

EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNCTION (ESF) #15
EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION – EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

I. PURPOSE:

To provide for the timely release of accurate information to the residents of the City of Pacific in the event of an emergency or disaster. Utilizing all forms of media available. Such measures will help substantially to: ensure public safety, maintain order, minimize rumors and misinformation, and to the best extent possible, satisfy the demands of the news media in reporting the unfolding event.

II. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situation:

1. The City of Pacific is served by various news media, either located within the city or in the surrounding area, which would be utilized to disseminate public information in an emergency or disaster situation. (See Appendix 4 to ESF#15 for a listing of these media.)
2. Initially, the public information function for any emerging disaster/emergency event will be handled by the Mayor, or designee, and in conjunction with incoming state and federal responders, depending on the scope of the incident. The fact that an emergency/disaster situation is a result of a terrorist act may not be known immediately during the initial emergency response, and it may take days or weeks until that is fully determined.
3. The City of Pacific is not immune to becoming the target of a terrorist threat, attack or incident, as could occur in any other community or area in the United States. Public Information/procedures specific to a terrorist threat/incident are in ESF#13-3.
4. Effective public information capabilities and coordination of information represents a vital function for Federal, state and local law officials during the response. Standard NIMS protocols and constructs (e.g. JIS, EOC PIO) shall be used for purposes of this EOP.
5. The dominant number of City of Pacific residents speak English. Official Public Information will be issued in English. Should there be a need for emergency translation, the following options shall be considered:
 - a. Family, friends, co-workers
 - b. AT&T Language Services
 - c. Area schools' foreign languages staff
 - d. Area partner agencies
6. Sample news releases have been developed and can be found in

Appendix 6 to this annex.

- B. Assumptions:
1. During an actual or impending emergency or international crisis, the public will expect local government to provide specific information relating to safety, survival, and protection of property.
 2. The media will cooperate with local officials in the dissemination of information to the public.
 3. Widespread or major disasters may result in state and national media coverage. Media personnel from state and national levels will not be familiar with local news release procedures.
 4. Media personnel may attempt to obtain information from other than "official sources".
 5. An effective public information program will reduce casualties and damages.

III. **CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS**

NOTE: The time frame for performing these actions is listed in parentheses.

- A. The Public Information Officer (PIO) will be in the EOC or at a location to be designated when this plan is implemented. This location will serve as the official point of contact for the media during an emergency. (PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE, and RECOVERY)
- B. Release of official public information will be coordinated with and approved by the Mayor and the Incident Commander (when incident command operations are in effect) and released to the public in a timely manner. (MITIGATION, PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE, and RECOVERY)
- C. Only information released by the Mayor or the chief PIO will be considered official. The media will be so informed. (MITIGATION, PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE, and RECOVERY)
- D. Information for release will be prepared and released to the media in accordance with the format described in Appendix 2 to this annex. (PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE, and RECOVERY)
- E. Response organizations are responsible for coordinating with the PIO and for clearing press releases with the Mayor before releasing information to the media for the public. (PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE, and RECOVERY)

- F. Any person, department, or agency releasing information to the public of their own volition will bear the responsibility for any legal or moral ramifications and repercussions resulting from that release. (PREPAREDNESS, EMERGENCY RESPONSE, and RECOVERY)
- G. Dissemination of public information will utilize all available, relevant alerts, warnings and media pathways as is relevant for the situation. A list of available pathways and authorized personnel is in the City of Pacific's Public Information Alert and Warning Plan policy. Media options include television, newspaper, radio, internet and social media applications/outlets. Appendix 3 to ESF#15 contains a typical Statement of Understanding (SOU) for emergency public information. (MITIGATION, PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE, and RECOVERY)
- H. Public information personnel in the field will coordinate with the chief PIO through frequent contacts with the EOC staff. (PREPAREDNESS, EMERGENCY RESPONSE, and RECOVERY)
- I. Periodic briefings as necessary for media personnel may be conducted by the PIO. (PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE, and RECOVERY)
- J. A rumor control section may be established to answer inquiries from the public and to monitor media broadcasts to insure the public is receiving accurate information. (PREPAREDNESS, EMERGENCY RESPONSE, and RECOVERY)
- K. A major task of public information operations is often responding to inquiries. The PIO must establish procedures to inform families on the status of relatives who are injured or missing, emergency services available, damaged and/or restricted areas due to a disaster event, etc. (MITIGATION, PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE, and RECOVERY)
- L. When an emergency occurs or threatens to occur requiring the dissemination of emergency public information, the PIO will release this information as soon as possible. (PREPAREDNESS and/or RESPONSE)
- M. Should the emergency involve more than the City of Pacific, the PIO will coordinate public information activities with the PIO(s) of the other jurisdiction(s) involved. (PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE, and RECOVERY)
- N. If the emergency/disaster warrants activation of a state and/or federal response, the local PIO will coordinate public information activities with the state and/or federal PIOs. (PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE, and RECOVERY)

- O. The PIO will coordinate with state, federal, and private sector agencies to obtain technical information (health risks, weather, etc.) when preparing releases. (PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE, and RECOVERY)

IV. ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The conceptual functional diagram for emergency public information is located in Appendix 1 to ESF#15.
- B. The Chief PIO for The City of Pacific is the Mayor. In his/her absence the City Administrator and/or the Emergency Management Director shall be designated as the back-up PIO. No other local IMT personnel shall provide public information.
- C. During a hazardous materials situation, the Incident Commander will appoint an on-scene PIO for media relations. If the EOC is activated, the on-scene PIO will coordinate activities with the Chief PIO should they be two different individuals.
- D. The PIO, in conjunction with the EMD and MAC Group, is responsible for the following:
 - 1. Prepare and release public information and assist in the dissemination of items.
 - 2. Arrange for emergency public information (EPI) materials for visually- and hearing-impaired persons, as well as for any non-English speaking groups, if applicable.
 - 3. Prepare instructions for people who must evacuate from a high-risk area.
 - 4. These EPI instructions will address the following for each threat:
 - a. Definition of the population at risk
 - b. Evacuation routes
 - c. Suggested types and quantities of food, water, clothing, medical items, etc. evacuees should take with them
 - d. Locations of reception areas, shelters, feeding facilities, and medical clinics in the host (reception) area
 - e. Safe travel routes for returning to residences
 - f. Centrally-located staging areas/pick-up points for evacuees

needing transportation, etc.

5. Coordinate with the Franklin and/or St. Louis Counties Health Department's PIO on the development of public information regarding health risks, first-aid, etc.
 6. Establish a rumor control section if determined to be required.
- E. The Counties Public Health PIO will assist the chief PIO in the development of materials, which describe the health risks, associated with each hazard, the appropriate self-help or first-aid actions, and other survival measures.
 - F. The Police Chief will coordinate across law enforcement communications for emergency public information, including rumor control and EAS monitoring.
 - G. Each operating department/organization will furnish a PIO when necessary and available. These department/organization PIOs will provide information to the mayor and the city administrator when needed and will assist in the release of public information.
 - H. Under certain circumstances a Public Information Call Center (PICC) may be deemed valuable and shall be activated. The decision to activate a PICC and name the immediate PICC Coordinator resides with the City Administrator in consultation with the EMD and Chief of Police. The PIO shall establish contact and provide guidance with the PICC Coordinator.
 - I. As an incident becomes more complex, the use of a Joint Information Center (JIC) and its corresponding Joint Information System (JIS) shall be evaluated for activation. This decision, and the staffing, role and location of such shall adhere to NIMS/ICS best practices and the specific scenarios being addressed.

V. DIRECTION AND CONTROL:

- A. Release of public information will be under the control of the Public Information Officer.
- B. The Public Information Officer is a member of the EOC staff.

VI. CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT:

The line of succession for The City of Pacific's Chief PIO is:

1. City Administrator
2. Chief Elected Official, i.e. Mayor
3. Emergency Management Director
4. Acting Board President

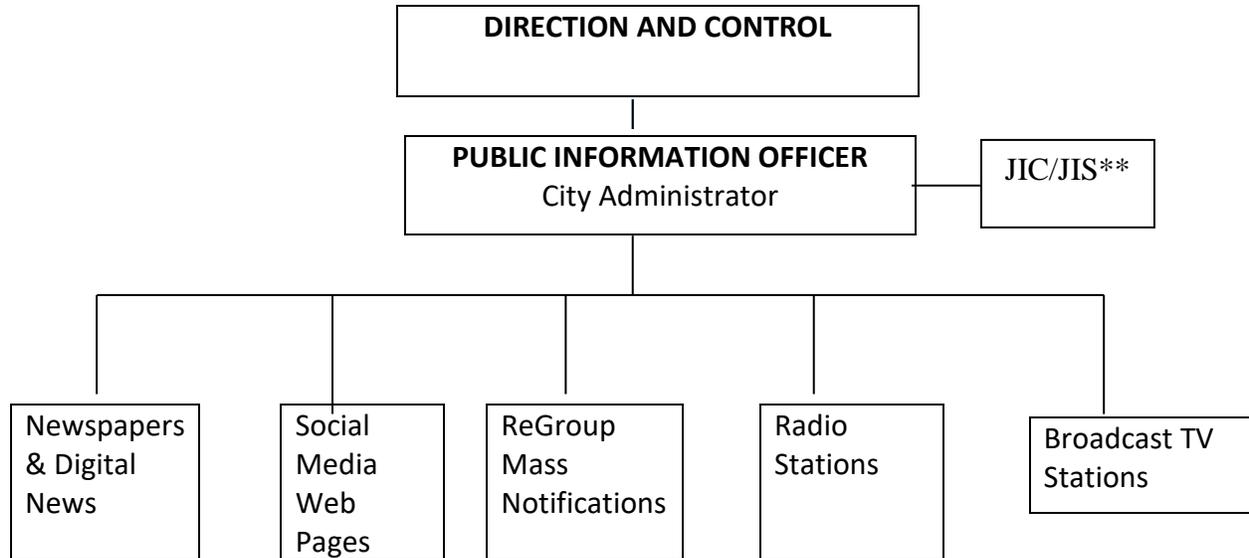
VII. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS

A chronological file of all news releases during the disaster will be maintained in the EOC, as well as a log of these releases (see Appendix 6 to this annex).

APPENDICES

1. Emergency Public Information Conceptual Functional Diagram
2. Format and Procedures for News Releases
3. Statement of Understanding for Emergency Public Information Operations
4. Area Media Points of Contact
5. News Release Log
6. Sample News Releases:
 - Attachment A - Flood Evacuation Ordered
 - Attachment B - Hazardous Materials Incident
 - Attachment C - No Information Available
 - Attachment D - Update on Earthquake
7. Public Information Call Center (PICC) Overview

Appendix 1 To ESF#15
CONCEPTUAL EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION FUNCTIONAL DIAGRAM*



*Further specifics and information regarding various pathways available for use by authorized City of Pacific personnel is contained in the City of Pacific, MO Emergency Management Agency (EMA) Public Information (PI) Alerting and Warning Plan. This policy document also includes a list of triggers which may be encountered and the various PI pathways that shall be used.

** A joint information center (JIC) is a group of communications representatives from agencies and organizations located together and providing public information about a significant, large-scale event. It is designed to handle public information needs on a larger scale than could be effectively managed by a single agency. The JIC structure is designed to work equally well for large- or medium-sized situations and can expand or contract to meet the needs of the incident. The JIC is led by the lead agency public information officer (PIO) who has three primary responsibilities:

- **Gather incident data:** Obtain verified, up-to-date information from appropriate sources;
- **Inform the public:** Serve as the source of accurate, consistent and comprehensive information about the incident and the response to a specific set of audiences;
- **Analyze public perceptions of the response:** Employ techniques for obtaining feedback to provide response agencies with insight into community information needs, their expectations for the role to be played by the response agencies and the lessons to be learned from specific response efforts.

The JIC should be located within or nearby the emergency operations center. There can be only one primary JIC for an incident, but satellite JICs may be established if the scale of the emergency makes it necessary.

Appendix 2 to ESF#15
FORMAT AND PROCEDURES FOR NEWS RELEASES

A. Format:

1. Name, address, and telephone 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 reactions 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 section.

Appendix 3 To ESF#15
STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING FOR
EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION OPERATIONS

- A. This statement of understanding is entered into between (Radio-TV stations and/or Newspapers), hereinafter referred to as the media, and (the City of Pacific), hereinafter referred to as (the City of Pacific) to provide emergency information to the citizens of (the City of Pacific) whenever a threat to life and property exists from natural or man-made causes.
- B. When, in the determination of the Mayor of (the City of Pacific), a threat to life and property exists or threatens (the city), the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) of (the City of Pacific) 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.
- C. The EOC of will:
1. Provide the media with a description of the threat and the actions that the emergency staff of (the City of Pacific) 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 significant 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.
- D. 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 Pacific) 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 Pacific) any damage to or outages of such equipment.

NB: THIS STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE (City of Pacific) 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 (the City of Pacific).

For the Media

For the City of Pacific

APPENDIX 6 to ESF#15
SAMPLE NEWS RELEASES

Attachment A To Appendix 6 to ESF#15
SAMPLE RADIO/TV MESSAGE

FLOOD EVACUATION ORDERED

This is _____. The flooding situation continues in parts of the city of Pacific 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 area 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).

Attachment B To Appendix 6 to ESF#15
SUMMARY STATEMENT FOR MEDIA

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INCIDENT
(To be adapted according to the situation.)

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- _____ 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 were _____.

Attachment C To Appendix 6 to ESF#15
SAMPLE MEDIA MESSAGE

EARTHQUAKE

This is _____ at the _____. An earthquake of undetermined magnitude has just been felt in the Pacific City 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 informed as reports come in. Meanwhile, be prepared for aftershocks.

If shaking begins again, 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.

Attachment D To Appendix 6 to ESF#15
SAMPLE MEDIA MESSAGE

UPDATE ON EARTHQUAKE

This is _____ at the _____. The magnitude of the earthquake, which struck the Pacific City 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.

Appendix 7 To ESF#15
PUBLIC INFORMATION CALL CENTER (PICC) OVERVIEW

General

During times of crisis or emergency, the demand for information is great. In fact, it has been said that during a crisis, information is as important to people as food and water.

Part of the mission of Emergency Management is to provide the public with accurate, concise, credible information in a timely fashion – information the public will use to make decisions about their health and safety.

While the Internet and the traditional media are excellent outlets for information, the telephone remains key for the following reasons:

- People may not have access to the Internet.
- Traditional media may not be readily accessible or offer the information people need at the time they need it.
- Information may not be in the language or format some people need.
- Some people will prefer personal contact for information.
- Answers to some questions may not be readily available through other outlets.

Calls will come, so the City of Pacific must be prepared to respond to specific questions from the public and provide callers with accurate, credible, concise information in order to help them make the best decision they can about their health and safety.

APPENDIX 4 to ESF#15
AREA MEDIA POINTS OF CONTACT

<u>Media Type (MT)</u>	<u>Media Focus (MF)</u>	<u>Language (L)</u>
BC-Broadcast	AG-Agriculture	ENG-English
CB-Cable	AL-Alternative	SPA-Spanish
DN-Digital News	BU-Busines	ZHO-Chinese
IN-Internet	CO-College University	
MG-Magazine	ET-Ethnic	
NP-Newspaper	GI-General Interest	
	GL-Gay Lesbian	
	LG-Legal	
	ML-Military	
	RL-Religion	
	SH-Shopper	
	SP-Sport	

Missouri Newspapers and News Media - Local

		<u>MT</u>	<u>MF</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>Details</u>
Ellisville	West Newsmagazine	NP	GI	ENG	
Festus	Leader Publications	IN	GI	ENG	
Pacific	Hometown Matters	IN	GI	ENG	
Regional	Spectrum	CB	GI	ENG	
Regional	Dish	CB	GI	ENG	
Regional	DirectTV	CB	GI	ENG	
St. Clair	St. Clair Missourian	NP	GI	ENG	
St. Louis	Current	NP	CO	ENG	Missouri St. Louis
St. Louis	Diario Digital STL	IN	ET	ENG	Hispanic Also ENG
St. Louis	El Hispano	NP	ET	SPA	Hispanic
St. Louis	Journal	NP	CO	ENG	Webster
St. Louis	KDNL	BC	GI	ENG	ABC 31/30
St. Louis	KETC	BC	GI	ENG	PBS 23/9
St. Louis	KFTK	BC	GI	ENG	FM 97.1
St. Louis	KMOV	BC	GI	ENG	CBS 24/4
St. Louis	KMOX	BC	GI	ENG	AM 1120
St. Louis	KPLR	BC	GI	ENG	CW 26/11
St. Louis	KSDK	BC	GI	ENG	NBC 35/5
St. Louis	KTVI	BC	GI	ENG	FOX 43/2
St. Louis	KWMU	BC	GI	ENG	FM 90.7
St. Louis	Red Latina	NP	ET	SPA	Hispanic
St. Louis	Riverfront Times	NP	AL	ENG	
St. Louis	St. Louis American	NP	ET	ENG	African American
St. Louis	St. Louis Argus	NP	ET	ENG	African American
St. Louis	St. Louis Business Journal	NP	BU	ENG	
St. Louis	St. Louis Chinese American News	NP	ET	ZHO	Chinese Also ENG
St. Louis	St. Louis Chinese Journal	NP	ET	ZHO	Chinese Also ENG
St. Louis	St. Louis Jewish Light	NP	RL	ENG	Jewish
St. Louis	St. Louis Metro Sentinel Journal	NP	ET	ENG	African American
St. Louis	St. Louis Post Dispatch	NP	GI	ENG	
St. Louis	St. Louis Review	NP	RL	ENG	Roman Catholic
St. Louis	Student Life	NP	CO	ENG	Washington

St. Louis	University News	NP	CO	ENG	St. Louis
St. Louis	Vital Voice	NP	GL	ENG	
St. Louis	West End Word	NP	GI	ENG	
Sullivan	Sullivan Independent News	NP	GI	ENG	
Sullivan	Sullivan Journal	IN	GI	ENG	
Union	Union Missourian	NP	GI	ENG	
Washington	E Missourian	IN	GI	ENG	
Washington	Washington Missourian	NP	GI	ENG	