement of communications assets and personnel.
- Provides information regarding the condition, accessibility, and suitability of roads and bridges, rail lines and airports necessary to support state disaster communications operations.

Georgia Bureau of Investigations

- Investigative expertise and coordination in support of State emergency operations.
- Provides access to LMR system(s) for disaster response communications.

Georgia Forestry Commission

- Provides COM-L and COM-T subject matter expertise, access to cache radios and other communications equipment.
- Provides access to LMR system(s) for disaster response communications.

Georgia Public Broadcasting

- Provides access to television and radio networks for purposes of non-Emergency Alert System public notices and information to the public via ESF-15 External Affairs.
- Use of property and utilities to temporarily host fixed/portable communications equipment.

Georgia Technology Authority

- Provisioning of voice and data services in accordance with state contract in accordance with the Georgia Infrastructure Transformation parameters.
- Provides frequency coordination for disaster communications and petitions of waivers to the Federal Communications Commission on behalf of state agencies.

Public Service Commission

- Provides information about telecom companies within the state, liaisons with telecom companies regarding service disruptions, waivers and long-term restoration plans and progress

4.0 Direction, Control, and Coordination

4.1 Information, Collection, and Dissemination

ESF-2 Communications will report all activities to the ESF-5 Situation Unit for inclusion in the development of Incident Action Plans and Situational Reports. All public information reports regarding ESF-2 Communications activities will be coordinated with ESF-15 External Affairs.

In addition to the SOC, ESF-2 Communications may provide personnel and/or equipment to field operations established in Georgia, including but not limited to: State ICPs, FOBs, Joint Field Offices, Disaster Recovery Centers, and any other incident

facility established to meet operational demands for each incident requiring the activation of the GEOP.

4.2 Communications and Documentation

The GEMA/HS Planning Section has provided SOG development templates and planning assistance to all ESFs listed in the GEOP. All ESFs will strive to develop operationally ready SOGs for inclusion in the GEOP. ESF-2 Communications, will meet as necessary to develop, review and refine SOGs that discuss specific operational processes and procedures.

4.3 Administration, Finance, and Logistics

In conjunction with ESF-7 Logistics, ESF-2 Communications will develop, review, refine and maintain lists of all resources currently available and under the control of the primary or support agencies listed in this plan. The development of these lists may be completed by several organizations and professional groups, which currently operate within this ESF. These resource lists should be compliant with the resource typing standards outlined in the National Incident Management System.

5.0 Plan Evaluation, Maintenance, and Revision

5.1 Evaluation

GEMA/HS conducts all exercises within the structure provided by the Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program (HSEEP). ESF-2 Communications will participate in exercise activities when applicable and will follow the HSEEP process to include active participation in planning and evaluation meetings, workshops, and conferences.

GEMA/HS systematically coordinates and conducts event debriefings and compiles after action reports for any incident that calls for the activation of all or any portion of the GEOP. ESF-2 Communications shall participate in this process when applicable. After Action Reports will document areas for improvement, resource shortfalls and corrective action planning requirements which will be incorporated into the GEOP, its Annexes or ESF SOGs when applicable.

5.2 Maintenance and Revision

This Emergency Support Function Annex will be reviewed every two years and updated as required. In addition, the document shall be evaluated for recommended revisions and corrective measures as an integral part of the Agency Exercise or Event After Action Reports / Improvement Plans, as well as internal reviews that will follow the issuance of any Governor Executive Order or passage of legislation impacting the Agency.

6.0 Authorities and References

The authority for the Georgia Emergency Operations Plan is based on Official Code of Georgia, Title 38, Section 3, Articles 1 through 3, known as the Georgia Emergency Management Act of 1981, and is compliant with the National Incident Management System and supports the National Response Framework.

O.C.G.A. § 38-3-1, to § 38-3-10, establishes legal authority for development and maintenance of Georgia's Emergency Management Program and organization, and defines the emergency powers, authorities, and responsibilities of the Governor and Director of GEMA/HS. Moreover, the State's Emergency Services and Disaster Laws require that state and local governments develop and maintain current Emergency Operations Plans to be prepared for a variety of natural and human caused hazards. Executive Orders by the Governor supplement the laws and establish specific planning initiatives and requirements.