Culberson County/Town of Van Horn EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

Emergency Support Function 2

Communications

COORDINATING AGENCY: County of Culberson

SUPPORTING AGENCIES:

Sheriff's Office

Approval and Implementation

Date	Signed by	Signature
10/25/2024	County Judge, Carlos G. Urias	
10/25/2024	EMC, Cody L. Davis	
10/25/2024	Sheriff, Oscar E. Carrillo	

NOTE: The signature(s) will be based upon local administrative practices. Typically, the individual having primary responsibility for this emergency support function signs in the first block and the second signature block is used by the Emergency Management Coordinator, Mayor, or County Judge. Alternatively, each department head assigned tasks within the support function may sign.

Filed this 25th day of October A.D. 2024
at 10:03 o'clock A. M.
Tina Urias
County Clerk
By J. Barraza Deputy

Filed this _____ day of
_____, A.D. _____
at _____ o'clock _____ M.
Tina Urias
County Clerk
By _____ Deputy

Record of Changes to ESF 2

This page is used to date and describe changes to this document, followed by the initials of the person who made the change.

Use this table to record the following information:

- Change number, in sequence, beginning with 1
- Date change was made to the document
- Description of change and rationale if applicable
- Initials of person who made the change

Number	Date	Description	Name/Initials
1	2024-Jun-17	Transition to ESF	

doc. revision 04/06/2023

INTRODUCTION

A. ESF #2 – Communications ensures the provision of communications to support county, state, and federal communications efforts. This ESF coordinates with communications assets available from county agencies, non-governmental agencies (NGOs), the telecommunications industry, state agencies, and the federal government.

B. This document applies to Culberson County/Town of Van Horn and all jurisdictions signatory to the basic plan. Whenever this support function indicates a city/county official or office, the support function also refers to the corresponding municipal official or office.

C. Respective primary and support agencies are responsible for the dissemination of information that may be of value to other ESF representatives. This information sharing contributes to the response and recovery during an emergency/disaster of any type.

Purpose

A. Function

This support ESF provides information about our communications equipment and capabilities available during emergency operations. Our entire communications system is discussed and procedures for its use are outlined

B. Goal

Provide Culberson County/Town of Van Horn with a mechanism to manage communication operations during a disaster or event.

C. Objectives

a. Provide operational guidance for entities that assist in local and regional communications response.

b. Provide information to decision makers about communications procedures, capabilities and resources.

c. Describe roles, responsibilities and actions that ensure communications resource availability during incident response.

d. Describe local and regional communications interoperability, accessibility and redundancy.

Explanation of Terms

This section defines terms and acronyms' used in this document.

Acronyms	
CATV	Cable TV
EAS	Emergency Alert System
EMP	Electromagnetic Pulse
FNARS	FEMA National Radio System
JIS	Joint Information System
LWP	Local Warning Point
NAWAS	National Warning System
RACES	Regional Amateur Civil Emergency Service
TEWAS	Texas Warning System
TLETS	TX Law Enforcement Telecommunication System
TRCIP	Texas Radio Communications Interoperability Plan

Definitions

1. Area Warning Center. Area Warning Centers disseminate national and state warning messages to a multi-county area of responsibility. The State's 36 Area Warning Centers are operated on a round-the-clock basis by the Department of Public Safety. Each center is equipped with a variety of primary and alternate telecommunications systems.
2. Texas Fusion Centers (TFC). The TFC is composed of three entities co-located in the DPS headquarters building. These entities include the SOC, The BSOC, and the Intelligence Center. The SOC and BSOC monitor and coordinate, as necessary, state emergency and border activities. The Intelligence Center, under the CIS of DPS, functions on a 24-hour basis to receive and respond to reports from the public and local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. CIS commissioned officers and analysts from the CIS and federal agencies staff the Intelligence Center. When warranted, the Intelligence Center disseminates actionable intelligence and investigative leads to the CIS District Command staff and/or Regional JTTF and/or local law enforcement. The Intelligence Center also remains in communication with the DHS through several communications networks. The Director, Texas Office of Homeland Security, is appraised of any activity or threats potentially impacting the State of Texas.
3. TLETS. TLETS is a statewide telecommunications network connecting state and local law enforcement agencies and warning facilities. TLETS is the state warning network's primary "hard copy" communications system.

Situations and Assumptions

A. Situation

1. A reliable and interoperable communications system is essential to obtain the most complete information on emergency situations and to direct and control our resources responding to those situations, as well as to warn the public of impending incidents.
2. This jurisdiction can expect to experience emergency situations that could threaten public health and safety and both private and public property and necessitate the implementation of protective actions for the public at risk.
3. The Dispatch/Communications Center is located at 300 La Caverna St, Van Horn, TX 79855, USA. It is staffed on a 24-hour basis by the Culberson County Sheriffs Office. Equipment is available to provide the communications necessary for emergency operations.

B. Assumptions

1. Timely warnings to the public of impending emergencies or those which have occurred may save lives, decrease injuries, and reduce some types of property damage.
2. Adequate communications are available for effective and efficient warning, response and recovery operations.
3. Electronic news media are the primary sources of emergency information for the public.
4. Additional communications equipment required for emergency operations may be supplemented by citizens, business, volunteer organizations, and/or other governmental entities.
5. Any number of natural or manmade hazards may neutralize or severely reduce the effectiveness of communications currently in place for emergency operations.
6. Some people directly threatened by a hazard may ignore, not hear, or not understand warnings issued.
7. Additional communications equipment required for emergency operations will be made available from citizens, business, volunteer organizations, and/or other governmental agencies.
8. Provisions exist for the possibility that Culberson County/Town of Van Horn either loses access or suffers disruption to communications equipment or is called upon to assist neighboring jurisdictions in the event of similar.
9. Such agreements may or may not be attached to this document, or stored internally within
    - Internet:
    - Radio:
    - HSIN or other Information networks:

- Private partners:

Concept of Operations

A. This ESF defines the operational concepts, strategies and responsibilities for local, regional and tribal communications and includes information on communications coordination, interoperability, restoration and resources.

B. Communication networks and facilities include telephone, internet, email, facsimile, and radio facilities. To meet the increased communications needs during a disaster, state and regional entities, amateur radio operators, business, industry and volunteer radio systems provide expanded communication capabilities as needed. These capabilities are requested through local and regional mutual aid and or Disaster District Committee (DDC) as required.

C. The focal point of the warning function is the Local Warning Point (LWP), which operates around the clock. Culberson County/Town of Van Horn LWP is located at 300 La Caverna Van Horn, Tx 79855. The Sheriff's Office operates the LWP.

1. The LWP receives warning of actual or potential emergency situations from a variety of sources, including federal and state agencies, the news media, private entities, and the public at large. The systems by which warnings may be received are listed herein:
    - Internet:
    - Radio:
    - HSIN or other Information networks:
    - Private partners:
2. The LWP will verify information, where necessary, and disseminate information to specific officials and departments.
    a. Dependent upon circumstance, the LWP may be authorized to activate the local warning system and warn the public immediately.
    b. In other situations, County of Culberson and County Sheriff's Office shall approve the activation of the warning system and determine appropriate instructions to accompany the warning before a warning may be disseminated.
    c. Should the EOC be activated, it shall assume responsibility for formulating warning messages and public instructions, which may then be disseminated.

D. During emergency operations, County of Culberson and County Sheriff's Office is the **lead entity** for emergency communications planning, warning, and coordination. The lead entity has significant responsibility, authority, capabilities and resources relative to this emergency support function or support function. In performing these responsibilities, the lead entity follows the principles of the National Incident Management System (NIMS), Incident Command System (ICS) and, as necessary, Unified Command (UC).

E. Relationships between levels of government

1. Federal
    a. Coordination with Federal ESF #2 may occur through the State Operations Center, at the site of the incident, or in an established Field Office designated as such.
2. Tribal
    a. Communication with tribal government may occur through: Communications Manager, or Communications personnel.
3. State
    a. Coordination with the State ESF #2 may occur through the DDC, at the scene of the incident, or through a facility designated as a field office.
4. Local/Regional

a. Local and Regional entities maintain primary responsibility for addressing local gaps and provisioning for incidents or eventualities that may impact operations.

F. Activities by Phase of Emergency Management

1. Prevention

a. Maintain a current technology based, reliable, interoperable, and sustainable communications system.

b. Ensure warning communications systems meet jurisdictional needs.

c. Establish an effective public warning system and appropriate SOPs. Ensure system expands with population and adopts new measures to reach segments of the population not well served by the current system.

d. Ensure intelligence and other vital information networks are operational.

e. Ensure integrated communications procedures are in place to meet the needs and requirements of Culberson County/Town of Van Horn.

2. Preparedness

a. Test the Warning system regularly.

b. Review and update this document.

c. Develop communications procedures that are documented and implemented through communications operating instructions (to include connectivity with private-sector and NGOs).

d. Thoroughly and continually review the system for improvement including the implementation and institutionalized use of information management technologies.

e. Ensure communications requirements for Emergency Operations Center and potential JIC are regularly reviewed.

f. Review AARs of actual events and exercises and other sources of information for lessons learned.

g. Ensure the integration of mitigation plans and actions into all phases of emergency management as applicable.

h. Acquire, test, and maintain communications equipment.

i. Ensure replacement parts for communications systems are available and make arrangement for rapid resupply in the event of an emergency.

j. Train personnel on appropriate equipment and communication procedures as necessary.

k. Conduct periodic communications drills and make communications a major element during all exercises.

l. Review assignment of all personnel.

m. Review emergency notification list of key officials and department heads.

n. Provide Sheriff's Office with a list of circuit restoration priorities for essential government systems.

3. Response

a. Select communications personnel required for emergency operations according to the incident.

b. Incident communications will follow ICS standards and will be managed by the IC using a common communications plan and an incident-based communications center.

c. All incident management entities will make use of common language during emergency communications. This will reduce confusion when multiple agencies or entities are involved in an incident.

d. Ensure emergency equipment repair on a 24-hour basis.

e. Initiate warning procedures as prepared, if required.

f. Discontinue warnings when no longer required.

4. Recovery

a. All activities in each emergency phase will continue until such time as emergency communications are no longer required.

b. Advise public of termination of emergency incident.

Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

A. General

1. Our emergency communications system is operated by the Sheriff's Office and includes a variety of government-owned and operated equipment as well as equipment owned and operated by certain volunteer groups. The departments, agencies, and groups that are part of our communications system are listed in Section 8.
2. The Sheriff's Office will ensure that warning information received at our warning point, the Dispatch/Communications Center, is disseminated to the jurisdiction's officials and, where appropriate, to the public. The responsibility of ensuring the communications system is operational and incorporates all available resources rests with the Sheriff's Office, who may appoint a Communications Coordinator to carry out this task.

B. Task Assignments

1. Emergency Management Coordinator will:

   a. Be responsible for all activities enumerated in this support function in Section 5B, Activities by Phases of Emergency Management.
   b. Supervise the Communications Coordinator.

2. Communications Coordinator will:

   a. Coordinate common communications procedures.
   b. Develop and maintain a communications resource inventory (See Emergency Support function, Resource Support).
   c. Ensure a communications capability exists between the Dispatch/Communications Center of the Culberson County Sheriff's Office and the Emergency Operations Center to include coordination with the telephone company for installation of dedicated telephone lines into the Dispatch/Communications Center and/or EOC.
   d. Ensure that the local telephone company is forwarded a list of circuit restoration priorities.
   e. Ensure procedures are in place for dissemination of message traffic.
   f. Coordinate the inclusion of business/industry and amateur radio operators into the communications network.
   g. Develop and maintain SOPs to include message-handling procedures and recall rosters for essential personnel.

3. Radio Operators will be:

a. Responsible for proper use and maintenance of the equipment and for correct message handling procedures, including routing of all incoming messages and logging all incoming and out-going messages.

4. Switchboard Operators will be:

a. Responsible for proper screening and routing of all incoming telephone calls.

Direction and Control

A. General

1. The Communications Coordinator will oversee the provision of communications services during emergency situations.
2. In the initial states of an emergency incident, the LWP will, within the limits of authority delegated to it, determine if a warning needs to be issued and formulate a warning, and disseminate it.
3. Special populations and facilities will be warned of incidents that pose risk to public safety, life, and property by available methods to include:
   a. Visually impaired:
      EAS messages and news advisories on radio, NOAA Weather Radio, or by door-to-door notificatio

   b. Hearing impaired:
      Captioned EAS messages and news advisories on television, print media

   c. Non-English speaking:
      Interpreters/radio, TX, or cable language newscasts/door-to-door

   d. Special Facilities:
      List how you will communicate to Jails/Nursing Homes/Hospitals/Clinics/ETC.

B. Continuity of Government

1. Each department or agency with communications responsibilities shall establish a line of succession for communications personnel.

Readiness Levels

Refer to Basic Plan

Administration and Support

A. Facilities and Equipment

A complete listing of equipment is included in Appendix 1 of ESF Resource Support or is maintained internally by County of Culberson.

B. Communications Protection

1. Radio
   a. Electromagnetic Pulse (EMP)

      One of the effects of a nuclear detonation that is particularly damaging to radio equipment is EMP. Plans call for the disconnection of radios from antennas and power source when an Attack Warning is issued. A portable radio unit will then be employed as a backup to maintain limited communications with field units. This procedure will be used until an All Clear is announced. Telephones will also be used while operable.

   b. Lightning, Wind, and Blast
      1. Standard lightning protection is used including arrestors and the use of emergency power during severe weather.
      2. Damaged antennas can be quickly replaced with spare units kept in reserve.
      3. Mobile repeaters kept in reserve can be quickly positioned at predetermined locations to resume radio communications in the event of damage to radio towers.

2. Telephone (Common Carrier)

a. Overloaded Circuits

To avoid overloaded circuits during emergencies, citizens will be advised to listen to EAS for information and to use telephones only if they have a genuine emergency. If overloaded circuits do become a problem, coordinate with the LIST COMMON PHONE CARRIERS Telephone Company to begin immediate restoration of priority circuits.

b. Emergency Service

During major emergencies, a direct line to the LIST COMMON PHONE CARRIERS Telephone Office is activated in the EOC for emergency service calls.

3. Computer Equipment and Facilities

The physical protection of computer equipment and facilities will be maintained under normal and emergency operations to help ensure continuity of communications.

C. Security

1. Measures will be taken to ensure that only authorized personnel will have access to the Dispatch/Communications Center.
2. Communications security will be maintained in accordance with national, state, and local requirements.

D. Training

1. The Emergency Management Coordinator will provide additional training on emergency communications equipment and procedures as necessary.

Development and Maintenance

The Communications Coordinator will, in conjunction with the Emergency Management Coordinator, Emergency Management Director, and related support personnel, maintain responsibility for the development and maintenance of this ESF.

The Communications Coordinator, or their designee, will maintain responsibility for the regular testing of equipment related to this ESF, where such falls outside the SOPs of the responsible agencies.

References

A. Texas Division of Emergency Executive Guide (TDEM, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG-101), National Preparedness Goal, State of Texas Emergency Plan Communications (ESF 2)
B. Division Of Emergency Management *Local Emergency Management Planning Guide.* (DEM-10)

APPENDICES

1. Authorities
2. Common Communications SOP
3. Communications Restoration Guide
4. Amateur Radio Support Agreement
5. Receiving Warnings
6. Outdoor Warning Siren Map

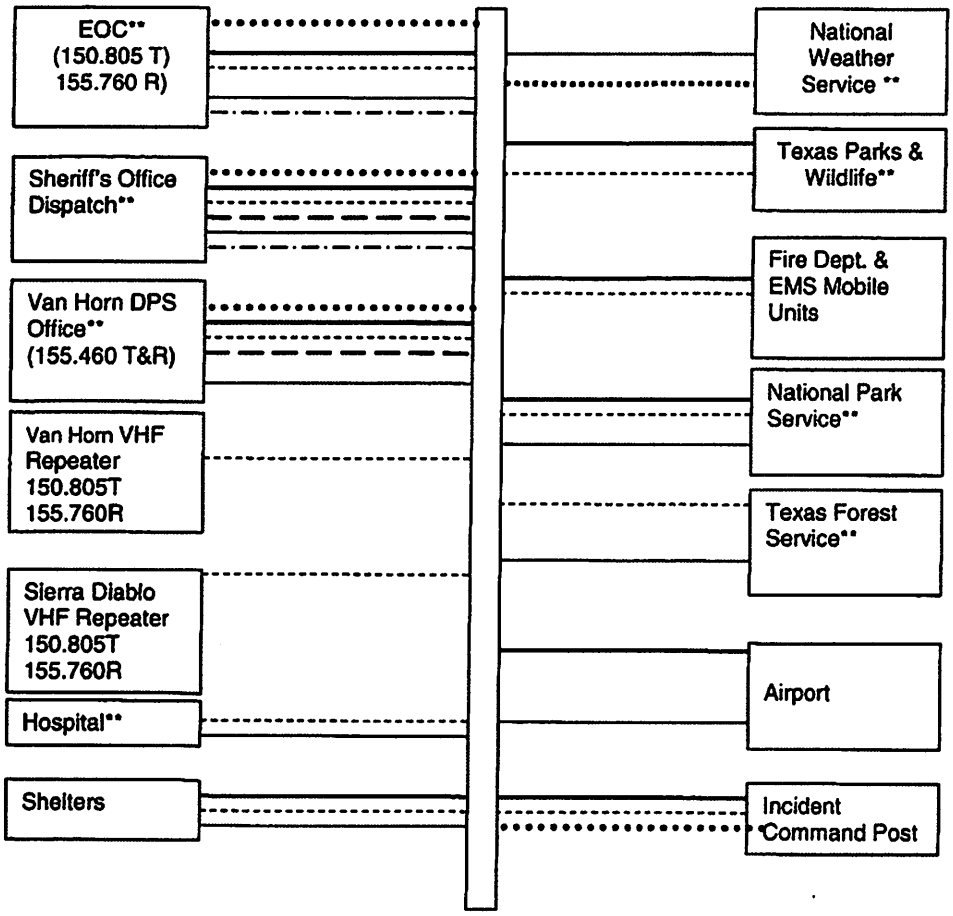
Appendix 1: Authorities

This information can be found in the Basic Plan

Appendix 2: Common Communications SOP

(*If attached appended at the end of Document)

COMMUNICATIONS DIAGRAM



LEGEND:

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•••••••••••	CATV or Satellite	———	Cell Phones
———	Telephone and/or Fax	R	Receive Only
— — — ·	TLETS	T	Transmit Only
———	RACES	T&R	Transmit and Receive
-·-·-·-	Local Computer Network	**	Internet Access & E-mail

Appendix 3: Communications Restoration Guide

(*If attached appended at the end of Document)

FACILITY	COMMUNICATIONS									
	Cable TV Or Satellite	Phone/ Fax	TLETS	RACES	Radio VHF/UHF	Radio HF	Cell Phones	Satellite Phones	Local Computer Network	Internet E-mail
Airport		X					X			X
Department of Public Safety	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X
EOC	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
External Customers (Citizens, Private Industry)		X		X	X	X	X			X
Fire Department & EMS Mobile Units					X		X	X		
Hospital	X	X			X		X			X
Municipal Utilities		X			X				X	X
National Weather Service	X	X	X							X
Windstream Comm.		X	X				X			X
Public Works		X			X		X			
Red Cross		X		X	X		X			X
Shelters		X		X	X					
Sheriff's Office	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X

Appendix 4: Amateur Radio Agreement

(*If attached appended at the end of Document)

Appendix 5: Receive Warnings

Culberson County/Town of Van Horn may receive warnings of actual emergencies or incidents, or the threat of such, from the following:

1. National and State Warning Systems

    a. NAWAS is a 24-hour national multi-line telephone warning system linking federal agencies and the states that is used to disseminate civil emergency warnings. NAWAS is a voice communications system operated by FEMA under DHS and controlled from the FOC in Washington D.C., as well as the FAOC in Olney, Maryland. NAWAS disseminates three types of warnings to state and local governments:

        - Attack Warnings
        - Fallout Warnings
        - Natural and Technological Emergency Warnings

    Warnings from the FOC or FAOC are coordinated with the HSOC and related through the FEMA Regional Communications Center in Denton, TX to the State Warning Point. The State Warning Point further disseminates the warnings through TEWAS. The FNARS serves as a backup for NAWAS.

    b. TEWAS is a state level extension of NAWAS. It consists of a dedicated telephone warning system linking the State Warning Point at the SOC with the Area Warning Centers located in DPS offices around the State of Texas, and with seven NWS offices in Texas.

        - The State Warning Point relays national warnings received on NAWAS to Area Warning Center using TEWAS. Area Warning Centers will disseminate warnings they receive to LWPs via teletype messages on TLETS. Warnings may be disseminated by telephone or radio to those LWPs can cannot be reached by TLETS.
        - TEWAS may also be used by the SOC to disseminate warning messages from the Governor or other key officials to specific regions of the state.

c. HSIN-CI is an unclassified network which may immediately provide the HSOC with one-stop 24/7 access to a broad spectrum of industries, agencies, and critical infrastructure across the public and private sectors.

d. Texas AMBER Alert Network is a coordinated emergency alert program that disseminates information about abducted children. It serves as an early special purpose warning system available for use by law enforcement to alert the public when a child has been kidnapped and the police believe the child is in danger.

2. NWS Weather Products, such as weather warning messages, are issued by the NWS Weather Forecast Offices and various specialized centers, such as the NWS River Forecast Center.

   a. NWS disseminates weather forecasts, watches, and warnings via the NOAA Weather Wire Service, which is a satellite communications system that broadcasts to specialized receiver terminals. In Texas, NWS

weather products, such as watches and warnings, are transmitted by Weather Wire to the SOC. The SOC, as the State Warning Point, sends these weather messages to appropriate Area Warning Centers and Local Warning Points by TLETS. Among the weather messages that are provided are:

- Flood and flash flood

  watches and warnings

- Severe weather

  watches and warnings

- Tornado watches and warnings

- Tropical weather watches and warnings

Many local radio and TV stations subscribe to the NOAA Weather Wire Service and have installed terminals to receive weather products directly from the NWS.

b. NOAA Weather Radio is received by Emergency Management Coordinator.

c. Emergency Manager Wireless Information Network weather information is broadcast via satellite. Culberson County/Town of Van Horn does not have a terminal to receive such.

d. Culberson County/Town of Van Horn has not contracted to provide electronic weather information.

3. EAS is intended to provide a means for government to provide emergency warning and instructions to the public. Culberson County/Town of Van Horn may receive EAS messages that contain warning information broadcast by:

   a. Federal Authorities or Agencies

   b. State Government

   c. Other local governments

4. Civil emergency warnings issued through NAWAS may also be disseminated through EAS. Incoming EAS messages may be received on commercial radio or television stations monitored by local officials (or on the EAS recorder/decoder located at N/A.

5. State Government issues, from time to time, warnings through the SOC to local governments in specific regions of the state. For example, an advisory may be issued to inland regions along major evacuation routes when large scale evacuations begin in coastal regions due to hurricanes. Warnings issued by the SOC are typically sent via TLETS to LWPs and Area Warning Centers.

6. Local Officials may provide warning of emergency situations they have discovered or that have been reported to their departments and have been confirmed. Such situations should be reported to the LWP through any available means of communication.

7. Business/Industry that suffer a major fire, explosion, HazMat spill, or other emergency situation that may pose a threat to public health and safety, public, or private property have a general duty to notify local officials of such occurrences. Such notifications are usually made through 9-1-1. Companies reporting incidents that may pose a risk to the public are expected to recommend to local government appropriate actions to protect people and property.

8. Specialized government agencies may deliver specific warnings related to their field.

9. Citizens may provide warning of an emergency, usually by calling 9-1-1. It is

always advisable to confirm information on emergency situations reported this way before issuing public warnings.

Appendix 6: Outdoor Warning Map

(*If attached appended at the end of Document)