Emergency Support Function # 2 – Communications

ESF Coordinator

Floyd County 911 Coordinator or designee

Primary Agencies

Floyd County Emergency Management

Secondary/Support Agencies

Floyd County Sheriff's Office
Amateur Radio
Citizens Telephone

Introduction

Purpose:

Communications supports public safety and other county agencies by maintaining continuity of information and telecommunication equipment and other technical resources. ESF #2 uses available communication resources to respond to an incident by:
- Alerting and warning the community of a threatened or actual emergency;
- Continuing to communicate with the community through a variety of media to inform of protective actions; and
- Provide guidance, when appropriate, to help save lives and protect property;

This ESF describes the locality's emergency communications/notification and warning system. The locality will coordinate with the Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC) should additional assistance and resources be required.

Scope:

ESF # 2 works to accurately and efficiently transfer information during an incident. ESF #2 also:
- Informs the community of a threatened or actual emergency, in coordination with ESF #15;
- Ensures Floyd County has the ability to notify the community of a disaster or emergency;
- Provides for the technology associated with the representation, transfer, interpretation, and processing of data among people, places, and machine; and
- Supports Floyd County with the restoration, emission or reception of signs, signals, writing images, and sounds or intelligence of any nature by wire, radio, optical, or other electromagnetic systems.

Policies:

The following policies are reviewed and revised as necessary:
- The Emergency Communications Center (ECC) operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and serves as the 911 center and the locality's warning point.
- The ECC is accessible to authorized personnel only;
- Support personnel to assist with communications, logistics, and administration will also be designated. The Director of Emergency Management will be available for decision making as required, and
- The ECC will initiate notification and warning of appropriate personnel.

Concept of Operations

General:

Floyd County's Emergency Communication Center (ECC) is the point of contact for receipt of all warnings and notifications of actual or impending emergencies or disasters. 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).

Current ECC staffing includes two dispatchers on duty at all times. The ECC operates on UHF frequency. The ECC is the dispatch center for all fire, rescue, and law enforcement services.

The ECC is accessible to authorized personnel only.   The ECC is most often the first point of contact for the general public.

The ECC has the capability to access the Emergency Alert System (EAS) to deliver warnings to the public.   Use of the EAS for warning and notification will not provide sufficient warning to the general public and special needs population.

Citizens Telephone Company 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 Management will coordinate with the telephone company to provide these services.

Floyd County Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (RACES) may provide emergency backup radio communications between the county's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and the Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC), 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 multiple agencies are better able to interact and understand each other.

Should an evacuation become necessary, warning and evacuation instructions will be disseminated via radio, television, use of mobile public address systems, and, if necessary, door-to-door within the affected community.   The Public Information Officer 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. The Public Information Officer will coordinate with External Affairs ESF15 on all statements or warnings released to the public.

Organization:

Floyd County emergency communications are heavily dependent of 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 or damage loss of telecommunications equipment could hamper communications or the ability to communicate with emergency personnel and the public throughout the locality. Mutual aid repeaters in contiguous jurisdictions 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 in the locality during an emergency.

RACES and other non-governmental volunteer groups used to assist with emergency radio communications support will be under the authority of the Director of Emergency Management or the Coordinator of Emergency Management, or the Information Technology Department. RACES and other non-governmental volunteer operators will be required to actively participate in regular training and exercises established by the Office of Emergency Management and the Information Technology Department.

Actions/Responsibilities:

ESF #2 will establish a working arrangement between the local Primary Agency, the local Emergency Operations Center, and local news media;

- The ECC will initiate notification and warning of appropriate personnel. Landline telephones, voice or data-2 way radio, and wireless telecommunications devices may be utilized to notify public officials, EOC staff, emergency personnel and others, as required
- Upon a report of severe weather the E-911 center will contact the National Weather Service to report weather conditions (800) 221-2856 and the Emergency Management Coordinator.
- Emergency service vehicles equipped with public address systems may be used to warn the general public
- Should an evacuation become necessary, warning and directions for evacuation and/or protect in place will be disseminated via all appropriate means. Responding agencies will use mobile loudspeakers, bull horns and/or go door-to-door to ensure that residents in the threatened areas have received evacuation warning.
- The Coordinator of Emergency Management or his/her designee must authorize the use of the Emergency Alert System

Emergency warning may originate at the federal, state, or local level of government. Timely warning requires dissemination to the public by all available means:

- Emergency Communications Center
- Emergency Alert System
- Local radio and television stations
- NOAA Weather Radio – National Weather Service
- Mobile public address system
- Telephone
- General broadcast over all available radio frequencies
- Newspapers
- Amateur Radio Volunteers

- 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
- Maintain records of cost and expenditures and forward them to Finance Section Chief

Tab 1 to Emergency Support Function #2

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

Until the EOC is activated, the Communications Center of Floyd County will notify the following officials upon receipt of a severe weather warning, other impending emergency, or when directed by an on-scene incident commander:

Official	Home Phone	Work Phone
County Administrator	745-3852	745-9300
Coordinator of Emergency Management	250-5251	745-9313
Public Information Officer (Chairman of the Board)	330-3245	651-2445
Sheriff		745-9334

Table 2.1 – Emergency Notification Procedures

Once operational, the local Emergency Operations Center will receive messages directly from the VEOC. It is then the responsibility of the Communications Center of the locality to monitor message traffic and ensure that messages reach the Director of Emergency Management or his designee.

A full listing of contact numbers is maintained in the Communications Center.

Tab 2 to Emergency Support Function #2

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES
Media Contact
(Partial Listing)

Newspaper	Address	Contact	Phone Number(s)
Landmark Media	110 Peppers Ferry Rd Christiansburg VA 24072	Editor	540-382-4905
Galax Gazette	PO Box 88 Galax, VA 24333	Editor	276-236-5178
Roanoke Times	201 W. Campbell Ave. Roanoke, VA	Editor	800-346-1234 540-981-3340
Floyd Press	710 East Main Street Floyd VA 24091	Editor	540-745-2127
Radio Stations	**Address**	**Contact**	**Phone Number(s)**
WBRF-FM 98.1	Galax	Station Manager	276-236-7198
WPVR-FM 94.9	Roanoke	Station Manager	540-772-0112
WXLK-FM 92.3	Roanoke	Station Manager	540-744-9200
WVTF-FM 89.1	Roanoke	Station Manager	540-540-989-8900
Television Stations	**Address**	**Contact**	**Phone Number(s)**
WDBJ 7 – Roanoke – New River Newsroom	3601 Holiday Lane Blacksburg, VA 24060	Bureau Chief	540-951-7304
WSLS 10 – Roanoke	401 3rd Street Roanoke, VA 24011	News Director	800-SEE-NEWS 540-981-9126
WSET TV 13	2320 Langhorne Road Lynchburg VA 24501	News Director	434-528-1313
Citizens Television	Floyd VA		540-745-2111

- *Table 2.2 – Media Contacts*

Tab 3 to Emergency Support Function #2
Available Methods of Communication

Equipment	Organization and Address	Contact	Method	Phone
Dispatching Center	Floyd County 911	Dispatch	Capable of making radio links with Carroll Co., Montgomery Co., and Patrick Co.	540-745-9334
Amateur Radio	Floyd County Races	Michael Gale	Multiple Frequencies	540-235-1552
Amateur Radio	Floyd County Races	Russ Abbey	Multiple Frequencies	540-808-3235
Amateur Radio	Floyd County Races	Mark Ward	Multiple Frequencies	803-320-2492

Table 2.3 – Methods of Communication