

## **Emergency Support Function 2 - Communications**

Primary Agency Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA)

Support Agencies Illinois Department of Central Management Services (CMS)  
Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC)  
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA)  
Illinois Department of Military Affairs (IDMA)  
Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)  
Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH)  
Illinois Secretary of State (SOS)  
Illinois State Police (ISP)  
Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM)  
Illinois Department of Transportation - Division of Highways  
(IDOT-H)  
Illinois Department of Transportation - Division of Aeronautics  
(IDOT-A)  
American Red Cross (ARC)

### **I. Introduction**

#### **A. Purpose**

1. The purpose of this Annex is to provide operational guidance for communications support to the State agencies and other organizations involved in disaster response.

#### **B. Scope**

1. The scope of this Annex is to provide and coordinate the use of a comprehensive telecommunications system by State agencies and other organizations involved in disaster response.
2. This Annex will comply with the communications systems interoperability requirements of NIMS.

### **II. Assumptions**

#### **A. Public Telephone Networks:**

1. rapidly become overloaded, thus denying services to users;

2. electrical outages may occur and switching centers may be inoperable;
  3. restoration of public telecommunications services is addressed in the Public Works and Engineering Annex of the IEOP.
- B. A significant portion of telecommunication resources will be obtained by responding State agencies from their existing sources.
- C. During the immediate response period, responding agencies may need to be self-sufficient until some telecommunications services are restored.
- D. Upon implementation of the IEOP, communications response activity shall be conducted in accordance with the Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP), the CMS telecommunications procedures and policies, and those outlined in this Annex.

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

- A. General
1. Telecommunications support for a disaster will be provided by resources of IEMA and other State agencies and organizations.
  2. As the primary agency, IEMA will coordinate the telecommunications assets of State agencies and other organizations during disaster operations. This coordination can include the following:
    - a. designating specific control frequencies, talk groups, and/or communications systems for use by agencies and organizations during disaster operations,
    - b. restricting access to specific control frequencies during disaster operations,
    - c. designating procedures for the transferring of information during disaster operations using the State telecommunications system.

## B. Notification

1. When disaster conditions threaten parts of the State, the IEMA Communications Center notifies the local Emergency Services and Disaster Agencies (ESDA) in those areas, as well as the IEMA Director, Bureau Chiefs and Duty Officer. Contact is made with supporting State, Federal and outside agencies for further information and recommendations. Any additional information is disseminated as it is received from the SIRC. If warranted and possible, personnel and equipment may be dispatched in advance of the actual occurrence.
2. Based on a thorough evaluation of the disaster threat, and directed by SOPs, the IEMA Communications Center notifies other departments, agencies, and other organization operational liaisons to report to the SIRC based on the nature and severity of the disaster. The IEMA Director, SIRC Manager, or Duty Officer may initiate the contacting of operational liaisons.

## C. Operational Structure

1. CMS will serve as the initial point-of-contact for IEMA requests for telecommunications assistance.
2. When a disaster occurs and the IEOP is implemented, CMS may assign a Telecommunications Coordinator to the CMS liaison in the SIRC. The Telecommunications Coordinator will report to the SIRC liaison and assist in obtaining additional telecommunications resources for State agencies and other organizations involved with disaster response. If requested by IEMA, the Telecommunications Coordinator will report to the SIRC following initial notification.
3. Additional telecommunications staff may be present at the SIRC, and may consist of CMS, ICC, telecommunications industry representatives, and other organizations deemed necessary. The IEMA Communications Officer deploys with the UAC and where needed in the State to provide emergency communications.

D. Federal Coordination

1. Under a Presidential Declaration of a major disaster or emergency, State agencies may directly coordinate with their Federal counterparts when Federal assets are required. When Federal assets are to be utilized, IEMA will coordinate their inclusion into the State telecommunications system.

## IV. Responsibilities

A. Primary Agency - Illinois Emergency Management Agency

1. coordinates the Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP),
2. maintains a 24-hour communications center for communicating with emergency response personnel from all agencies and organizations,
3. provides, through IEMA field staff, information from the area affected by the disaster to the SIRC; other departments, agencies and organizations; and the Governor; utilizing STARCOM21, EMnet (Emergency Management Network) and its statewide low band radio system. The IEMA participates in the statewide trunked radio system known as STARCOM 21 and also maintains 16 radio antenna sites statewide as part of the IEMA low band system, The IEMA also subscribes to the EMnet network,
4. implements the Operation Secure Plan which specifies the system design and operation for a coordinated statewide network of High Frequency-single side band (HF-SSB) radios to be utilized within the State for:
  - a. communications during disasters when safety of life and property are concerned,
  - b. stand-by and/or back-up communications for those disrupted due to disasters,

- c. short and long-range communications anywhere in the State without the need for phone lines or towers.
5. maintains a statewide radio system for internal use. Mobile and portable IEMA units can communicate on the STARCOM21 system as well as IEMA low band and IREACH frequency,
6. maintains alternative communication methods, (STARCOM21, EMnet, low-band radio, high band, UHF, cellular phones and satellite phones),
7. maintains the ability to communicate with the following State and federal agencies on the STARCOM21 system: Illinois National Guard, IDOT-Emergency Helicopter Services, IDOT-Operations staff, American Red Cross, Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Scott Air Force Base, 1st Army Defense Coordinating Element, Office of the State Fire Marshal, and the Illinois State Police,
8. maintains 2-VHF portable repeater systems , 60-VHF portable radios, 5-800 MHZ repeaters and a cash of 800 MHZ portables, as well as 2-UHF, 2-VHF, 2-low band, and 2-low band control stations interconnected through a gateway. These are available for use by other state agencies and local governmental entities as needed,
9. dispatches state communications assets, the Illinois Transportable Emergency Communication Systems (ITECS) and Mobile Command Vehicles (MVC).

B. Support Agencies

1. Illinois Department of Central Management Services
  - a. assigns a telecommunications coordinator to CMS liaison in the SIRC if necessary to assist in obtaining additional communications resources for State agencies and other organizations,
  - b. provides additional telecommunications support to the SEOC, as required,

- c. serves as the initial point-of-contact for IEMA requests for telecommunications equipment including telephones, cellular, and paging services,
- d. assists with establishment of free phone banks for disaster victims use in assisting family reunification,
- e. obtains telecommunications equipment for disaster relief facilities to facilitate the provisions of mass care services,
- f. coordinates the purchase of or contracting for telecommunications equipment,
- g. procures equipment not available through State sources from commercial vendors or suppliers,
- h. establishes a toll-free telephone number and the lines for all citizens and agencies desiring to donate money, services, or other in-kind donations,
- i. supports Illinois Commerce Commission lead activities with technical assistance for telecommunication services to the impacted area,
- j. provide aid in setting up text typewriter (TTY) telephones for hearing impaired,
- k. administers contract with Motorola for STARCOM21 radio system.

2. Illinois Department of Corrections

- a. maintains a low band, high band (mobile only) and UHF radio systems,
- b. can use mobile radios with Illinois Radio Emergency Aid Channel (IREACH) frequency to communicate with response units in the field,

- c. maintains the capability to communicate with IEMA and ISP units,
  - d. conducts daily operations and maintains interoperability through the STARCOM21 system.
3. Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
- a. maintains ability to communicate with IEMA via STARCOM21 and cellular phones,
  - b. possesses some mobiles on IEMA low band and high band channels,
  - c. maintains interoperability through the STARCOM21 system.
4. Illinois Department of Military Affairs
- a. maintains limited communications equipment to communicate with other State agencies and organizations,
  - b. has some portable radios available for disaster operations,
  - c. maintains limited statewide HF-SSB system with ability to communicate with IEMA,
  - d. provides emergency communications equipment and personnel,
  - e. provides limited emergency power and generation.
5. Illinois Department of Natural Resources
- a. maintains a statewide high band radio repeater system,
  - b. can use IREACH frequency and STARCOM21 to communicate with response units in the field,

- c. maintains the capability to communicate with ISP and IEMA through IDNR Law Enforcement Division,
  - d. provides emergency generators,
  - e. maintains interoperability through the STARCOM21 system.
6. Illinois Department of Public Health
- a. maintains the Health Alert Network (HAN)
    - 1. allows limited voice (telephone) and electronic communications with local health departments, hospitals, and other regulated facilities,
    - 2. maintains 24 internal concurrent lines that can process over 500 two minute calls (fax, phone, page) per hour,
    - 3. maintains 200 external lines which allows 5,500 calls per hour,
    - 4. provides coordination for all notifications and requests for aid through the Illinois Public Health Mutual Aid System,
    - 5. housed in the Public Health Emergency Operations Center (PH-EOC).
  - b. establishes communications with the local health departments, medical facilities, and regulated entities,
  - c. maintains communications between the SIRC and the PH-EOC through the use of STARCOM21,
  - d. maintains the ability to communicate directly, using STARCOM21, with other response partners, i.e., local health departments, hospitals, IMERT, RMERT, IDOT, ISP, and IDOC,

- e. coordinates and governs communication through the Medical Emergency Radio Communications of Illinois (MERCII) and STARCOM21 for the following groups:
    - 1. hospital to hospital
    - 2. hospital to emergency medical services
    - 3. hospital to IMERT
    - 4. hospital to RMERT
  - f. maintains interoperability through the STARCOM21 system.
7. Illinois Secretary of State
- a. maintains high and low-band radio systems for Cook/Lake, Sangamon, and St. Clair Counties. The Illinois State Police controls these systems remotely in Districts Chicago, #9 and #11 respectively,
  - b. utilizes STARCOM21 system and high-band frequencies, including Illinois State Police Emergency Radio Network (ISPERN) and IREACH,
  - c. provides personnel and equipment to assist with traffic and access control,
  - d. provides security and other duties as required and requested by ISP,
  - e. maintains capability to communicate with ISP, IDNR, and IEMA, and county and local municipalities,
  - f. maintains interoperability through the STARCOM21 system.
8. Illinois State Police
- a. uses an extensive statewide trunked radio system known as STARCOM21 as well as maintains a statewide high band radio system. ISP can communicate on IREACH via mobile radios in all districts. However, only those

districts with licenses for the communications center can transmit on this frequency,

- b. implements ISP Emergency Response Plan,
  - c. implements ISP District Contingency Plan,
  - d. maintains portable radios programmed to transmit and receive on statewide VHF and UHF channels. These radios are available for use by other State agencies,
  - e. maintains communication centers strategically located throughout the State,
  - f. maintains field technicians who are assigned vans equipped with high/low band radios and equipment to set up and repair communications throughout the State,
  - g. maintains 100 watt base stations (high band),
  - h. maintains 35KW generator,
  - i. maintains pagers (including alpha-numeric),
  - j. maintains State-wide cellular phones,
  - k. provides telecommunicators statewide,
  - l. maintains interoperability through the STARCOM21 system.
9. Office of the State Fire Marshal
- a. maintains communications with IEMA base and mobile units on STARCOM21 State Interoperable Template, IREACH frequencies or any designated inoperability channel,
  - b. has vehicles, which have STARCOM21 and high band radio capabilities,

- c. field staff can communicate with cellular phones and pagers,
  - d. provides a liaison between local fire departments and IEMA,
  - e. maintains a communications van:
    - 1. 3 telecommunicator positions
    - 2. low/high band communications
    - 3. cellular telephones
    - 4. fax
    - 5. IWIN docking station
    - 6. 12-16 channel portable VHF radios
    - 7. laptop computer for reprogramming portable radio frequencies, CAMEO, etc.
  - f. maintains interoperability through the STARCOM21 system.
10. Illinois Department of Transportation - Division of Highways
- a. maintains a statewide low band radio system and currently installing STARCOM21 mobiles ,
  - b. maintains communication centers operating on low band system in each of the nine districts outside of the Chicago area,
  - c. maintains a high band radio system in the Chicago area,
  - d. maintains a command center located in Carbondale equipped with radio to communicate with IEMA and ISP,
  - e. other maintenance facilities located in southern Illinois are also equipped to communicate with IEMA,
  - f. maintains IEMA low band channel in vehicles of key personnel in each district statewide,

- g. maintains interoperability through the STARCOM21 system.

11. Illinois Department of Transportation - Division of Aeronautics

- a. maintains a limited capability to communicate with other state agencies and organizations in all bands but high frequency,
- b. this limitation is based on the equipment configuration of each specific aircraft and is not standardized throughout the fleet,
- c. maintains the capability of supporting Disaster Intelligence (DI) activities including airframes and pilots and report capabilities to the IEMA DI staff,
- d. provides contact to pre-qualified contractors,
- e. maintains a mobile command center located in Ottawa equipped with high band, low band, StarCom and Ham Radio communications to communicate with IEMA and other authorized jurisdictions,
- f. maintains IEMA low band channel in vehicles of key personnel in each district statewide .

12. American Red Cross

- a. communicates with IEMA from their mobile units on all four IEMA low band frequencies and IREACH ,
- b. utilizes amateur radio volunteers for long distance communications using high frequency communications equipment,
- c. provides communications between ARC and staff for mass care facilities,

- d. maintains satellite phones and computer equipment to support mass care operations,
- e. maintains a Logistics Immediate Response Vehicle (LIRV) in Springfield fully equipped with phones, facsimiles, and other equipment to coordinate mass care activities.

## **V. State Telecommunications Resources**

### **A. Common Radio Frequencies**

- 1. Illinois Radio Emergency Assistance Channel (IREACH)
  - a. a governmental interagency mutual aid channel,
  - b. can be used by any public safety entity once it obtains a license from the IREACH Governing Board.
- 2. Illinois State Police Emergency Radio Network (ISPERN)
  - a. interagency communications capability for municipal, county, State and Federal law enforcement agencies.
- 3. Medical Emergency Radio Communications of Illinois (MERC)
  - a. in Northern Illinois,
  - b. a separate frequency is used in East St. Louis to prevent confusion with neighboring states,
  - c. a network of frequencies established to allow traffic for mobile-to-mobile, mobile to hospital, and hospital-to-hospital channels,
  - d. by the Illinois Department of Public Health.

4. STARCOM 21 radios
  - a. provide emergency notification and coordinate emergency response assets while enroute to a large-scale emergency throughout the state ,
  - b. have been distributed to local police, fire, public health, and emergency management agencies.
  
5. High Frequency-Single Side Band (HF-SSB) radios
  - a. provides for a coordinated statewide network,
  - b. allows communications among IEMA staff with other State and Federal agencies, including the ISP districts, IDOT headquarters, Illinois National Guard, Federal Emergency Management Agency, American Red Cross, Scott Air Force Base, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, trauma centers, and amateur radio operators ,
  - c. located at the SIRC, UAC, and the IDOT EOC at the Carbondale Yard,
  - d. transportable suitcase units will be able to be deployed as needed.

B. Other Telecommunications Systems

1. Nine Illinois Transportable Emergency Communications Systems (ITECS)
  - a. have been strategically assigned to locations across the State,
  - b. ITECS supports incident communications operations as part of the Logistics Branch,
  - c. Each of the 9 vehicles has been assigned to local units of Government,
  - d. remain deployable assets of the IEMA.

2. EMnet
  - a. a statewide warning and alerting system,
  - b. a satellite-based data system capable of receiving simultaneous, authenticated text messages from the SIRC,
  - c. distributed to 101 counties, 9-1-1 centers, State agencies, and key transportation agencies throughout the State .
3. Information Systems Technology
  - a. Computer technology :
    1. With laptop computers,
    2. modems,
    3. and cellular telephones,
    4. relay information directly from the disaster site.
  - b. IEMA coordination:
    1. collect,
    2. record,
    3. analyze and
    4. transmit data.

## **VI. Authorities**

- A. *Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act* (20 ILCS 3305/6[5], 14 and 19)
- B. Emergency Telephone Communications (720 ILCS 660/0.01 et seq)

- C. Police Radio Stations (20 ILCS 2605/55a)
- D. IAC Title 77: Public Health, Section 515.400, General Communications

## **VII. References**

- A. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Regulations
- B. Emergency Response Plan – ISP
- C. Districts Contingency Plans - ISP
- D. Duty Officer Standard Operating Procedures – IEMA
- E. Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan, Ver. 1.0, Dec. 3, 2007

## **VIII. Appendices and Attachments**

- A. Appendix 1 – Notification

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