

## PLEASANTS COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

### ANNEX B: COMMUNICATIONS

<b>Related Federal ESFs</b>	ESF #2: Communications
<b>Related State Annexes</b>	Annex C: Communications
<b>Purpose</b>	The purpose of this annex is to outline Communications procedures and capabilities to be employed in the event of an emergency or disaster in Pleasants County.
<b>Primary Agencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pleasants County Office of Emergency Services (PCOES)</li> <li>• Pleasants County COMM Center (911)</li> </ul>
<b>Support Agencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Amateur Radio Operators</li> <li>• WV Emergency Management Division (WVEMD)</li> <li>• US Department of Homeland Security (USDHS)</li> </ul>
<b>Authorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WV Code, §7-1-3cc, as amended</li> <li>• WV Code, §15-3, as amended</li> <li>• WV Code, §15-5-21, as amended</li> <li>• WV Executive Order No. 13-07</li> </ul>
<b>References</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>National Response Framework</i>, USDHS, as amended.</li> <li>• <i>National Plan for Telecommunications Support in Non-Wartime Emergencies</i>, Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), as amended.</li> <li>• <i>National Emergency Communications Plan</i>, USDHS, July 2008.</li> <li>• <i>Voice Radio Communications Guide for the Fire Service</i>, US Fire Administration, October 2008.</li> <li>• <i>West Virginia Emergency Operations Plan</i>, WVEMD, as amended.</li> <li>• <i>WV State Interoperability Plan</i>, as amended.</li> </ul>

## **I. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS**

### **A. Situation**

1. The Pleasants County 911 Center (COMM Center) and Emergency Operations Center (EOC) are located at 215 Clay Street in St. Marys (Frontier Communications Building).
2. There is sufficient capability within central Communications to provide the communications necessary for most emergencies. In a severe or long-duration emergency, augmentation may be required.
3. The hazards that are most likely to necessitate large-scale communications efforts are floods, severe winter storms, hazardous material incidents, and industrial accidents.

### **B. Assumptions**

1. Central communications will be used to meet two (2) of the four (4) basic communications requirements for an emergency: the direction and control of units engaged in emergency operations utilizing communications and the interchange of information between units of government. The other two (2) requirements – warning and public information – are addressed elsewhere in this plan.
2. During an emergency, amateur radio operators may be utilized to augment communications capabilities if existing communications systems capabilities are inadequate.

## **II. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS**

### **A. General**

1. All emergency-related communications should be transmitted in plain language, utilizing no codes or uncommon acronyms.
2. COMM Center is a continually staffed facility routinely used for the activation and coordination of emergency response personnel. Information should be disseminated, as necessary, to emergency organization representatives present in the EOC.
3. COMM Center comprises the communications Section of the EOC. The Communications Officer (CO) is responsible for serving as the link between COMM Center and EOC personnel.

- a. The Pleasants County 911 Director is the EOC Communications Officer.
  - b. The Incident Commander (IC) should designate an on-scene communications officer if manpower is available.
4. Representatives may disseminate information to their respective organizations, as they deem necessary, by radio or some other available means. If an organization has no representative in the EOC, dissemination can be by telephone, radio, or runner.
  5. Primary emergency management reporting and tracking with the WV Emergency Management Division (WVEMD) is via WebEOC.
- B. On-Scene Communications
1. The on-scene IC should ensure that communications are maintained on-scene.
  2. The Incident Command Post (ICP) should serve as a communications link between on-scene personnel from the various responding departments.
    - a. On-scene personnel should communicate with each other on-scene through their normal mobile/portable radios.
    - b. On-scene personnel should communicate with central communications by using normal mobile radios on appropriate frequencies and through SIRN system radios. Landline and cellular telephones may be used as backup systems between the scene and 911 Center/EOC.
  3. The Public Information Officer (PIO), if activated, should ensure that communications are sufficient with off-scene agencies such as hospitals and support agencies if the EOC is *not* activated.
    - a. The IC ensures adequate communications with off-site agencies if the Command Staff PIO is not activated.
    - b. The IC may also choose not to delegate this task to the Command Staff PIO. He/she may choose to retain it him/herself.
    - c. If the EOC is activated, the Command Staff PIO should serve as the direct communications link between the ICP and the EOC.
- C. Notification
1. COMM Center should apprise the PCOES Director of emergency situations per EOC notification guidelines.

2. The PCOES Director should make the decision to activate the EOC based on incident conditions. (See Annex A: Direction and Control)
  3. If the EOC is activated, the PCOES Director should notify available personnel directly, to report to the EOC.
  4. COMM Center should notify on-scene units that the EOC is activated.
- D. 911 Center Capabilities (including alternate facility designation)
1. In the event that the primary 911 Center/EOC is not available, a backup communications center should be established at a safe location away from the incident.
  2. Fire service, EMS, and law enforcement personnel are tasked with providing backup communications, as they are available, if central Communications/EOC becomes unable to communicate with on-scene personnel.
  3. The 911 Director and affected agencies are responsible for ensuring that communications shortfalls are quickly identified and overcome during response operations. To rapidly resolve any shortfalls that do arise, the 911 Director should maintain contact with the PCOES Director if procuring backup communications resources.
  4. The following systems and capabilities are present or readily available in central communications.
    - a. Commercial Telephone Service – Used as a backup system for field units and as the primary system for communications between units of government and other fixed sites (including neighboring county EOCs). Frontier Communications provides local service.
    - b. National Warning System (NAWAS) – Dedicated telephone circuit providing state and national information.
    - c. Emergency Alert System (EAS) – A federally-coordinated warning system using commercial and public radio and television stations to broadcast emergency warnings to the general public.
    - d. Weapon/Nlets – An IP-Based telephone system used by law enforcement agencies to transmit data on a statewide and nationwide basis.
    - e. West Virginia State Police – Only monitoring capabilities are present in central communications.
    - f. Pleasants County Emergency Services (High Band) – Used by local Law

Enforcement.

- g. Pleasants County Fire Frequency (High Band) – Radio system used for dispatching county fire departments, Rt 16 and McElroy towers.
- h. There are WV SIRN radios in COMM Center, PCOES Portable, PCEMS Base and mobile, PC SO Base, St. Marys Mobile Fire Units and Base unit, Belmont Mobile Fire Units and Base Unit, SMPD Mobile, and PC Sheriff Mobile.
- i. Ohio MARCS (UHF) – Ohio SIRN System
- j. JEMNET
- k. Other communication frequencies are available in the COMM Center.

#### E. State and Federal Involvement

##### 1. State

- a. Various state agencies provide oversight and support for the WV SIRN.
- b. The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) has access to a variety of communications systems that can receive warning information. If warnings are received, the WVEMD may disseminate that information to potentially affected areas in the state.
- c. The state's mobile operations center and other equipment may be available to provide mobile communications throughout the state.
- d. The WVEMD also coordinates the WebEOC software for use throughout West Virginia. This coordination includes the provision of training and ensuring that the system is periodically upgraded and working properly.

##### 2. Federal

- a. The General Services Administration/Federal Technology Service appoints a Department of Homeland Security/Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection/National Communications System (DHS/IAIP/NCS) Regional Manager in each of the ten (10) federal regions and the National Capital Region. This Regional Manager is a telecommunications specialist who can assume the duties of the Federal Emergency Communications Center (FECC). The FECC is the single federal point of contact in the incident area.
- b. The FECC coordinates the federal telecommunications industry's response in the incident area.

- i. Emergency Support Function (ESF) #2 coordinates federal actions to provide temporary National Security and Emergency Preparedness (NS/EP) telecommunications and restoration of general telecommunications infrastructure.
- ii. The FECC may be located at either the Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC) or in the Joint Field Office (JFO), as dictated by incident needs.
- c. The FECC coordinates with state communications officials to ensure federal communications requirements do not conflict with state needs.
- d. Local officials access the FECC through the WVDHSEM.

### **III. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **A. 911 Director**

1. Manage the Communications Section of the EOC and supervise the communications personnel assigned there.
2. Support any Joint Information Center (JIC) operations on an as-needed basis.
3. Ensure that the communications staff properly operate their assigned equipment.
4. Ensure that communications staff follow established radio protocols and procedures for voice transmissions and message handling.
5. Ensure that communications staff screens and logs information as is appropriate and routes incoming calls (or gives messages) to the appropriate EOC sections.

#### **B. Pleasants County Office of Emergency Services**

1. Coordinate, as necessary, with COMM Center when activating the EOC.
2. Relocate the EOC if necessary.

#### **C. COMM Center (911 Director)**

1. Dispatch responders.
2. Appropriately relay communications messages.
3. Relocate 911 Center if necessary.
4. Serve as Communications Officer

5. Request additional dispatchers to respond to Comm Center.
- D. Local Amateur Radio Operators
1. Follow proper communications protocols (delineated by the county, state, and FCC) if utilized as a backup communications system.
- E. WV Emergency Management Division
1. Supports local requests for communications resources.
  2. Manages MIARRS and the SEOC, when activated.
  3. Identifies state communications (and telecommunications) needs.
  4. Maintains Communications Operating Guidelines (OGs) for the state.
  5. Coordinates, as necessary, with federal personnel.
- F. US Department of Homeland Security
1. Coordinates ESF #2 operations.

#### **IV. DIRECTION AND CONTROL**

- A. The 911 Director should report to the EOC upon its activation. He/she should primarily serve as a liaison between 911 Center and EOC personnel. He/she provides direction and control over all communications activities.
- B. Field forces of supporting agencies/departments should report activities and current status of operations to the EOC through the ICP, 911 Center, and 911 Director.

#### **V. CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT**

- A. See Basic Plan.
- B. The PCOES Director alternates to the position; therefore, a line of succession is not necessary.

#### **VI. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS**

- A. Administration
1. Message logs and other records should be kept in order to maintain an

accurate account of the response, including the support that was provided.

2. Communications records should be provided to the PCOES Director within 10 days of the conclusion of major operations.

## B. Logistics

1. Equipment that is purchased should be NIMS compliant. Also, per homeland security grant requirements, equipment should be compliant with the state interoperable communications system.

### 2. Communications Protection

#### a. Radio

- i. Using standard lightning protective techniques during severe weather can guard against lightning.
- ii. Wind and other hazards can damage antennas, but these can be quickly replaced. With sufficient warning, protective measures can be taken.

#### b. Telephone

- i. Jammed circuits are possible during emergency situations since telephone use increases dramatically. To prevent an overload condition from jamming available telephone circuits, a procedure known as the "Line Load Limit Control" can be imposed by the telephone company. This restricts telephone usage to essential callers.
- ii. Priority of service restoration should be negotiated by the appropriate telephone company and the EOC.

#### c. Cellular Telephone

- i. Cellular towers can be damaged by a variety of hazards, including high winds, significant snowfall, and significant rainfall.
- ii. With sufficient warning, protective measures can be taken.
- iii. The EOC, if using cellular telephones as a backup form of communication, will coordinate the correction of service interruptions with the appropriate company, if it is known.

#### d. Internet (Network)

- i. Network maintenance is necessary due to WebEOC requirements.
- ii. The EOC is served by a secure connection.



iii. In the event the system goes down, the EOC can coordinate with CCI.

3. Security

- a. Because of the role of communications and warning and the vulnerability of communications facilities and equipment during emergency operations, particularly during incidents of national and/or state significance, security is necessary.
- b. If available, local law enforcement can provide security to central Communications/EOC (and alternate facilities).

4. Training

- a. The 911 Director should ensure that 911 dispatchers are properly trained.
- b. All agency participants should be NIMS trained per the NIMS Training Guidelines for WV.

**VII. PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE.**

- A. The OES Director and 911 Director should review and update this annex as necessary.

Appendix 1: ICS Forms

In separate document