

City of Cordova



ANNEX D: EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION

Purpose

An Emergency Public Information (EPI) annex describes the means, organization and process by which the city will provide timely, accurate, and useful information and instructions to area residents and the media throughout an emergency.

Situation

Emergency Public Information is disseminated to the public via the warning system, the vehicular PA systems, radio and television stations (GCI TV Channel 1 scanner), newspaper (Cordova Times), informational brochures and posters, public forums, and the internet (www.cityofCordova.net).

- In time of emergency, a Joint Information Center (JIC) will be established to organize and coordinate the dissemination of information. The Public Information Officer will be the sole source disseminating the information. The JIC serves as the official public information point of contact to preclude unfounded rumors and inaccurate information.

Assumptions

- During emergency situations, the general public will demand information about the emergency situation and instructions on proper response/survival action.
- The media will also demand information about emergency situations. The local media, particularly broadcast, will perform an essential role in providing emergency instructions and up-to-date information to the public. Depending on the severity of the emergency, or the media conception of the severity of the emergency, State or National media will also cover the story and demand both information and comment from local officials.
- Depending on the severity of the emergency, telephone communications may be sporadic or impossible, due to system overload. Radio and television may also be off the air due to power failure. Electromagnetic pulse (EMP), resulting from a nuclear weapon discharge or the sun, could further disrupt communications.

Limitations

- There are times when disaster strikes without warning and the public information system cannot react quickly enough to warn the public about the hazard.
- Demand for information could be overwhelming if sufficient trained staff is not available.

Concept of Operations

General:

- The Incident Commander will establish a centralized Joint Information Center as the official point of contact for release of emergency information during major disaster situations.
- Newspaper offices, radio and television stations throughout the area will be requested to assist in the coordinated dissemination of emergency information to the public.

- The Public Information Officer, in coordination with the Incident Commander, will approve all emergency information and instructions prior to dissemination by the news media. That information will specifically state that it comes from the “City of Cordova”.
- Rumors and incorrect information will be quickly addressed by immediately disseminating the correct information.
- Special needs populations will be reached by making sure that information is disseminated in numerous venues...via the written word, via auditory means, and in appropriate languages.
- Responders and local officials will refer the media to the Public Information Officer at all times.
- The Public Information Officer will make certain that the radio and television are monitored for incorrect information.

Direction and Control:

- The overall direction and control function is addressed in the Basic Plan and in Annex A: Direction and Control. The Public Information Officer, when appointed, reports directly to the Incident Commander .

Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

Organization:

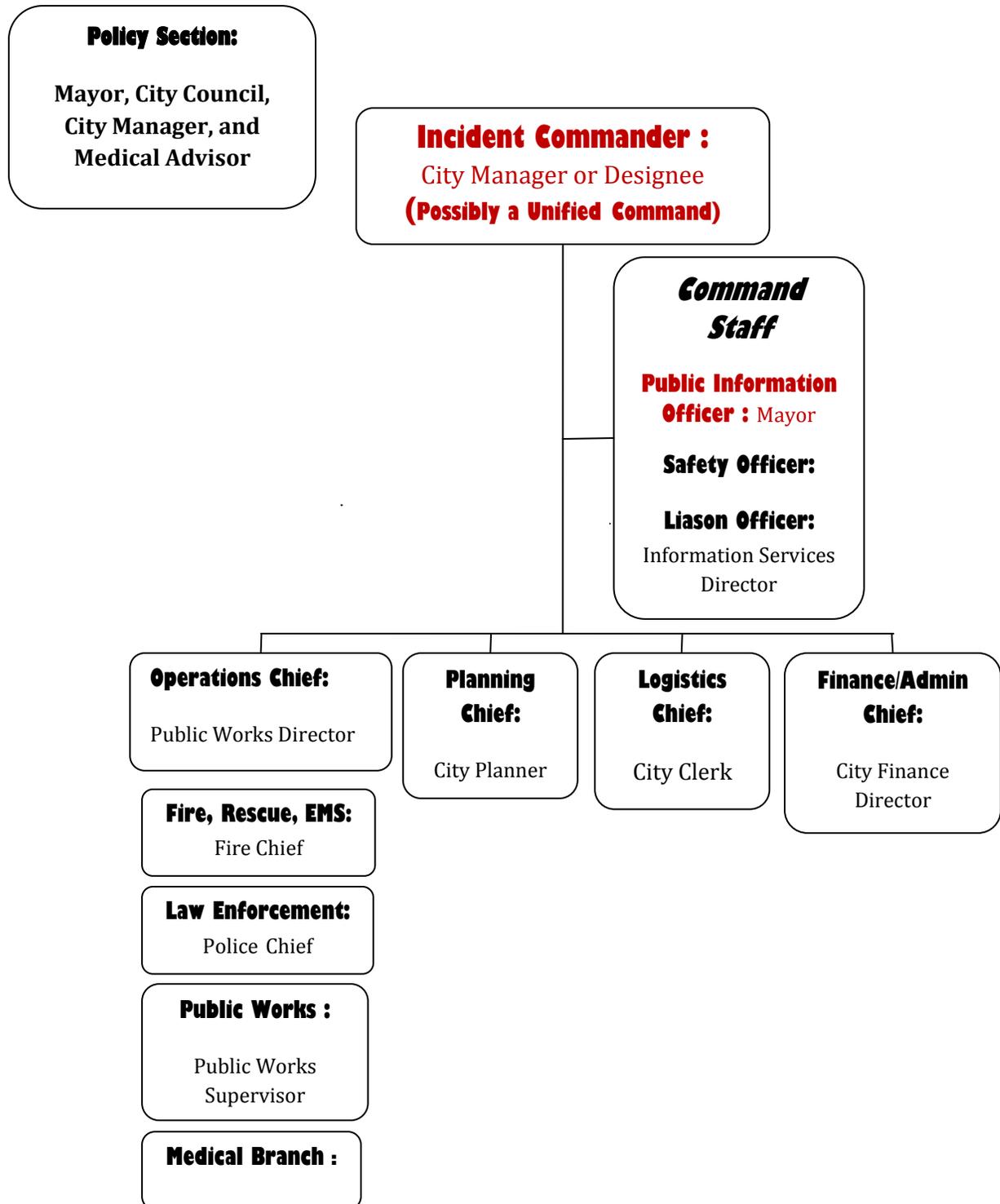
- The City of Cordova does not have a full time Public Information Officer assigned. During non-emergency periods, the overall responsibility for the dissemination of disaster related public information rests with the City Manager and/or the Emergency Management Coordinator. The Superintendent of Schools also plays a vital role in ensuring that students and faculty receive emergency public information.

- During periods of imminent emergency or when the Emergency Operations Center has been activated, the City Manager will designate a member of his or her staff to serve as the Public Information Officer for the City of Cordova. Normally, this function will be assigned to the City Mayor. Additional staff members from the Office of the City Manager or other City departments will be designated to assist the Public Information Officer if necessary. The person selected to serve as the Public Information Officer should have experience in working with the media and be generally familiar with the operations and policies of the City government.
- Pre-scripted messages/public instructions for specific hazards will be available in the Brown Box for the Public Information Officer, as well as in the Emergency Resource Manual.
- The Public Information Officer is a member of the Emergency Operations Center Command Staff and reports directly to the Incident Commander. He or she will serve as the primary focal point for all information releases pertaining to the emergency. The Public Information Officer also provides his or her services to the Mayor, City Manager and Council in matters pertaining to the dissemination of emergency public information.
- The Incident Commander approves all EPI releases.
- Local media contacts are:

Radio	KLAM 14.50 AM/KCDV 100.9 FM	JR Lewis	424-5475
	***can disseminate information immediately		
TV	GCI Channel 1 – scanner	Cindy Bradford	424-7318
	***can disseminate information within hours		
Newspaper	Cordova Times	Joy Landaluce	424-3181
	***can disseminate information weekly		

Organizational Chart for Emergency Public Information

***RED indicates activation of that entity for EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION



Specific responsibilities for the following jobs are found in the Position Checklist. The abbreviation for each job is found in the table below.

Incident Commander	IC
Public Information Officer	PIO
Emergency Management Coordinator	EMC

POSITION CHECKLIST: EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION

***If it is a PRIMARY responsibility, it will be in **BOLD and underlined**

Responsibility/Task	<u>Who is Responsible?</u>
PREPARATION	
During times of increased readiness or during an actual emergency, keep the general public and the news media apprised of the current situation	<u>PIO</u>
Establish procedures to counter rumors with factual information	<u>PIO</u>
Create sample news releases for various types of disasters and locate them in the PIO Brown Box	<u>EMC</u>
Organize and train public information staff who are assigned emergency responsibilities	<u>EMC</u>
Establish procedures for the collection, authentication and dissemination of official information during an emergency	<u>EMC</u>
Develop procedures to assure that all information for dissemination to the public conforms to national security requirements.	<u>EMC</u>
Update existing plans for the dissemination of emergency public information	<u>EMC</u>
Coordinate with other city officials	<u>EMC</u>
Disseminate emergency planning information to the general public	<u>EMC</u>
RESPONSE	
When the Emergency Operations Center has been activated, initiate the EPI process	<u>PIO</u>
Establish and manage a JIC, if appropriate	<u>PIO</u>
Stay abreast of the current situation and coordinate the information releases with the	<u>PIO</u>

Incident Commander , who will approve ALL informational releases	
Determine from the Incident commander if there are any limits on information release.	<u>PIO</u>
Develop materials for use in media briefings.	<u>PIO</u>
Inform public/media and conduct media briefings, as well as any tours necessary.	<u>PIO</u>
Arrange for tours or other media briefings, as necessary.	<u>PIO</u>
Obtain media information that may be useful to incident planning.	<u>PIO</u>
Maintain NIMS Unit Activity Log (Form 214)	<u>PIO</u>
RECOVERY	
Communicate final Public Information status to EOC.	<u>PIO</u>
Restock supplies and equipment used in the event return any borrowed/rented equipment after proper cleaning/inspection.	<u>PIO</u>
Itemize all damaged equipment and supplies and submit list to Finance/Administration Section	<u>PIO</u>
Provide a copy of all documentation to the Planning Section Chief.	<u>PIO</u>

