

## ANNEX D

# EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION

### I. PURPOSE.

This annex provides procedures for the effective collection, control, and dissemination of emergency public information. Long-term public educational efforts related to hazard awareness are also outlined in this annex.

### II. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS.

See Section II, Basic Plan.

### III. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS.

#### General.

A. Emergency information efforts will focus on specific event-related information. This information will generally be of an instructional nature focusing on such things as warning, evacuation, and shelter. It is also important to keep the public informed of the general progress of events especially in terrorist related events since a major part of the terrorist threat is fear and intimidation. A special effort will be made to report positive information regarding emergency response in order to reassure the community that the situation is under control. Rumor control will be a major aspect of the informational effectiveness. Education efforts are directed toward increasing public awareness about potential hazards and how people can deal with them. All information and education efforts during a major emergency or disaster will rely heavily on the cooperation of media organizations.

B. The Sheriff, County Commissioners and the Emergency Management Director or their appointed representative are responsible for releasing information to the press through regularly scheduled news conferences following a major disaster. Initially the Sheriff will provide information concerning access restrictions or concerns and other security details necessary for the public. Following the initial control and security issues, the County Commissioners and the Emergency Manager will keep the public informed of appropriate information. As soon as possible a Joint Information Center (JIC) may be set up in an appropriate location for large incident control, and a Public Information Officer designated to provide information from all disciplines and jurisdictions.

### IV. TASK ORGANIZATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

#### A. Policy Group.

Appoint a public information officer or delegate the authority to an appropriate official.

B. Public Information Officer (PIO).

- a. Develop and present appropriate news information concerning disaster events
- b. Direct all emergency public information efforts.
- c. Designate a public information section within the EOC as the single official point of contact for the media during an emergency.
- d. Provide news releases, which have been cleared for release by the proper authorities, for the media.
- e. Check all print media for accuracy of reports.
- f. The following types of information shall be provided to the public by appropriate officials as soon as possible and in as much detail as possible.
  1. Nature of disaster.
  2. Location of disaster.
  3. Time of disaster.
  4. Number of casualties, dead and injured if known
  5. Agencies involved in response.
  6. Scope of agency involvement.
  7. Investigate rumors.
  8. Check TV and radio broadcast for accuracy of reports.
  9. Maintain a recent record of events.

V. DIRECTION AND CONTROL.

The Public Information Officer is responsible for gathering and controlling the release of accurate and appropriate information. The Public Information Officer

will maintain contact with the public contacting the EOC for information as follows:

a. The types of information outlined shall be collected and disseminated as soon as possible by the appropriate personnel as follows. It is recognized that personnel involved in response to a disaster have certain responsibilities for the protection of life and property, and will be under varying degrees of mental and physical stress, it is also recognized that certified representatives of the news media should be provided every opportunity for equal access to the scene of a disaster response activity and to interview personnel when it is consistent with safety and effective operation.

b. Incident Commander, or his designated representative, will provide a timely review of the disaster to the Public Information Officer, to be followed, as appropriate, by additional details as they are available will allow such access as consistent with safety and efficient operation.

c. The Public Information Officer, will be responsible for collection of information from the Incident Command Post, and other sources and agencies and for the dissemination of information directly to the news media, for preparation of news releases, and, where appropriate, for making announcements directly to the public via radio and/or television hookups. Under no circumstances shall the names of casualties be released through Oklahoma County.

d. In recognition of the public's right to know as much information as possible about a disaster, the various agencies involved in response will make every effort to cooperate by allowing certified representatives of legitimate news media equal access to information and scenes of response activities with safety of those individuals and rescue operations continuity as the primary factors.

#### VIII. PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE.

The Emergency Manager will be responsible for the development and maintenance of education and information programs.

#### IX. AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES.

A. Authorities. See Section IX, Basic Plan.

B. References.

1. Review of Mass Media Campaigns. Boulder, Colorado; Natural Research and Applications Information Center, University of Colorado.

2. Hazard Awareness Guidebook. Austin, Texas; Texas Coastal and Marine Council.
3. FEMA, State and Local Guide 100 (SLG 100); Guide for Increasing Local Government Civil Defense Readiness During Periods of International Crisis.
4. Public Awareness Programs for Natural Hazards, Boulder, Colorado, Natural Hazards Research and Applications Information Center, University of Colorado