



#15 External Affairs

State Emergency Support Function Annex

Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency

February 2022

STATE OF HAWAI'I
EMERGENCY
OPERATIONS PLAN



SESF #15 TASKED AGENCIES

State ESF Primary and Coordinating Agencies:

State Department of Defense, Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA)
Office of the Governor

State Support Agencies:

- Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS)
- Department of Agriculture (HDOA)
- Department of Attorney General
- Department of Budget and Finance (B & F)
- Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism (DBEDT)
- Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA / Attached to DBEDT)
- Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA)
- Public Utilities Commission (PUC / Attached to DCCA)
- Department of Defense (DOD)
- Department of Education (HDOE)
- Department of Hawaiian Homelands
- Department of Health (HDOH)
- Department of Human Resources Development (DHRD)
- Department of Human Services
- Department of Labor & Industrial Relations (DLIR)
- Department of Land & Natural Resources (DLNR)
- Department of Public Safety (DPS)
- Department of Taxation (DOTAX)
- Department of Transportation (DOT)
- Hawai'i State Judiciary (HSJ)
- Libraries
- Office of Enterprise Technology Services (OETS)
- University of Hawai'i

State Non-Profit and Private Sector Support Agencies:

American Red Cross



Federal ESF Coordinating Agency:

U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region IX

Federal ESF Primary Agency:

U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

County ESF Primary Agency:

(Note: Not every county uses an ESF structure to organize their Emergency Operations Centers. For counties that do not use the ESF structure, the agency listed serves in a role that is equivalent to an ESF Primary Agency.)

Hawai`i County: Hawaii County Civil Defense

Maui County: Maui Emergency Management Agency

City and County of Honolulu: Department of Emergency Management

Kauai County: Kauai Emergency Management Agency



RECORD OF CHANGES

The SESF #15 is responsible for the #15 External Affairs State Emergency Support Function Annex and is authorized to make changes in coordination with the HI-EMA Operations Branch. All updates to the #15 External Affairs State Emergency Support Function Annex will be tracked and recorded in the following table to ensure the most recent version is disseminated and implemented. This annex will be reviewed on a biennial basis and after every incident where SESF #15 was activated.

Change Number	Date of Change	Section Changed	Summary of Change
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			

Luke Meyers
HI-EMA Administrator

Date Mar 18, 2022

David Lopez
HI-EMA Executive Officer

Date Mar 18, 2022

Adam Weintraub
Communication Director

Date Mar 17, 2022

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE

1. The State Emergency Support Function (SESF) #15 – *External Affairs Annex* to the State of Hawai'i's Emergency Operations Plan (HI-EOP) provides basic guidance for all departments and agencies responding to disaster emergencies under the provisions of this plan. The annex is intended to ensure that during a potential or actual incident, the State can provide coordinated, accurate, timely information to affected audiences, including government units, the private sector, the news media, and the local populace, including children; those with disabilities and others with access and functional needs; and, individuals with limited English proficiency.
2. The purpose of this Annex is to:
 - a. Define the activities that fall within the scope of SESF #15;
 - b. Identify the agencies with responsibilities under SESF #15;
 - c. Describe how tasked agencies will coordinate to execute missions assigned to SESF #15 during an emergency or disaster.

1.2 SCOPE

1. SESF #15 encompasses all state, county, federal, and non-profit/private sector departments and agencies that may require communications and external affairs support or whose external affairs assets may be employed during incidents requiring a coordinated communications response.
2. During an incident all activated SESF #15 state, county, federal, and non-profit/private sector departments and agencies share responsibility for communicating information about the incident to the public. This is a critical component of incident management and must be fully integrated with all other operational actions.
3. Activities within the scope of SESF #15 include the following:
 - a. Serving as external affairs coordination and support for all facets of incident management including preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation.
 - b. Developing and disseminating information before, during, and after a natural or human-caused disaster to the media, stakeholders/VIPs, and the public, including children; those with disabilities and other access and functional needs; and, limited English proficiency populations.
 - c. During an incident, ensuring the coordinated, accurate and timely release of information from the Joint Information Center (JIC).
 - d. Rumor monitoring and control.
 - e. Establishing and maintaining contact with government representatives, before, during, and after an incident and responding to inquiries.
4. This Annex applies to all hazards that impact the state of Hawai'i.



1.2.1 DEFINITIONS

1. **Agency Spokesperson** – An emergency response staff member with the responsibility for delivering emergency public information regarding his/her own agency.
2. **Access and Functional Needs (AFN)** – Individuals having access and functional needs may include, but are not limited to, individuals with disabilities, seniors, and populations having limited English proficiency, limited access to transportation, and/or limited access to financial resources to prepare for, respond to, and recover from the emergency.
3. **Emergency Operations Center (EOC)** – The location or facility, serving the state or a county, where responsible officials gather during an emergency or exercise to direct, command, and coordinate emergency operations, to communicate with other jurisdictions, with field emergency forces, and the public and to formulate protective action decisions.
4. **Joint Information Center (JIC)** – A single location where public information officials gather to collaborate on and coordinate release of emergency public information. The JIC serves as a one-stop shopping center for the media and public to receive emergency information.
5. **Joint Information System (JIS)** – A concept designed to provide coordinated dissemination of emergency information. Similar to the JIC concept, except there is no specific location to operate the coordinated information dissemination process.
6. **Limited English Proficiency (LEP)** – Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English can be limited English proficient.
7. **Public Information Officer (PIO)** – The person on the emergency management team who oversees public information.
8. **Recovery** – The stage in an emergency response when all systems return to normal, or near normal. Short-term recovery returns vital life support systems to minimum operating standards. Long-term recovery focuses on restoring the community to the condition it was in prior to the emergency/disaster. Long-term recovery may continue for months or years, depending on the nature of the incident.
9. **Virtual JIC** – A virtual JIC serves the need for timely information gathering and disseminating in a response by collecting information from responders and communications staff across a wide area and developing essential tools in a virtual setting.



2. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

2.1 SITUATION OVERVIEW

1. The most recent State of Hawai'i all-hazard identification, vulnerability, and risk assessment includes the following hazards and scenarios in which SESF #15 will communicate: tsunami, hurricane, volcanic hazards, climate change and sea level rise, drought, earthquake, flood, high wind storm, landslide and rockfall, wildfire, infrastructure failure, hazardous material (HAZMAT), health risks, terrorism, and cyber threat.
2. SESF #15 supports the external affairs priorities of state incident management before, during, and after a disaster in four essential function areas: Emergency public information, community relations, legislative affairs, and state and county coordination.

2.2 ASSUMPTIONS

SESF #15 planning is based on the following assumptions:

1. An emergency may occur at any time and may affect single or multiple jurisdictional areas. Some incidents will occur with enough warning to allow for activation and preparation prior to the onset of emergency conditions. Other incidents will be no-notice events that occur without warning;
2. The scope of information to be provided will exceed the resources of a single state agency, therefore, the coordination and cooperation of state, county, federal, and non-profit/private sector agency communicators is essential;
3. All communications must be coordinated and disseminated from a central source such as a Joint Information Center (JIC) or the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC);
4. ESF #15 support personnel tasked with emergency duties who live and work within areas affected by an incident may be personally impacted by the incident and unable to report to work;
5. In a major incident, local, national and international media will be on-scene and social media will be used by those in and out of the affected community to identify needs, report damage and locate loved ones;
6. In a major incident, the public and media may present and circulate misinformation and rumors. Rumor monitoring and control will be essential;
7. Some disasters will temporarily disable electronic communication means. Alternate communication such as HAM radio, roto-dial and prerecorded messages should be readily available;
8. A pandemic environment will impact some communications efforts. For example, if there are gathering restrictions, community events would not be available as an option for public education outreach. Other options will need to be deployed, such as virtual fairs;
9. In a pandemic environment the establishment of a full-fledged Joint Information Center (JIC) might not be feasible during a pandemic response and/or statewide or multi-county incidents. Time limitations, travel



issues or concerns with social distancing may keep essential personnel from gathering at one location. These considerations may require the creation of a virtual JIC;

10. Press conferences, media briefings and interviews will need to be conducted virtually in a pandemic environment, for the most part. Alternative measures to allow for dissemination of accurate information, such as live-streaming and facilitation of Q&As, must be considered and deployed if needed.



3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following section outlines the roles and responsibilities assigned to state agencies and community partners to ensure SESF #15 activities are performed in a coordinated, efficient, and effective manner.

This document does not relieve tasked agencies of the responsibility for emergency planning; agency plans should adequately provide for the capability to implement the actions identified below.

3.1 GENERAL DUTIES OF ALL SESF #15 AGENCIES

All agencies assigned to SESF #15 are responsible for the following, in addition to the agency-specific duties listed later in this section.

BEFORE AN INCIDENT

1. Designate primary and alternate SESF #15 representatives, who shall be responsible for coordinating with internal department stakeholders, the SEOC and other SESF #15 agencies to ensure successful execution of duties assigned in this Annex. Notify HI-EMA of any changes to assigned contacts.
2. Maintain this Annex and conduct joint planning to further develop, document and refine procedures and processes for interagency coordination of SESF activities.
3. Participate in SESF #15 meetings, training, and exercises.
4. Ensure internal agency readiness to execute SESF duties assigned in this Annex. Ensure SESF responsibilities are addressed in agency plans; sufficient personnel are assigned and trained to support the SESF; required resources are identified; and contingency contracts or mutual aid plans are in place to address gaps.
5. Identify contingency contracts with vendors for services or equipment that may be required to execute the department's SESF #15 duties during an emergency.

DURING AN INCIDENT

1. Coordinate with other SESF #15 agencies and the SEOC to fulfill requests for assistance or information. Coordinate actions with counties, other SESFs or federal ESFs as appropriate.
2. Activate, assign, and track department resources to fulfill SESF mission assignments. Ensure financial and property accountability for agency resources used in support of SESF #15.
3. Provide situational awareness of SESF #15 activities to the SEOC.
4. Represent the SESF at the SEOC and other incident sites as requested.

3.2 SESF PRIMARY AGENCY

1. The Office of the Governor serves as the Primary Agency for SESF #15 as outlined in the HI-EOP section 3.3.2
2. The HI-EMA serves as a Primary and Coordinating Agency for SESF #15.



- 3. Primary Agencies, as defined by the **HI-EOP**, have significant authorities, roles, resources, or capabilities for functional areas the SESF oversees. Primary Agencies serve as the principal contact for HI-EMA on issues related to the SESF and provide overall management of both preparedness and response activities.
- 4. SESF Primary Agencies have additional responsibilities related to management of SESF activities.

BEFORE AN INCIDENT

- a. Coordinate SESF preparedness activities, including convening quarterly planning meetings and ensuring SESF #15 participation in applicable trainings and exercises.
- b. Lead the development, review, and refinement of SESF #15 plans, Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs), job aids and/or other written resources to document operational processes and procedures.

DURING AN INCIDENT

- a. Notify Support Agencies when SESF #15 is activated by the SEOC and what personnel are needed.
 - b. Provide a representative to the SEOC/JIC during activation hours.
 - c. Prioritize requests for SESF #15 assistance using incident objectives and work with Support Agencies to identify and direct required resources.
 - d. Provide SESF #15 information to *SESF #5 – Information & Planning* to include in Situation Reports, Incident Action Plans (IAPs) and other products as requested.
 - e. Provide updates to the SEOC on the status of SESF mission assignments. Notify the SEOC Operations Section if the SESF is unable to fulfill assigned missions.
5. The following are agency-specific duties of the SESF #15 Primary Agency that are in addition to the general duties outlined above.

Primary and Coordinating Agencies	Agency Functions
Office of the Governor Hawaii State Department of Defense <u>Division(s)</u> Hawaii Emergency Management Agency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop, monitor, and coordinate (with the Office of the Governor's Communications team) the public release of information related to all phases of the State's emergency response activities – preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation. 2. Identify and prepare public information resources, contacts, and materials for use in emergency response or disaster recovery operations, including messages translated into the most frequently spoken non-English languages, and a list of non-English media outlets and other contacts for LEP populations. 3. Coordinate with state agencies to identify and train appropriate staff to implement SESF #15 duties outlined in this annex. 4. Lead SESF #15 training and exercise programs to test messaging and operating procedures for the State EOC, the JIS, and a JIC.



Primary and Coordinating Agencies

Agency Functions

5. Coordinate with the Office of the Governor's Communications team on any emerging incidents and activation of the State EOC.
6. Fill SESF #15 positions as dictated by the actual or projected scale and scope of the incident, and to support the communication needs of the Office of the Governor's Communications team, and other responding state agencies.
7. Establish communication with external affairs officials of responding county, state, non-profit, private-sector, and the regional office of FEMA, where practical.
8. Monitor news coverage and social media for situational awareness and prepare communications to correct misinformation if necessary.
9. Recommend and coordinate the activation of a state-level JIC, if necessary, or assign staff to a local JIC established per the incident.
10. Establish two-way communication with private-sector industry organizations as needed.
11. Provide information and respond to inquiries from legislative and congressional offices and representatives in affected areas.
12. Maintain files and documentation of all SESF #15 activities.
13. Oversee demobilization of external affairs resources, as necessary.
14. Participate in after-action, lessons-learned activities and take action to revise and improve SESF #15 performance in all phases of emergency response activities.

3.3 SUPPORT AGENCIES

1. Support Agencies, as defined by the **HI-EOP**, have specific capabilities, expertise or resources that can assist Primary Agencies in executing missions assigned to the SESF by the SEOC.
2. The following are specific responsibilities for the Support Agencies for SESF #15 that *are in addition to the general duties of all SESF #15 agencies* listed in [Section 3.1 General Duties of All SESF #15 Agencies](#).

3.3.1 STATE SUPPORT AGENCIES



Support Agency	Agency Functions
All other State Agencies as assigned to SESF #15	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify appropriate communications staff assigned to support the SESF #15 function. Staff will attend training and participate in exercise programs established by the state response agencies to become familiar with plans, operating procedures, and systems used during preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation communication activities. 2. Assist with the emergency communications component of their agency's continuity of operations planning. 3. Make staff available to provide public information, editorial, and graphics support, and subject matter expertise to SESF #15 operations. 4. Coordinate their agency's emergency public information with SESF #15 operations in the SEOC prior to dissemination, if possible. 5. Coordinate their agency's disaster recovery public information with SESF #15 operation in the SEOC prior to dissemination, if possible. 6. Participate in after-action, and lessons-learned activities.

3.3.2 PRIVATE SECTOR AND NON-PROFIT SUPPORT AGENCIES

Support Agency	Support Agency Functions
American Red Cross	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Under SESF #15, the American Red Cross coordinates disaster messaging with state communicators and provides critical disaster relief and preparedness information to the public through proactive media outreach, its website, and social media platforms.



4. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

4.1 GENERAL

1. The Office of the Governor is the Primary Agency for SESF #15 . The HI-EMA is both a Primary and Coordinating Agency for SESF #15 and leads preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation communication activities in coordination with Support Agencies.
2. The HI-EMA, as part of its SESF #15 functions, will have the primary responsibility in connection with emergency management for statewide community relations, legislative affairs, and state and county coordination.
3. The HI-EMA External Affairs Branch will monitor public inquiries on emergency management topics and respond or coordinate response, and foster positive community relations using tools such as public appearances and educational events, public service announcement campaigns on readiness and hazard awareness, informational support to State and County officials, and social media.
4. The HI-EMA External Affairs Branch will coordinate with County and County emergency management PIOs to share relevant community relations information such as talking points and hazard awareness messages.
5. The HI-EMA External Affairs Branch will monitor proposed State legislation with a potential impact on emergency management and coordinate testimony and outreach to lawmakers to improve the State's emergency response capabilities and discourage legislative action that would degrade or unnecessarily complicate emergency response.
6. SESF #15 will be activated by the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) when the amount of information that must be communicated on an incident is expected to overwhelm or has overwhelmed a single agency. All SESF #15 agencies will assign personnel to monitor and support SESF activities during the activation.
7. The Primary Agency will be notified by the SEOC when the SESF #15 is activated. The Primary Agency is responsible for notifying Support Agencies. If neither the primary SESF representative nor alternates can be reached, that agency's EMO should be contacted to request an alternate point of contact. A list of current contacts is maintained in the 'State Contact List' section of the WebEOC computer system.
8. When activated, the Primary Agency may be required to have a representative in the SEOC during activation hours. If requested, Support Agencies will also send a representative to the SEOC. Otherwise, Support Agencies will work from their offices or Department Operations Centers (DOCs) to monitor and update WebEOC and provide requested support.
9. The HI-EMA Communication Director will work with representatives of HI-EMA, the Office of the Governor Communications team, and other agencies/SESFs as needed to coordinate public information activities related to the emergency and SEOC operations. If the demands of an incident require it, additional coordinated SESF #15 resources will be deployed using a JIC, as outlined in the Joint Information Center Procedural Guide.



4.2 KEY ACTIONS

4.2.1 PREPAREDNESS

1. SESF #15 agencies work together in the preparedness phase to ensure readiness to implement effective and efficient response and recovery activities within the scope of SESF #15.
2. Preparedness activities for SESF #15 include:
 - a. Developing, reviewing, and refining SESF #15 plans and Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs) that address specific operational processes and procedures.
 - b. Ensuring adequate levels of training for personnel that will support SESF #15 during a disaster.
 - c. Participating in exercises to test, refine and validate SESF #15 procedures.
 - d. Developing, reviewing, refining, and maintaining lists of all resources under the control of agencies listed in this plan that can support the execution of SESF #15 duties.
 - e. Developing, reviewing, and maintaining contact lists for the media, government relations, and SESF #15 contacts.
 - f. Where possible, developing useful, effective pre-scripted messages and public education campaigns, including for LEP and AFN populations.

4.2.2 RESPONSE

4.2.2.1 INITIAL RESPONSE ACTIONS

1. Immediately upon notification of a threatened or occurring incident, consideration is given by ESF #15 toward:
 - a. Providing appropriate representation at the SEOC.
 - b. Establishing and implementing coordinated, timely, and accurate public messaging in collaboration with the SEOC manager and the Office of the Governor's Communications team.
 - c. Ensuring all appropriate SESF #15 support agencies are notified of activation and staff assigned to SEOC duties.

4.2.2.2 ONGOING RESPONSE AND INITIAL RECOVERY ACTIONS

1. In addition to continuing the above initial activities, as appropriate and required, ESF #15 provides ongoing coordination of the following activities during the response:
 - a. Maintaining timely and accurate response and recovery communications with affected audiences, including governments, the private sector, the news media, and the local populace, including children; those with disabilities and others with access and functional needs; and, individuals with limited English proficiency. As emergency response changes to reflect transition to recovery phase,



communications messages also will change to include initial recovery topics, such as remaining safe when returning to damaged property, notifying insurers, and conducting damage inventories.

- b. Establishing and maintaining all documentation relating to SESF #15 activities
- c. Actively monitoring media and social media outlets for rumors and misinformation and preparing communications to correct misinformation, where necessary.
- d. Responding to any Requests for Information (RFI) or Requests for Assistance (RFA) assigned to SESF #15 in the WebEOC.
- e. Assist with demobilization of SESF #15 JIC activities, where necessary, as described in the Joint Information Center Procedural Guide.

4.2.3 LONG-TERM RECOVERY

- 1. As the incident transitions to longer term recovery, SESF #15 will deactivate. The decision to deactivate SESF #15 will be made by the Operations Section Chief.
- 2. Following large or particularly complex disasters, the Governor may appoint a state disaster recovery coordinator to manage state support of county reconstruction efforts. Agencies that are part of SESF #15 may be assigned responsibilities for supporting this type of long-term recovery effort, but those duties are separate from and outside the scope of SESF #15.

4.2.4 MITIGATION

- 1. All SESF #15 agencies will take the following steps to support hazard mitigation, as applicable:
 - a. Providing input into updates of the ***State of Hawai`i Hazard Mitigation Plan***
 - b. Identifying, supporting and/or implementing mitigation measures related to SESF #15 contained in the plan.
 - c. Communicating upcoming mitigation opportunities to eligible applicants.
 - d. Communicating awarded, in-progress, and completed mitigation projects to the public, media, stakeholders, and VIPs.

4.3 DIRECTION, CONTROL, AND COORDINATION

4.3.1 DIRECTION AND CONTROL

- 1. The SEOC serves as the central location for interagency coordination and decision-making for state emergency operations, including all activities associated with SESF #15. If established, the physical location for a JIC will typically be at the SEOC.
- 2. SESF #15 is part of the External Affairs Section in the SEOC organizational structure.
 - a. The SESF Primary Agency reports to the HI-EMA Administrator in the SEOC.
- 3. Activities of SESF #15 Support Agencies are, in general, coordinated by the SESF #15 Primary Agency.



4.3.2 COORDINATION AMONG SESF #15 AGENCIES

1. The SESF #15 representative in the SEOC (or, if applicable, the JIC Lead PIO or liaison to the SEOC) coordinates SESF #15 responses to RFAs and RFIs. The request is evaluated and assigned to the SESF #15 agency most likely to have the requested capability or information. Information on the status of the request must be entered in WebEOC by the tasked SESF #15 agency.
2. SESF #15 agencies not present in the SEOC or JIC will ensure an SESF #15 contact is identified and available to respond to inquiries from the SEOC during activation hours.
3. When SESF #15 is activated, the SESF #15 Primary Agency will organize a daily SESF #15 conference call or equivalent venue to share information and confirm internal coordination procedures. If federal agencies have been activated to support the incident, this call should include the federal #15 Primary Agency.

4.3.3 COORDINATION WITH OTHER SESFS

1. It is anticipated that SESF #15 will coordinate with other SESFs on the following:
 - a. External Affairs support to the SERT staff as needed.
 - b. Deconfliction of information for rumor control.

4.3.4 COORDINATION WITH COUNTY EOCs

1. Each jurisdiction within the state is responsible for its own requirements. Only when local and mutual aid resources are exhausted or projected to be exhausted, or the required capability does not exist at the local level, may the jurisdiction request assistance from the state.
2. Counties are partners in SESF #15 and assigned County SESF #15 personnel will coordinate with the State Primary Agency of JIC to ensure information is being reliably and accurately shared. Counties will take part in the daily conference call or equivalent meeting to share information. County partners will work within County EOCs to ensure relevant data is being entered in WebEOC logs, and will notify the State Primary Agency as soon as possible of incident developments with a significant impact of SESF #15 concerns.

4.3.5 COORDINATION WITH FEDERAL PARTNERS

1. If federal ESF #15 is activated in response to, or in anticipation of, a presidential disaster declaration, SESF #15 will establish contact with the federal ESF Coordinating Agency and ensure daily coordination for the duration of the activation. The Federal Emergency Management Agency Region IX is the federal agency with primary responsibility for federal ESF #15.
2. Coordination will primarily occur at the SEOC, JIC, or Joint Field Office (JFO).



5. AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES

5.1 STATE LAWS, REGULATIONS AND DIRECTIVES

1. Hawai'i Revised Statutes Chapter 127A – Emergency Management
2. Administrative Directive No. 15-01, Emergency Management Preparedness Policies for Departments
3. HI-EMA Crisis Communication Procedural Guide and Joint Information Center Procedural Guide.

5.2 FEDERAL LAWS, REGULATIONS, AND DIRECTIVES

1. Presidential Policy Directive – 8, National Preparedness
2. Public Law 104-321, Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC)