

EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNCTION #15

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

ESF COORDINATOR: City Communications Program Manager/PIO

LEAD AGENCY: City Communications Program Manager/PIO

SUPPORT AGENCIES: Director of Emergency Management
Police Department – Public Information Officer
School District – Public Information Officer
Hospital District – Public Information Officer
City of North Bend – Public Information Officer
City of Issaquah – Public Information Officer
All City of Snoqualmie Departments

I. Introduction

A. Purpose

This document is designed to provide guidance for the development and delivery of accurate, coordinated, and timely incident-related information to affected audiences, including the citizens of the City of Snoqualmie (City), city personnel and their families, government and public agencies, the media, the private sector, and visitors/tourists.

B. Scope

1. The Emergency Support Function (ESF) #15 addresses the communication needs of the City and outlines the responsibilities for processing, coordinating, and disseminating incident-related information to affected audiences.
2. The ESF also provides for the coordination of federal public affairs support for the City's public information activities.

C. Situation

1. A public emergency or other significant event may be of such severity and magnitude as to require City response and recovery assistance to field efforts to save lives and protect property. Activation of the Public Affairs function is contingent on the need to keep the public informed of the status of the emergency or disaster, reassured of the actions taken to respond to the emergency or disaster by the City and other jurisdictions and/or agencies, and informed on actions the public should take in response to the

emergency or disaster

2. During and after a public emergency, normal means of communications in the affected area may be destroyed or severely disrupted; therefore, only limited and incomplete information may be expected from the area until communications can be restored.

D. Assumptions

1. The resources routinely available within the affected emergency area may be inadequate to conduct comprehensive response.
2. Decisions impacting recovery will be made under great pressure of competing priorities, limited resources, and the desire to bring the community quickly back to “normal”.
3. Personnel may not return to their normal assignments for a period of weeks or months, depending on the level of effort required.
4. The PIOs are trained in Public Affairs functions, including operations at the City’s Emergency Operation Center (EOC) and receive regular updates/training on related issues. Anyone serving as a PIO should be active in the consortium of King County PIOs.

E. Policies

1. All activities within ESF #15 – Public Affairs will be conducted in accordance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the National Response Framework (NRF) and will utilize the Incident Command System (ICS).
2. As a signatory of the Regional Coordination Framework for Disasters and Planned Events (RCF), through Washington State’s intrastate mutual aid system, WAMAS, and through local mutual aid agreements, the City will make resources available to other jurisdictions through the Zone 1 EC and King County Emergency Coordination Center (KCECC), whenever possible.
3. In the event of a disaster or emergency situation, it is the responsibility of the City to provide accurate and timely incident-related information to affected audiences.
4. All incident-related information will be developed by the Public Information Officer (PIO) in coordination with the release of incident-related information through the EOC or the Joint Information Center (JIC).
5. Before being released to the public, all incident-related information must be approved by the Emergency Management Director or Incident Commander or his/her designee.

6. The City will make a reasonable effort, when necessary, to consider cultural, social, and economic backgrounds, as well as people with disabilities and language barriers, when considering community outreach and communications. This may include format of services, languages offered, colors of handouts, font size, etc.
7. The City will make a reasonable effort, to offer written text in different languages, when appropriate.
8. In the event of an after-hours emergency, such as an earthquake, major storm, or other major disruption, it is possible PIOs may need to report to an alternative site for the EOC.
9. As an acknowledgment of different jurisdictions, PIOs staffing the EOC/ JIC will avoid statements that evaluate or judge other governmental agencies. Public information staff will take care not to provide information beyond the expertise or purview of the City. They will refer such matters to the appropriate jurisdiction, most likely via that jurisdiction's JIC.

II. Concept of Operations

A. General

1. The release of incident-related information is the responsibility of the City through either the EOC or the JIC.
2. When activated, the KC ECC and the Washington State Emergency Management Division (EMD) EOC may release incident-related information to the affected audiences and the public by working with the lead agency.
3. When activated Public Health-Seattle & King County may release incident related information to the affected audiences and the public, in coordination with the lead agency, on topics that are in their purview.
4. In the event of an Incident of National Significance, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) may provide support to the City to assist with the dissemination of accurate and timely information.
5. In the event of a terrorist incident, the release of information to the public may be coordinated with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and other federal agencies.
6. During an Incident of National Significance, the EMD and FEMA may establish a JIC to coordinate federal, state, and local information.
7. Demands for information from media outside the City will be significantly increased during and after a disaster.
8. Normal means of communication within the affected areas may be either destroyed or largely incapacitated and, therefore, only limited or incomplete information should be anticipated from the disaster area until

communication can be restored.

9. Sufficient support personnel may be available to coordinate public information and interface with the media and other agencies.
10. The ICS will be used by all organizations operating within this ESF.

B. Organization

1. The following individuals are designated to serve as PIO to coordinate the dissemination of incident-related information to the public:
 - a. Communications Program Manager
 - b. Communications Assistant
 - c. City Clerk

Support may be provided by the following:

- a. Snoqualmie Police Department PIO
 - b. Snoqualmie School District PIO
 - c. Hospital District PIO
 - d. City of North Bend PIO
 - e. City of Issaquah PIO
2. The release of incident-related information shall be coordinated by the PIO through the EOC or JIC.
3. Assistants may be assigned from other agencies or departments involved.
4. The designated PIO may appoint an Assistant PIO to ensure the media is kept informed regarding media briefing locations.
5. A media staging area will be designated by the PIO and the EOC Director. The location of media briefings will be determined by the event. In the event that the location is not functional or communications are inadequate, an alternate location will be identified and announced by the PIO.
6. In some situations, it may be necessary to release incident-related information from field command posts. Should this occur, the Incident Commander (IC) will contact the EOC in a timely manner and provide a detailed account of the information that was released.
7. The PIO will utilize the PIO Emergency Checklist and the PIO News Release Worksheet during any emergency situation or disaster that requires the dissemination of incident-related information to the public. (See Appendix 1 - PIO Emergency Checklist and Appendix 2 - News Release Worksheet).

8. Communications between the EOC and the IC will be through established channels.
9. Additional assistance with the PIO needs can be sought from the consortium of King County PIOs facilitated by the King County Office of Emergency Management.

C. Actions

1. Preparedness

- a. Coordinate with local media about public information procedures, content of information, information dissemination strategies, and roles and responsibilities of the Public Information Officer (PIO) under ICS.
- b. Assist in the dissemination of written and graphic disaster preparedness materials such as brochures and publications, public presentations, news releases, and media events. The information is to encourage preparedness activities, awareness, and personal responsibility to minimize the loss of life and property during a disaster. This information also identifies vulnerable areas for each hazard as described in the All-Hazards Mitigation Plan.
- c. Prepare and maintain emergency operating procedures, resource inventories, personnel rosters, and resource mobilization information necessary for implementation of the responsibilities of the lead agency.
- d. Assign and schedule sufficient PIO personnel to implement identified tasks for an extended period of time.
- e. Ensure lead agency PIO personnel are trained in their responsibilities and duties.
- f. Maintain active network with support agencies and the consortium of King County PIOs.
- g. Develop and implement emergency response strategies relating to long-term community recovery.
- h. Conduct All Hazards exercises involving public affairs.

2. Response

- a. Coordinate operations in the Snoqualmie EOC and/or at other locations as required.
- b. Develop, prioritize, and implement strategies for the initial response to EOC requests.
- c. Establish communications with appropriate field personnel to

- ensure readiness for timely response.
- d. Participate in EOC briefings, development of Incident Action Plans and Situation Reports, and meetings.
 - e. Coordinate with support agencies, as needed, to support emergency activities.
 - f. Obtain other resources through Regional Coordination Framework for Disaster and Planned Events (RCF) and WAMAS or through the consortium of King County PIOs.
 - g. Coordinate with other area PIOs to obtain resources and facilitate an effective emergency response among all participating agencies.
 - h. Pre-position response resources when it is apparent that resources may be necessary.
 - i. Arrange media briefings and media access to important news stories.
 - j. Prepare the City Mayor and other officials for media briefings, media advisories, and any needed response to information releases.
 - k. Arrange for public notice of the Mayor's proclamations, emergency ordinances, and executive orders.
 - l. Arrange for the preparation of multilingual advisory and informational materials for the public, to include consideration for people with hearing and visual disabilities.
 - m. Notify the media of disaster impacts, protective measures, and other topics that will facilitate and expedite response and recovery and address public information needs.
 - n. Request KCECC to post information on "Alert King County", a.k.a., CodeRed.
 - o. Provide updates to the news media about disaster conditions and actions taken in response to those conditions, primarily information and instructions provided for the survival, health, and safety of the citizens in the impacted area. Informational releases will be prepared via the following prioritization:
 - Lifesaving – including information essential to survival, health and safety
 - Recovery – including instructions concerning disaster recovery, relief, programs, and services
 - Other – including non-emergency notices released by participating government and volunteer agencies

3. Recovery

The Communications Program Manager/PIO will participate on the Recovery Task Force appointed by the Mayor/City Administrator after a disaster. They will coordinate information to and from the public during the disaster recovery phase as outlined in ESF 14.

4. Mitigation

Mitigation for this ESF is covered in the City of Snoqualmie Hazard Mitigation Plan.

III. Responsibilities

A. Emergency Operation Center Director

1. Assist the PIO while EOC is activated by sharing relevant information with the PIO or assist with rumor control when it has been identified as an issue.
2. Approve incident-related information prior to release by PIO.

B. Communications Program Manager/Public Information Officer (PIO)

1. Serve as the City's lead PIO. Establish and maintain standard operating procedures for use during emergencies.
2. Establish priorities for release of emergency information. Gather and coordinate information with approval of EOC Director. Manage emergency public information before, during, and after the incident. Maintain copies of information released
3. Develop information dissemination channels and systems. Determine appropriate vehicles for all communications, news releases, advisory bulletins, and interviews.
4. Establish contact with the media. Determine appropriate location(s) for public official and media briefings. Monitor information being provided by the media. Correct misinformation being disseminated by media.
5. Send Sitreps to KCECC, KCJIC, and State EOC.
6. Serve as liaison to county and/or state PIOs. Send information to other jurisdictions' JICs and/or EOCs. Notify appropriate agencies to assist in the dissemination of emergency public information. Coordinate with King County when information is to be released via the "Alert King County" emergency alert system, a.k.a. CodeRed. Provide support for King County jurisdictions

and/or the JIC as needed.

7. Monitor other jurisdictions' websites, provide links to other jurisdictions' websites, and/or post information on joint websites.
8. Participate in videoconferences and/or teleconference call among PIOs of other jurisdictions.

C. City Departments

1. Provide timely information to the EOC regarding field activities and incident-related public information.
2. Coordinate requests for assistance through the EOC.
3. In coordination with the Administrative Services Director, timely information will be disseminated to employees with their families if necessary.

D. State of Washington

1. The Governor's Communications Director serves as the State Emergency Public Information Officer (EPIO), and under the direction of the Governor, may direct, coordinate, and supervise the release of all State emergency instructions and news releases pertaining to the State's disaster operations.
2. In the absence of the Governor's Communications Director or Assistant, the EMD's PIO may direct, coordinate, and supervise the incident-related public information functions in coordination with local jurisdiction.
3. The State EPIO coordinates with local and federal agencies on the release of emergency information and instructions.

E. Federal

1. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) through the National Response Plan (NRP) ensures that sufficient Federal assets are deployed to the field during a potential or actual Incident of National Significance to provide accurate, coordinated, and timely information to affected audiences, including governments, media, the private sector, and the local populace.
2. According to the NRP, the DHS recognizes that it is the City's responsibility to provide information to the citizens of the City.

IV. APPENDICES

- A. Public Information Officer Checklist
- B. Public Information Officer News Release Worksheet
- C. Media Contact List
- D. Public Information Media Strategy
- E. Regional Coordination Framework for Disasters and Planned Events

V. REFERENCES

- A. The National Response Framework, ESF #15 External Affairs
- C. The National Incident Management System

APPENDIX A
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER EMERGENCY CHECKLIST

In the event of a major emergency when communications may have been disrupted, pre-designated PIOs should report to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) as soon as possible.

PRIOR TO ARRIVAL:

- _____ 1. When possible, ask what the situation is, where the EOC is located, who the EOC Director is, and where they want you located.
- _____ 2. Advise them of how long it will take for you to reach your assigned location.
- _____ 3. Bring a flash drive with your communications templates, documents, contact lists, etc. Bring a laptop if a computer will not be available for you.
- _____ 4. Have your passwords for all communications channels, e.g., Code Red, KC Share-point, etc.

AFTER ARRIVAL AT YOUR ASSIGNED AREA:

- _____ 1. Meet with the EOC Director, or his/her designee, to get an update on the situation and any specific concerns.
- _____ 2. Establish a work area for yourself with access to a computer/laptop with internet connection, printer, photocopier, and fax machine if possible.
- _____ 3. Establish your network to have access to the information you need and access to the EOC Director and other members of the Incident Command System. Ensure field personnel know you are in place and will be managing communications, as well as meeting with media as needed.
- _____ 4. Coordinate with other local and regional PIOs, (Fire, Police, School, Hospital, neighboring jurisdictions, King County, etc.).
- _____ 5. Establish an area for the media to be briefed. The media area should be at a distance away from the EOC so there is no interruption in the work of the EOC.
- _____ 6. Try to establish a set schedule for news conferences (such as every hour, every two hours, etc.). This will reduce interruptions and allow all to be aware when information releases will be available.
- _____ 7. If possible, develop or obtain handouts with basic information concerning the emergency. This will assure that all media receive consistent information and reduce the number of questions you will be asked.

- ____ 8. Take a pro-active stance. Develop plans for possible situations that may occur. This could include such things as street closures, evacuations, information sheets for purifying water, guidelines for items to bring if evacuated to a shelter, etc.
- ____ 9. If possible, acquire at least one person to assist you with the paperwork and the information handling process of the job.
- ____ 10. Remember to include communications methods that can reach people with hearing and visual disabilities, language barriers, or who may not have basic ways to receive information like internet, TV, radio, and print media.

DURING THE EMERGENCY:

- ____ 1. Have regular briefings with the EOC Director to ensure you have timely information and the facts that the EOC needs to disseminate.
- ____ 2. Establish an event journal to log the emergency events and activities of the PIO function. This PIO event journal will be of value in tracking activities during the event and to evaluate activities after the event is over.
- ____ 3. Keep all communications, such as news releases, Code Red messages, etc. in a single folder on a flash drive for easy access, transport, and sharing.
- ____ 4. Make copies of all news releases. This will allow you to update late arriving media without needing to spend time repeating the information.
- ____ 5. Provide critical information and updates about road closures, event status, shelters, points of distribution, etc. to the KC ECC to disseminate through Code Red.
- ____ 6. Monitor and utilize City and regional social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.

DEMOBILIZATION:

- ____ 1. Send final news releases to media informing them that the EOC is being deactivated and provide your contact information for after-event information requests.
- ____ 2. Assure there is someone available to manage any late-coming inquiries.
- ____ 2. Confirm that the PIO event journal is up-to-date and covers all activities of your office.
- ____ 3. Confirm that any information the public needs to access is released to the media and to those who will be contacts after the EOC is deactivated.

APPENDIX B
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER NEWS RELEASE WORKSHEET

Action Item: _____ Date: _____

Time: _____

General Situation: _____

Who: _____

What: _____

When: _____

Where: _____

Why: _____

How: _____

Source of Info.: _____

Point of Contact (including name, email, phone): _____

Who was it released to: _____

Comments: _____

APPENDIX C
MEDIA CONTACT LIST

Print Media

<p>Snoqualmie Valley Record editor@valleyrecord.com www.valleyrecord.com P.O. Box 300 Snoqualmie WA 98065</p> <p>Tel: 425-888-2311 Fax: 425-888-2427</p>	<p>SnoValley Star (Published by Issaquah Press) editor@snovalleystar.com www.snovalleystar.com PO Box 1328 Issaquah, WA 98027</p> <p>Tel: 425-392-6434 Fax: 425-392-1695</p>
<p>Seattle Times newstips@seattletimes.com www.seattletimes.com P. O. Box 70 Seattle, WA 98111</p> <p>Tel: 206-464-2204 Fax: 206-464-2261</p>	<p>Associated Press Seattle Bureau (optional) apseattle@ap.org www.ap.org 3131 Elliott Avenue, Suite 750 Seattle, WA 98121</p> <p>Tel: 206-682-1812 Fax: 206-621-1948</p>
<p>Living Snoqualmie info@livingsnoqualmie.com www.livingsnoqualmie.com</p> <p>Snoqualmie, WA</p> <p>Editor: Danna McCall 425-736-1433</p>	

TV Media

Channel	News Release Email	Other contact info
KING 5 TV (NBC)	newstips@king5.com	www.king5.com Tel: 206-448-5555
KOMO TV (ABC)	tips@komo4news.com	www.komo4news.com Tel: 888-477-5666
KIRO TV (CBS)	newstips@kiroTV.com	www.kiroTV.com Tel: 206-728-7777
Q13 TV (FOX)	tips@q13fox.com	www.q13fox.com Tel: 206-674-1313
NWCN Northwest Cable News 24-hour news	viewercenter@nwcN.com nwnews@nwcN.com newstips@nwcN.com	www.nwcN.com Tel: 206-448-3600
Weather Channel (National)	newsdesk@weather.com Photo/Video: iwitness@weather.com <i>Severe weather info only</i>	www.weather.com Reporter: Jim Pedersen jpedersen@weather.com Tel: 770-226-2119 <i>Severe weather info only</i>

Radio Media

Channel	News Release Email	Other contact info
KIRO Radio 97.3 FM AM 710	newsdesk@973kiro.com	www.kioradio.com Tel: 206-726-5476
KOMO Radio AM 1000	comments@komo1000news.com	www.komonews.com/radio Tel: 206-404-5666
KUOW Radio (NPR) 94.9 FM	newsroom@kuow.org	www.kuow.org Tel: 206-685-1136
KVI Radio Am 570	comment@kvi.com	www.kvi.com Tel: 888-312-5757
KPLU Radio (NPR) 88.5 FM	news@kplu.org	www.kplu.org Tel: 206-922-1020
KDDS FM* Spanish Language	Uriel Romero, Sr. Acct. Exec. uromero@adelantemediagroup.com	Tel: 253-735-9700 ext. 224

City of Snoqualmie Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan
ESF #15 Public Affairs

KKMO AM* Spanish Language	Edgar Solares, Gen Mgr. edgars@elrey1360seattle.com	Tel: 206-436-7851
--	---	-------------------

**The Spanish language radio contacts were provided by Karen Rich of Take Winter by Storm, karenrich@richmarketing.us.*

Quarterly, check with consortium of King County PIOs for updates and additions to Spanish radio stations and other non-English communications channels.

APPENDIX D

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEDIA STRATEGY

City of Snoqualmie public information staff will provide information to media outlets and the public during an incident. These activities may be provided solely by the City of Snoqualmie, through coordination with the King County Joint Information Center, and/or through cooperation of multiple jurisdictions.

Information Gathering

The Director of Emergency Management can assist the Public Information Officer (PIO) by directing him/her to subject matter experts or pre-scripted materials. Information sources outside of the Emergency Operations Center, City staff, and the King County JIC may include the King County website, , Public Health – Seattle & King County, the Red Cross, and other reliable information centers.

When possible, prepare messages ahead of time with fill-in-the-blank spaces for updates. This will expedite message dissemination. The messages should include, in particular, resources for further information, such as King County contacts, Public Health – Seattle & King County, The Red Cross, FEMA, utility companies, etc.

Distribution Strategy

The public information strategy should include methods to disseminate the prepared information to the general public. The City of Snoqualmie PIO has a listing of available media outlets and contact information, which is updated as needed.

The following are suggested vehicles for dissemination of information.

- **Media**
 - Print: Local and regional newspapers
 - Television: Regional stations
 - Radio: City radio station, regional radio stations

- **Online**
 - City website
 - City Facebook page(s)
 - City Twitter page(s)
 - Local blogs, such as Living Snoqualmie
 - Code Red (through King County)
 - Local neighborhood info sharing sites, such as Yahoo and Nextdoor
 - Add others as technology options change

- **Direct Information Pieces**
 - During and after disaster: staff to post information sheets provided by the PIO or EOC Manager to traplines (community bulletin boards)
 - Before emergencies and disasters for emergency preparedness: Direct mail, newsletter,

utility bill inserts, fact sheets, new residents/business welcome kits, event handouts

- **Public Forums** – Interactive community meetings Telephone (landlines, cell phones, text): Code Red (through King County)
- **Traplins** - Information boards located at public spaces with info posted by city staff or volunteer emergency workers

The PIO must take advantage of every information vehicle available if power, utilities, and other infrastructure have been damaged. Often, the best carriers of information are the responders in the field. The general public recognizes their role and frequently asks questions regarding the operations. Stocking the equipment and trucks with flyers, pamphlets, and other print media allows responders to perform their duties while also satisfying the public's need for information.

Types of Information to Disseminate

The following topics should be addressed in communications, as well as others as they arise.

- Emergency Preparedness
- Road closures and traffic detours
- Utility/power updates
- Evacuations
- Shelter Locations
- Public Health Concerns (contaminated water, etc.)
- Public safety contacts (emergency, fire, police)
- Reporting instructions (missing persons, damages, claims, etc.)
- Recovery issues
- Cleanup instructions for various types of debris to include:
 - Status of cleanup
 - Locations and details of drop-off or collection sites
 - How to source-separate waste
 - Handling procedures
 - Illegal dumping provisions

Developing Messages in Languages other than English

Based on the community demographics in the City of Snoqualmie, messages may need to be developed in the following languages: Hindi and Spanish.

Translation Resources

The following resources are available to develop messaging materials for alternate languages.

- Emergency Preparedness
 - What to do to Make it Through
<http://makeitthrough.org/>
 - Take Winter by Storm (checklists in many languages)
<http://takewinterbystorm.org/>
 - [Public Health – Seattle & King County](#) (checklists in many languages)
<http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/languages.aspx>
- Assistance during an Emergency
 - 211 – King County 211 Community Resources
<http://www.crisisclinic.org/211kc.html>
 - Hearing Speech & Deafness Center
<http://www.hsdcc.org/>
 - Online translation services
 - <http://www.freetranslation.com/>
 - <http://www.paralink.com/>

Special Needs Communications Resources

- King County Department of Social and Health Services
Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/hrsa/odhh/index.shtml>
- Washington Relay Service
<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/hrsa/odhh/relser.shtml>