COORDINATING: Anderson County Emergency Management Division

PRIMARY: Anderson County Sheriff’s Office; Administrator’s Office; Anderson County School Districts 1-5; City of Anderson Police Department; City of Anderson Fire Department; Anderson County Fire Department; Anderson County Administrator’s Office; Anderson County Communications Department; Anderson County Special Populations

SUPPORTING: AnMed Hospital; Upstate IMT; Municipal Governments; SC Emergency Management Division ESF-15

# INTRODUCTION

* 1. Generation of timely public information coordinated with the appropriate level of government is essential to avoid or minimize loss of life and property if a disaster is imminent or has occurred.
  2. Before, during, and after emergency operations, the County will apprise the public through reports to the news media, the internet, the Emergency Alert System (EAS), and various alternative media.
  3. County services and assistance provided under this function shall include the delineation of responsibilities and protective actions to be taken to provide the general public with essential information, and the documentation of emergency actions and operations implemented or proposed by written, verbal or photographic means.

# PURPOSE

Provide effective public information through coordination with appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies and organizations to minimize loss of life and property before, during, and after an emergency or disaster.

# CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

* 1. The Public Information Section of the Anderson County Emergency Management Division (ACEMD) is responsible for all ESF-15 administrative, management, planning, preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery activities to include developing, coordinating and maintaining the ESF-15 Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).
  2. ESF-15 primary & supporting agencies will assist ACEMD in the planning and execution of the above.
  3. ESF-15 personnel will be trained in the principles of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Command System (ICS) and integrate those principles into all ESF-15 planning and response operations. Required FEMA courses include 100, 200, 700, and 800 at a minimum. Additional training in Public Information/External Affairs is highly recommended.
  4. Dissemination of Public Information
     1. Disaster and emergency information from Anderson County government shall be clear, concise, and accurate regarding the existing situation, actions being taken by authorities, and those to be taken by the population.
     2. On behalf of the County Administrator, the Director of ACEMD, through ESF-15, is responsible for informing the public of emergency and disaster operations within the County.
     3. The dissemination of public information during emergency and disaster operations is done with the advice and consent of the Incident Commander, who reserves the authority to intervene, to assume control, or to disseminate supplementary public information at any time.
        1. ESF-15 will keep the Incident Commander informed of media-related events as they unfold and will provide such information on a continuing and timely basis.
        2. ESF-15 will provide timely and continuing information to the Incident Commander, and make appropriate recommendations if requested.
     4. ESF-15 will provide and/or coordinate situation briefings, press conferences, taped messages, photographs, news accounts, statistics on injuries and fatalities, and other information to the news media as appropriate, to include information targeted for non-English speaking individuals and/or special needs populations.
     5. On behalf of the county, ESF-15 will provide similar materials and briefings for State and Federal officials and coordinate county and local information/news releases with related Federal, State, and local agencies and officials. ESF-15 will coordinate with each agency regarding such activities.
     6. The EAS will be activated appropriately according to established county, state, and national EAS procedures.
  5. County agencies or departments will make their public information, public relations, or public affairs personnel available to augment ESF-15 when requested, to include non-English speaking individuals and/or access and functional needs populations.
  6. Coordination of Public Information
     1. ESF-15 will establish a Joint Information System (JIS) of public information personnel from all affected municipalities, agencies, non-profit and private sector organizations.
     2. ESF-15 will coordinate Public Information efforts to prevent and counter rumors, hearsay, and inaccuracies, and to ensure accurate, timely, and consistent emergency public information.
     3. ESF-15 will coordinate efforts to report and document emergency/disaster operations at the EOC and/or near the incident site.
     4. Under certain circumstances, and with approval of the Administrator’s Communications Director, county departments may issue press statements. However, the county departments must coordinate these with ESF-15 prior to release.
  7. Joint Information Center
     1. If appropriate, ESF-15 will establish a Joint Information Center (JIC). Representatives of county departments and municipalities may provide emergency public information from this location.
     2. The county JIC will normally be co-located at the EOC. However, based on the event or the site or hazard-specific plan, the county JIC may be located at a separate site. The primary JIC location during times of activation will be collocated with the EOC at 200 Bleckley Street, Anderson SC 29625.
     3. A media staging area will be provided at either the JIC or near the incident site at the discretion of the incident commander (IC).
     4. Under some circumstances, State agencies and/or departments may issue statements of news releases. These statements are to be coordinated with the local ESF-15 lead Public Information Officer prior to release.
     5. Situation briefings, press conferences, recorded messages, photographs, news accounts, statistics on injuries and fatalities, and other pertinent information may be provided to news media outlets as appropriate to include information targeted at non-English speaking individuals and/or special needs populations.
     6. ESF-15 will consult with appropriate department or agency representatives concerning implementation of emergency or disaster public information activities.
     7. A message that states, “The Anderson County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has been activated to a level of \_\_\_\_. Further information will be made available as needed.” will be released as emergency operations are phased into activation. This message will be sent to all appropriate ESF reps and agencies.
     8. County ESF-15 will coordinate with State ESF-15 to obtain state assistance as required.
     9. ESF-15 will coordinate the internal coordination of information and the timely release of such information to the public using all available medium.
     10. Information verification and authentication shall be handled by ESF-15 in cooperation with each supporting ESF operating in the EOC.

# ESF ACTIONS

* 1. Preparedness
     1. Develop a public information program to educate the public regarding the effects of common, emergency, and disaster situations.
     2. Develop plans to coordinate with international, national, state and local news media for emergency operations, before, during and after emergency situations.
     3. Develop plans to conduct a multi-agency/jurisdiction coordinated public information program during emergencies and disasters.
     4. Develop plans and programs to educate news media that ESF-15 is the primary information center during emergency situations, unless otherwise directed by the Administrator’s Director of Communications.
     5. Develop procedures to organize and operate the County Emergency Response Team (CERT) media briefing area and/or a JIC.
     6. Be prepared to engage multi-lingual personnel to translate EAS messages, news releases, and public service announcements, for all hazards affecting the county.
     7. Secure lists of qualified interpreters/translators to relay public information.
     8. Develop and maintain social media engagement procedures for the County Emergency Response Team during activations of the EOC.
     9. Encourage the public to develop disaster plans and kits.
     10. Provide evacuation information to the affected public.
     11. Participate in local and State exercises and conduct, at least annually, an ESF-15 exercise to validate this annex and supporting standard operating procedures.
     12. Develop and maintain a roster with contact information of ESF-15 personnel and media outlet contacts to be updated annually by November 15.
     13. Review the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Universal Task List and Target Capabilities List integrating tasks as appropriate by November 15.
     14. Ensure all ESF-15 personnel integrate NIMS principles in planning. All ESF-15 personnel must complete required NIMS training as outlined in DHS training guidelines.
     15. Ensure procedures are in place to document costs for any potential reimbursement.
     16. Support the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) by ensuring ESF-15 personnel are trained on EMAC responsibilities by pre-identifying assets, needs and resources that may be allocated to support other States and maintaining related information in PalmettoEOC.
  2. Response
     1. Alert agencies whose personnel, equipment, or other resources may be used.
     2. Provide EAS messages and news releases in common language and terminology to inform the public. Coordinate with established hotline systems.
     3. Provide emergency public information to special needs populations, as well as non-English speaking individuals.
     4. Coordinate with news media regarding emergency operations.
     5. Provide mass notification to urban and rural populations and provide periodic media updates.
     6. Execute a multi-agency/jurisdiction coordinated public information program.
     7. Organize and operate a County Emergency Response Team press briefing area and a joint information center, as appropriate.
     8. Supplement local emergency management public information operations, as necessary, and when resources are available.
     9. Identify and provide a liaison officer for each EMAC request to facilitate arrival and onward movement of EMAC support at appropriate staging area.
  3. Recovery
     1. Continue public information activities to include updating the public on recovery efforts including public health notices for clean up on private property while ensuring all public notices are available in alternative formats.
     2. Anticipate and plan for arrival of and coordination with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), ESF-15 (External Affairs) personnel in the EOC and the Joint Information Office (JIO).
     3. Process and disseminate disaster welfare and family reunification information.
     4. Ensure emergency information concerning safety and disaster assistance is provided to the public in coordination with each ESF utilizing available communications channels.
     5. Support long-term recovery priorities as identified by the Recovery Task Force.
     6. Emergency Management Division personnel will coordinate community relations functions with FEMA staff and other state agencies in the aftermath of a disaster.
     7. Provide ESF-15 representation on the Recovery Task Force.
  4. Mitigation
     1. Support and plan for mitigation measures including monitoring and updating mitigation actions in the County Hazard Mitigation Plan.
     2. Review, evaluate, recommend, and comment on proposed County Hazard Mitigation Plan amendments, upon initiation and within the review period.
     3. Support requests and directives from the State and/or FEMA concerning mitigation and/or re-development activities.
     4. Document matters that may be needed for inclusion in agency, county or state/federal briefings, situation reports and action plans.
     5. Participate in After Action Reporting and Improvement Plan development.

# RESPONSIBILITIES

* 1. General: ESF-15 support agencies will maintain contact with and prepare to execute missions in support of ESF-15 during periods of activation.
  2. Anderson County Emergency Management Division
     1. Identify, train, and assign personnel to staff ESF-15 in the EOC.
     2. Develop and implement a training program regarding EOC operations/processes for all ESF-15 members.
     3. Develop a public information program to educate the public regarding the effects of emergency and disaster situations.
     4. Develop plans to coordinate with news media and external agencies for emergency operations, before, during and after an emergency.
     5. Develop plans to conduct a multi-agency/jurisdiction coordinated public information program during emergency and disaster situations.
     6. Develop plans and programs to educate news media that ESF-15 is the primary information center during emergency situations, unless otherwise directed by the Administrator’s Director of Communications.
     7. Develop procedures to organize and operate a CERT media briefing area and/or a joint information center.
     8. Develop pre-scripted EAS messages and news releases for all hazards to include winter weather, severe weather, hurricanes, earthquakes, nuclear incidents, and dam failures in traditional and alternative media.
     9. Coordinate with local Public Information Officers on the dissemination of news releases and other public information materials.
     10. Develop and maintain social media plans and procedures for the County Emergency Management System.
  3. Anderson County Sheriff’s Office
     1. Identify, train and assign personnel to maintain contact with and prepare to execute missions in support of ESF-15 during periods of activation.
     2. Provide personnel to augment ESF-15 during emergencies and disasters.
  4. Anderson County Administrator’s Office – Communications Department
     1. Identify, train and assign personnel to maintain contact with and prepare to execute missions in support of ESF-15 during periods of activation.
     2. Provide personnel to augment ESF-15 during emergencies and disasters.
  5. AC County Television

Provide support and assistance in county-wide public communications from the Emergency Operations Center.

* 1. Anderson County Fire Department
     1. Identify, train and assign personnel to maintain contact with and prepare to execute missions in support of ESF-15 during periods of activation.
     2. Provide personnel to augment ESF-15 during emergencies and disasters.
  2. City of Anderson Fire Department
     1. Identify, train and assign personnel to maintain contact with and prepare to execute missions in support of ESF-15 during periods of activation.
     2. Provide personnel to augment ESF-15 during emergencies and disasters.
  3. City of Anderson Police Department
     1. Identify, train and assign personnel to maintain contact with and prepare to execute missions in support of ESF-15 during periods of activation.
     2. Provide personnel to augment ESF-15 during emergencies and disasters.
  4. Municipal Governments of Anderson, Belton, Honea Path, Iva, Pelzer, Pendleton, Starr, West Pelzer and Williamston
     1. Identify, train and assign personnel to maintain contact with and prepare to execute missions in support of ESF-15 during periods of activation.
     2. Provide personnel to augment ESF-15 during emergencies and disasters.
  5. Anderson County School Districts 1 - 5
     1. Identify, train and assign personnel to maintain contact with and prepare to execute missions in support of ESF-15 during periods of activation.
     2. Provide personnel to augment ESF-15 during emergencies and disasters.
  6. Anderson County Special Populations
     1. In coordination with ACEMD Public Information develop and disseminate written Spanish language disaster/preparedness Public Service Announcements (PSA), news releases, and other disaster related public information to local/county emergency management offices, and applicable broadcasts/print media outlets.
     2. During periods of activation and at other times as requested, provide bi- lingual services during print/on-air broadcast media interviews, press conferences, and other live media events.
     3. Develop plans/procedures to ensure widest distribution of disaster information via Spanish language print and broadcast media outlets.
  7. Upstate Incident Management Team (IMT)
     1. Identify, train and assign personnel to maintain contact with and prepare to execute missions in support of ESF-15 during periods of activation.
     2. Provide personnel to augment ESF-15 during emergencies and disasters.
  8. AnMed Health
     1. Identify, train and assign personnel to maintain contact with and prepare to execute missions in support of ESF-15 during periods of activation.
     2. Provide personnel to augment ESF-15 during emergencies and disasters.

# STATE ASSISTANCE

* 1. This Annex is supported by the National Response Framework ESF-15 (External Affairs).
  2. State ESF-15 consists of the following functional components:
* External affairs
* Community relations
* Congressional affairs
* Public affairs
* State and local coordination
* Tribal affairs
* Private sector external affairs coordination
* Planning and products
  1. SCEMD ESF-15 provides the Chief of Public Information & External Affairs Officer to the Unified Coordination Staff during an incident requiring a coordinated Federal response. The External Affairs Officer, or ESF-15 Officer, serves as the primary external affairs advisor to the Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) and Unified Coordination Group, if designated.
  2. ESF-15 may provide the same support to a National Special Security Event.
  3. Public information personnel will arrive with the initial FEMA IMAT, will initially co-locate with the EOC, and then operate from either the JFO or EOC.

**EOC Checklist**

**Activation Phase:**

* Maintain an overall vision of safety during all processes.
* Initiates position log in PalmettoEOC and all appropriate/required documentation
* Receives assignment and briefing from Emergency Management Director during Initial EOC Strategy Meeting
* Determines staffing and communications equipment requirements and makes required personnel assignments

**Operational Phase:**

* Maintains position log in PalmettoEOC
* Obtains policy guidance and approval from the EOC Manager with regard to all information to be released
* Advises the EOC Manager of all unusual requests for information and critical or unfavorable media comments
* Develops and publishes a media briefing schedule, to include location, format, preparation and distribution of handout materials
* Establishes a media briefing area
* Maintains up-to-date status boards and other references to the media
* Establishes a call center to manage public inquiries and provide emergency support information
* Interacts with other EOCs and/or JICs to share information
* Establishes distribution lists
* Coordinates with other EOC sections and incident PIOs
* Prepares media briefings for elected officials and other leaders
* Ensures, in coordination with Incident Command, that adequate staff is available to coordinate and conduct tours of the disaster areas
* Establishes and monitors content for Emergency Alert System (EAS) releases and local media outlets
* Develops talking points or scripts for the call takers of the call center
* Ensures that announcements, emergency information and materials are translated and prepared for special populations (non-English speaking, hearing impaired, etc.) Monitors all media, using information to develop follow-up news releases and rumor control
* Ensures that file copies are maintained of all information released
* Provides copies of all media releases to the EOC Manager
* Conducts shift change briefings in detail, ensuring that current activities are identified and follow-up requirements are known

**Demobilization Phase:**

* Ensures any open actions are assigned to appropriate staff
* Provides all final documentation to the Documentation Unit Leader
* Prepares final news releases and advises media representatives of contacts for follow-up information
* Assists with demobilization procedures

**Unique resources required:** N/A