New Hanover County Emergency Operations Plan Functional Annex: Communications

Communications Annex Responders	
Agency Role	**Agencies**
Primary Agencies	• Fire & Ocean Rescue • Police Department • Town Manager & Assistant Town Manager/Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC)
Supporting Agencies	• NHC Emergency Management (External) • New Hanover County 911 Communications Center • Amateur Radio Emergency Services • PSCC
Private Resources	• Wireless Communications • Various Cellular, Paging and Telecommunications Companies

External Plan Alignment to Communications Annex:

- *New Hanover County Communications Annex*

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Introduction

Purpose

The purpose of *Functional Annex: Communications* is to provide support for communications systems and infrastructure utilized by responders in the Town of Carolina Beach. This annex coordinates systems, infrastructure, and the restoration of those services which are impacted by an event.

Scope

This annex identifies the key policies, concepts of operations, roles and responsibilities, and capabilities associated with communications in the Town of Carolina Beach. This annex is focused solely on the municipal response and recovery operations, as applicable.

Coordination activities may include:
- Managing the Town of Carolina Beach's computer network and internal telecommunications system.
- Providing Information Technology (IT) hardware support and installing and troubleshooting software applications as necessary.
- Providing support for WebEOC, alert and warning systems, Geographical Information System (GIS), and other systems necessary for Incident Command Post (ICP) operation.
- Coordinating the restoration and repair of telecommunications infrastructure and communication with providers community-wide.

Situation

- Reliable communications are foundational to disaster operations. Inoperable communications systems compromise response and recovery missions.
- The Town of Carolina Beach operates on a common 800 MHz radio system.
- The county has one Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP), the NHC 911 Communication Center.

Planning Assumptions

- Agencies involved in response operations will develop and maintain plans for redundancy of critical IT systems.
- IT will ensure that all necessary information technology systems are maintained and readily available for emergency situations.
- Emergencies may impact normal communications systems, necessitating redundant communications systems to be in place pre-disaster.
- The Town of Carolina Beach's communications infrastructure could sustain damage as a primary hazard or as a result of another hazard. This damage will influence the amount and types of communications assets available for the coordination of recovery efforts by government agencies and the ability to communicate with disaster victims and responders.
- Disaster responses requiring communications will be difficult to coordinate effectively if a breakdown in public and private systems occurs.
- Communications capability will have a direct impact on the ability to command and control response and recovery activities.
- Initial reports of damage may be fragmented and provide an incomplete picture of the damage to communications facilities.
- Weather and other environmental factors may restrict the movement of mobile or transportable communications equipment into the affected area.

Concept of Operations

General

- Prior to and upon activation of the Incident Command Post (ICP), Communications personnel will verify testing of critical computer networking, telephone equipment, and radio systems to ensure proper operation.
- All responders will maintain systems under their charge in working order with trained personnel available for support as needed.

Specific

Communications Infrastructure

- The NHC 911 Center is the primary dispatch center for NHC. It is located at 230 Government Center Drive, Suite 185, in Wilmington.
- Secondary dispatch is located at NHC Fire Rescue Station 19 Federal Point.
- NHC 911 Center operates a Motorola P25 simulcast trunking system as the primary public safety radio system.
- The back-up system for the P25 system is the statewide VIPER network. This network does have some day-to-day application as well for out-of-county communications.
- National Public Safety Planning Advisory Committee (NPSPAC) interoperability 800 MHz repeaters are located on various towers through the county.
- PACE (Primary, Alternate, Contingency, Emergency) planning is underway to develop a common radio template for all public safety agencies.

Communications Assets

- Radio caches are available for responders in the county through NHC EM.
- Amateur radio operators may be available on an as needed basis. These radios and operators require an FCC license.
- Requests for tower access must be coordinated through the 911 Center.

Tactical Interoperable Communications

PACE plan

- All agencies are now on a common template which allows for interoperability among responders.
- Novant New Hanover Regional Medical Center has their own system and also can access the P25.
- Law enforcement communications are primarily encrypted. There are also some additional channels which are encrypted to allow for security and interoperability with outside agencies.

Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

All agencies charged with a response in this annex are expected to collaborate and coordinate with emergency partners to respond to and recover from emergencies in the Town of Carolina Beach. This annex is not a substitute for local/departmental response plans and does not usurp local policies and

procedures. This annex may be activated to support any response in the Town of Carolina Beach for which the EOP is activated.

Key actions which should be implemented by all those responding under this annex are as follows:
- All responders should maintain professional relationships with partner agencies.
- All responders should participate in training and exercises as appropriate.
- Agencies will maintain current rosters with points of contact and resources.
- Organizations responsible are expected to maintain the capability to provide services for which they are charged. Contingency plans should be in place for continuing operations if needed.
- All individuals/organizations involved in disaster response should collect and record information on the utilization of labor, materials, equipment, and disaster related costs.
- Appropriate representation will be sent to the Incident Command Post (ICP) as needed.

The following pages are checklists of actions to be coordinated by those listed in this annex as primary and support agencies. The primary agencies will coordinate the overall response under the functions covered by this annex and supporting agencies will assist in the response as needed. The primary agencies will collaborate to identify and activate supporting agencies as appropriate.

Preparedness Actions Checklist

These actions may be taken during normal operations in preparation for an event. All primary and support agencies should consider these actions.

Preparedness Actions	Notes	Responsible Party	Status
Review, update and revise mutual aid agreements, memorandums of understanding, standard operating guidelines, etc. annually.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Continually evaluate capabilities required to accomplish operations under this annex, identify any gaps, and leverage resources to address them.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Address after-action items and lessons learned regarding this annex from exercises and real-world events, whether through planning, operations, exercises, training, or equipment.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Develop and/or participate in relevant related planning, training, and exercise activities at the local, regional, state, and/or federal level.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Ensure necessary supplements to the annex are developed and maintained including contact lists, internals procedures, etc.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Ensure staff are fully trained and prepared to respond to the Incident Command Post (ICP) as needed.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Maintain a list of municipal officials and key County and State agency's contact phone numbers, unlisted numbers, pager numbers, cell phones and fax numbers, etc.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Develop and update contact lists with phone numbers (home, cellular, fax, etc.), pagers, radio call signs, etc.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐

Preparedness Actions	Notes	Responsible Party	Status
Plan for alternate means of communicating with field units if normal communications channels are disrupted.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Routinely test Incident Command Post (ICP) technology equipment and ensure proper operation. (Computers, Projector, Terminals, Monitors, Faxes, Telephones, Plasma Screens, Modems, Copiers, and Scanners etc.)			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Ensure an adequate supply of computer support supplies.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Verify software operability.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Establish liaison with telephone, paging, cable, and cellular companies, etc.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐

Monitoring/ Initial Incident Actions Checklist

The following actions may be taken during the initial phases of incident response, including during a "Monitoring" phase activation. Not all actions will be necessary during every event. Complete those actions necessary for the incident.

Monitoring/Initial Incident Actions	Notes	Responsible Party	Status
Identify and notify the supporting agencies that their resources and personnel may be required to respond.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Ensure communications have been/will be established with field units, command posts, etc.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐

Monitoring/Initial Incident Actions	Notes	Responsible Party	Status
Prepare staffing plan to adequately support Incident Command Post (ICP) operations over the required number of operational periods.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Develop plans to overcome gaps in communications capabilities.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Anticipate and advise the Incident Command Post (ICP) of the need for additional technology resources.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Verify testing of critical computer networking, telephone equipment, and radio systems to ensure their proper operation in the Incident Command Post (ICP) and other responding departments.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Work with IT professionals and software vendors to establish disaster preparedness and recovery plans.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Prepare backup tapes for file server(s) and store off-site.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Notify Technology of impending event and make plans to back up and secure servers and computer equipment within the Finance Department.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Prepare and secure vital records.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Provide technical assistance to activate internal/external notification systems.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Establish communication with support agencies (radio, telephone, cellular) and ensure that they are ready to respond.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐

Response Actions Checklist

The following actions may be taken during the response, including during partial or full phase activations. Not all actions will be necessary during every event. Complete those actions necessary for the incident.

Response Actions	Notes	Responsible Party	Status
When requested, respond to the Incident Command Post (ICP)			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Provide assistance to incoming personnel in the use of technology and equipment, as necessary.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Receive, manage, and track resource requests.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Receive, review and contribute to situational reports from the Incident Command Post (ICP) on a regular basis.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Track all incident related activities through appropriate ICS forms.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Ensure that all supporting agencies have maintained accurate logs of personnel and equipment resources utilized for response.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Track daily costs and develop expense reports.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Track the resources that have been committed to specific missions and plan for re-deployment upon release, when necessary.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Maintain list of communications resources and personnel (volunteer from private or business sector) that have been called into the Incident Command Post (ICP).			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Identify staging areas for communications resources that may be sent into the affected area for support.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Compile report of any damaged communications assets.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐

Recovery Actions Checklist

The following actions may be taken during recovery, including during partial or full phase activations. Not all actions will be necessary during every event. Complete those actions necessary for the incident.

Recovery Actions	Notes	Responsible Party	Status
Ensure all responders to this annex and/or their agencies provide appropriate records of costs incurred for purposes of reimbursement when available.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Create and implement a plan for deactivation of all assets.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Compile reports of damages to facilities, equipment, injuries, etc.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Participate in after-action review.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Develop a plan for the priority replacement of any damaged or destroyed communications assets.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐
Develop plan of action to improve response during future events.			Complete ☐ Ongoing ☐ Incomplete ☐

Direction, Control, and Coordination

Annex Activation

This annex will be activated in the event of a disaster or emergency impacting the Town of Carolina Beach in coordination with the Town of Carolina Beach's EOP, as outlined in the Base Plan. These procedures consist of processes and systems to communicate timely, accurate, and accessible information to the public, responders and stakeholders- the whole community. Any event requiring activation of the EOP may necessitate the activation of this annex.

Annex Development and Maintenance

This annex is developed by the Town of Carolina Beach in conjunction with emergency partners charged with a role in this annex. It is a functional annex supporting the Town's EOP. This document will be reviewed, maintained, and updated annually by the Town of Carolina Beach and any changes necessary will be made and forwarded to emergency partners. This annex may also be updated following exercises or real-world activations of this annex to modify policies, procedures, and incorporate lessons learned.

Acronyms

AFN	Access and Functional Needs
APIO	Assistant Public Information Officer
ARC	American Red Cross
ARES	Amateur Radio Emergency Services
ASU	Animal Services Unit
BNP	Brunswick Nuclear Plan
CDC	Centers for Disease Control
CISM	Critical Incident Stress Management
EAS	Emergency Alert System
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
EOP	Emergency Operations Plan
EPCRA	Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act
EPIC	Emergency Public Information Center
ERG	Emergency Response Guidebook
ESF	Emergency Support Function
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
GIS	Geographic Information Systems

IC	Incident Command
IC-3	Individual Care Coordination Center
ICP	Incident Command Post
ICS	Incident Command System
IPAWS	Integrated Public Alert and Warning System
JIC	Joint Information Center
JIS	Joint Information System
LEPC	Local Emergency Planning Commission
NAWAS	National Warning System
NC OEMS	North Carolina Office of Emergency Medical Services
NC	North Carolina
NFPA	National Fire Protection Administration
NHC EM	New Hanover County Emergency Management
NHC EOC	New Hanover County Emergency Operations Center
NHC EOP	New Hanover County Emergency Operations Plan
NHC HHS	New Hanover County Health and Human Services
NHC	New Hanover County
NHCFR	New Hanover County Fire Rescue
NHCHD	New Hanover County Health Department
NNHRMC	Novant New Hanover Regional Medical Center
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NWS	National Weather Service
OSC	On-Scene Coordinator
PETS	Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act
PIO	Public Information Officer
PSAP	Public Safety Answering Point
RRT	Regional Response Team
SAR	Search and Rescue
SARA	Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act
SERC	State Emergency Response Commission
SMAT	State Medical Assistance Team
SMORT	State Mortuary Operations Team
SNS	Strategic National Stockpile
SPCA	Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
TTY	Teletypewriter
USAR	Urban Search and Rescue
USCG	United States Coast Guard

UWCFA	United Way of the Cape Fear Area
VIPR	Volunteer Intervention Prevention Response
WEA	Wireless Emergency Alerts