

## Emergency Support Function 15 – External Affairs

Primary Agency	Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA)
Support Agencies	Illinois Department of Central Management Services (CMS) Illinois Department of Military Affairs/Illinois National Guard (IDMA/ING)

### I. Introduction

#### A. Purpose

1. The purpose of this Annex is to establish policies for providing accurate, coordinated, timely and accessible information to affected groups to include governmental entities (local, Federal and Legislative), media, and citizens during an incident.

#### B. Scope

1. The Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) will be the lead agency in issuing approval for the release of information even though the primary State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) State Public Information Office (PIO) has been assigned by the Illinois Office of Communication and Information (IOCI), a division of the Illinois Department of Central Management Services (CMS).
2. Approval to release information will be obtained either from the Director of IEMA, the SEOC Manager (during SEOC activations), or their designee(s).
3. The coordination and release of information to the public and the media will utilize the Joint Information System.
4. This Annex includes the components of:
  - a. Public Information
  - b. Legislative Affairs
  - c. Intergovernmental Affairs (Federal and local coordination)
  - d. Community Relations
  - e. Communications Strategies.

- C. External Affairs Components
1. The public information component includes the processes, procedures and systems for communicating timely, accurate and accessible information on an incident with respect to the cause, size and current situation. It also includes communicating matters of general interest to the public, responders and additional stakeholders.
    - a. Various forms of communication will be utilized to reach those populations whose members may have additional needs in functional areas. This may include but is not limited to individuals in need of: maintaining independence, communication, transportation, supervision and medical care. Individuals in need of additional response assistance may include those who have disabilities; who live in institutionalized settings; who are elderly; who are children, who are from diverse cultures; who have limited English proficiency or are non-English speaking; or who are transportation disadvantaged<sup>1</sup>.
    - b. Emergency instructions during an incident will be provided to the Unified Area Command (UAC) staff, which includes responders assigned to the UAC, through the use of safety messages and Incident Action Plans (IAPs). Emergency instructions which may impact a broader audience, to include mission-critical workers from other State agencies, will be disseminated through the established channels within IOCI or through the SEOC liaisons.
  2. The legislative affairs component addresses incident-related questions, concerns and problems of constituents relayed by the Congressional and Legislative districts of the United States Congress and/or the Illinois General Assembly members or their respective staff.
  3. The intergovernmental affairs component is the direct communications interaction and outreach between elected officials at the Federal, State, county and local levels.
  4. The community relations component involves IEMA to provide coordination and support to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in order to provide vital information to those affected by the disaster through interaction with local officials, community groups, or one-on-one with disaster survivors.

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<sup>1</sup> National Response Framework

5. The communications strategies include the methods in which the information will be conveyed to the public and additional stakeholders. The delivery mechanisms and content messaging will be coordinated as appropriate in order to reach various population sectors, including those with functional needs.
  - a. Media advisories
  - b. Press releases
  - c. Prepared material (flyers, fact sheets, brochures, etc.)
  - d. Public Service Announcements
  - e. Briefing packages for media briefings
  - f. Translated material
  - g. Social media (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, etc)
  - h. Emergency Management Websites (i.e., [www.Ready.Illinois.gov](http://www.Ready.Illinois.gov))

## **II. Assumptions**

- A. The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) State Public Information Officer (PIO) will be provided by the Illinois Office of Communication and Information (IOCI). IOCI, a division of the Illinois Department of Central Management Services (CMS), has the centralized responsibility for media relations on the part of State departments and agencies. The State PIO will generally be the communications manager assigned to IEMA, but may be another representative from IOCI.
- B. PIOs assigned to other State agencies and/or the SEOC Liaisons are expected to provide pertinent information regarding their response activities to the State PIO. If necessary, other State agency PIOs may be assigned to support the State PIO. These PIOs will be provided training on emergency management and SEOC operations.
- C. Disasters generate intense interest from the public and the media. Accurate reporting can assist the response effort as well as help to control rumors before they cause panic and disturbances in the affected area.
- D. The severity of the disaster and the area impacted may necessitate the use of multiple Unified Area Commands. As a result, a Joint Information Center (JIC) may be established in order to provide a central location for the coordination of external affairs activities. This may result in the utilization of additional PIOs and support staff to serve the multiple response coordination locations (SEOC, UAC, and JIC).
- E. Legislative liaisons from other agencies are expected to inform the IEMA Legislative Liaison of pertinent information relative to legislative inquiries

that are being handled by their respective agencies regarding response and recovery operations.

- F. Business operations may be disrupted as a result of an incident. Business recovery is a central and critical component in a community's recovery. Dissemination of external affairs information through the SEOC agency liaison associated with the private sector and non-governmental organizations may assist in mitigating the impact of the incident on the private sector and non-governmental organizations recovery process.

### **III. Concept of Operations**

#### **A. General**

1. The State PIO duties and responsibilities will be performed in accordance with the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act (20 ILCS 3305/), the Illinois Disaster Management System (IDMS), the Incident Command System (ICS), the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and IEMA SOP 95-014, Public Release of Information, and numerous other SOPs maintained by the IEMA Communications Center wherein the PIO is contacted based on the incident..
2. The State PIO position will be filled in all SEOC activations in order to implement a definitive "one voice" approach to public information and to ensure that State government disseminates a clear and consistent message to all population sectors.
3. Timely and effective communications will be disseminated through a variety of communication mediums, including television, radio and newspapers. In addition, internet-based sites such as the Ready Illinois website, Facebook, Twitter and other social media sites will be utilized.
4. The content of emergency messages during an incident may include specific information regarding transportation, evacuation and sheltering locations, incident facts, health risk concerns, pre- and post-incident protective action recommendations and where to access information in a format or language that a diverse population, including those with functional needs, can access.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Interim Emergency Management Planning Guide for Special Needs Populations (Version 1.0; August 15, 2008 – CPG 301 – Federal Emergency Management Agency)

B. Organization

1. The State PIO will notify the IOCI Deputy Director or his/her designee and one or more representatives of the Governor's Press Office upon activation of the SEOC. If additional PIOs are needed to staff the SEOC, JIC, UAC or other locations, the State PIO will make that request through the IOCI Deputy Director or his/her designee.
2. The State PIO will be part of the Command Staff responsible for communicating with the public, media, incident personnel and/or coordinating with other agencies that may be involved in the incident.
3. Release of external affairs information generated through the SEOC in response to an incident will be authorized by the IEMA Director, SEOC Manager (during SEOC activations), or their designee(s).
4. The IEMA legislative liaison will coordinate communications with members of the United States Congress, the Illinois General Assembly and their staffs in order to provide them with information on disaster response and to include the members and staffs as the response transitions into recovery. Through this interaction expectations can be managed as they pertain to response and recovery operations. IEMA will also coordinate its legislative affairs activities with the Governor's Office.

C. Notification

1. Notification for activation of External Affairs functions in the SEOC will be conducted in accordance with the Communications Annex (ESF 2) of the Illinois Emergency Operations Plan (IEOP).
2. IEMA SOP 10-003, Illinois Media Worthy Events Notification, will be used by the IEMA Emergency Response Telecommunicators (ERTs) when information is received through open source media for transmission to the IEMA Duty Officer and Senior Staff for situational awareness.
3. The IEMA Communications Center will notify the State PIO of incidents as dictated within numerous SOPs maintained for response operations.

D. Federal Coordination

1. Under a Presidential Declaration of a major disaster or emergency, the External Affairs functions may be coordinated with Federal counterparts in a Joint Information Center (JIC) and/or Joint Field Office (JFO) environment.
2. Inquiries received by the State External Affairs staff from the Federal level may be coordinated with the FEMA External Affairs staff.

**IV. Responsibilities**

A. Primary Agency – Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA)

1. coordinate the development of public information in accessible formats, this may include the use of pre-scripted news releases,
2. coordinate the posting of external affairs information on various websites in conjunction with the IOCI,
3. utilize the Joint Information System (JIS) to organize, integrate and coordinate information to ensure timely, accurate, accessible, and consistent messaging across multiple jurisdictions at the time of an incident,
4. coordinate the establishment of a Joint Information Center (JIC) as needed. The JIC may be within the SEOC, at a location or locations near the incident, or both. This includes:
  - a. coordination of staffing schedules and amount of staff needed,
  - b. acquisition of required equipment, and
  - c. management of on-scene media at all locations.
5. maintain up-to-date contact lists of all media serving Illinois citizens, other State agency PIOs, Governor's Press Office contacts, local emergency management agency PIOs, PIOs from adjacent states, PIOs for pertinent federal agencies (i.e., FEMA, U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), etc.),
6. develop and disseminate emergency instructions during an incident in accessible formats to response staff (local, State and Federal), public, media, private sector and non-governmental organizations, and volunteer groups, to include, but not limited to, evacuations,

location of commodity distribution points, and locations of shelters. Methods of dissemination (newspapers, radio, TV, flyers, etc.) will be dictated by the delivery methods available within the area of operation during the response phase,

7. coordinate the media monitoring in order to ensure that accurate and timely information is being disseminated,
8. develop and disseminate public information in accessible formats during the recovery process to reassure the public, private sector and non-governmental organizations about the recovery efforts. Methods of dissemination (newspapers, radio, TV, flyers, etc.) will be dictated by the delivery methods available within the area of operation during the recovery phase,
9. provide video and satellite services, including live and taped video coverage of on-going events related to the incident,
10. provide for the integration of Federal external affairs support during an event through the use of the National Incident Communications Conference Line (NICCL), the State Incident Communications Coordination Line (SICCL), and/or the Private Sector Incident Communications Coordination Line (PICCL),
11. coordinate site visits within the area of operations for government officials and other dignitaries,
12. develop and disseminate information to State and Federal legislators and their staff,
13. provide timely and accurate information to requests from constituents relayed by the Congressional and Legislative offices and/or districts of the United States Congress and/or the Illinois General Assembly members and their respective staff,
14. maintain up-to-date contact list for State and Federal legislative offices.

B. Support Agencies

1. Illinois Department of Central Management Services
  - a. The Illinois Office of Communication and Information (IOCI) may provide additional public information officers as required based on the magnitude of the event for possible

deployment to the SEOC, JIC, unified area command (UAC) or other location as deemed necessary,

- b. coordinate the posting of news releases relating to the safety and security of the public to the “Safety and Security News” section of the “Illinois Government News Network” during an event,
  - c. provide video and satellite services, including live and taped video coverage of on-going events related to the incident that can be provided to television stations throughout the State, nation and world,
  - d. provide radio services for development of public service announcements (PSAs),
  - e. assist in the distribution of news releases through the Editorial Services unit of Illinois Information Services to news media
2. Illinois Department of Military Affairs/Illinois National Guard (IDMA/ING)
- a. The Illinois National Guard (ING) may provide public affairs officers as required based on the magnitude of the event for possible deployment to the SEOC, JIC, UAC or other locations as deemed necessary. The number of public affairs personnel available is dependent upon current military deployment of these resources,
  - b. provide video and satellite services, including live and taped coverage of on-going events related to the incident that can be provided to television stations throughout the state, nation and world,
  - c. assist with the distribution of news releases and other public information materials,
  - d. provide two Humvees, as needed, to assist with public information efforts, including media escort within the area of operations.

## **V. Authorities**

Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act (30 ILCS 3305/)

## **VI. References**

Illinois Disaster Management System, Attachment 1, Illinois Emergency Operations Plan (IEOP), as amended.

National Response Framework (NRF), as amended

National Incident Management System (NIMS), as amended

Interim Emergency Management Planning Guide for Special Needs Populations (Version 1.0; August 15, 2008; CPG 301 – Federal Emergency Management Agency)

Illinois Emergency Management Agency website: [www.state.il.us/iema](http://www.state.il.us/iema)

Ready Illinois website: [www.ready.illinois.gov](http://www.ready.illinois.gov)

IEMA SOP 95-014, Public Release of Information, as amended

IEMA SOP 10-003, Illinois Media Worthy Events Notifications, as amended

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