

Northampton County Emergency Operations Plan

3.2 ESF #2 - Communications

Primary Department

Northampton County Information Technology

Support Departments

Northampton County Emergency Management
Northampton County Facilities Management

Other Support Agencies

Eastern Shore Amateur Radio Club
Eastern Shore of Virginia 911

Purpose

The purpose of ESF #2 (Communications) is to guide operations during an emergency/disaster response. The communications function is in place to provide support and establish necessary voice, data, and video capabilities needed in the County's EOC, the Eastern Shore of Virginia 911 call center, the fire and police mobile command vehicles, and any other location where such emergency technology is required. The purpose of ESF #2 (Communications) is to support public safety and other County agencies by maintaining continuity of information, telecommunication equipment, and other emergency technology resources.

Scope

This annex identifies the key policies, concepts of operations, roles and responsibilities, and capabilities associated with ESF #2 (Communications) in Northampton County. Specific operating procedures and protocols are addressed in documents maintained by the participating departments/agencies.

Potential operations include the following:

- Establishing and maintaining communications infrastructure in the County EOC
- Establishing and testing redundant communications systems
- Maintaining essential communications during a disaster
- Re-establishing the communication network following a disaster

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ESF #2 (Communications) Primary Department	Roles/Tasks
Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain, test, and upgrade communication equipment as necessary, to ensure and enhance the County's communications capability in the event of an emergency. • Develop procedures for communications, to include setting up telephones in the EOC on short notice and backing up radio communications for operations in the field. • Assign emergency duties and provide specialized training, as needed.
Response – Initial Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to the EOC or make initial contact with the EOC via telephone within one hour of activation, or as directed. • Ensure the operational capability of the EOC. • Test communications systems and backup electrical power.
Response – Continuing Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain essential communications.
Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to maintain essential emergency communications through the established emergency communications network or through the use of amateur radio operators, if necessary, until the emergency has subsided.
ESF #2 (Communications) Support Departments	Roles/Tasks
Northampton County Emergency Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain effective communications in order to have the capability to direct and control emergency operations, as well as to provide initial warning and alerting, in the event of an emergency. • Develop procedures for warning. Describe the warning devices to be used. Assign responsibilities for activating warning systems. • Assign emergency duties and provide specialized training, as needed. • Alert on-duty personnel, chiefs, and department heads, as required, by the type of incident and SOPs. • Alert all personnel. • Alert special facilities, if appropriate, that would require assistance to evacuate from threatened areas. • Ensure that amateur radio operators are on standby to provide emergency backup radio communications in the event normal communications are disrupted. • Activate rumor control communications equipment and personnel to handle citizen inquiries. • Coordinate, as necessary, with amateur radio operators to enhance the existing communications network and possibly to facilitate communications with selected in-the-field operators. • Continue to provide rumor control communications equipment and personnel until the fears and concerns of the public have been alleviated. • Develop plans and procedures for providing timely information and guidance to the public in a time of emergency. • Consummate official working agreements with local Emergency Alert System (EAS) radio stations. • Ensure compatibility between this plan and the emergency plans and procedures of key facilities and organizations within the County.
Northampton County Facilities Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the operation of County communication systems during an incident.

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ESF #2 (Communications) Other Support Agencies	Roles/Tasks
Eastern Shore Amateur Radio Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participate in relevant training and exercises.• Provide backup communication capabilities before, during, and after an incident.
Eastern Shore of Virginia 911	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participate in relevant training and exercises.• Provide the County with capability and status updates regarding Eastern Shore communication systems during an incident.• Work with County dispatch resources to ensure that communications infrastructure is operating.