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EF 2 – Communications

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EF 2 Tasked Agencies	
Primary Agencies	Shasta Area Safety Communications Agency
Supporting Agencies	Shasta County Sheriff's Office Shasta County Information Technology Department Valley Communications Shasta 2-1-1 Shasta Tehama Amateur Radio Emergency Services California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Emergency Coordination Center
Primary State Agency	California Governor's Office of Emergency Services – Public Safety Communications Office

1 Purpose and Scope

Emergency Function (EF) 2 provides resources, support and restoration of government emergency telecommunications, including voice and data. EF 2 organizes, establishes, and maintains the communications capabilities among appropriate agencies and other entities necessary to meet Shasta County's (County's) operational requirements in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies and disasters. This EF also outlines the structure and operation of the warning systems used to alert key officials and the general public of a potential or occurring emergency or disaster. This function emphasizes the technical considerations of communication functions. Collection, control, and dissemination of emergency public information are covered by EF 15 – Public Information.

2 Policies and Agreements

2.1 Policies

The following communication-related policies are currently in place:

- County Interoperable Communications Plan

2.2 Agreements

The following agreements are currently in place:

- Third Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement with the Shasta Area Safety Communications Agency, County of Shasta, the City of Redding, and the City of Anderson (as amended in 2012).

3 Situation and Assumptions

3.1 Situation

A disaster condition may result from a significant natural or human-caused incident that generates extensive damage and/or results in a high volume of

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requests from all levels of government for services required to save lives and alleviate human suffering. The authorities receiving such requests require accurate and timely information on which to base decisions and guide response actions. At a time when the need to convey information quickly is greatest, the infrastructure needed to facilitate efficient communication may be damaged or overloaded. In such situations, all functioning telecommunications assets of the various levels of government, augmented by extra-regional assets, will be needed immediately to ensure a proper response to aid those in need.

3.2 Assumptions

- Local jurisdictions will require accurate and timely information on which to base their decisions and focus their response actions.
- Routine, day-to-day modes of communication will continue to be utilized to the degree that they survive the disaster.
- There are identified frequencies that will be used for primary direction and control.
- Normal forms of communication may be severely interrupted during the early phases of an emergency or disaster.
- The loss of some or all telephone service will reduce or eliminate the effectiveness of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) public information lines, as well as the majority of County departments.
- The management and logistics of communications support is highly situational and requires flexibility and adaptability.
- Significant incidents may require evacuation of significant numbers of affected populations. Such evacuations may require extensive coordination of inter- and intra-County communications and may exceed normal radio communication capabilities.
- In the event of an emergency or disaster that damages the County's digital radio system, a backup analog system may be utilized.
- Local amateur radio operators have the ability to set up field communications to support or augment public safety operations, as appropriate. One use of this amateur radio system may be for providing communications between the EOC and American Red Cross shelters.
- At a time when the need for real-time electronically processed information is greatest, the capability to produce it may be seriously restricted or nonexistent due to widespread damage to communications and power systems facilities.

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- If electronic emergency information systems are not available, paper logs may be used to record events, communications and messages, damage assessments, situation reports, resources utilized, staff hours expended, etc.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities for each department in support of emergency services will vary depending on the type of resource, the length of the warning period, and the duration of the incident.

4.1 Emergency Function 2 Actions by Phase of Emergency Management

4.1.1 Preparedness

- Develop plans, procedures, and protocols for communications in accordance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS), Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), State of California (State) and local ordinances, and existing agreements.
- Ensure that alternate or backup communications systems are available.
- Coordinate common communications procedures.
- Develop and test emergency procedures.
- Develop written mutual aid agreements as needed to ensure coordination within the Shasta Operational Area.
- Develop and/or review procedures for requesting additional crisis resources.
- Review departmental plans and procedures and maintain personnel call-up lists.
- Develop and conduct training to improve all-hazard incident management capability for response communications.
- Develop exercises and drills of sufficient intensity to challenge management and operations and to test the knowledge, skills, and abilities of individuals and organizations for response communications.
- Participate in emergency management training and exercises.
- Develop and maintain a communications resource inventory.

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- Implement incident communications interoperability plans and protocols.
- Communicate incident response information.
- Use established common response communications language (i.e., plain English) to ensure that information dissemination is timely, clear, acknowledged, and understood by all receivers.
- Request external resources using the jurisdictions within the Sheriff's Office, Office of Emergency Services Mutual Aid Regional Coordinator and other intra-county mutual aid/assistance processes.
- Ensure that all critical communications networks are functioning.
- Establish and maintain response communications systems on site.
- Maintain existing equipment and follow established procedures for communicating with organization personnel performing field operations.
- Implement procedures for inspecting and protecting communications equipment.
- Ensure that redundant communications circuits/channels are available for use.
- Make arrangements to ensure that emergency communications equipment repair service is available 24 hours/day, or a backup communications system is available in the event that the equipment is out of service.
- Establish and ensure radio connectivity between the Incident Command Post and the EOC. Keep the EOC informed of field operations as much as possible.
- The Shasta Area Safety Communications Agency (SHASCOM) will provide the proper number of dispatchers needed to handle radio communications for the incident.
- The Response Information Management System (RIMS) is a key means of communication between the EOC and Regional EOC.
- Operational Area Satellite Information System (OASIS) is a system designed to ensure voice and data communications between the Shasta Operational Area, the Regional EOC, and the State Operations Center. This system provides a back-up to RIMS.

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4.1.3 Recovery

- Phase down operations, as appropriate.
- Continue to perform the tasks necessary to expedite restoration and recovery operations.
- Clean, repair, and perform maintenance on all equipment before returning to normal operations or storage.
- Coordinate and conduct a post-disaster situation analysis to review and determine the effectiveness of the pre-established tasks, responsibilities, reporting procedures, and formats to document crucial lessons learned and make any necessary changes in this EF Annex to improve future operations.

4.1.4 Mitigation

- Test all communications and warning equipment to ensure that it is operating.
- Develop and maintain back-up systems, including back-up power ability.
- Attempt to construct/place new equipment away from possible hazards.
- Ensure that methods are in place to protect communications equipment, including cyber and telecommunications resources.

5 Concept of Operations

5.1 General

- In accordance with the County EOP and this EF annex, SHASCOM is the primary agency responsible for coordinating emergency communications activities. Plans and procedures developed by the primary and supporting agencies provide the framework for carrying out those activities.
- Requests for assistance with communications resources will be generated one of two ways: they will be forwarded to SHASCOM, or they will be issued in accordance with established mutual aid agreements.
- SHASCOM will provide guidance for the coordination of communications resources.

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- Communications support requirements that cannot be met at the local level should be forwarded to the State for assistance. If needed, federal assistance may be requested by the Governor.

5.2 Notifications

- The Director of Emergency Services will notify SHASCOM and supporting agencies of EOC activation and request that representatives report to the EOC to coordinate communications activities.
- As additional EOC staffing needs become apparent, other support and partnering agency personnel may be asked to report to the EOC to assist with communications activities.

5.3 Access and Functional Needs Populations

County emergency communications services will be provided in such a way that populations with access and functional needs receive adequate and timely warning and emergency information.

6 Emergency Function Annex Development and Maintenance

SHASCOM will be responsible for coordinating regular review and maintenance of this EF Annex. Each primary and supporting agency will be responsible for developing plans and procedures that address assigned tasks.

7 Supporting Documents

The following plans and procedures are currently in place:

Shasta County

- Shasta County Emergency Operations Plan: EF 15 – Public Information
- Shasta County Interoperable Communications Plan

State of California

- California Emergency Plan: EF 2 – Communications and EF 15 – Public Information
- California Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan, June 2011

Federal

- National Response Framework: ESF 2 – Communications and ESF 15 – Public Information

8 Appendices

None at this time.

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