

NORTH CAROLINA EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN (NCEOP)
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I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this appendix is to outline the Communications Support Plan for state and local response before, during, and after an emergency. This plan describes how state government and State Emergency Response Team (SERT) partners typically react to and address emergency communications. For a more in-depth explanation of ESF-2 activities, please refer to the North Carolina Emergency Management ESF-2 Communications Plan.

B. SCOPE

ESF-2 plans, coordinates, and assists in telecommunications support to state, tribal, county and local disaster response elements. ESF-2 will coordinate telecommunications assets (including both equipment and services) available from state agencies, volunteer groups, county agencies, the telecommunications industry, federal government agencies, and the U.S. Military. ESF-2 will be the focal point of all communications activity at the state level before, during, and after activation of the SEOC.

II. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

A. SITUATION

All communications systems are vulnerable to natural and technological disasters. Individuals and agencies responding to and recovering from disasters will require large amounts of information. This information will be essential for dispatching resources and will continue to be needed when certain communications systems are inoperable. In such cases, all available remaining means of communications will be necessary to assure the quickest possible response.

B. ASSUMPTIONS

1. During a disaster a citizen's ability to access emergency services via commercial voice or data systems could be impaired or non-existent.
2. Initially, local emergency services will focus on lifesaving activities and reestablishing control in the disaster area.
3. Significant portions of the emergency communications systems in the affected area(s) may become overwhelmed or inoperable during an emergency situation or in the aftermath of a disaster.

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4. Weather and other environmental factors may restrict deployment of mobile or transportable communications equipment into the disaster area.
5. The affected area's ability to communicate effectively to provide life safety may be impaired.
6. The affected area's ability to communicate with other parts of the state could be impaired.
7. Careful consideration of sites will be required to establish staging areas for centralized communications in the field.

III. ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

A. LEAD STATE AGENCY

1. NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY (NCDPS)

NORTH CAROLINA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (NCEM)

- a. In coordination with SEOC Operations, coordinate deployment of the resources to provide on-scene coordination of state emergency forces participating in emergency operations or in support of local government response, as required.
- b. Provide location at SEOC radio room for additional communications assistance.
- c. Ensures all requests for assistance are addressed and routed to proper organization.
- d. Provide alternate EOC facilities if needed.
- e. Maintain proper information and intelligence gathering methods pertaining to potential threats to communications infrastructure.

B. SUPPORTING STATE AGENCIES

1. NC DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (NCDIT)

- a. The NC Department of Information Technology provides IT services to state agencies, many local governments and educational institutions. DIT also supports the state's broadband efforts to include contracts with cellular service providers across the state.

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- b. Serve as liaison between North Carolina Emergency Management, local telephone service providers, and communications equipment vendors to provide necessary services to include voice and data circuits.
- c. Provide subject matter expertise and guidance for any matters of suspected or confirmed cybersecurity issues or attacks on communications infrastructure.
- d. Maintain status of North Carolina's Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) and ensure the 911 system is operational and effective (NC911 Board Staff).

2. NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

STATE HIGHWAY PATROL (SHP)

- a. The State Highway Patrol operates, manages and supports the state's primary statewide land mobile radio system known as VIPER. Established mutual aid/incident management talkgroup use is coordinated through the NCEM 24HROC. Additional talkgroups or extraordinary talkgroup usage should be coordinated through the 24HROC, VIPER staff, the VIPER Network Operations Center (NOC) and any Communications Unit personnel.
- b. Identify and assign personnel to maintain contact with and prepare to support communications during periods of activation.
- c. Notify local users of any anticipated or actual degradations in radio coverage.
- d. In coordination with the 24HROC and the ESF-2 Coordinator, provide personnel to manage communications equipment using the Strategic Technology Reserve to include radio trailers, portable towers, cache radios, and personnel.
- e. Provide personnel to assist in managing VIPER talkgroups using established WebEOC resources to help coordinate Response and Recovery activities.
- f. Assist the 24HROC/ESF-2 Coordinator with re-tasking previously assigned State Event talkgroups or Strategic Technology Reserve (STR) resources as needed.

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- g. Report tower site statuses based on “Active (on-air),” “Active (generator power),” “Degraded (site trunking),” or “Degraded (off-air).”
- h. Interface with other North Carolina radio system administrators to ensure status of infrastructure and operability of the system.

CIVIL AIR PATROL (CAP)

- a. Voluntary organizations have a significant capability to provide assistance with emergency public communications during major disasters. CAP aircraft can provide logistics as well as communications support.
- b. Provide airborne or ground based logistical support for communications personnel or equipment.
- c. Provide emergency airborne data and voice relay services to both base and mobile Emergency Operations Centers.
- d. Identify and assign CAP personnel to maintain contact with and prepare to support ESF2 efforts during periods of activation.
- e. As the SERT functional lead for Air Operations, identify the need for Communications SME support and work with the Communications Branch for proper assignment of personnel.
- f. Provide point-to-point high frequency (HF) radio communications assistance.
- g. Provide support for airborne and mobile ground repeaters.

NORTH CAROLINA NATIONAL GUARD (NCNG)

- a. The NCNG’s primary communications support exists within their Civil Support Teams (CST), Mobile Emergency Communications Operations Center (MEOC) resources, DIRECT force packages and Joint Incident Site Communications Capabilities (JISCC).
 - 42nd CST;
 - 145th Airlift Wing (MEOC); and
 - 196th and 295th Signal Support Co. (DIRECT/JISCC).

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- b. Coordinate mission assignments of NCNG communications equipment.
- c. Assist with frequency coordination for military aviation assets and/or programming.
- d. Identify and assign Civil Support Team and Mobile Emergency Operations Center and other communications trained personnel to maintain contact with and prepare to support ESF-2 functions during periods of activation.
- e. Provide personnel and equipment for point to point or mobile communications support on a 24-hour basis, as required.
- f. Provide backup generator support (if available) to include personnel to transport, install, operate, and maintain generators and communications equipment.
- g. Provide trained personnel to augment communications staff.
- h. Provide subject matter expertise, guidance and liaison activities regarding requests for military communications resources outside of those outlined above.

3. NORTH CAROLINA AUXILIARY COMMUNICATIONS (AUXCOMM)

- a. Designate specific single point of contact to receive mission information, other instructions, and guidance from the Communications Branch Manager.
- b. Identify, train, and assign personnel to maintain contact with, and prepare to execute missions in support of ESF-2 during periods of activation.
- c. Establish and maintain an organizational structure and plans that align with the NCEM SEOC EOG and ESF2 Communications Plan.
- d. Provide radio communications support or other assistance as assigned during activations.
- e. Establish a plan, conduct ongoing training, and provide data over radio frequency (Winlink, Winmor, Pactor, etc) communications support as requested during activations.

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- f. Provide and relay situation reports from impacted areas.
- g. Maintain and submit NIMS/ICS compliant documentation in the format(s) as specified by the Communications Branch/ESF-2.
- h. Staff AUXCOMM radio positions at the SEOC, regional coordination center locations, or other locations upon request.
- i. Assist the 24Hr Watch with PACE planning and testing.
- j. Coordinate with local AUXC entities to ensure PACE planning and tactical readiness.
- k. Maintain connections to the SHARES network and pass all requested messages.
- l. Operate the SEOC FEMA National Radio System (FNARS) station as required.
- m. Coordinate with SKYWARN spotter groups to assist National Weather Service (NWS) Offices with damage reports.
- n. Provide and relay situation reports from impacted areas (SPOT reports) to include status' of:
 - Local television broadcast signals;
 - Local radio broadcast signals;
 - Status of landline telephone services;
 - Status of power at the reporting location; and
 - Status of commercial voice and data networks.
- o. Support PSAP operations, as requested, to provide a secondary means to dispatch emergency calls for service.

4. NORTH CAROLINA 911 BOARD (PSAP COORDINATION)

- a. Serves as the ESF-2 Technical Lead for all PSAP service disruptions to include, but not limited to:
 - Physical damage to PSAP structure(s);
 - Significant staffing shortages due to injury or illness;
 - Infrastructure degradation for which a PSAP is not functioning; and

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- Multi-system cyber disruptions, malicious or accidental.
- b. Provide coordination between ESF-2 and the Network Monitoring and Assistance Center (NMAC). This will provide status of the North Carolina Emergency Services IP Network (ESInet).
- c. Provide the status for all 127 PSAPs (primary and secondary) to ensure that citizens are able to access the 911 network.
- d. Facilitate any 911 call alt-routing based on capabilities at the degraded PSAP and the back-up PSAP. Consideration will be taken regarding the geographic impact area and the potentially impacted PSAPs in order to prevent a cascading route of 911 calls with an unknown destination.
- e. Maintain a twice daily welfare status check of all PSAPs to ensure there are no gaps in INTD or TERT resources.
- f. Work with NCEM TERT Coordination (24Hr Watch Manager and TERT Regional Coordinators) to optimize deployable resources.
- g. Deploy 911 Board staff to RCC's as requested.
- h. Coordinate commercial voice/data partners that have direct involvement with the restoration of networks that deliver 911 calls to PSAPs.
- i. Coordinate with NC211 to ensure 911 system optimization.

5. FIRST RESPONDERS EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES PROGRAM (FIRSTTECH)

- a. Provide specific, event based, technology platforms for usage within ESF-2.
- b. Provide direct support to the Communications Branch Manager.
- c. Be the single point of contact for FirstNet (US Department of Commerce) coordination as needed.
- d. Coordinate state agency restoration of voice, data and other infrastructure systems.

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- e. Provide supplemental staffing to NCEM or local response agencies as requested.

6. NORTH CAROLINA LOCAL GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS ASSOCIATION (NCLGISA) IT STRIKE TEAMS

- a. Utilize capable local IT professionals to form subject matter expertise resources to the SERT.
- b. Support IT systems at State EOC and RCC's at the request of NCEM Administration Section and/or ESF-2.
- c. Support NCEM Cyber with consequence management and recovery in response to a local, state or tribal system compromise.
- d. Provide incident/event-based support at the local, state or tribal level.

7. UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA CENTER FOR PUBLIC TELEVISION (UNC-TV)

- a. Provide coordination with NCSHP TSU to ensure access and restoration of shared tower sites and shared resources (for example - VIPER microwave radio network) that become degraded.
- b. Ensure that the SEOC infrastructure is sufficient to provide for the broadcast of the Governor's press conferences. In the event that it is not, work with the NCEM Public Information Officer (PIO) and ESF-2 commercial partners to implement solutions.

IV. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. GENERAL

Operational activities outlined in this plan will be executed in accordance with all North Carolina general statutes and policies of the Department of Public Safety. They will also align with the NCEM ESF-2 Communications Plan. They will also be consistent with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the National Response Framework (NRF).

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B. NOTIFICATION

The NCEM 24-Hour Operations Center (24HROC) will notify the lead and support communications agencies when an emergency or the potential for an emergency exists. These agencies will either be requested to report to the State EOC or to be on standby.

C. RESPONSE ACTIONS

1. INITIAL

- a. Provide a general description of the situation as it pertains to ESF-2 and an analysis of the ESF's operational support requirements.
- b. Based upon the Situation Analysis, prepare a list of objective-based priority actions to support lifesaving and short-term recovery operations. The action list should be revised as the situation changes.
- c. Coordinate with Department of Information Technology (DIT) to determine the priorities of the commercial telecommunications companies for service restoration. Also work with DIT to coordinate the installation of any additional phone lines that may be required.
- d. Coordinate with the 24HROC/VIPER Staff for the equitable distribution of and recall of previously assigned VIPER State Event talk-groups.
- e. Coordinate with VIPER Staff for the deployment of or pre-staging of any of the state's strategic technology reserve (STR) equipment. Work closely with the NCEM 24HROC staff, and the VIPER Staff to accomplish this action.
- f. Support the requirements of the 2-1-1 Center as required.
- g. Establish communications with the Federal Emergency Communications Coordinator (FECC) to coordinate communications assets required beyond state capability.
- h. In coordination with the RCCs, coordinate and develop an ICS-205 Incident Radio Communications Plan for disaster operations. This plan will include SERT and RCC information.

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- i. Monitor WebEOC and be prepared to coordinate any request for Communications support. All Communications Resource Requests will be entered into WebEOC by the requesting agency or county at which time it will be sorted by the State EOC and either tasked to appropriate RCC, tasked to a county for mutual aid, or sent to the Operations Chief (via WebEOC) to be tasked to the ESF-2 Coordinator to fill the request using available resources.
- j. Determine the level of response required by ESF-2 to respond to the event.
- k. Initiate notification of the required personnel and support organizations to achieve the required level of response.
- l. Determine the available resources through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC).
- m. Request mission assignments from ESF-5 (Emergency Management) to accomplish objectives.
- n. Mobilize resources and coordinate communications support for all government, quasi-government and volunteer agencies as requested, using approved mission assignments.
- o. Prepare timely electronic briefings and paper reports as requested on the status of ESF-2 response operations and the status of communications systems. Maintain copies of all reports for preparation of after-action reports and lessons learned.
- p. Keep track of all expenditures concerning operations and submit these to the Administration and Logistics Section after terminating operations.

D. RECOVERY ACTIONS

1. Gather information from impacted area and determine which communications systems are operational, including but not limited to land-line telephone service, cellular telephone networks, and land mobile radio systems (LMR).
2. Assess the communications requirements for any damage assessment teams who will deploy to the impacted area to survey damage. Coordinate the procurement and distribution of the equipment.

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3. Coordinate, if needed, with Federal ESF-2 partners to ensure that state staff has the necessary communications equipment such as telephone lines, and internet connectivity to function at a Joint Field Office (JFO).
4. Assess the need for and obtain telecommunications industry support as needed.
5. Prioritize the deployment of services based on available resources and critical needs.
6. Ensure ESF-2 team members or their agencies maintain appropriate records of costs incurred during the event.
7. In coordination with the RCCs, coordinate and develop an ICS 205 Incident Radio Communications Plan for disaster operations as needed. This plan will include SERT and RCC information.
8. Provide ESF-2 coordination and support as required for Recovery Operations.
9. Coordinate the demobilization of emergency communications equipment and personnel as regular communications are restored.
10. Conduct internal after-action reviews and document lessons learned and recommendations for improvement of Emergency Operations Plans, Procedures and Guidelines.

V. DIRECTION, CONTROL AND COORDINATION

A. LOCAL

Counties are responsible for their own communications needs and systems. Counties will continue using existing communications equipment and service vendors as much as possible during emergencies and disasters. Counties will route those requirements that cannot be met locally to the SERT through the SEOC Communications Center.

B. STATE

State agencies are responsible for their own communications needs and systems. In the event of a disaster, the state will assess damage to its communications systems and make repairs using existing resources as much as possible. If additional resources are needed, the state will call on FEMA for assistance. The state will also attempt to respond to resource requests

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from local governments. If the state does not have adequate resources from which to draw, local government requests will be forwarded to FEMA.

C. FEDERAL

ESF-2 (Communications) personnel described by the National Response Framework monitor disaster situations and determine when there is a need for federal response. FEMA's communications liaison from the National Communications System will contact state personnel to prepare for Joint Field Office (JFO) operations and to determine whether federal resources will be needed for state and local governments.

VI. REFERENCES

- A. NC ESF-2 Communications Plan