

ANNEX B

COMMUNICATIONS

Jurisdiction

Template Color Legend (Text Only)

*Red – New NIMS related material
for inclusion in plan*

*Blue – New material for review
to consider including in plan*

APPROVAL & IMPLEMENTATION

Annex B

Communications

Signature

Date

Signature

Date

NOTE: The signature(s) will be based upon local administrative practices. Typically, the individual having primary responsibility for this emergency function signs the annex in the first block and the second signature block is used by the Emergency Management Coordinator, Mayor, or County Judge. Alternatively, each department head assigned tasks within the annex may sign the annex.

ANNEX B
COMMUNICATIONS

I. AUTHORITY

See Basic Plan, Section I.

II. PURPOSE

This annex provides information about our communications equipment and capabilities available during MCI Operations. Our entire communications system is discussed and procedures for its use are outlined.

III. EXPLANATION OF TERMS

A. Acronyms

CATV	Cable TV
EAS	Emergency Alert System
EMP	Electromagnetic Pulse
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
IC	Incident Commander
JIC	Joint Information Center
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
RACES	Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service
STARS	Statewide Telecommunications and radio System
TRCIP	Texas Radio Communications Interoperability Plan

B. Definitions

Definition	Answer
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IV. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situation

1. As noted in the general situation statement in the basic plan, it is virtually impossible to predict and prevent Mass Casualty Incidents. Maintaining systems and preparing for the event is the best method to remain prepared. A reliable and interoperable communications system is essential to obtain the most complete information on emergency situations and to direct and control our resources responding to those situations.

2. Each participating municipality maintains a Dispatch/Communications Center. Its location is listed in this plan. It is staffed on a 24-hour basis by emergency dispatchers. Equipment is available to provide communications necessary for emergency operations.

B. Assumptions

1. Adequate communications are available for effective and efficient warning, response and recovery operations.
2. Any number of natural or manmade hazards may neutralize or severely reduce the effectiveness of communications currently in place for emergency operations.
3. Additional communications equipment required for emergency operations will be made available from citizens, business, volunteer organizations, and/or other governmental agencies.

V. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. General

1. A common operating picture within our jurisdiction and across other jurisdictions provides the framework of our communications capabilities. This framework is made possible by interoperable systems. Extensive communications networks and facilities are in existence throughout [County/City] to provide coordinated capabilities for the most effective and efficient response and recovery activities. A diagram of the communications network is in Appendix 1.
2. Our existing communications network consisting of telephone (Landline, Cellular, Satellite), computer (Via Internet thru T1, Cellular, Broadband, Satellite), and radio (LMR system) and will serve to perform the initial and basic communications effort for emergency operations. Landline circuits, when available, will serve as the primary means of communication with other communication systems as back up.
3. During emergency operations, all departments will maintain their existing equipment and procedures for communicating with their field operations units. They will keep the EOC informed of their operations and status at all times.
4. To meet the increased communications needs created by an emergency, various state and regional agencies will be asked to supplement communications capabilities. These resource capabilities will be requested through local and regional mutual-aid agreements.
5. Inter-operability is achieved thru the maintenance of common regional radio channels. These channels are listed in this Annex. Further inter-operability can be achieved thru the radio patching capabilities maintained at local EOCs, the RHCC, and the Montgomery County Radio Cache. These capabilities are detailed later in the Annex.
6. Plain English will be used at all times for communications throughout the region. During MCI events units will identify themselves using the Agency's name as a prefix, followed by their unit's number. (i.e. Roanoke County Medic 71)

7. When an order has been received, briefly restate the order received to allow confirmation that the receiver actually received and understood the order, and is proceeding with correct action.
8. The Transport Group Supervisor/ Unit Leader will establish and maintain communications with the Coordinating Emergency Department or RHCC.
9. The responding EMS agency will contact the closest Emergency Department and RHCC as indicated, immediately after a multiple or mass casualty incident has been identified. The responding EMS agency must advise that hospital and RHCC of the incident, incident location, approximate number of patients, possible types of injuries involved, and the presence or absence of chemical, biological or radiological contamination.
- 10.

B. Activities by Phases of Emergency Management

1. Prevention

- a. Maintain a current technology based, reliable, interoperable, and sustainable communications system.
- b. Ensure warning communications systems meet regional needs.
- c. Ensure intelligence and other vital information networks are operational.
- d. Ensure integrated communications procedures are in place to meet the needs and requirements of the region

2. Preparedness

- a. Review and update this communications annex.
- b. Develop communications procedures that are documented and implemented through communications operating instructions (include connectivity with private-sector and nongovernmental organizations).
- c. Thoroughly and continually review the system for improvement including the implementation and institutionalized use of information management technologies.
- d. Ensure communications requirements for Emergency Operations Center and potential Joint Information Center (JIC) are regularly reviewed.
- e. Review After Action Reports of actual occurrences and exercises and other sources of information for lessons learned.

- f. Acquire, test, and maintain communications equipment.
- g. Train personnel on appropriate equipment and communication procedures as necessary.
- h. Conduct periodic communications drills and make communications a major element during all exercises.
- i. Review emergency notification list of key officials and department heads.

3. Response

- a. Select communications personnel required for emergency operations according to the incident.
- b. Incident communications will follow ICS standards and will be managed by the IC using a common communications plan and an incident-based communications center.
- c. All incident management entities will make use of common language during emergency communications. This will reduce confusion when multiple agencies or entities are involved in an incident.
- d. Initiate warning procedures as outlined in Annex A, Warning, if required.
- e. The region has a mix of VHF to UHF to 800MHz primary radio systems. Mutual Aid channels exist in each VHF, UHF, and 800MHz spectrum and are identified in this annex. However, in a large-scale incident, resources may be called from outside their normal response area. Statewide frequencies are designed to provide a standard communications mechanism throughout Virginia.
 - 1. Use of the following VHF frequencies may be employed in a region-wide event:
 - 1.1 155.205 MHz- Statewide Mutual Aid: Used for communications between incoming units and staging officer.
 - 1.2 155.340 MHz - HEAR Radio: Used for communications between ambulances and hospitals.(Note: Some hospitals do not have a HEAR radio in the Emergency Department. Ambulances should use their normal methods for conducting ambulance to hospital communications unless otherwise directed by the Incident Communications Plan.)
 - 2. Use of the following UHF frequencies may be employed in a region-wide event:
 - 2.1 4xx.xxx MHz or Med 9 - Describe
 - 2.2 4xx.xxx MHz or Med 10 – Describe

4. Recovery

All activities in the emergency phase will continue until such time as emergency communications are no longer required.

VI. ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

A. General

1. Our emergency communications system is operated by the [Sheriff's Office/Police Department] and includes a variety of government-owned and operated equipment as well as equipment owned and operated by certain volunteer groups. The departments, agencies, and groups that are part of our communications system are listed in Section VII.C.
2. The [Sheriff/Police Chief] will ensure that warning information received at our warning point, the Dispatch/Communications Center, is disseminated to [county/city] officials and, where appropriate, to the public. The responsibility of ensuring the communications system is operational and incorporates all available resources rests with the [Sheriff/Police Chief], who may appoint a Communications Coordinator to carry out this task.

B. Task Assignments

1. The Incident Commander will:

- a. Be responsible for all activities enumerated in this annex in Section V.B, Activities by Phases of Emergency Management.
- b. Supervise the activities of the Transport group Supervisor/Unit Leader
- c. Supervise the activities of the COM-L or On Site communications Leader if staffed

2. The Transport Group Supervisor/Unit Leader will

- a. Use the Emergency Department capacity and bed status data received from the Coordinating Emergency Department or RHCC (Based on tier and needs), to determine the destination for each patient. He/she will consult with the Coordinating Emergency Department to determine the best distribution of unique cases (i.e. multiple burn victims in excess of the capacity of the nearest Burn Center).
- b. The Transport Group Supervisor/Unit Leader or designee will notify **destination emergency departments** when ambulances depart the scene and provide them with the following information for each transport:
 - EMS Agency and Ambulance Number with the destination hospital
 - Patient Triage Tag Number(s)
 - Triage Color of each patient.
 - Age and gender of each patient
 - Nature of each patient's injuries

- Estimated time of arrival
- c. The distribution of patients should only start after consultation with the receiving ED and/or the RHCC or Coordinating Emergency department
3. Ambulance Operators:
- a. During an MCI, routine ambulance-to-Emergency Department communications are suspended. The Transport Group Supervisor/Unit Leader or Medical Communication Coordinator will relay the information to the receiving Emergency Departments.
 - b. Transport Group Supervisor/Unit Leader or Medical Communication Coordinator will work with the Coordinating Emergency Department via the most reliable communication methods and channels. Contact options are as follows
 - Radio
 - Telephone

** If the dedicated local channel is utilized, the Incident Commander should request that the dispatcher restrict usage of the channel to this incident only. Ambulances working calls elsewhere in the community will need to utilize alternate means of communications.*

4. **Public Information Officer** will be:

Responsible for **monitoring** commercial radio and telephone broadcasts for accuracy of public information. The PIO will network with affected businesses and other entities in the collaboration of a common message.

5. **COM-L or Communications Unit Leader** will be:

On site communications lead will be responsible for supporting radio channel assignment and tactical communications. Verify that units responding are aware of interoperable channels and address issues or connections as they arise.

6. **Each Municipalities Communications coordinator will:**

- a. **Coordinate common communications procedures.**
- b. **Develop and maintain a communications resource inventory (See Annex M, Resource Management).**
- c. **Ensure a communications capability exists between the Dispatch/Communications Center of the [Sheriff's Office/Police Department] and the Emergency Operations Center to include coordination with the telephone company for installation of dedicated telephone lines into the Dispatch/Communications Center and/or EOC.**
- d. **Ensure communication restoration procedures are developed.**
- e. **Ensure that the local telephone company is forwarded a list of circuit restoration priorities.**

f. Ensure procedures are in place for dissemination of message traffic.

g. Coordinate the inclusion of business/industry and amateur radio operators into the communications network.

h. Develop and maintain SOPs to include message-handling procedures and recall rosters for essential personnel.

i. Switchboard Operators will be:

Responsible for proper screening and routing of all incoming telephone calls. Maintaining awareness of emergency response entities and appropriately triaging incoming calls and routing to the appropriate person.

VII. REGIONAL ASSETS FOR COMMUNICATION

A. General

1. Other Networks

a. STARS is a statewide telecommunications network connecting the State Police and other governmental agencies, with approximately ### city, county, state, and federal, in Virginia.

b. Joint Information Center (JIC), Joint Operations Center (JOC), and SOC.

c. Virginia COMLINC, supported thru the Radio InterOperable System (RIOS) connects local PSAP Radio assets with a broader statewide system. This Annex provides tested connections based on each locality.

d. The Montgomery County Radio Cache, a State supported radio asset offers portable and mobile radios in each bandwidth. This asset additionally offers local radio patching capability within and across VHF, UHF, and 800MHz bands.

VIII. ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT

A. Facilities and Equipment

A complete listing of equipment is included in Appendix 1 of Annex M.

B. Preservation of Records

Vital records should be protected from the effects of disaster to the maximum extent feasible. Should records be damaged during an emergency situation, professional assistance in preserving and restoring those records should be obtained as soon as possible.

C. Communications Protection

1. Telephone (Common Carrier)

a. Overloaded Circuits

To maintain access to phone circuits, Emergency responders are encouraged to secure adequate numbers of GETS cards

b. Overloaded Cellular Circuits

To maintain access to cell phone circuits, Emergency responders are encouraged to apply WPS priority to critical cellular telephone devices utilized during major emergencies.

D. Support

If requirements exceed the capability of local communications resources, the municipality will request support from nearby jurisdictions or state resources.

IX. ANNEX DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

A. The MCIRC Communications Workgroup will be responsible for maintaining this annex.

B. This annex will be updated in accordance with the schedule outlined in Section X of the Basic Plan.

X. REFERENCES

A. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), 1996. Guide For All-Hazard Emergency Operations Planning. (SLG-101)

B. Division Of Emergency Management *Local Emergency Management Planning Guide*. (DEM-10)

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Communications Diagram & Table

Appendix 2 Standard Messaging Guide

Appendix 3 INTEROPERABILITY: Tac Channel Designation

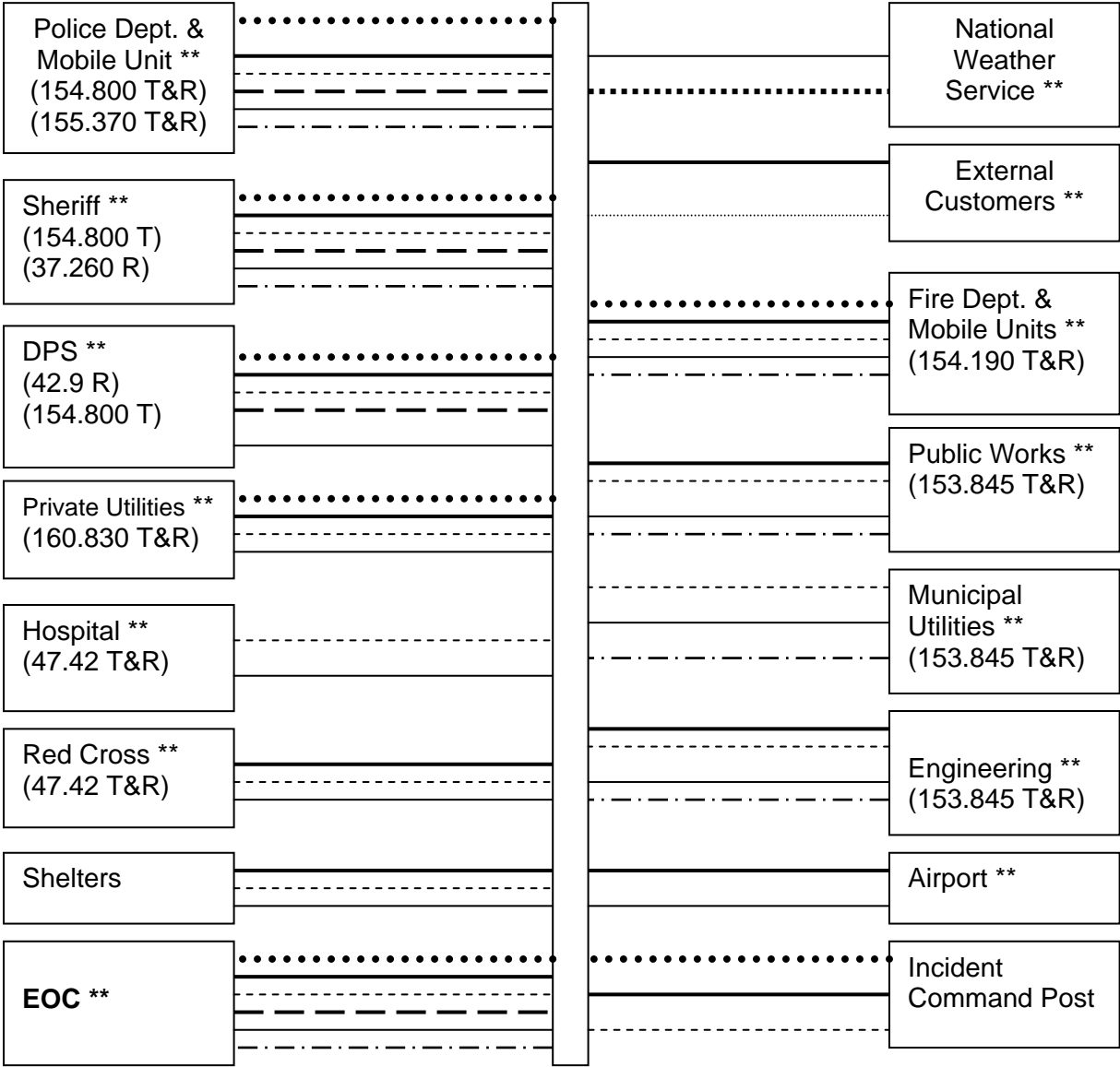
SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

1. Common Communications SOP

2. Communications Restoration Guide

3.

COMMUNICATIONS DIAGRAM



LEGEND:

- Radio
- CATV or Satellite
- _____ Telephone and/or Fax
- - - - - STARS
- RACES
- . - . - . Local Computer Network
- Satellite Phones
- _____ Cell Phones
- R Receive Only
- T Transmit Only
- T&R Transmit and Receive
- ** Internet Access & E-mail

XII. Standard Messaging Guide

1. Notice to Home Agency: To be completed based on existing departmental policy
 - 1.1. Agency notifies leadership via pre-established methods of potential or confirmed incident.

2. Notice to Hospital: To be completed by an EMS Agency on scene of or enroute to a confirmed or possible Mass Casualty incident.
 - 2.1. Agency notifies the hospital closest to the incident and provides brief report of situation. The Agencies dispatch center may perform this task.
 - 2.2. Hospital provides agency with bed count and capabilities to receive patients

3. Notice to RHCC: To be completed by an EMS Agency on scene of or enroute to a confirmed or possible Mass Casualty incident
 - 3.1. Agency notifies the RHCC via Emergency Number. The Agencies dispatch center may perform this task.
 - 3.2. RHCC obtains vial information and initiates a Bed Poll of local Emergency Department capacity and notifies Incident coordination team
 - 3.3. RHCC Incident coordination team sends Region wide SMS Text alert notifying regional entities of potential incident.
 - 3.4. RHCC initiates WebEOC incident and posts Situation Report
 - 3.5. RHCC establishes contact with Scene via Radio when applicable.

4. Notice to Mutual Aid: To be completed by the EMS Agencies Communications center or by the Emergency manager, or a designee codified in departmental policy
 - 4.1. Mutual Aid Entities responding will be provided:
 - 4.1.1. Channel for operations (Which should be inter operable)*see Interoperable guide
 - 4.1.2. Point of contact and Staging area directions / instructions
 - 4.2. Transport Sector Liason officer or other designee will document staff names and affiliated EMS Unit / Agency for documentation and tracking purposes

5. Notice to the Regional PIO Team: To be completed by the leade response agencies PIO
 - 5.1. Sit rep will be transmitted thru the XXX means
 - 5.2. Collaboration will be faciliatated thru VHASS WebEOC
 - 5.3. Telephone Numbers for the JIC will be provided via XXX means

6. Notice to OCME: To be completed by the RHCC
 - 6.1. The OCME will be notified by the RHCC via SMS Text message and Telephone

- 7.

8. This annex will be updated in accordance with the schedule outlined in Section X of the Basic Plan.

XIII. INTEROPERABILITY: Tactical Channels designation
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This guide will outline Tactical Channels and Interoperable plans for communication by Municipality. Each municipality listed will be responsible for updating the MCIRC Communications workgroup should channels or radio assets change. In many cases, Connections must be made in order to create links between VHF, UHF and 800MHz systems. The responsible party for making these connections is listed in each Municipality Description.

Roanoke County

Primary System: 800MHz Digital Trunked Motorola
Contact: Rodney Thompson, Communications Coordinator

First MCI Medical Channel for Operations: Tac XX (856.9...)
Second MCI Medical Channel for Transport Sector: Tac XX (859.4675)

UHF First Patch frequency and channel name: Roanoke Med 9 (469.9999)
Frequency is Repeated from Tinker Mountain. Frequency is monitored by Roanoke City Dispatch, RHCC Dispatch Center (CCPT), and Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital MedCom.

UHF Second patch frequency and channel name: U TAC 91 (466.9999)
Frequency is Repeated from XXXX

VHF First Patch Frequency: V TAC 91 (155.1111)
Frequency is Repeated from XXXX ?

Entity responsible for creating Radio patch:
Roanoke County Dispatch Center

First Alternate for creating Radio Patch:
Roanoke City Dispatch center

Second Alternate for creating Radio Patch:
RHCC Dispatch Center

Instructions:
Patch the X radio channel with X...