

State Planning Standards Checklist for Annex I - Public Information

Jurisdiction(s): Jackson County


Annex Date: February 25, 2020 Date of most recent change, if any: _____

(The date which appears on the signature page)

Note: The annex will be considered Deficient if the *italicized* standards are not met.

This Annex shall:	Section/paragraph
I. Authority	
I-1. Identify local, state, and federal legal authorities pertinent to the subject of the annex in addition to those cited in the basic Plan.	I
II. Purpose	
I-2. Include a purpose statement that describes the reason for development of the annex.	II
III. Explanation of Terms	
I-3. Explain and/or define terms and acronyms used in the annex.	III
IV. Situation & Assumptions	
<i>I-4. Include a situation statement related to the subject of the annex.</i>	IV.A
<i>I-5. Include a list of assumptions used in planning for public information operations in emergency situations.</i>	IV.B
V. Concept of Operations	
<i>I-6. Describe the local concept of operations for public information including how it relates to NIMS operating principles.</i>	V.A
<i>I-7. Describe methods of disseminating information and instructions to the public during emergency situations.</i>	V.B
<i>I-8. Describe methods of disseminating emergency information to Non-English speaking populations.</i>	V.C
<i>I-9. List resources available for disseminating public information.</i>	V.D
<i>I-10. Include a list of actions by phases of emergency management to be taken to ensure adequate public information during emergencies.</i>	V.E
VI. Organization & Assignment of Responsibilities	
<i>I-11. Describe the organization that will be used to provide public information during emergency situations.</i>	VI.A
<i>I-12. Include a listing by organization and/or position of the responsibilities for various information tasks during emergency situations.</i>	VI.B
VII. Direction & Control	
<i>I-13. Describe how public information activities will be directed and controlled during emergency situations.</i>	VII.A
<i>I-14. Indicate the line of succession for key public information personnel during emergency situations.</i>	VII.B

VIII. Readiness Levels		
I-15. Describe public information actions to be taken at various readiness levels.		VIII
IX. Administration & Support		
I-16. Provide that the PIO maintain a media contact roster.		IX.A Appendix 1
I-17. Outline policies relating to record keeping for public information operations during emergencies.		IX.B
I-18. Describe emergency-related public education programs and sources of materials for such programs		IX.C
I-19. Outline training requirements for public information personnel.		IX.D
X. Annex Development & Maintenance		
I-20. Specify the individual(s) by position responsible for developing and maintaining the annex.		X.A
I-21. Make reference to the schedule for review and update of annexes contained in section X of the Basic Plan.		X.B
XI. References		
I-22. List references pertinent to the content of the annex not listed in the Basic Plan.		XI
Other		
I-23. Describe general emergency information needs and how information will be collected and disseminated.		Appendix 2
I-24. Provide general guidance for working with the media.		Appendix 3
I-25. Outline policies relating to access by the media to incident sites and emergency facilities.		Appendix 4
I-26. Provide a list of the pre-scripted emergency messages contained in Annex A, Warning.		Appendix 5
I-27. Include emergency public information checklists for principal local hazards.		Appendix 6

FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT USE	Signature	Date
This Checklist Completed By Kelly R. Janica		2-10-2020

FOR GDEM USE	Initials	Date
TDEM Preparedness Section Processing		

ANNEX I

Public Information

Jurisdiction



**JACKSON COUNTY
INCLUDING THE CITIES OF
EDNA, GANADO & LAWARD**

APPROVAL & IMPLEMENTATION

Annex I

PUBLIC INFORMATION



Kelly R. Janica
Emergency Management Coordinator

02-10-2020

Date

ANNEX I

PUBLIC INFORMATION

I. AUTHORITY

- A. See Section I of the Basic Plan for general authorities.
- B. Texas Local Government Code, Chapter 203 (Management and Preservation of Records).
- C. Jackson County Emergency Operations Plan

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this annex is to outline the means, organization, and process by which we will provide appropriate information and instructions to the public during emergency situations. This annex also provides for public education to be conducted in advance of emergency situations to reduce the likelihood that citizens will place themselves in hazardous situations that may require an emergency response.

III. EXPLANATION OF TERMS

A. Acronyms

EAS	Emergency Alert System
EMC	Emergency Management Coordinator
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
IC	Incident Command/Commander
ICP	Incident Command Post
JFO	Joint Field Office
JIC	Joint Information Center
JIS	Joint Information System
LWP	Local Warning Point
PIO	Public Information Officer
TV	Television

B. Definitions

Public Information: Information provided to citizens before, during, and after emergency situations/incidents specifically including instructions on how to protect personal health, safety, and property or how to obtain assistance.

IV. SITUATION & ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situation

1. Jackson County faces a number of hazards which may cause emergency situations; see Section IV of the Basic Plan for a summary of those hazards and their possible impact.
2. During emergencies, the public needs timely, accurate information on the emergency situation and appropriate instructions regarding protective actions that should be taken to minimize injuries, loss of life and damage to property.
3. During major events, the public needs timely notice of accurate information regarding the event and/or measures which are in place to facilitate the event. In order to increase the public's situational awareness of potential diversions that may be in place to improve safety and maximize participation.
4. For some slowly developing emergency situations (such as river flooding or hurricanes), there may be several days for local government and the media to provide detailed information about the hazard and what citizens should do.
5. For other emergency situations, there may be no warning, leaving the public information system unable to react rapidly enough to properly inform the public about the hazard and what to do about it. For this reason, it is important that the public be advised of likely hazards and what protective measures should be taken to lessen the effect of an emergency and/or disaster.

B. Assumptions

1. An effective program combining both education and emergency information can significantly reduce loss of life and property. However, many people are unconcerned about hazards until they may be affected and will not participate in or retain pre-emergency education; therefore, special emphasis must be placed on the delivery of emergency information during emergencies and disasters.
2. Local media will cooperate in disseminating warning and emergency public information during emergency situations and may participate in pre-disaster awareness programs and other disaster education activities.
3. Some emergency situations may generate substantial media interest and draw both local media and media from outside the local area, overwhelming the available emergency public information staff.
4. While a primary PIO is formally designated for county wide incident and event management, smaller incidents and events may elicit an appointment either temporarily or for the whole response by the IC.

V. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. General

1. Pursuant to the National Incident Management System (NIMS) operating principles and protocols, public information efforts should generally focus on specific event-related information. This information will generally be of an instructional nature focusing on such things as warning, evacuation, and shelter. Appendix 2 describes some basic emergency information needs.
2. A special effort should be made to keep the public informed of the general progress of events. Reporting positive information regarding emergency response will help to reassure the community that the situation is under control. Rumor control must be a major aspect of the informational program. Public feedback should be used as a measure of the program's effectiveness.
3. Education efforts are to be directed toward increasing public awareness about potential hazards and how people should prepare for them. All information and education efforts will rely heavily on the cooperation of every type of media organization.

B. Information Dissemination

1. In the initial stages of an emergency situation, the Local Warning Point, otherwise known as the 911/Emergency Dispatch Communications Center, located at 115 W. Main Street, Edna, Texas may have to take action on time-sensitive hazards. Within the limits of the authority delegated to it, the Local Warning Point (LWP) will, formulate a warning if necessary, and disseminate it. Pre-scripted emergency messages have been prepared for likely hazards and are included in Annex A, Warning. A list of these messages is provided in Appendix 5. These pre-scripted messages may be used as written or tailored as needed for specific circumstances.
2. As Emergency Alert System (EAS) messages are limited to two minutes, EAS warning messages may have to be supplemented with Special News Advisories prepared by the PIO staff that contains amplifying emergency information. Special News Advisories are generally disseminated to media outlets by fax. Copies of the pre-scripted messages, which include warning messages and Special News Advisories, are maintained on computers at the Warning Point and in the EOC so that they can be modified quickly.
 - a. Broadcasters and cable companies must carry national security warnings and messages initiated by the President; they may broadcast alerts and messages initiated by state and local governments. The Federal Communications Commission encourages licensees to broadcast local warning and instruction messages, but the final decision on broadcasting such messages rests with the broadcasters.
 - b. Broadcasters and cable operators will expect EAS to be used for life-threatening emergencies.
3. When the Incident Command System is activated for an emergency situation, the Incident Commander will normally warn the public in and around the incident site. A designated PIO at the Incident Command Post (ICP), assisted by the County PIO staff if

necessary, will normally provide information on the emergency situation to the media if the EOC has not been activated. All information relayed to the media by the PIO will be approved by the IC and the County Judge, regardless of the command structure – single or unified.

4. Once the EOC has been activated for an emergency situation, the EOC Supervisor will normally determine the need for additional warning and instructions. The PIO staff will formulate additional warning messages and public instructions, using the sample messages contained in Annex A as a basis, where appropriate. The LWP will normally execute such warnings by activating the warning system, including transmitting EAS messages to broadcasters. The PIO staff will disseminate Special News Advisories and other emergency public information materials to the media directly using its contact list.
5. In the case of large-scale emergencies or disasters where there are substantial external responders from other jurisdictions and/or state or federal agencies and the response and recovery effort may continue for an extended period, a Joint Information Center (JIC) may be established. The JIC, an element of the Joint Information System (JIS) developed to provide information to the public during an emergency, is a working facility where the emergency public efforts of all participating jurisdictions, agencies, volunteer organizations, and other responders can be coordinated to ensure consistency and accuracy. In federally declared incidents, a JIC will typically be set up as part of the Joint Field Office (JFO).
6. The following means will be used to provide emergency information and instructions to the public:
 - a. EAS broadcasts by radio, television, and cable companies.
 - b. Special news broadcasts by radio, television, and cable companies.
 - c. Local newspapers.
 - d. Sudden link and/or New Wave Communication local government access channel
 - e. Mobile units with public address systems
 - f. Contracted Emergency Notification warning/information system
 - g. The local government internet communication websites
 - h. 2-1-1 information network
 - i. Webpage and/or Social Media

C. Providing Emergency Information to Special Populations

Special populations will be provided information on emergency situations and appropriate instructions by the following methods:

1. Visually-impaired: EAS messages and news advisories on radio, NOAA Weather Radio, or by door-to-door notification
2. Hearing-impaired: EAS messages and news advisories on radio, NOAA Weather Radio, or by door-to-door notification
3. Non-English Speakers: Interpreters/radio, appropriate print media, TV, or cable language newscasts, contracted emergency notification warning/information system in appropriate languages for the target area, door-to-door other means.

D. Resources

The PIO shall maintain a Media Roster that contains the names, telephone and facsimile numbers, and E-mail addresses of each of the media resources listed below. See Appendix 1 for an example.

1. Radio

- a. KIXS - Victoria
- b. KVIC 104.7 – Victoria
- c. KULP – (AM Stations Only) El Campo
- d. KIOX – Edna/El Campo

2. Broadcast Television

- a. KAVU - Victoria
- b. KHOU – (CBS) Houston
- c. KTRK – (ABC) Houston
- d. KPRC – (NBC) Houston
- e. KRIV – (FOX) Houston

3. Cable Television

- a. Suddenlink Cable Victoria/Edna

4. Newspapers

- a. Victoria Advocate
- b. Jackson County Herald Tribune

E. Phases of Management

1. Mitigation

- a. Conduct hazard awareness programs.
- b. Develop systems to enhance information dissemination during emergency situations.

2. Preparedness

- a. Develop and distribute educational materials; conduct public education programs.
- b. In coordination with the EMC, prepare pre-scripted warning and public instruction messages for known hazards. See Appendix 5 to this annex for a list of those messages included in Annex A, Warning.
- c. Brief local media on local warning systems and coordinate procedures for transmitting emergency information to media.

- d. Conduct public education on warning systems and the actions that should be taken for various types of warnings.
- e. Train public information staff.
- f. Brief local officials and emergency responders on working with the media. See Appendix 3.
- g. Maintain this annex.
- h. Identify suitable facilities for a Joint Information Center.

3. Response

- a. Develop, obtain authorization, and release public information on the emergency situation.
- b. Conduct media monitoring to determine the need to clarify issues and distribute updated public instructions.
- c. Manage rumor control.
- d. Conduct news conferences and arrange interviews as needed.

4. Recovery

- a. Provide public information relating to recovery process and programs.
- b. Compile record of events.
- c. Assess effectiveness of public information and education program.

VI. ORGANIZATION & ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES
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A. General

1. The overall responsibility for providing emergency information and instructions to the public rests with the County Judge.
2. The County Judge shall provide general guidance for Public Information (PI) programs and appoint a Public Information Officer (PIO).
3. The PIO will manage and coordinate all emergency public information related activities and direct such staff as may be assigned or recruited to assist in those activities.
4. Trained public information specialists will staff PIO positions at the Incident Command Post and in the EOC.

B. Task Assignments

1. The County Judge will:
 - a. Appoint a Public Information Officer (PIO).
 - b. Ensure that the jurisdiction has implemented and institutionalized processes and procedures to coordinate and integrate public information functions including the development of a public education program for emergency situations.
 - c. Authorize release of all IC approved incident information to the media.
 - d. Ensure that a Joint Information Center (JIC) is activated when warranted by the incident.
2. The Public Information Officer (PIO) will:
 - a. Represent and advise the IC/UC on all public information matters relating to the management of the incident.
 - b. Ensure the IC/UC approves the release of all incident-related information.
 - c. Coordinate and integrate public information functions across jurisdictions and functional agencies as required.
 - d. Develop accurate and complete information on the incident for both internal and external consumption.
 - e. Coordinate the overall emergency public information efforts of local government.
 - f. Recommend the establishment of a JIC when warranted by the incident.
 - g. Serve as the official Jackson County PIO representative in the JIC.
 - h. Conduct public education programs as an ongoing activity.
 - i. Develop and disseminate public information materials and maintain a stock of materials for emergency use based on hazards likely to confront the jurisdiction. Such materials should include:
 - 1) General materials dealing with the nature of hazards and basic protective actions to take in the event of an emergency, including shelter-in-place and evacuation.
 - 2) Hazard specific instructions on "where to go and what to do" in an emergency.
 - 3) Information on how emergency warnings are disseminated and the meaning of warning signals.

- i. In coordination with the EMC, and respective Department Directors, develop pre-scripted warning messages for known hazards for use by the local warning point and the ICP/EOC.
- j. Develop methods (i.e., website, briefings, speaking engagements, booths in high traffic areas, newspaper supplements, prepared TV/radio scripts for broadcast stations for distribution of emergency preparation materials to the public, to include materials for non-English speaking groups, if appropriate.
- k. In cooperation with the EMC, coordinate with broadcasters (radio and television stations and cable television companies) to develop procedures for local government to disseminate warning messages and emergency information through the broadcast media.
- l. Authenticate sources of information, verify for accuracy, and obtain authorization before issuing news releases.
- m. Provide authorized news releases to the media while keeping the appropriate key elected and appointed officials, 911 Operations Center, and IC informed of message contact.
- n. Monitor media coverage of emergency operations for accuracy of reports and issue corrections where necessary.
- o. Take action to control rumors.
- p. Brief potential Incident Commanders, department heads and key staff, and the EOC staff on basic public information needs, working with the media, and media access during emergency operations. See Appendices 2, 3 and 4 for further information on these subjects.
- q. Maintain a media briefing area [in/in the vicinity] of the EOC.
- r. Periodically brief the media on local warning systems and warning procedures and encourage cellphone registration for emergency messages.
- s. Maintain a Media Contact Roster. See Appendix 1 for a sample.
- t. Compile printed and photographic documentation of the emergency/disaster if necessary.
- u. Develop public information emergency checklists for known hazards. See Appendix 6.
- v. Anticipate and be prepared to handle unscheduled inquiries from the media and the public.
- w. Train a group of government employees and/or volunteers to staff PIO positions at the Incident Command Post and in the EOC.
- x. Recommend updates for the Emergency Management website or social media site.

