

15

ESF 15 – External Affairs

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Table of Contents

1	Purpose	ESF 15-1
2	Scope.....	ESF 15-1
3	Roles and Responsibilities.....	ESF 15-1
3.1	Primary Agencies	ESF 15-1
3.1.1	Governor’s Office.....	ESF 15-2
3.1.2	Oregon Emergency Management.....	ESF 15-2
3.2	Support Agencies.....	ESF 15-3
3.2.1	Department of Administrative Services.....	ESF 15-3
3.2.5	Oregon Department of Human Services/ State Public Health Division.....	ESF 15-4
3.2.6	Department of State Lands.....	ESF 15-4
3.2.7	Office of the State Fire Marshal	ESF 15-4
3.2.8	Oregon Department of Transportation.....	ESF 15-4
3.2.9	Oregon State Police	ESF 15-4
3.3	Adjunct Agencies	ESF 15-4
4	Concept of Operations.....	ESF 15-4
4.1	General	ESF 15-4
4.2	Public Information Team	ESF 15-5
4.2.1	Composition of the Public Information Team.....	ESF 15-5
4.2.2	Deployment of the Public Information Team.....	ESF 15-7
4.2.3	Information and Message Development.....	ESF 15-9
4.2.4	Staffing the Public Information Team.....	ESF 15-10
4.3	Joint Information Center.....	ESF 15-10
4.3.1	Function.....	ESF 15-10
4.3.2	Responsibilities.....	ESF 15-11
4.3.3	Location of the Joint Information Center.....	ESF 15-12
4.3.4	Virtual Joint Information Center and Website	ESF 15-12
4.3.5	Information and Message Development.....	ESF 15-14
4.3.6	Staffing the Joint Information Center	ESF 15-15
4.4	Training Requirements for Public Information Officers.....	ESF 15-15
5	Supporting Documents.....	ESF 15-16
6	Appendices	ESF 15-16

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ESF 15 Tasked Agencies	
Primary Agencies	Governor's Office Oregon Emergency Management (OEM)
Supporting Agencies	Department of Administrative Services (DAS) Oregon Military Department (OMD) Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS)/State Public Health Division (PHD) Department of State Lands (DSL) Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Oregon State Police (OSP)
Adjunct Agencies	

1 Purpose

- Ensure that sufficient state assets are deployed during incidents of major disaster, emergency or statewide incident of significance to provide accurate, coordinated, and timely information to affected governments, legislators, the media, the private sector, and the local populace.
- To collect, analyze, and disseminate critical information from Federal, state, local, regional, and tribal agencies, non-governmental organizations, commercial and private sector organizations to facilitate overall mitigation, response, and recovery actions associated with the emergency operations in the state.

2 Scope

- Coordinates the information and planning functions of the Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) when activated.
- Performs the information and reporting function of the ECC and provides a macro-view of the disaster or emergency situation.

3 Roles and Responsibilities

Major emergencies and disasters usually require responses from more than one state agency. Volume II, sections 3.1-3.25.5, and ESF 1 through ESF 15 of the Oregon Emergency Operations Plan specify the roles and responsibilities of state agencies as they respond to and manage emergencies.

3.1 Primary Agencies

- Upon activation of this plan, the Public Information Officer (PIO) of the designated lead state agency for the emergency or disaster becomes

the lead state PIO for purposes of this plan and the procedures it specifies.

- At any time, the Director of OEM or the Governor may appoint a replacement lead state PIO.
- The directors of state agencies must ensure that their emergency operations plans and public affairs officers and other information officers are National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliant.

While most emergency situations are handled locally, when there is a major emergency or disaster help may be needed from other jurisdictions, the state and the federal government. NIMS provides a consistent nationwide template to enable Federal, State, local, and tribal governments and private-sector and nongovernmental organizations to work together effectively and efficiently to prepare for, prevent, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity.

- In the event of an emergency, each responding state agency is responsible for providing subject matter experts, as appropriate, to assist the Public Information Team (PIT) in developing informational materials that are accurate and provide the public with wanted facts. This person may be the agency liaison officer in the Oregon ECC.
- In the event of an emergency or disaster, each responding state agency is responsible for notification of its respective partners and stakeholders.

3.1.1 Governor's Office

- The Governor's office mobilizes the PIOs of state agencies to staff and support the Joint Information System (JIS) or a Joint Information Center (JIC) when a public emergency or disaster occurs.

3.1.2 Oregon Emergency Management

- The mission and purpose of OEM is to establish, maintain, and implement an emergency services system on behalf of the Governor. Through the Oregon Emergency Response System (OERS), OEM provides a single point of contact that local governments and industries can use to obtain 24-hour-a-day assistance from any state emergency-response agency.
- At the direction of the Governor's Office, the OEM PIO and the lead agency PIO use the call-down procedure in Appendix C of the Public

Information Manual to notify key state agency PIOs of the emergency and activate additional staff, as warranted by the scale of the emergency and the demand for public information.

- Interact with Federal, Tribal, State and Local partners to facilitate a process of information sharing; inform elected and appointed officials on response efforts, protocols and recovery programs; and disseminate information with municipal and county associations and tribal governments.
- OEM will notify the DAS public affairs manager of training and exercise opportunities. The DAS public affairs manager will, in turn, notify the State Communications Council.

3.2 Support Agencies

3.2.1 Department of Administrative Services

In addition to the roles specified in Volume II, section 3.2, page 3-3, DAS will perform the following functions:

- When funding becomes available, DAS will establish and maintain a crisis communication hotline the public can use to obtain essential emergency information when needed.
- DAS's Public Affairs Section will establish and maintain an "emergency information" feature on the Oregon.gov Web site, which will provide updates and public advisories in the event of an emergency or major disaster. DAS will insert a link to this page on the Governor's Web site.
- DAS's Public Affairs Section will maintain a database of up-to-date contact information for all state agency PIOs.
- When funding becomes available, DAS's Public Affairs Section will establish and maintain a secure Virtual JIC.

3.2.2 Oregon Military Department

- OMD's Public Affairs Office is responsible for providing information to the public concerning activities of the Oregon National Guard and responding to requests for information from the public and private sector.
- OMD's Public Affairs Office will provide support to OEM's PIT in the State ECC or JIC, if established.

3.2.5 Oregon Department of Human Services/State Public Health Division

- The Oregon PHD will allow the Health Alert Network (HAN) (also known as Oregon Health Network) to serve as a secure virtual JIC until the state can establish a shared state-level virtual JIC.
- In addition to the virtual JIC function, the HAN includes an alerting system which allows pre-identified PIOs from various state agencies to be quickly and efficiently contacted through their preferred and prioritized method. This includes telephone, pager, and email. The Oregon PHD will allow OEM to utilize the HAN's alerting system to notify and give direction to appropriate PIO's regarding an emergency or disaster.

3.2.6 Department of State Lands

[TO BE DEVELOPED]

3.2.7 Office of the State Fire Marshal

[TO BE DEVELOPED]

3.2.8 Oregon Department of Transportation

- Provide OEM with reports on the status of transportation systems and ODOT response activities.
- Provide ODOT public affairs personnel to work in a JIS.

3.2.9 Oregon State Police

- Provide information, as appropriate, to the public concerning an emergency or disaster which requires the participation of OSP.

3.3 Adjunct Agencies

[TO BE DEVELOPED]

4 Concept of Operations

4.1 General

OEM will coordinate all requests for assistance and communicate with the state agencies to identify the appropriate action and state resources to be used. Once Public Information assets have been identified to meet the request, OEM will create an action using Ops Center to the specific State agencies to accomplish the task.

The intent of this annex is to establish and maintain an accessible process to help public agencies release timely emergency information that is accurate, consistent and easy to understand. Such information includes updates and reports about public agencies' response to an emergency or disaster and any recovery efforts that are underway. The audience includes the news media, the public at large, local governments, tribal entities, federal agencies and state workers.

When an emergency or disaster occurs, the public relies on timely, accurate, credible and coordinated information in order to react appropriately. State agencies have a responsibility to issue information that achieves the following goals:

- Help prevent loss of life and property.
- Warn and inform people in danger about the threat, and tell them what they can do to reduce the risk.
- Improve appropriate public response to future emergencies and disasters through education.

4.2 Public Information Team

To protect the public's health and safety in the event of an emergency or disaster, public agencies must issue accurate and timely information through the news media. They must rapidly and effectively communicate the facts of what happened. They must also reveal what the government will do about the emergency or disaster, and describe what citizens must do to protect themselves.

4.2.1 Composition of the Public Information Team

The PIT utilizes PIOs from various state agencies. The level of participation depends on the nature and scope of the emergency or disaster.

The primary agencies to be represented on the PIT include:

- OEM
- OMD
- Governor's office
- DAS
- ODOT
- Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
- Oregon State Police (OSP)
 - OSFM

ESF 15. External Affairs

- Law Enforcement Data Systems - Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS)
- Office of State Medical Examiner (OSME)
- DHS/PHD
- Other Agencies: Depending on the nature of the emergency or disaster, other agencies may need to participate in the PIT. These include, but are not limited to:
 - Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA)
 - Department of Aviation (AERO)
 - Department of Consumer and Business Services (DCBS)
 - Building Codes Division (BCD)
 - Insurance Division (INS)
 - Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Division (OR-OSHA)
 - Department of Corrections (DOC)
 - Oregon Economic and Community Development Department (OECDD)
 - Department of Energy (DOE)
 - Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW)
 - Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF)
 - Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI)
 - Department of Housing and Community Services (OHCS)
 - Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD)
 - Oregon Liquor Control Commission (OLCC)
 - Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD)
 - Oregon Poison Center (OPC)
 - Travel Oregon
 - Public Utility Commission (PUC)
 - DSL

- Water Resources Department (WRD)
- American Red Cross (ARC)
- Civil Air Patrol (CAP)

4.2.2 Deployment of the Public Information Team

- The decision to deploy state public information resources to help with emergencies or disasters affecting other state agencies, local agencies, regional agencies or other states lies with the Governor's office, the lead state agency PIO, and OEM.
- The lead state PIO and OEM PIO, in coordination with the Governor's Communication Director or representative, are responsible for determining if and when the PIT needs additional staff. If the need arises, the lead state PIO and the OEM PIO will use the call-down procedure in Appendix C of the Public Information Manual to activate additional staff. Appendix B of the Public Information Manual includes State PIO and other PIO contact information that can be used when requesting state and local public information resources.
- PIOs from affected jurisdictions will compile and disseminate information under a JIS. The PIO from each jurisdiction will coordinate information that comes from his or her respective emergency operations center. Such coordination includes exchanging news releases, advising one another of media inquiries, and sharing pertinent information.
- The JIS will operate from the onset of any emergency or disaster, and will continue operating as long as the state continues its response. Operations may continue through periods of recovery.
- When activated, the JIC becomes the primary location for facilitating the operations of the JIS. The JIC gives the media a single source of reliable information, a place to call for authoritative updates, attend interviews, and receive briefings. Procedures for establishing a JIC appear in Section VI below.
- The PIT may establish itself in the ECC, in the lead state agency Emergency Operations Center, or in a JIC depending on the nature and extent of the emergency or disaster.
- The PIT provides information about emergency conditions, actions being taken to respond to the emergency or disaster, and any instructions or warnings to the public. The PIT will perform the following functions:

ESF 15. External Affairs

- Conduct liaison between the decision-makers in the ECC and the news media.
- Provide timely, accurate, coordinated information to OEM staff, the Governor's communications director, the public, the news media, partners, stakeholders, and other interested parties. Such information includes the following:

Nature and extent of the emergency or disaster

- Areas of the state that have endured the effects of the emergency or disaster, and areas that may sustain damage in the future
 - Actions the public should take to protect themselves
 - Activities that government has initiated, or plans to initiate, in response to the emergency or disaster
- Prepare and maintain electronic copies of press releases and a log of public information activities.
 - Plan and prepare announcements, interviews, question-and-answer sessions, video footage, and other services for use by the printed news media, broadcast news media and internet news providers.
 - Brief the news media as new information becomes available. Schedule briefings on a regular basis (at designated times) and when announcements of "breaking news" are appropriate.
 - Monitor national, regional, and local news broadcasts to assess the accuracy of news reports. If inaccuracies occur, notify decision-makers in the ECC immediately, and take appropriate measures to provide corrected information to the news media.
 - Counter unfounded rumors with the timely release of factual information to the public.
 - Develop supplemental information, such as newspaper inserts and backgrounders, that provide detailed information about the state's efforts to protect the public, or any other facts or advice the public may find useful.
 - Whenever possible, maintain all public information news releases, briefing sheets, talking points, backgrounders and supplemental materials in electronic format. After the emergency has ended, collect public information records and deliver them to the manager of the ECC.

- During an activation of the ECC, the Governor’s communications director will provide direction to the PIT as part of the Executive Management Section.

4.2.3 Information and Message Development

During an emergency, the team focuses on delivering the facts of the event, as well as information about public health and safety, the activities involving response and recovery, disaster preparedness, and other directives from government. A key part of the job is to assure the public that authorities are executing coordinated response plans.

- The following sections of the Public Information Manual contain guidance for message development for use by the PIT:
 - Appendix E - Checklists and Forms
 - Appendix F - Hazards & Preparation Messages (examples of news releases and emergency preparedness information for specific disasters and emergencies)
 - Appendix G - Risk Communications Guide
- Prior to release of any message to the news media and other government representatives during an emergency or disaster, the PIT must secure approval from the following:
 - Lead state PIO
 - Subject matter expert (as appropriate)
 - One of the following Senior Management Officials with OEM:
 - OEM Director
 - ECC Manager
 - OEM Operations Manager
 - State coordinating officer (in the event that the President of the United States declares an emergency or disaster)
- During an emergency or disaster, the PIT will send all messages to the Governor’s communications director.
- In disseminating information to the public, the PIT will use the full array of communications systems and digital lists of news media contacts (email addresses of newsrooms, wire services and reporters). See Public Information Manual Appendix D - Media Contacts.

- The DAS will provide an 800 “hotline” that enables callers to learn critical facts and updates, including what residents can do to protect themselves and their property. The hotline will also notify callers of other important sources of information, including Web sites. The hotline will be located at OEM, the JIC, or other designated location.

4.2.4 Staffing the Public Information Team

- The roles and responsibilities of each member of the PIT appear in Appendix A - PIT/JIC Job Descriptions of the Public Information Manual.
- If Oregon requires help with public information from other states, the PIT will use the interstate Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) process. The EMAC Coordinator in the state ECC will process the EMAC request.
- The Governor and the directors of state agencies have discretion to deploy Oregon’s public information resources to help with emergencies or disasters that affect other states, local governments or regional agencies.

4.3 Joint Information Center

4.3.1 Function

- Depending on the extent of an emergency or disaster, dissemination of information to the public may occur through a JIS that begins when an emergency occurs and ends when the state’s response is complete. When established, the JIC becomes the primary location for facilitating the JIS and providing the news media with a single, reliable source of information. A JIC may be established under the following circumstances:
 - The scope of the emergency or disaster exceeds an individual agency’s ability to respond effectively.
 - The response to the emergency or disaster requires the involvement of more than one state agency.
 - The lead state agency determines that a JIC is needed.
- Once established, the JIC becomes the physical facility in which public affairs professionals work together to perform public affairs functions on behalf of the agencies involved in responding to the crisis. These professionals issue information about the emergency, answer questions from the news media, and coordinate responses to

the public's need for information about such matters as preparedness, response, recovery, mitigation and prevention of harm.

- A JIC may include representatives from the federal government, the State of Oregon, neighboring states, local government, and the private sector. The JIC will coordinate and release all information to the public on behalf of the state.
- Once a JIC has been established, the PIT operating in the State's ECC will relocate to the JIC. One ECC/JIC PIO liaison will continue to work in the ECC and coordinate information between the ECC and the JIC.
- Since the ECC will be closed to the media, the JIC also provides a location where the Governor, the lead state PIO, and others can meet with the media to hold news conferences and briefings.

4.3.2 Responsibilities

- The JIC must gather information from as many reliable sources as necessary to achieve an understanding of the emergency and its magnitude. When information comes to the JIC, the staff must collect and organize it to make it useful. This function requires skilled, experienced professionals who can quickly recognize the utility of gathered facts and present them in a way that reporters and news editors find helpful.
- Information comes to the JIC from many sources. The JIC staff must analyze the information, verify its reliability, and decide which items to release to internal and external audiences, a process that will require much of the staff's time. Throughout the process, those staffers who analyze incoming information must continuously share it with staffers who are responsible for producing news releases, briefing materials, backgrounders, tip sheets and other informational materials.
- The public needs information in a useable form, organized by category, priority and value. In the early stages of an emergency or disaster, the JIC staff may employ a "one sheet" technique, presenting only critical information in topical subheads and bullets that fit on a single sheet of paper. The staff may also employ all the traditional techniques, utilizing maps, photos, charts and videos to highlight and emphasize important points.
- A quick but thorough review of all information to be released is an essential part of the information management process. Reviewers should look for inconsistencies, inaccuracies, clarity and completeness.

Agencies with an official response role in the emergency will quickly respond with any serious concerns or changes.

- JIC staff must use every means available to provide information to those who need it, using the proper format. Dissemination also must serve internal audiences involved in responding to the emergency or disaster, as well as external audiences.
- Proper documentation of public information is mandatory under the rules that govern the Incident Command System (ICS) and NIMS. In order to resolve a miscommunication, disputes or lawsuits, documentation of government decisions and activities is essential. Each supervisor in the JIC must maintain a personal log that records the dates and times when significant actions occurred during his or her shift, with appropriate notations that describe the action (including references to actual press releases, backgrounders and other materials released to the public and to other agencies). Every JIC manager should provide the means for filing such information at the close of each shift. Documentation forms are available in Appendix E of the Public Information Manual.
- Monitoring the media is a critical function of the JIC. Staff members will watch and listen for issues and inaccuracies that could cause problems for officials and the public in affected areas.

4.3.3 Location of the Joint Information Center

- The primary location of the JIC, if activated, will be Room 114 in the Anderson Readiness Center at 3225 State Street in Salem, Oregon, or as designated by the Director of OEM.
- A JIC may also locate close to the area affected by the emergency or disaster, or in some other suitable site that the lead state agency designates.
- If an emergency or disaster develops that threatens or compromises the primary JIC site, the lead state agency or the Director of OEM may move the JIC to another location.
- The equipment needs of a JIC appear in Appendix E - Checklists and Forms of the Public Information Manual, as do those of a portable or mobile JIC.

4.3.4 Virtual Joint Information Center and Website

- During an emergency or disaster, assembling key JIC staff at the appropriate location may require many hours. A “virtual” JIC may serve the public’s expectation for instant news by collecting

ESF 15. External Affairs

information from responders across a wide area until responders and JIC staff can assemble in one location.

- A “virtual” JIC is a crucial part of the JIS. It allows responding PIOs in many locations to post and access the latest verified information from a single secure Web site. During an emergency or disaster, assembling key PIOs to staff a JIC may require many hours. In addition to providing crucial information throughout the emergency, the virtual JIC can be used to share information before a physical JIC has been established.
 - The operation of a virtual JIC allows interaction among incident-management sites, and ensures delivery of consistent, timely information to those who need it.
 - A virtual JIC collects information from many sources and assembles it in one place (e.g., a Web site). Multiple state agencies and county and city governments may contribute information through a virtual JIC.
 - During an emergency or disaster, authorities can feed critical information from the affected areas to the HAN, which JIC staff may access for message development and distribution. The DAS Public Affairs Section will then place selected information from the HAN on the state Oregon.gov Web site, which is accessible to the public. In the long term, the state will work toward establishing a secure, password-protected site that can serve as a virtual JIC for use during emergencies.
 - Message development and approval will occur according to Section E, below.
 - The virtual JIC will provide templates, key messages to and from stakeholders, fact sheets, and frequently asked questions (which also appear in Appendix E of the Public Information Manual). The JIC staff will develop these model materials, messages, and templates under the guidance of the Governor’s office and the lead state PIO.
 - The Governor’s office and participating agencies, jurisdictions and municipalities will link to the public site to ensure continuity of information about the emergency or disaster.
- The HAN (also referred to as Oregon Health Network), with approval of DHS/Oregon Public Health Division, will temporarily serve as the secure virtual JIC until the state can develop a shared virtual JIC for emergency management use at every level of government.

4.3.5 Information and Message Development

The JIC serves as a single, reliable point-of-contact for the news media and the public. The JIC will also give emergency response agencies opportunities to ensure that the public information and messages developed by the JIC are complete and consistent.

- The JIC staff will develop messages with the guidance of the following appendices included in the Public Information Manual:
 - Appendix E - Checklists and Forms
 - Appendix F - Hazards & Preparedness Messages (examples of news releases and emergency preparedness information for specific disasters and emergencies)
 - Appendix G - Risk Communications Guide
- The PIT located at the state ECC will send its news releases and any other informational materials it develops to the JIC by fax, telephone or email.
- Before releasing any information to representatives of emergency management agencies or the news media, the JIC's PIT will obtain review and approval from the following:
 - Lead state PIO
 - Subject matter expert
 - One of the following Senior Management Officials with OEM:
 - OEM Director
 - ECC Manager
 - OEM Operations Manager
 - State coordinating officer (in the event that the President of the United States declares an emergency or disaster)
- During an emergency or disaster, the PIT will send all messages to the Governor's communications director.
- State agencies that respond to the emergency may release information about their own roles in the response, but they must ensure that their information and messages are consistent with those issued by the JIC.
- During an emergency or disaster, the JIC will release its telephone numbers to the public through the news media, giving people a place to call for timely and accurate information.

4.3.6 Staffing the Joint Information Center

- The lead state agency will assign a qualified PIO to serve as JIC manager. The JIC manager will coordinate the activities of the JIC and its media center. The JIC manager may also ask technical staff from the ECC to participate in briefings in the JIC, addressing technical questions raised by reporters, members of the public, and other government officials.
- The specific roles and responsibilities of JIC members appear in Appendix A -PIT/JIC Job Descriptions of the Public Information Manual.
- Once a JIC is established, the PIT operating in the State's ECC will relocate to the JIC. One ECC/JIC PIO will continue to work in the ECC to coordinate information between the ECC and the JIC.
- If Oregon requires help with public information from other states, the interstate EMAC process will be used to request assistance. The EMAC Coordinator in the state ECC will process the EMAC request.
- The Governor and the directors of state agencies have discretion to deploy Oregon's public information resources to help with disasters that affect other states, local governments or regional agencies.

4.4 Training Requirements for Public Information Officers

- During an emergency or disaster, PIOs must be able to assemble information quickly, organize it, and use it to develop effective messages for release to the public. They must understand the ICS and how they work together to coordinate information for the public through a JIS and JIC. To ensure that PIOs possess the needed skills and background to perform these critical duties, the state requires that all PIOs must complete the following training in order to qualify for JIC duty:
 - FEMA/Department of Homeland Security Basic PIO Training. Various organizations offer this training periodically, including the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (CSEPP) and Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue. OEM maintains a list of other training opportunities.
 - FEMA Introduction to ICS training IS-100.
 - FEMA NIMS and Introduction training IS-700.

- FEMA National Incident Management (NIMS) Public Information Systems training IS-702
- Other recommended minimum requirements include the following:
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication training
 - FEMA/Department of Homeland Security Advanced PIO training (or equivalent).

5 Supporting Documents

- National Response Framework, ESF 15 – External Affairs
- County ESF 15 Annexes
- State of Oregon Emergency Operations Plan, 2010
- Public Information Manual

6 Appendices

None at this time.