Emergency Support Function #2 - Communication

**Primary Agency**
Office of Emergency Preparedness
Information Technology
University Relations
911 Centers

**Secondary/Support Agencies**
Law Enforcement
Local Telephone Service Provider
Wireless Providers
Amateur Radio
Campus Radio Station

**Introduction**

**Purpose:**
The purpose of Emergency Support Function #2 – Communication is to support public safety and other university departments by maintaining continuity of information and telecommunication equipment and other technical resources. ESF #2 in conjunction with ESF #15 is responsible for keeping faculty, staff, and students informed in regards to an emergency situation, provide guidance when appropriate to help save lives and protect property, and support university agencies with the restoration and reconstruction of telecommunications equipment, computers, and other technical resources. This section describes the university’s emergency communications, notification, and warning systems. The university will coordinate with the City of Radford Emergency Operations Center should outside assistance be required.

**Scope:**
ESF #2 works to accurately and efficiently transfer information during an incident. This ESF is also responsible for the technology associated with the representation, transfer, interpretation, and processing of data among people, places, and machines. Communication includes transmission, emission, or reception of signs, signals, writing, images, and sounds or intelligence of any natures by wire, radio, optical, or other electromagnetic systems.
Policies:
- The Emergency Communications Center (ECC) operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and serves as the 911 center and the university warning point;
- The ECC is accessible to authorized personnel only;
- The ECC staff will consist of the Communications Supervisor, Dispatchers, and other designated representatives. Support personnel to assist with communications, designated logistics, and administration will also be designated. The Communications Supervisor will be available for decision-making as required; and
- The ECC will initiate notification and warning to appropriate personnel.

Concept of Operations

General:
The Emergency Operations Plan provides guidance for managing emergency communications resources.

The University’s Communications Center is the point of contact for receipt of all warnings and notification of actual or impending emergencies or disaster. The dispatcher on duty will notify other key personnel, chiefs, and department heads as required by the type of report and standard operating procedures (SOP).

The Emergency Communications Center (ECC) is accessible to authorized personnel only. The ECC is most often the first point of contact for the campus. The ECC has the capability to access the University Emergency Alert Systems to deliver warnings to the campus community and the public. Use of all available forms of warning and notification will provide warning to the general public and special needs population.

The telephone companies will ensure that communications essential to emergency services are maintained. During a major disaster, additional telephone lines may be installed in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to coordinate emergency operations. At least one phone with a special publicized number will be reserved for "rumor control" to handle citizen inquiries. The Coordinator of Emergency Preparedness will coordinate with Information Technology to provide these services.

Amateur radio operators may provide emergency backup radio communications between the EOC and the State EOC, should normal communications be disrupted. They may also provide communications with some in-field operators.

It is important that while communicating, standard or common terminology is used so that multiple agencies are better able to interact and understand each other.

Should an evacuation become necessary, warning and evacuation instructions will be put out via the university mass notifications system, siren system, email, VOIP/Speaker system, web and social media, radio and TV. The Office of Emergency Preparedness and University Relations will develop and provide public information announcements and publications regarding evacuation procedures to include recommended primary and
alternate evacuation routes, designated assembly points for those without transportation, rest areas and service facilities along evacuation routes, if appropriate, as well as potential health hazards associated with the risk.

**Organization:**

The Coordinator of Emergency Preparedness will assure the development of SOPs on the part of each major emergency support service. Generally, each designated agency should maintain current notification rosters, designate and staff an official emergency control center, and establish procedures for reporting appropriate emergency information, and provide ongoing training to maintain emergency response capabilities. When an emergency threatens, available time will be used to implement increased readiness measures as listed in each annex to this plan. The Coordinator of Emergency Preparedness will assure that all actions are completed as scheduled. University Relations will represent and advise the Incident Commander on all public information. This includes rumors that are circulating the area, what local media are reporting, as well as warnings and emergency public information.

The EOC support staff will include a recorder, message clerk, and other support personnel as required relieving the decision-making group of handling messages, maintaining logs, placing maps, etc. An EOC wall map should be prepared and be readily accessible. A separate Reports Section may also be established as an adjunct to the EOC staff.

Radford University emergency communications are heavily dependent on the commercial telephone network. The telephone system is vulnerable to the effects of emergencies and disasters and to possible system overload due to increased usage. Technical failure, damage, or loss of telecommunications equipment could hamper communications or the ability to communicate with emergency personnel and the public throughout the campus. Mutual aid procedures and repeaters may not be available or may not be able to provide sufficient coverage or channel loading to compensate for technical failure or damage to telecommunications resources on the campus during an emergency.

Amateur radio operators and other nongovernmental volunteer groups used to assist with emergency radio communications support will be under the authority of the Director of Emergency Preparedness or the Coordinator of Emergency Preparedness. The amateur radio and other nongovernmental volunteer operators will be asked to actively participate in regular training and exercises established by the Office of Emergency Preparedness.

**Actions**

- ESF #2 will establish a working arrangement between the Primary Agencies, the local Emergency Operations Center, and local news media;
- The ECC will initiate notification and warning of appropriate personnel. Landline telephones, mass notification systems, 2 way radio, and wireless
telecommunications devices may be utilized to notify public officials, EOC staff, emergency personnel and others, as required;

- Emergency service vehicles equipped with public address systems may be used to warn the campus community;
- The Coordinator of Emergency Preparedness, Director of Emergency Preparedness, Police Supervisor, or his/her designee must authorize the use of the Emergency Alert System; and
- Emergency warning may originate at the federal, state, or local level of government. Timely warning requires dissemination to the campus by all available means:
  
  a. Emergency Communications Center  
  b. Emergency Alert System  
  c. Local radio and television stations  
  d. NOAA Weather Radio – National Weather Service  
  e. Mobile public address system  
  f. Telephone  
  g. General broadcast over all available radio frequencies  
  h. Newspapers  
  i. Amateur Radio Volunteers  
  j. Mass Notification Systems  
  k. Siren Systems

**Responsibilities**

- Develop and maintain primary and alternate communications system for contact with local jurisdictions, state agencies, nongovernmental and private sector agencies required for mission support;
- Ensure the ability to provide continued service as the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) for incoming emergency calls;
- Ensure communication lines and equipment essential to emergency services are maintained by the appropriate vendor;
- Provide additional staffing in the EOC to assist with communications functions;
- Develop and maintain an emergency communications program and plan;
- Provide telephone service providers with a restoration priority list for telephone service prior to and/or following a major disaster; and
- Maintain records of cost and expenditures and forward them to Finance Section Chief.
EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

Until the EOC is activated, the Radford University Dispatch Center will notify the following officials upon receipt of severe weather warnings, building fires, Active Threats, or when directed by an on-scene incident commander:

Note: Home numbers are not listed on web.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Official</th>
<th>Home Phone</th>
<th>Work Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exec. Director of Emergency Preparedness</td>
<td></td>
<td>540-831-6696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator of Emergency Preparedness</td>
<td></td>
<td>540-831-7155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief of Police</td>
<td></td>
<td>540-831-5500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications Supervisor</td>
<td></td>
<td>540-831-5500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exec. Director of University Relations or</td>
<td></td>
<td>540-831-7745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Marketing</td>
<td></td>
<td>540-831-7523</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Depending on the incident, the Director and/or Coordinator will notify the Provost, VP of Finance and Administration, and VP of Student Affairs. Once operational, the EOC will receive messages from the University Police, City 911 Center, and/or State EOC. It is then the responsibility of the Communications Center of the university to monitor message traffic and ensure that messages reach the Director of Emergency Preparedness or their designee.
Emergency Support Function #2

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION TECHNOLOGY

Radford University provides multiple alert notification services to students, faculty and staff that enable the university police department, emergency preparedness, and senior campus administrators to send emergency alert notifications including text messages, emails, telephones, web sites, Facebook, Twitter, campus computers, and the RU campus IP reverse announcement telephone system speakers. Specific alert notification system technologies integrated into the RU campus Emergency Response Plan include:

RU Alert Notification System

The Radford University RU Alert Notification System sign-up is accessible through the university web portal. The system allows students and staff to sign-up and receives emergency messages including campus emergencies, severe weather notifications, campus closings, and delay information through multiple telephone, email, and text messaging outlets. Additional information and instructions on how to sign up for RU Alert can be found online.

Campus Email

In the event of any emergency or need to relay important information to the Radford University community, a “coverage” or “blast email” is sent that reaches all university email users. The email system also will be used to provide continuing information about the emergency or event.

Campus IP Telephone Reverse Announcement System

Beginning in fall of 2009, Radford University began updating the campus telephone system using new IP telephone units and speaker boxes for campus residence halls, offices, and classroom locations. In the event of an emergency the message generated by the RU Alert System will initiate a reverse audio message through the IP telephone system and selected speaker locations. Additional IP telephones and speakers will be deployed including links with new fire alarm audio systems.

RU Alertus Desktop System (Deployment in the spring of 2013)

In the Fall of 2012, RU Alert messages will be linked to Desktop Alertus computer messaging system that will take the RU Alert notification message and generate a parallel emergency notification message on all active campus computers including computer labs and classroom instructional computers. The alert will display as a full screen message and will require an acknowledgement response to clear screen.
Campus Siren and Verbal Notification System

Radford University deploys a campus siren/public address system. Sirens and speakers are placed at multiple locations on campus and at the Dedmon Center. The operation of the system provides a first notification siren alarm followed by a verbal communication via the PA system positioned at each location to convey specific information.

Campus Signage System

As of spring of 2013, the university is upgrading the campus LCD/TV displays information system that feeds multiple news and information channels to the campus community through residence halls and various buildings on campus. In conjunction with other campus alert systems, the signage system allows for emergency messages to be displayed including status information.

Radford University Web Page

During a time of emergency or crisis the link icon will be activated calling attention to information for the emergency including status and updates. In the event of a major threat or emergency that requires quick and concise information, the university home page will be shifted to the RU Alert web page containing specific information.

WVRU Public Radio

In time of emergency WVRU public radio, a service of Radford University, will interrupt programming to broadcast emergency notification messages and severe weather information. Tune to 89.9FM WVRU. Weather information and warnings will come directly from the National Weather Service.

Facebook

Anyone can sign up for RU Alert messaging through the RU Facebook portal. Once connected you will receive the same alert message from RU Alert system and generated to your Facebook link. Please follow instructions below to sign up.

- Go to your personal Facebook page and log in.
- Click on the Applications Tab in the lower left corner
- Search for Application called RU Alert
- Add to your Facebook Site

Important Note: This application does not track or gather any information about you. It is only a link to the RU Alert Notification network messaging system.
LEVELS OF EMERGENCY

Level One Emergency
If the need has arisen to notify faculty, staff, and students to an emergency situation the following should be used:

- Mass Notification System
- Web page and social media
- VOIP/Speaker system
- Desktop Crawler
- Signage System

Cable Television if the emergency occurs after dark or during the weekends.

Level Two Emergency

- Mass Notification System
- Siren/PA System
- Web page and social media
- VOIP/Speaker system
- Desktop Crawler
- Cable Television/Campus Radio Station

Signage system and Web Site to keep the campus updated to events and responses.

Level Three Emergency

In the event of a Level Three Emergency, all methods of communication will be utilized to warn and update the campus community. Some systems may be activated at a later time as information is obtained.

- Siren/PA System
- Mass Notification System
- Web page and social media
- VOIP/Speaker system
• Desktop Crawler
• Cable Television/Campus Radio Station
• Signage System and Web Sites along with internal emails

During the initial phase of the emergency, University Police and/or the Office of Emergency Preparedness will initiate all life safety and emergency communications as necessary for the immediate protection of the campus community. The University Police Department has the authority to change or modify the above recommendations for all warning systems initializations depending on conditions and time constraints presented until the Coordinator and/or Director of Emergency Preparedness arrives.

It is essential that information being sent to the campus community and the public should be coordinated and consistent. Once a representative from University Relations arrives at the EOC or Police Department, all following event public information will be communicated through this office. University Relations will work with the Office of Emergency Preparedness and/or the University Police Department to disseminate information to the campus community and the local media.

All University Emergency Systems can be activated by the Radford University Police, Office of Emergency Preparedness, and approved departments who may be needed to help in the dissemination of emergency information.
Tab 3 to Emergency Support Function #2

Department Personnel who can activate the Warning Systems

Note: No cell phones are listed on web version

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Systems Used</th>
<th>Office Phone</th>
<th>Cell Phone</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Todd Branscome</td>
<td>OEP</td>
<td>All except Web</td>
<td>540-831-7155</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennie Templeton</td>
<td>OEP</td>
<td>All except Web</td>
<td>540-831-6696</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleen Roberts</td>
<td>RUPD</td>
<td>Mass Notification Siren</td>
<td>540-831-5500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christy Jackson</td>
<td>University Relations</td>
<td>Web and Social Media</td>
<td>540-831-775</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Baker</td>
<td>RUPD</td>
<td>Mass Notification Siren</td>
<td>540-831-5500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott Shaffer</td>
<td>RUPD</td>
<td>Mass Notification Siren</td>
<td>540-831-5500</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dispatchers</td>
<td>RUPD</td>
<td>Mass Notification Siren</td>
<td>540-831-5500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randy McCallister</td>
<td>SR. Eng.</td>
<td>Cable Television Signage System</td>
<td>540-831-7514</td>
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## EOC Technology Support Personnel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Systems Used</th>
<th>Office Phone</th>
<th>Cell Phone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charlie Cosmato</td>
<td>TLC</td>
<td>Social Media, Web page</td>
<td>540-831-6597</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randy McCallister</td>
<td>SR. Eng</td>
<td>Cable TV, Signage System, Radio</td>
<td>540-831-7514</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lydia McCallister</td>
<td>Operations Manager</td>
<td>Signage System</td>
<td>540-831-5716</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamie Hunt</td>
<td>Dir. Web Communications</td>
<td>Web Page, Signs</td>
<td>540-831-7137</td>
<td></td>
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