

# Emergency Support Function (ESF) #15

## External Affairs

### Primary Agency/ESF Coordinator

City of Rolla Emergency Management Agency

### Support Agencies:

All County/City Departments

## I. PURPOSE

Emergency Support Function (ESF) #15 External Affairs coordinates the release of accurate, coordinated, timely, and accessible public information to affected audiences, including governments, media, and the private sector. ESF #15 works closely with state and local officials to ensure outreach to the whole community, including the special needs population.

## II. SCOPE

ESF #15 will manage information during an incident so that the most up-to-date and correct information is used to inform the public. ESF #15 will coordinate with all departments and agencies involved with the incident so that one message is used for public information to avoid any conflicts of released information. This ESF addresses the following functional components:

- Public affairs and the Joint Information Center
- Community Relations
- Legislative Affairs
- Private sector outreach

## III. SITUATION AND PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

### A. Situation

1. The City of Rolla is served by various news media, either located within the County/City or in the surrounding area, which would be utilized to disseminate public information in an emergency or disaster situation. News media serving the area include:
  - a. Radio Stations:
  - b. Television Stations:
  - c. Newspaper:
2. The primary Emergency Alert System (EAS) station for the City of Rolla is

KZNN-FM, 105.3. It is accessed at Rolla Central Communications Center.

3. There are no prominent groups of non-English speaking people in the City of Rolla. Dissemination of information will be in English. If necessary, the translation of emergency public information will be coordinated with the area schools' foreign languages staff.
4. Sample news releases have been developed and are available with the City of Rolla Emergency Management Agency.

#### **B. Planning Assumptions**

1. The timely dissemination of emergency public information will reduce casualties, injuries, and prevent property and environmental damage, as well as promote the re-establishment of a healthy local economy.
2. The media serving the area will cooperate with local officials in the dissemination of information to the public.
3. Sufficient departmental representatives will be available to coordinate public information and interface with the media and other agencies. If there are not a sufficient number of trained PIOs available, the City of Rolla's emergency organization may be overwhelmed by the demand for information.
4. The dissemination of timely, well-coordinated public information will help to maintain public trust and confidence during an emergency situation.
5. A large disaster will result in state, national, and international media coverage, and in the aftermath of a disaster, media personnel may attempt to obtain information from other than "official" sources.
6. The need for timely and useful public information will continue throughout the recovery phase and the City of Rolla's ability to maintain a program to keep the community informed is a critical recovery function.

### **IV. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS**

#### **A. General**

1. The City of Rolla recognizes the media as a logical extension of the disaster operation and will use the local media to provide emergency instructions and potentially lifesaving information to the public. In most cases, contact with the media will be maintained using landline and cellular telephones, facsimile, and email.
2. The right of the media to inform the public in any disaster situation is recognized by the City of Rolla and with the permission of public safety officials, the media may have access to areas that are closed to the public. In general, authorized members of the media will be permitted reasonable access

to the disaster site as long as they do not interfere in any way with public safety actions, compromise the integrity of a possible crime scene, or endanger their own safety.

3. Since many emergencies strike rapidly, the public information system cannot always react swiftly enough to properly inform the public about the hazard and for this reason, it is important that citizens are made aware of potential hazards and appropriate protective measures prior to the occurrence of an emergency. The City of Rolla will make every effort to provide ongoing public education to its citizens regarding emergency preparedness activities.
4. Every effort will be made to provide emergency public information to special needs groups, such as the hearing and visually impaired and non-English speaking populations. Close coordination will be required with the government, volunteer, and community agencies described further in ESF #6 Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing and Human Services.
5. In addition to providing information to the public through the media, emergency public information may also be disseminated directly to the public by establishing a citizen inquiry hotline and using the capabilities of the Internet.
6. Public information activities will initially be coordinated from the City of Rolla EOC, but in major events or those with considerable media attention, the County/City may establish a Joint Information Center (JIC) to facilitate the coordinated release of information from all responding agencies.
7. ESF #15 will address the following functions:
  - a. Public Affairs will coordinate messages from the various agencies and establish a Joint Information Center as needed. Public Affairs will gather information on the incident and provide incident related information through the media and other sources to keep the public informed. Public Affairs will monitor the news coverage to ensure the accuracy of the information being disseminated. Public Affairs will handle appropriate special projects such as news conferences and press operations for incident area tours.
  - b. Community Relations will prepare an initial action plan with incident-specific guidance and objectives, at the beginning of an actual or potential incident to address community issues. They will identify and coordinate with the community leaders and neighborhood groups to assist in the rapid dissemination of information, identify unmet needs, and establish an ongoing dialogue and information exchange.
  - c. Legislative Affairs will establish contact with the state legislative and congressional offices representing the affected areas to provide information on the incident. The locality should be prepared to arrange an incident site visit for legislators and their staffs. Legislative Affairs will

also respond to legislative and congressional inquiries.

- d. Rumor Control. In an attempt to ensure rumor control, all news releases will be approved by the Emergency Management Director, or designee. Information that is received by the PIO that appears to be questionable or false will be verified through another source, prior to being released to the public. The verification can be return telephone calls to the information source or by having another agency or department verify the authenticity of the information. If the information cannot be verified through at least one additional source, it will not be released to the general public.

## **B. Actions by Operational Timeframe**

### **1. Preparedness**

- a. Identify all viable methods to reach the public including but not limited to radio, television, print media flyers, posters, brochures, informational booths, and the Internet.
- b. Develop pre-scripted media releases and public advisories dealing with each hazard having the potential to affect the City of Rolla.
- c. Ensure the capability is in place to augment personnel and the telephone lines for the Citizen "Helpline".
- d. Ensure adequate space and equipment is available for a JIC at a location in close proximity to the EOC.
- e. Ensure all departments have trained staff to support the JIC.
- f. Make accommodations for 24-hour staffing.
- g. Ensure all local media outlets are pre-identified and contacts established - brief them regularly on emergency public information procedures.
- h. Ensure emergency responders are familiar with public information procedures and know how and when to refer the media to the appropriate field or JIC personnel for information.
- i. Develop and maintain this document as well as supporting Operating Procedures.
- J. Be prepared to meet the emergency public information needs of identified special needs populations.
- k. Participate in both local and regional emergency public information training and exercises.
- l. Work with other jurisdictions to develop consistent pre-scripted media releases and public advisories dealing with hazards potentially affecting the metropolitan area.
- m. Ensure the capability exists to communicate between jurisdictions via fax, telephone, and the Internet.

### **2. Response**

- a. Inform the public of health and/or safety concerns and ways to reduce or eliminate the associated dangers.
- b. Provide evacuation instructions and shelter locations.
- c. In coordination with the EOC Team, release emergency information as

dictated by the situation.

- d. Ensure the Citizen "Helpline" is receiving timely, accurate information.
- e. Implement a proactive public information strategy to ensure the media's needs are being met.
- f. If the situation dictates, activate and staff the JIC.
- g. Work with other jurisdictions to ensure consistency in the information released to the public.
- h. If needed, request assistance from other regional PIOs or provide trained PIOs to other jurisdictions when requested.
- i. If the situation dictates, request activation of the Regional Joint Information Center (JIC) to assist with the release of consistent information from all involved agencies in the region.
- J. Work to develop and implement a regional public information strategy to ensure the consistency and completeness of information dissemination.
- k. Other specific response information will be dictated by the situation.

### **3. Recovery**

- a. Continue all emergency public information activities based on the circumstances and the organizations involved in the recovery efforts.
- b. Distribute information on what to do when returning to your damaged home and how and where to apply for different types of disaster assistance.
- c. Continue to coordinate specific response information with other jurisdictions in the region as dictated by the situation.

### **4. Mitigation**

- a. Develop a campaign to promote the importance of maintaining adequate insurance.
- b. Provide information and increase awareness about safe rooms and other shelter methods.
- c. Conduct all-hazard safety visits to increase home hazard prevention actions.
- d. Promote preparedness information that will lessen the impact of disasters, such as having a disaster preparedness kit and a family disaster plan.
- e. Work with other jurisdictions in the region to coordinate the dissemination of emergency preparedness information that will lessen the impact of any disaster, such as having a disaster preparedness kit and a family disaster plan.

## **V. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **A. Primary Agency/ESF Coordinator**

City of Rolla Emergency Management Agency

- 1. Provide a representative to the EOC to serve as the ESF # 15 Primary Agency.
- 2. Gather and disseminate information about the event.
- 3. Coordinate the emergency public information activities of all involved

agencies.

4. Work to ensure timely, accurate, consistent, and useful information is being disseminated through all available media outlets.
5. If needed, establish and staff a Joint Information Center (JIC).
6. Provide information to elected and appointed officials regarding the event and coordinate media access to elected officials.
7. Handle appropriate special projects such as news conference.
8. Assist in establishing a phone bank to respond to citizen inquiries.
9. Work with the EOC to coordinate official "VIP" visits to the affected area(s).

**B. Support Agencies**

All City Departments

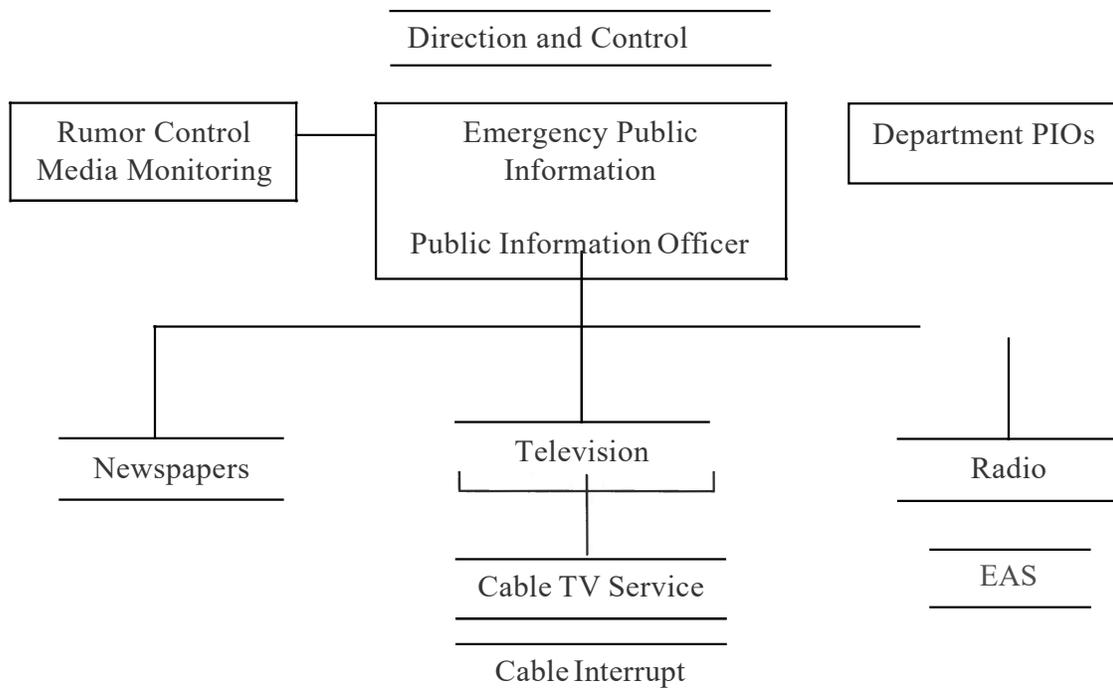
1. Provide a PIO to support Emergency Public Information activities.
2. Ensure field PIOs are coordinating with the Emergency Public Information Coordinator in the EOC or JIC.
3. Provide technical subject matter expertise when required by the situation.

**VI. CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT**

Lines of Succession for ESF #15 External Affairs:

1. Director, City of Rolla Emergency Management Agency
2. PIO

**EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION DIAGRAM**



Appendix 2 to Annex C

**FORMAT AND PROCEDURES FOR NEWS RELEASES**

A. FORMAT

1. Name, address, and phone number of the news release initiator.
2. Text of the news release.
3. Substantiating records for the release.
4. Date and time received.
5. Date and time released.
6. How and to whom the news release was issued.

B. RELEASE PROCEDURES

1. Verify the authenticity of the information contained in the release.
2. Verify that a duplicate release has not already been made.
3. Prepare the release in the format listed above.
4. Determine if the information contained in the release is in the public interest and will not create unwarranted or unnecessary fear, anguish, or other adverse reaction among the public. However, news releases will not be withheld simply to avoid political or public official embarrassment should the situation so warrant.
5. News releases will be distributed fairly and impartially to the news media.
6. Copies of all news releases will be filed chronologically.
7. Copies of all news releases will be furnished to the Rumor Control center.

## Appendix 3 to Annex C

### **STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING FOR EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION OPERATIONS**

This statement of understanding is entered into between Radio-TV stations and/or Newspapers, hereinafter referred to as the media, and the City of Rolla, hereinafter referred to as the City of Rolla to provide emergency information to the citizens of whenever a threat to life and property exists from natural or man-made causes.

When, in the opinion of the chief executive of the City of Rolla, a threat to life and property exists or threatens the City of Rolla, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) of the City of Rolla will be placed on an appropriate status and staffed in accordance with the severity of existing or potential threat, and lines of communication will be opened and maintained for the duration of such threat between the EOC and the media.

The EOC of the City of Rolla will:

1. Provide the media with a description of the threat and the actions that the emergency staff of the City of Rolla is taking to combat the effects of the threat.
2. Provide immediate guidance for the public to lessen the dangers to life and property from the threat.
3. Establish with the media, a schedule of briefings on the progress of the threat and additional actions to be taken by the public to lessen the possibility of loss of life and damage to property.
4. Issue bulletins on any insignificant change in the threat as those changes occur.
5. Advise the media that the danger of the threat has passed and that no further EOC operations are necessary.

The media, at their discretion, and within operating limitations imposed by management or any rules and regulations imposed by appropriate government agencies, will:

1. Accept the transmissions from the EOC of the City of Rolla for inclusion in regular news programs or as special news bulletins or to be printed as emergency guidance for the purpose of saving life or reduction of property damage, for the duration of the threat.
2. Accept and maintain in place any equipment provided for communications and report to the City of Rolla any damage to or outages of such equipment.
3. Test any equipment provided by the City of Rolla by brief two-way transmissions on the first Wednesday of each month at 10:00 a.m. local time.

NB: THIS STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE CITY OF ROLLA AND THE MEDIA IS IN NO WAY INTENDED TO ABRIDGE THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS OR TO CONSTRAIN THE EDITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY INHERENT IN AN OPEN SOCIETY. THE SOLE PURPOSE OF THIS STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING IS TO ESTABLISH A SOURCE OF INFORMATION FOR THE MEDIA WHEN A THREAT OR POTENTIAL THREAT EXISTS TO THE LIFE AND PROPERTY OF THE CITIZENS OF CITY OF ROLLA.

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For the Media

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For the city

\*Entered as an example only, testing should be established by mutual agreement and entered in the statement of understanding at this point.

Appendix 4 to Annex C

**NEWS MEDIA CONTACT POINTS**

A. Newspapers

Rolla Daily News .....364-2468  
St. James Leader-Journal ..... 256-3321

B. Radio Stations

KZNN-FM, 105.3; Rolla..... 364-2525  
KTTR-AM, 1490; KTTR-FM, 99.7, Rolla .....364-2525  
KMNR-FM, 89.7, Rolla..... 341-4272  
KUMR-FM, 88.5, Rolla..... 364-4386  
KDAA-FM, 97.5, Rolla ..... 341-9211  
KMOZ-AM, 1590, Rolla .....  
KKID-FM, 92.9 Rolla.....364-4433

C. Television Stations

KRCG, Channel 13, Jefferson City.....896-5144  
KOMU, Channel 8, Columbia .....442-1122  
KOLR, Channel 10, Springfield.....417-862-1010  
KYTV, Channel 3, Springfield.....417-866-2766  
KMOV, Channel 4, St. Louis.....314-621-4444

D. Cable Television Service

Fidelity Cable Vision, Rolla .....364-5206  
Charter Communications, Washington .....636-239-4992



**SAMPLE NEWS RELEASES**

**Sample Radio/TV Message - Evacuation Ordered - Flooding**

(To be announced by Mayor, City Administrator, Emergency Management Director, Fire Chief, Police Chief, or other local authority.)

This is \_\_\_\_\_. The flooding situation continues in parts of \_\_\_\_\_ and may worsen. For your safety, I am asking that you leave the \_\_\_\_\_ area as soon as possible (give boundaries of local area, evacuation routes). Be sure to take essential items -- medicine, special foods, personal items, baby supplies, clothing, money, and valuable papers -- but do not overload your car.

Secure your home before you leave. Be sure to check on any neighbors who may need assistance. If you cannot stay with relatives or friends outside of the evacuation area, go to (one of) the Red Cross shelter(s) at \_\_\_\_\_.

Pets will not be allowed in Red Cross shelters. If you cannot make arrangements for someone outside the evacuation areas to take care of your pet, \_\_\_\_\_ (give instructions) \_\_\_\_\_. Do not allow your pet to run loose. If you cannot make arrangements for your large animals, \_\_\_\_\_ (give instructions) \_\_\_\_\_.

**Sample Radio Message - No Information Available - Earthquake**

This is \_\_\_\_\_ at the \_\_\_\_\_. An earthquake of undetermined magnitude has just been felt in the \_\_\_\_\_ area. At this time we have no confirmed reports of injuries or damage. Police and fire units are responding to the area. We will keep you updated as reports come in.

Meanwhile, be prepared for aftershocks. If shaking begins, quickly seek shelter under a sturdy piece of furniture or in a supporting doorway. If your house has been damaged and you smell gas, shut off the main gas valve. Switch off electrical power if you suspect damage to the wiring. Do not use your telephone unless you need emergency help.

**Sample Media Message - Update on Earthquake**

This is \_\_\_\_\_ at the \_\_\_\_\_. The magnitude of the earthquake which struck the \_\_\_\_\_ area at \_\_\_\_ (time) today, has been determined to be \_\_\_\_\_ on the Richter scale. The epicenter has been fixed at \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_ (scientific authority) \_\_\_\_\_.

This office has received reports of \_\_\_\_\_ deaths, \_\_\_\_\_ injuries, and \_\_\_\_\_ homes damaged. No dollar figure is yet available. Police and fire units are on the scene to assist residents. (Continue with summary of the situation.)

Aftershocks continue to be felt in the area. If you feel shaking, quickly seek shelter under a sturdy piece of furniture or in a supporting doorway. Do not use your telephone unless you need emergency help.

**Summary Statement for Media - Hazardous Materials Incident**

At approximately \_\_\_\_\_ am/pm today, a spill/release of a potentially hazardous substance was reported to this office by \_\_\_\_ (a private citizen, city employee, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_. (Police/Fire) \_\_\_\_\_ units were immediately dispatched to cordon off the area and direct traffic. The material was later determined to be \_\_\_\_ (describe) \_\_\_\_\_, a \_\_\_\_ (hazardous/harmless) (chemical, gas, substance, material) \_\_\_\_\_ which, upon contact, may produce symptoms of \_\_\_\_\_.

Precautionary evacuation of the \_\_\_\_ (immediate/X-block) \_\_\_\_\_ area surrounding the spill was (requested/required) \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_ (agency) \_\_\_\_\_. Approximately \_\_\_\_ (number) \_\_\_\_\_ persons were evacuated.

Clean-up crews from \_\_\_\_ (agency/company) \_\_\_\_\_ were dispatched to the scene and normal traffic had resumed by \_\_\_\_ (time) \_\_\_\_\_, at which time residents were allowed to return to their homes.

There were no injuries reported. -- OR -- \_\_\_\_ (number) \_\_\_\_\_ persons, including \_\_\_\_ (fire/police) \_\_\_\_\_ personnel, were treated at area hospitals for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_ (all/number) \_\_\_\_\_ were later released. Those remaining in the hospital are in \_\_\_\_\_ condition.

Response \_\_\_\_\_ agencies \_\_\_\_\_ involved \_\_\_\_\_ included \_\_\_\_\_.