Disaster AND EMERGENCY communications plan

[INSERT NAME OF COUNTY]

[INSERT MONTH AND YEAR]

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# DISCLAIMER

This template was created by the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) to assist Indiana county emergency management agencies (EMAs) and their stakeholders in the development of a Disaster and Emergency Communications Plan.

This template provides ***SAMPLE*** language based off the State Disaster and Emergency Communications Plan, but IDHS has tailored it for a more county-specific approach. Included are charts and diagrams to assist county emergency managers with identifying and documenting their specific needs. This template follows Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101 and National Incident Management System (NIMS) guidance.

This template can be scaled up or down and **modified to follow each county’s unique organizational structure, activation protocol, threat and hazard assessments and current capability and capacity gaps.** This template follows all federal, state and Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) guidance.

IDHS welcomes feedback on this template. The goal is to provide county stakeholders with best practices and the most comprehensive product for county EMAs and stakeholders in their planning initiatives.

***REMOVE THIS PAGE PRIOR TO PUBLISHING COUNTY DOCUMENT***

# CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE

The **[Insert County Name]** Disaster and Emergency Communications Plan is provided for the sole use of the intended recipient(s). It is not intended for general distribution or to be within the public domain. It contains confidential information, vulnerabilities, risks, needs, and threat assessments of which the public disclosure may threaten public safety by exposing a vulnerability to criminal or terrorist attack. Any unauthorized disclosure or distribution of this plan is prohibited.

***ONLY INSERT THIS STATEMENT IF PLAN IS NOT GOING TO BE RELEASED TO PUBLIC OR POSTED ON THE COUNTY WEBSITE.***

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

When disaster strikes, the ability to communicate is crucial to a successful response. Effective, real-time communications are critical to the overall operation of a disaster or emergency incident, including establishing command and control and maintaining situational awareness. Communications between responders and public safety agencies, or from local government to the public is imperative to saving lives. However, communications are often disrupted in an emergency, making response difficult.

It is also important to recognize that communications operability is a critical aspect to promote interoperability. Emergency responders must first be able to establish communications within their own agency before they can inter-operate with neighboring jurisdictions, other agencies, and/or other disciplines. Operability during disasters may be dependent on alternate communications systems when primary systems fail or are overloaded.

Disaster emergency communications is defined as the ability to exchange information through voice, data, and/or video as necessary to provide an effective and efficient response to a disaster, emergency, or event.

The **[Insert County Name]** Disaster and Emergency Communications Plan sets the foundation for how **[Insert County Name]** will work to create a temporary communication pathway while coordinating the restoration of existing, permanent infrastructure when communication networks are disrupted, and how to appropriately alert the public in times of need. This plan also serves as a tool for supporting agencies to see a catalog of communication resources available, if needed.

# RECORD OF CHANGES

| CHANGE # | CHANGE DESCRIPTION | DATE POSTED | PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE |
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# RECORD OF DISTRIBUTION

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# PLANNING AGENCIES

The primary agency identifies the appropriate supporting agencies that fall under this plan and collaborates with each entity to determine whether they have the necessary resources, information, and capabilities to perform the required tasks and activities within each phase of emergency management, including activations in the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and impacted areas. Though an agency may be listed as a primary agency, they do not control or manage those agencies identified as supporting agencies. The agencies listed below are part of the Whole Community Planning Committee for this plan.

## Primary Agency

**[Insert Name of County Emergency Management Agency]**

## Supporting COUNTY AND LOCAL Agencies/ORGANIZATIONS

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **[Insert names of supporting county agencies]** |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

## commissions, organizations, and associations

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **[Insert names of supporting commissions, organizations, and associations]** |  |

## SUPPORTING STATE AGENCIES

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **[Insert names of supporting state agencies]** | Integrated Public Safety Commission (IPSC) |
| Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

# PURPOSE, SCOPE, SITUATION, AND ASSUMPTIONS

## Purpose

The purpose of the **[Insert County Name]** Disaster and Emergency Communications Plan is to provide an integrated approach to ensuring effective communications coordination during an incident affecting **[Insert County Name]**. As an incident escalates, the need for emergency communications across different disciplines, and jurisdictions also escalates. The ability of responders to communicate in real time is critical to establishing command and control of an incident, maintaining situational awareness, and operating overall within a broad range of incidents. This plan:

* Supplements existing local communications plans and mitigation strategies in response to known vulnerabilities in local communications networks.
* Ensures that there is an accessible framework for communications coordination, including solutions to support incident requests for communications assistance.
* Provides the coordination and delivery of solutions for unknown or ad hoc communications requirements that may arise.

## Scope

This plan and its appendices provide guidance to **[Insert County Name]** when primary communications pathways are overloaded, an alert or warning message needs disseminated, or when a loss of communications infrastructure occurs due to an incident of significance affecting local, district, state, or multi-state communications.

Disaster Emergency Communications is a specialized field within the broader field of emergency communications. Emergency communications covers all technical means and modes for public safety agencies at all levels of government to perform their routine, daily communications. Disaster Emergency Communications applies to those technical means and modes required to provide and maintain operable, interoperable, and redundant communications before, during, and after emergencies, disasters, or planned events.

For the purposes of this plan, **[Insert County Name]** defines communications as:

* The exchange of information between two or more people or entities using various mediums: i.e., the message.
* The hardware, software, systems, protocols, languages, etc. which is used to convey the message: i.e., the medium.
* For the purposes of this plan, unless otherwise specifically stated, communications refer to the **medium** used to convey the message.

## Situation

As a result of the risks and vulnerabilities identified in the local Hazard Mitigation Plan, Hazard/Threat Risk Assessment (HIRA), and the County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), any communications system has the potential to be damaged, overwhelmed, or impaired by multiple threats and hazards. All hazards or threats to the County have the potential for degrading all forms of communication for both long and short term to all people, businesses, first responders, and government entities. Without critical communications in place, lives may be lost.

### Hazard and Threat Assessments

There are several plans and preparedness assessments the county uses to identify and evaluate county and local threats, hazards, risks, capabilities, and gaps. The National Preparedness Goal (NPG) has identified 32 core capabilities tied to the five (5) Mission Areas of Protection, Prevention, Mitigation, Response and Recovery. Table 1 provides a detailed list of each of the capabilities based on five mission areas. The highlighted capabilities are associated with this annex.

### Core Capabilities and Mission Areas

Table 1. MISSION AREAS

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PREVENTION** | **PROTECTION** | **MITIGATION** | **RESPONSE** | **RECOVERY** |
| **Planning** | | | | |
| **Public Information and Warning** | | | | |
| **Operational Coordination** | | | | |
| **Intelligence and Information Sharing** | | **Community Resilience** | **Infrastructure Systems** | |
| **Interdiction and Disruption** | | **Long-Term Vulnerability Reduction** | **Critical Transportation** | **Economic Recovery** |
| **Screening, Search and Detection** | | **Risk & Disaster Resilience Assessment** | **Environmental Response/Health and Safety** | **Health and Social Services** |
| **Forensics and Attribution** | **Access Control and Identify Verification** | **Threats and Hazards Identification** | **Fatality Management Services** | **Housing** |
|  | **Cybersecurity** |  | **Fire Management and Suppression** | **Natural and Cultural Resources** |
| **Risk Management for Protection Programs and Activities** | **Logistics and Supply Chain Management** |  |
| **Supply Chain Integrity & Security** | **Mass Care Services** |
| **Physical Protective** | **Mass Search and Rescue Operations** |
|  | **On-Scene Security, Protection, & Law Enforcement** |
| **Operational Communications** |
| **Public Health, Healthcare, and Emergency Services** |
| **Situational Assessment** |

### Capability Assessment - Core Capabilities

Table 2 lists the response core capabilities that this plan most directly supports along with the actions related to each of these core capabilities.

Table 2. core capabilities

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Core Capability | DISASTER COMMUNICATIONS |
| **PLANNING** | Conduct a systematic process engaging the whole community, as appropriate, in the development of executable strategic, operational, and/or community-based approaches to meet defined objectives. |
| **OPERATIONAL COORDINATION** | Establish and maintain a unified and coordinated operational structure and process that appropriately integrates all critical stakeholders and supports the execution of core capabilities. |
| **PUBLIC INFORMATION AND WARNING** | Deliver coordinated, prompt, reliable, and actionable information to the whole community through the use of clear, consistent, accessible, and culturally and linguistically appropriate methods to effectively relay information regarding any threat or hazard and, as appropriate, the actions being taken, and the assistance being made available. |
| **INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEMS** | Provide expertise and personnel to assist with assessment of emergency services sector critical infrastructure. |
| **OPERATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS** | Provide radio communications systems to support public safety, first responders, and incident response operations.  Provide communications personnel to accompany systems for user training and operator maintenance indoctrination. |

## Planning Assumptions

* County communication assets may be severely affected in a catastrophic event. The degradation or total disruption of communications may include all or some communications commonly utilized by federal, state, and local agencies and first responders.
* County communications resources co-located at State communications sites or those that rely upon the State microwave system for connectivity may experience a failure if the State system does. *Microwave is a line-of-sight wireless communication technology that uses high frequency beams of radio waves to provide high speed wireless connections that can send and receive voice, video, and data information.*
* All County agencies who provide critical services will familiarize employees with agency-specific, redundant communication plans.
* Local agencies will follow alerting procedures and guidelines prior to and while using an alerting system.
* Training, exercise, and evaluation of communications resources and capabilities for response have been completed and are an ongoing priority for essential agencies and departments.

## Limitations

**[Insert County Name]** will make every reasonable effort to ensure the accuracy of the information contained herein; however, due to the complexity of incidents and volatility of their cascading effects, it is impossible to anticipate every situation. An understanding of communication systems and infrastructure may be required beyond the scope of this document.

# CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

In the event of a communications system failure, **[Insert County Name]** will focus first on identifying those communication systems which are functional or partially functional to identify means to communicate to adversely affected areas. Restoration of communication systems will be a high priority, while simultaneously coordinating with communications partners to facilitate communications related to “lifesaving” and “life-safety”.

## Activation Authority

The County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is the primary hub for **[Insert County Name]** emergency support and coordination efforts to gather and disseminate event information, respond to requests for assistance from other counties and local agencies, identify and coordinate priority actions, and allocate resources.

The activation of the EOC begins with the activation of the county Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) Base Plan. The activation of the EOP establishes the emergency operations framework and structure needed to deliver a coordinated emergency response. Following the activation of the EOP, this support-specific plan may be activated to assist with coordinating a communications-specific response.

In most cases, the decision to activate will be made by Chairman of the Board of Commissioners (their successor), the **[Insert County EM Agency Name]** Director or their deputies if one or more of the following situations occur:

* An incident has occurred that has the potential for rapid escalation.
* The emergency will be of a long duration and requires sustained coordination.
* Major policy decisions may be required.
* The volume of local requests for assistance is increasing and expected to continue.
* Pre-deployment of local assets is occurring in anticipation of the emergency.
* Managing the situation requires urgent, high-level, non-routine coordination among multiple jurisdictions, county departments, or other external agencies.
* **[Insert County Name]** shall communicate and collaborate with other response/support agencies and integrate their response plans into the overall response.
* Activation of the EOC will be advantageous to the successful management of the event.

The EOC is managed by the County EMA Director and is the physical location where multi-agency coordination occurs, whether it is at the primary or alternate undisclosed sites. The EOC can be configured to expand or contract as necessary to respond to the different levels of incidents requiring county assistance.

During an EOC activation, Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) may be activated depending on the incident and activation level. During a disaster response, each county ESF representative in the EOC will remain under the administrative control of his/her agency head; however, he/she will function under the supervision of the EOC Manager/EMA Director.

EOC staff will be notified of an activation through the following methods:

Table 3. eoc activation notification methods

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **METHOD** | **PERSONNEL NOTIFIED** | **P.A.C.E CATEGORY** |
| E-Mail ([**[INSERT**](mailto:eocmanager@dhs.in.gov) **ADDRESS]**) | **[INSERT RECIPIENTS]** | Primary |
| Phone Call (mobile or office phone) | **[INSERT RECIPIENTS]** | Primary |
| **[INSERT MASS NOTIFICATION SYSTEM]** | **[INSERT RECIPIENTS]** | Primary |
| WebEOC | State EOC | Primary |
| **[INSERT RADIO CAPABILITIES]** | **[INSERT RECIPIENTS]** | Alternate |
|  |  | Contingency |
| AUXC/RACES/Amateur Radio | **[INSERT RECIPIENTS]** | Emergency |

## INCLUSION, Access, and Functional Needs

**[Insert County Name]** works with public, private, and non-profit organizations to build a culture of preparedness and readiness for emergencies and disasters that goes beyond meeting the legal requisites of people with disabilities as defined by the most current version of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)or for individuals with access and functional needs.

**[Insert County Name]** integrates the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) access and functional needs guidance, which identifies an individual’s actual needs during an emergency, and awareness of not using negative labels such as “handicapped,” “crippled,” or “abnormal.”

This planning guidance is inclusive as it also encompasses people with temporary needs or those who do not identify themselves as having a disability. This includes women who are pregnant, children, older adults, individuals with limited English communication, people with limited transportation access, and those with household pets and service animals. Additional awareness which helps ensure inclusive emergency preparedness planning includes addressing the needs of children and adults in areas such as:

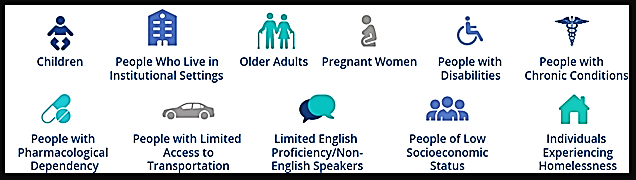
**SELF-DETERMINATION** – Individuals with access and functional needs are the most knowledgeable about their own needs.

**NO “ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL”** – Individuals do not all require the same assistance and do not all have the same needs.

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, INTEGRATION AND PHYSICAL ACCESS** – All individuals must have the same opportunities to benefit from emergency programs, services, and activities.

**NO CHARGE** – Individuals with access and functional needs may not be charged to cover the costs of measures necessary to ensure equal access and nondiscriminatory treatment.

**EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION** – Individuals must be given information that is comparable in content and detail to the information given to those without functional needs.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE REFER TO THE INDIANA ACCESS AND FUNCTIONAL NEEDS ANNEX TO THE STATE OF INDIANA EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN (EOP).**

# COMMUNICATIONS LIFELINE

**[REMOVE SECTION IF NOT USING COMMUNITY LIFELINES]** Community lifelines are those services that enable the continuous operation of critical government and business functions and are essential to human health and safety or economic security. Lifelines comprise integrated networks of resources and services that are used day-to-day to support the recurring needs of the community. Each lifeline contains several components and sub-components that encompass infrastructure, assets, and services that are essential to incident stabilization. Stabilizing lifeline services is the highest priority when responding to disasters because their disruption may result in immediate threats to life and property. Lifelines provide a common lens which all responders can use to assess whether critical lifesaving and life-sustaining services are disrupted and, if so, which core capabilities are required to provide those services. This may be accomplished through the use of Emergency Support Functions (ESFs).

Communication systems encompass a large set of diverse modes of delivery and technologies, often intertwined but largely operating independently. The Communications Lifeline involves five (5) major components:

* Infrastructure
* Responder Communications
* Alerts, Warnings, and Messages
* Finance
* 911 and Dispatch

The communications lifeline components further break down into sub-components and anticipated impacts, as described in Table 4 below:

Table 4. ANTICIPATED LIFELINE STATUS

| **COMPONENT** | **SUB-COMPONENTS** | **ANTICIPATED IMPACT(S)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Icon  Description automatically generated  **Infrastructure** | Wireless; Cable Systems and Wireline; Broadcast (Television and Radio); Satellite; Data Centers/Internet | * Infrastructure will immediately degrade or switch to back up power. * Many user devices will fail immediately or within 24 hours. |
| **Icon  Description automatically generatedResponder Communications** | Land Mobile Radio (LMR) Networks | * Systems used for response coordination may be degraded (e.g., WebEOC, State/FEMA enterprise networks, GIS, email, phone). |
| **Icon  Description automatically generatedAlerts, Warnings, and Messages** | Local Alert/Warning Ability; Access to Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS); National Warning System (NAWAS) Terminals | * Ability to disseminate alerts and warnings will degrade. * The public’s ability to receive messages will degrade as receivers lose power. |
| **Icon  Description automatically generatedFinance** | Banking Services; Electronic Payment; Processing | * Availability of cash may be limited due to ATM and bank degradation. * Credit cards, debit cards, and other electronic payment processing capabilities will degrade. |
| Icon  Description automatically generated  **911 and Dispatch** | Public Safety Answering Points; Dispatch | * Community ability to call 9-1-1 will degrade. * Dispatch paging, activations, and other communication with responders may degrade. |

## COMMUNICATIONS LIFELINE status designation

Community lifeline status designations are reported at the local and state levels and will be further incorporated into state response and recovery efforts in the coming years. The lifeline reporting construct provides the emergency management community with a comprehensive systematic approach to lifeline status planning, monitoring, and reporting across areas impacted by an incident. Status designations assist with objectives-based response decisions that prioritize the rapid stabilization of a lifeline when an incident occurs. The status of a lifeline is designated as one of the following: Unstable, Stabilizing, or Stable. Communications-specific lifeline status designations are described in Table 5 below.

Table 5. COMMUNICATIONS LIFELINE STATUS DESIGNATION

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **COLOR** | **INFRASTRUCTURE** |
|  | Public-safety communications are largely non-functional due to high levels of damages to sites and facilities |
|  | Public-safety communications have been restored to moderate functionality, due to temporary and permanent repairs to sites and facilities |
|  | Public safety communications capabilities have been restored to most users. Permanent repairs to sites and facilities have been made or scheduled |
| **COLOR** | **ALERT, WARNING, MESSAGES** |
|  | Federal resources are required to disseminate messages to the public |
|  | The state can manage public messages on its own through one-way dissemination to one or more target audiences |
|  | Warnings are robust and dispatch is capable of emergency communication |
| **COLOR** | **911 DISPATCH** |
|  | Stoppages in 911 service |
|  | Calls are being properly re-routed, and 911 calls are being answered for all jurisdictions, overloaded telephone system |
|  | All public safety answering points (PSAPs) are fully functioning |
| **COLOR** | **RESPONDER COMMUNICATIONS** |
|  | Experiencing system failure, system overload, damaged infrastructure |
|  | Transmitter realigned with receivers, decreased traffic, temporary fixes are in place, new infrastructure up and functioning |
|  | All bands are functional, cell services are restored, internet services are restored |
| **COLOR** | **FINANCIAL SERVICES** |
|  | The ability to manage money is severely impacted due to lack of utilities and service-industry damages |
|  | Operations are beginning to recover and can meet the financial demands of the communities |
|  | Financial institutions are fully recovered and serving the population |

## COMMUNICATIONS LIFELINE STABILIZATION

All communities must have access to commercial communications infrastructure to contact or be contacted by emergency services. The land mobile radio communications networks must also be operational, and public safety answering points must be available to the public. Financial services must also be accessible.

To work toward stabilization of the communications lifeline, ESF-2 in the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will assist with the coordination and execution of the following tasks:

Table 6. ESF-2 TASKS FOR COMMUNICATIONS

| **LIFELINE OBJECTIVE** | **ESF OBJECTIVE** | **SUPPORT NEEDED FROM** | **MISSION-ESSENTIAL TASKS** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **0 – 24 HOURS** | | | |
| To transmit public information and warning messages to survivors in the disaster area within 12 hours of the incident | (Same as lifeline objective) | * ESF-15 * AUXC | Communications and warning systems such as the Emergency Alert System (EAS) will be important for disseminating public information. If these systems are not functional, devise expedient methods to disseminate essential public information. For example, distribute flyers in populated areas, or use high power AM and FM radio stations to provide critical information to disaster victims who have portable radios or car radios. |
| * ESF-15 * Logistics Section Chief | Reach out quickly to ESF-15 to determine which systems will be effective in providing public information. |
| To assess critical communications infrastructure, including structures, equipment, supplies, and resources deemed necessary | To test all applicable means of communications within 2 – 6 hours of EOC activation to determine system fitness. | \_\_ \_\_ | Send out a coordinated message to achieve contact for testing and situational awareness. |
| AUXC | Identify primary channel availability by “channel surfing”. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Immediately conduct a communications check. The communications check should include questions about the degree of damage sustained. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | If the communications systems are believed to be severely affected, it is critically important to quickly ascertain which means of communications remain intact. All ESF-2 support agencies should immediately attempt to establish communications via all means possible. |
| To assess critical communications infrastructure, including structures, equipment, supplies, and resources deemed necessary (continued) | To achieve communications with all impacted counties within the first 24 hours by deploying radio caches as necessary and using common operating channels. | Communications vendors | Work with communications vendors to coordinate deployment of supplemental equipment such as cells on wheels (COW), cells on light truck (COLT), etc. |
| AUXC | Activate AUXC operators. Designate the representative(s) who will report to the EOC to support amateur radio communications. |
| AUXC | Establish an amateur radio operations network using RACES or other operators. These operators should be physically located at the county EOC or local incident command sites, if possible. |
| Planning Section  Chief | If communications capabilities do exist, begin compiling damage assessments, the status of existing capabilities, and first priority needs in coordination with the Planning Section Chief to determine overall functionality and the need to deploy radio caches. |
| Logistics Section Chief | While working with the Logistics Section Chief, determine the additional communications systems available to support emergency operations in the affected areas. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Coordinate with commercial telecommunications service providers to determine the emergency communications resources they may be able to provide. |
| AUXC | Implement any plans for the immediate repair/replacement of damaged infrastructure/ equipment used by amateur radio personnel. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Continually monitor the status of all communications. |
| **24 – 72 HOURS** | | | |
| To ensure communications needs are being met through temporary or permanent solutions. | (Same as lifeline objective) | State ESF-2 | Liaise with the State ESF-2 for any requests for state or federal communications assets, personnel, or reports. |
| * Planning Section   Chief   * Logistics Section Chief | Work with the Logistics Section Chief and Planning Section Chief to request radio programming technicians, communications unit leaders (COMLs), communications technicians (COMTs), Incident Tactical Dispatchers (INTD), Auxiliary Communicators (AUXC), and resources. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Determine the additional communications systems available to support emergency operations in the affected areas. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Continually monitor the status of all communications. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Identify appropriate channels and emergency response working groups to maximize communications capabilities. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Survey local communications functionality and share the results with the SEOC. |
| ESF-15 | Coordinate with ESF-15 to ascertain which systems are available for disseminating essential public information. |
| ESF-15 | Broadcast public messages as needed. |
| Logistics Section  Chief | Determine any resources needed and submit requests to the Logistics Section Chief. |
| To identify the operational status of local commercial communications carriers within 48 hours | IPSC | Promptly obtain tower status from the Integrated Public Safety Commission (IPSC) with estimated time of repairs. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Gather intelligence and communicate the status and existing capabilities of all ESF-2 agencies to prioritize needs. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Work with vendors and partners to ensure the repair and maintenance of communications equipment is prioritized and ongoing. |
| To identify the operational status of public safety networks within 24 – 48 hours | \_\_ \_\_ | Continue to determine the status of local systems. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Determine the additional communications systems and equipment available to support emergency operations in the affected areas. |
| **BEYOND 72 HOURS** | | | |
| To achieve communications county-wide | (Same as lifeline objective) | \_\_ \_\_ | Continually monitor the status of all communications, public and private, throughout the county. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Work with vendors and partners to ensure the repair and maintenance of communications equipment is ongoing. |
| Logistics Section  Chief | Determine any resources needed submit requests to the Logistics Section Chief. |
| To have cellular services fully functioning | \_\_ \_\_ | Private cell  companies | Set up privately owned equipment, such as MERS units, to enable cell services for residents. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Establish the Business Emergency Operations Center (BEOC). |
| IPSC | Coordinate the restoration of telecommunications service priority (TSP) circuits. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Coordinate the restoration of public cellular services. |

# ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

## Organization

Emergency communications planning exists in all levels of government and across all disciplines. In the event of a communications failure, local, state, federal agencies and private sector organizations will coordinate in the restoration of the communication system, as well as implementing backup communications procedures. Restoration is dependent on voluntary and local support and buy-in from local public safety communications stakeholders to be effective.

**[Identify County Agency]** will be the primary agency for Emergency Support Function (ESF) 2 – Communications when the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is activated. ESF-2 responsibilities are to provide the coordination, resources, and personnel to meet the overall communications-related needs of the state before, during, and after emergency or disaster events.

**[Identify Agency or Personnel]** will be the primary agency/representative for ESF 15 – External Affairs when the EOC is activated. ESF-15 responsibilities are to support the distribution of accurate, coordinated, timely, and accessible information to the public, private partners, and other governmental agencies.

## Assignment of Responsibilities

**county agency Responsibilities**

#### **[INSERT NAME OF COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY]**

* Develop and maintain a local Disaster and Emergency Communications Plan to include primary, alternate, contingency, and emergency (P.A.C.E.) methods of communicating and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).
* Obtain necessary training for all equipment and procedures, as well as primary and secondary communications pathways.
* Maintain equipment and perform all required tests.
* Assist local jurisdictions in establishing or reestablishing communication pathways within the County.
* Coordinate with nearby alerting authorities and the State to ensure that contradictory information is not released.
* Check and maintain local communication pathways. Report outages to the SEOC through WebEOC.
* Participate in communication systems training and exercise opportunities.
* Monitor public alerting and warning systems.
* Ensure messaging dissemination to the local population.
* Renew expired MOAs (Memorandums of Agreement) with IDHS and IPSC as required.

#### **[INSERT NAME OF COUNTY AGENCY]**

* **[List County Agency Responsibilities]**

**Amateur Radio/AUXILIARY COMMUNICATOR (AUXC) OPERATORS’ RESPONSIBILITIES**

Volunteer amateur radio responders, which include Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES), Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (RACES), and other AUXC operators, are responsible for maintaining equipment, maintaining licensing, meeting educational requirements, obtaining backup power for their radio system, knowing how to operate their radios, and participating in training.

# COMMUNICATIONS

Effective coordination and efficient usage of all available communications capabilities are critical to ensuring an effective emergency response. Familiarity with the operation of existing technologies prior to an incident response minimizes communications challenges. **[Insert County Name]** utilizes several forms of primary and alternative communications methods when conducting operations internally and supporting local jurisdictions during both daily operations and active emergency situations.

The following is a list of identified potential alternative communications, assuming that landline, wireless communication devices, and internet are primary sources of communication. Any of these can be primary forms of communications. Any of these can be used alone or in conjunction with other communication systems. One or all, may be operable at any given time within the county.

## Communication Methods [edit as appropriate]

* Data including: WebEOC, e-mail, text, social media, and Cisco Jabber
* Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS)
* Emergency Alert System (EAS)
* Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA)
* National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) All-Hazard Weather Radio
* Highway Advisory Radio Stations
* Amateur Radio
* Alternative Local Emergency Management Agency (EMA) Website
* Non-traditional avenues: Private Sector Partners and Translation Services
* Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS)
* 800 MHz Radio System
* Mutual Aid repeater system
* Satellite Radio/Phones
* Broadband Global Area Network (BGAN)
* Radio Emergency Associated Communications Teams (REACT)
* Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS)
* Runners

## communications distruption procedures

### PRE-DISRUPTION

* Identify back up communication systems.
* Primary and redundant communication capabilities should be checked at regular intervals by trained operators.
* Back-up communication system plans should be exercised regularly.

### POST-DISRUPTION

* When a communication disruption is recognized, current communication statuses will be posted to WebEOC, if available. If unavailable, contact the assigned IDHS District Liaison to relay the information.
* All agencies should activate their internal Emergency Communication Plan. The plan should identify back up communications and test procedures.
* Back-up communications will be utilized including but not limited to cell phones, satellite phones, internet, amateur radio, and runners to keep the flow of communication moving to the proper channels.
* Joint efforts by state and local stakeholders are required to establish and maintain the temporary communications network and restoration of the existing infrastructure to restore pre-disruption communications systems.

### INTERIM COMMUNICATIONS

* If some communication systems are still functioning properly, the EOC will attempt to develop a communications network to connect with as many agencies and jurisdictions as possible.
* The EOC will work with the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) District Liaisons to identify functional communication pathways between the county and state.
* In a worst-case scenario with no communications systems functioning properly, Auxiliary Communicators (AUXC), which include Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES), Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES), or runners, may need to be utilized to relay messages from one agency to another.
* If a temporary network is established, ESF-2 will oversee the management and maintenance of this system.

### RESTORATION OF PRIMARY SYSTEMS

* In a catastrophic event with complete communication infrastructure loss, it could take an extended amount of time to restore communication systems.
* Many essential federal, state, and local communication assets are co-located with the statewide systems on State-owned sites.
* Efforts will be made to:
  + Re-establish communications necessary for command and control.
  + Due to the number of public safety agencies utilizing the State trunked system, efforts will be made to restore the primary 800 MHz system first. However, dependent on the situation, the system that takes the least time and resources to fix may gain priority.
* Utilize the Business Emergency Operations Center (BEOC) to coordinate and prioritize the restoration of privately owned, commercial sites.

## COMMUNICATIONS INTEROPERABILITY

Communications interoperability makes it possible for emergency response agencies across jurisdictions and disciplines to work effectively together, maximize resources, and coordinate government support operations, emergencies, disaster relief, and recovery. Reliable, timely communications among public safety responders, or between public safety agencies and citizens, is critical to effectively carry out public safety missions.

Traditional voice capabilities, such as land mobile radio (LMR) and landline 9-1-1 services have long been and continue to be critical tools for communications. However, the advancement of internet protocol (IP) based technologies in public safety has increased the type and amount of information responders receive, the tools they communicate with, and complexity of new and interdependent systems. New technologies increase the need for coordination across public safety disciplines, communications functions, and levels of government to ensure emergency communications capabilities are interoperable, reliable, redundant, and secure.

Emergency response agencies require three distinct types of interoperability: day-to-day, mutual aid, and task force, as described below:

**Day-to-day interoperability** involves coordination during routine operations. For example, when firefighters from adjacent counties join forces to battle a structural fire, or when neighboring law enforcement agencies work together during a vehicle chase, interagency communications are critical to the mission’s success.

**Mutual aid interoperability** involves a joint and immediate response to catastrophic accidents or natural disasters. It requires tactical communications among numerous groups of emergency response personnel. Examples include airplane crashes, terrorist attacks, wildland fires, earthquakes, and tornadoes.

**Task force interoperability** involves local, tribal, state, and federal agencies coming together for an extended period in emergency response. Task forces lead the extended recovery operations for major disasters, provide security for major events, and conduct operations in response to prolonged criminal activity.

Limitations to communications interoperability between emergency response agencies, across jurisdictions, and disciplines include limited radio spectrum/congested channels, funding, incompatible technologies, lack of system planning, and lack of coordination and cooperation. One purpose of this plan is to establish communications interoperability procedures pre-disaster to ensure that emergency response stakeholders have reliable, redundant, and efficient communications methods to fulfill their obligations to protect life and property.

## COUNTY emergency operations center (EOC) COMMUNICATIONS

Local jurisdictions and other county agencies rely on the EOC for assistance during disasters and planned events in which communications may be disrupted. Therefore, it is imperative that the EOC have effective backup communications procedures in place to maintain interoperability across various jurisdictions and disciplines during these incidents. Primary, alternate, contingency, and emergency communications for the EOC are defined as:

Figure 1. P.A.C.E CATEGORY DEFINITIONS

A picture containing graphical user interface

Description automatically generated

Table 7 below identifies EOC communications methods and P.A.C.E categories: **[Fill in Table]**

Table 7. EOC COMMUNICATIONS

| **COMMUNICATION METHOD** | **DETAILS** | **P.A.C.E CATEGORY** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **TELEPHONE** | | |
| Daytime Telephone |  | Primary |
| 24/7 Telephone |  | Alternate |
| **INTERNET** | | |
| WebEOC |  | Primary |
| E-mail |  | Primary |
| **RADIO** | | |
| 800 MHz |  | Primary |
| 155 MHz |  | Alternate |
| HF, VHF, UHF |  | Contingency |
| WinLink |  | Emergency |
| **SATELLITE** | | |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **OTHER** | | |
| Microsoft Teams |  | Primary |
| Runners |  | Emergency |

# PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

## Plan Development

**[Insert Name of County Emergency Management Agency]** is responsible for the program and technical content of this plan. The designated agency personnel are the primary point of contact for planning collaboration.

The primary agency identifies required planning committee members and provides the committee with contact information and expectations of planning needs. The primary agency ensures compliance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101 standards including the FEMA 6-Step Planning Process and the Whole Community Planning Model. The primary agency will make recommendations regarding including other stakeholder involvement and review to ensure the Whole Community Planning Model is included.

The primary agencyapproves all program and technical content changes during the development, review, and scheduled update of the plan.

## Plan Maintenance

The primary agency oversees plan maintenance, formatting, and grammatical editing of the plan, and is responsible for ensuring the planning schedule is accurately published and timelines followed. The primary agency is also responsible for scheduling planning meetings, arranging logistics, and creating and distributing planning meeting agendas and subsequent meeting minutes. Moreover, the primary agency is responsible for facilitating planning meeting group discussion, as needed to achieve meeting objectives.

The primary agency maintains current and historical planning checklists and copies of current and previous plan versions with tracked changes. The primary agency will also electronically distribute the plan as specified in the Record of Distribution and file the plan as deemed necessary.

# AUTHORITIES

## Local AUTHORITY

* Indiana Code 36-1-3, Home Rule
* **[Insert County Name]** Emergency Operations Plans (EOP)
* Local Communication Plans
* Local Emergency Management Ordinances
* Local Tactical Interoperable Communications Plans (TICP)

**[ADD OR CHANGE TO COUNTY PROTOCOLS]**

## State AUTHORITY

* State of Indiana Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)
* Indiana Executive Order 17-02, establishes and clarifies duties of state agencies for all matters relating to emergency management.
* Indiana Code 5-26-2, establishes the Integrated Public Safety Commission
* Indiana Code 10-14-3, Emergency Management and Disaster Law
* Indiana Code 10-19-2, establishes the Indiana Department of Homeland Security
* Indiana Statewide 911 Board Resolution No. 2018-1

## Federal AUTHORITY

* Code of Federal Regulations, Title 47, Telecommunication, Federal Communications Commission (FCC)
* Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS)
* Integrated Public Alert and Warning System Modernization Act of 2015
* National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP) 2014, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
* National Incident Management System (NIMS), October 2017
* Presidential Executive Order 13407, Public Alert and Warning System
* Presidential Policy Directive (PPD) 5
* Presidential Policy Directive (PPD) 8
* Presidential Policy Directive (PPD) 21
* Section § 5196(d) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
* Section § 5121 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
* Warning, Alert, and Response Network Act of 2006

# APPENDIX A – COMMUNICATIONS RESOURCES

Table 8. COMMUNICATIONS RESOURCES

| **RESOURCE** | **DETAILS** | **LOCATION** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **[List County Communications Resources]** |  |  |
| *Cache Radios* |  |  |
| *Communications Vehicle* |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

## PRIVATE SECTOR

**[Describe Agreements with Private Sector Vendors]**

## RESOURCE REQUEST PROCESS

During an incident, requests for resource support originate from the site Incident Command (IC), Area Command (AC) or Unified Command (UC) and are directed to the county emergency management agency (EMA) in the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC). As local resource capabilities become overwhelmed, the County EMA requests support from the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) based on the projected needs of the local Incident Action Plan (IAP). A request exceeding State capability can be fulfilled using mutual aid, federal assistance, or other appropriate means.

The State Resource Request Process is designed to meet the varying needs of local jurisdictions throughout the life of an emergency event. The process may require alteration, activation of mutual-aid agreement(s), or assistance from federal agencies as needed.

Resource requests will be prioritized in the following manner:

1. Life safety and health
2. Incident stabilization
3. Protection of property, economy, and the environment
4. Restoration of essential infrastructure, utilities, functions, and services
5. Unity of effort and coordination among appropriate stakeholders

Prioritization of resources may change frequently based on how the incident evolves.

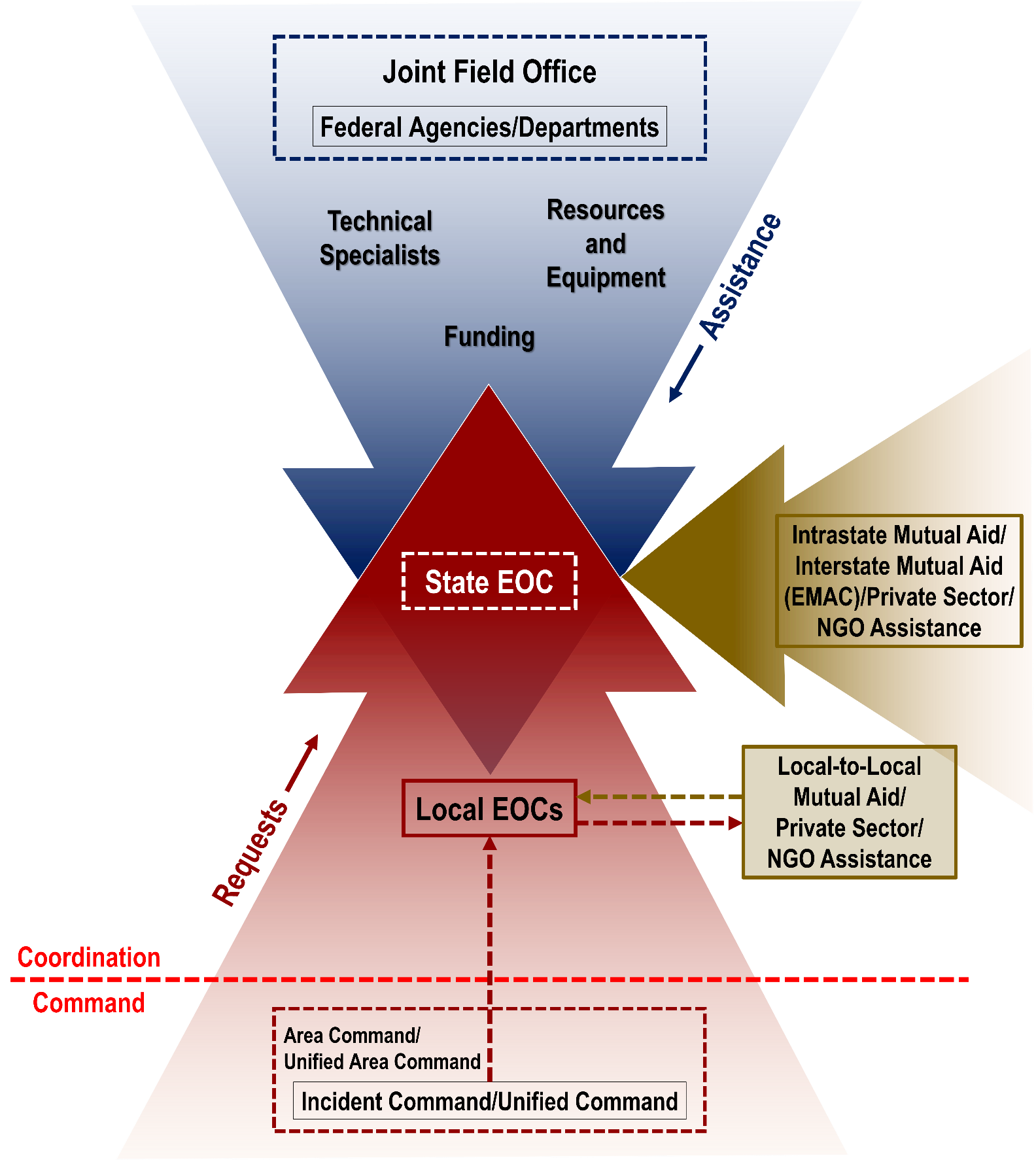


Figure 2. RESOURCE REQUEST PROCESS

# APPENDIX B – PRIMARY FREQUENCIES

## auxiliary communication frequencies

Table 9. AUXILIARY COMMUNICATION FREQUENCIES

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **DESCRIPTION** | **FREQUENCY** | **MODE** |
| **[List local radio frequencies used]** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

# APPENDIX C – RELATED PLANS, PROCEDURES, AND RESOURCES

## RELATED PLANS

* **[Insert County Name]** Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)
* **[List Related County Plans]**

## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP) AND USER GUIDES

* **[List Applicable SOPs and User Guides]**

## RESOURCES

* Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) Process Map Playbook, February 2021
* National Incident Management System – Incident Complexity Guide
* National Interoperability Field Operations Guide (NIFOG), August 2021
* National Response Framework (NRF), October 2019
* National Warning System (NAWAS) Operations Manual, January 2013
* **[List Additional County Communications Resources]**

# APPENDIX D – ACRONYMS

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ACRONYMS** | **FULL DESCRIPTION** |
| **AC** | Area Command |
| **ADA** | Americans with Disabilities Act |
| **ARES** | Amateur Radio Emergency Services |
| **AUXC** | Auxiliary Communicators |
| **BEOC** | Business Emergency Operations Center |
| **BGAN** | Broadband Global Area Network |
| **COLT** | Cells on Light Truck |
| **COML** | Communications Unit Leader |
| **COMT** | Communications Technician |
| **COW** | Cells on Wheels |
| **CPG** | Comprehensive Preparedness Guide |
| **EAS** | Emergency Alert System |
| **EMA** | Emergency Management Agency |
| **EMAP** | Emergency Management Accreditation Program |
| **EOC** | Emergency Operations Center |
| **EOP** | Emergency Operations Plan |
| **ESF** | Emergency Support Function |
| **FCC** | Federal Communications Commission |
| **FEMA** | Federal Emergency Management Agency |
| **GETS** | Government Emergency Telecommunications Service |
| **GIS** | Geographic Information System |
| **HF** | High Frequency |
| **HIRA** | Hazard/Threat Risk Assessment |
| **IAP** | Incident Action Plan |
| **IC** | Incident Command |
| **IDHS** | Indiana Department of Homeland Security |
| **INTD** | Incident Tactical Dispatcher |
| **IP** | Internet Protocol |
| **IPAWS** | Integrated Public Alert and Warning System |
| **IPSC** | Integrated Public Safety Commission |
| **LMR** | Land Mobile Radio |
| **MARS** | Military Affiliate Radio System |
| **MERS** | Mobile Emergency Response Support |
| **MOA** | Memorandum of Agreement |
| **NAWAS** | National Warning System |
| **NECP** | National Emergency Communications Plan |
| **NGO** | Non-Governmental Organization |
| **NIFOG** | National Interoperability Field Operations Guide |
| **NIMS** | National Incident Management System |
| **NOAA** | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration |
| **NPG** | National Preparedness Guide |
| **NRF** | National Response Framework |
| **PPD** | Presidential Policy Directive |
| **PSAP** | Public Safety Answering Point |
| **RACES** | Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service |
| **REACT** | Radio Emergency Associated Communications Teams |
| **SEOC** | State Emergency Operations Center |
| **SOP** | Standard Operating Procedure |
| **TICP** | Tactical Interoperability Communications Plan |
| **TSP** | Telecommunications Service Priority |
| **UC** | Unified Command |
| **UF** | Ultra-High Frequency |
| **VHF** | Very High Frequency |
| **WebEOC** | Web Emergency Operations Center |