Auxiliary Emergency Communications (AEC)

Training Course

Unit 2: AEC Roles and Responsibilities

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Terminal Learning Objective
Enabling Learning Objectives

TLO: At the conclusion of this unit, the student will describe the functions, responsibilities, and roles of personnel within the AEC function.

ELO A: Describe responsibilities of the AEC Communicator.

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Enabling Learning Objectives

ELO B: Describe additional responsibilities of the AEC Manager.

ELO C: Identify components of the AEC "Go Kit".

ELO D: Participate in Exercise 2-1 SOP.

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Unit Objectives

- This unit describes the general roles and responsibilities of AEC personnel

- This unit describes specific added roles and responsibilities of the AEC Manager

- Recommended equipment to be included in the AEC Communicator "Go Kit"

- Participate in 2-1 SOP Exercise

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AEC UNIT 2 - AEC ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Pre-Planning Activities

FAMILY

Preparation is required for your family before you activate/mobilize:

- Prepare family disaster plan so your family will be safe

- Home emergency supplies - water, food, first aid kit, flashlight, medications/prescriptions

- Evacuation – Routes and Locations

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Pre-Planning Activities (Cont)

- Go Bag/Survival Kit - Ready on short notice

- POC (out of state) & phone number to notify & update status

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AEC UNIT 2 - AEC ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

AEC Communicator Task List

- An AEC Manager or AEC Communicator will not undertake any task until directed to do so by their incident supervisor

- The list on the following slides contains possible assignments that could be tasked by an AEC Manager

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AEC Communicator Task List (Cont)

MOBILIZATION

1. Upon initial activation, obtain the following:
   - Incident name and number identifying the incident for tracking purposes
   - Reporting time and location
   - Verify communication gear requirements
   - Transportation arrangements/travel routes
   - Contact procedures during travel (telephone/radio)

AEC Communicator Task List (Cont)

2. Arrive at incident and check in.
   - Arrive properly equipped at the assigned incident location within acceptable time limits

AEC Communicator Task List (Cont)

INCIDENT ACTIVITIES

3. Obtain briefing from AEC Manager or COML. Examples of items are:

   - Current resource commitments and expectations
   - Current situation
   - Expected duration of assignment
   - Operating procedures and policies (SOPs, etc.)

AEC Communicator Task List (Cont)

INCIDENT ACTIVITIES

3. Obtain briefing from AEC Manager or COML. Examples of items are: (Cont)

   - Task assignment
   - Work schedule
   - Work space

AEC Communicator Task List (Cont)

4. Install AEC equipment per discussion with COML:

   - Utilizing appropriate/approved AEC equipment
   - Installing/testing all components of the AEC equipment to ensure systems are operational, for example:
     - Aircraft (e.g., supporting Civil Air Patrol (CAP)) and other special needs
     - Links (radio and wire-based)
     - Remotes
     - Repeaters

AEC Communicator Task List (Cont)

- Obtain installation priorities

- Cloning or programming radios

- This list is not all inclusive; the AEC volunteer is responsible for asking adequate questions

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AEC Communicator Task List (Cont)

5. Assist with distribution of AEC equipment by:

- Identifying kinds and numbers of AEC equipment to be distributed to specific units according to the communications plan

- Maintaining AEC equipment inventory to provide accountability

- Providing basic training as needed on equipment being fielded

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AEC Communicator Task List (Cont)

6. Establish AEC Communications Center (ACC) by:

- Coordinating location with AEC Manager/COML

- Locate ACC away from radio frequency and electronic interference

- Keep generators away from radio tent (ensure exhaust from generators is not in close proximity to the operations area)

- Obtaining necessary supplies for ACC to function properly

AEC Communicator Task List (Cont)

7. Perform duties within the ACC by:

- Directing AEC radio/telephone traffic to proper destinations
- Documenting AEC radio/telephone activities on appropriate ICS forms
- Following established routing procedures for AEC messages

AEC Communicator Task List (Cont)

- Identifying AEC system problems, both technical and operational, and determine appropriate solutions
- Setting up the filing system for ACC documentation

AEC Communicator Task List (Cont)

8. Coordinate resources by:

- Notifying AEC Manager of personnel/equipment excesses or deficiencies
- Identifying AEC resources as to capabilities, quantity, and location

AEC Communicator Task List (Cont)

9. Initiate and maintain accurate records of all AEC equipment by:

- Documenting geographic locations of AEC equipment and transfer this information to local maps (latitude/longitude, legal)
- Initiating and maintaining an accountability system for issuing AEC hand-held and mobile radio resources
- Keeping records of AEC resources to ensure return to proper location

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AEC UNIT 2 - AEC ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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AEC Communicator Task List (Cont)

10. Perform operational tests of AEC systems throughout the duration of the incident by:

- Acting decisively to minimize interruptions in system operation
- Identifying and taking necessary action to accomplish minor field repair
- Planning for battery replacement

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AEC UNIT 2 - AEC ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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AEC Communicator Task List (Cont)

11. Interact and coordinate with appropriate AEC operational personnel by:

- Coordinating with AEC Manager regarding system coverage and needs
- Knowing what other AEC resources may be coming to the incident
- Participating in briefings and other planning meetings when permitted

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AEC Communicator Task List (Cont)

12. Maintain ICS Form 214 Unit Log. The unit log will be kept current, legible, and will document all significant activities, which may include:

- Equipment locations
- Medical evacuations
- Personnel changes
- Meetings attended/briefings
- Personnel issues

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AEC Communicator Task List (Cont)

DEMOBILIZATION

13. Demobilization and check out by:

- Receiving demobilization instructions from AEC Manager
- Briefing AEC subordinate staff on demobilization procedures and responsibilities
- Completing required ICS form(s) and turning them in to the appropriate person

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AEC Communicator Task List (Cont)

- Documenting lost/damaged equipment on agency/organization specific form(s)
- Ensuring that incident and agency/organization demobilization procedures are followed
- Submitting all required information to the AEC Manager

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AEC Manager Task List

In addition to the Communicator Task List

1. Obtain and assemble information and materials needed for a "Go Kit" prior to receiving an assignment, including critical items needed for the assignment and items needed for functioning during the first 72 hours.

   Some items, such as local Tactical Interoperable Communications Plans (TICPs), are specific to the AEC Manager and not typically required by all AEC Communicators.

AEC Manager Task List (Cont)

2. Establish and maintain positive interpersonal working relationships by:
   - Coordinating with the Communications Unit Leader and other Communications Unit personnel to share information and assure appropriate communications support is provided
   - Creating a work environment that provides diversity and equal opportunity for all AEC personnel assigned to the incident

AEC Manager Task List (Cont)

3. Provide for the safety and welfare of assigned AEC personnel during the entire period of supervision by:
   - Recognizing potentially hazardous situations and informing subordinates of hazards
   - Providing safety and identifying equipment, such as vests identifying the communications function, flashlights, and glow sticks
   - Ensuring that special precautions are taken when hazards exist

AEC Manager Task List (Cont)

- Ensuring adequate rest, hydration, and nutrition is provided to all AEC personnel
- Don't assign personnel with serious health problems
- Recognizing any special medical needs of AEC personnel

AEC Manager Task List (Cont)

4. Receive and review the Incident Action Plan (IAP), if developed, or Incident Briefing Form (ICS Form 201)
5. Determine requirements for communications to be established, evaluate AEC needs, and order supplies, materials, and personnel per incident protocol to keep unit operating

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AEC Manager Task List (Cont)

6. Organize and supervise by:
   - Assigning and monitoring AEC work assignments
   - Briefing and keeping AEC subordinates informed and updated
   - Developing and promoting team work
   - Establishing time frames and schedules
   - Following established procedures for reporting inappropriate actions

AEC Manager Task List (Cont)

- Using the chain of command
- Briefing relief AEC personnel
- Manage or delegate the responsibility to manage the ACC
- Ensure proper demobilization
- Distribute AEC documentation as necessary
- Notify other AEC groups of assignments and communication information

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AEC Manager Task List (Cont)

7. Participate in meetings with the COML related to formal ICS Incident Planning meetings as the AEC subject matter expert for communications needs, by:
   - Determining the feasibility of providing the required AEC communications support
   - Providing operational and technical information on available AEC equipment
   - Providing operational and technical information on communications equipment and systems capabilities and restrictions

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AEC Manager Task List (Cont)

8. Design AEC systems to support incident operational needs, by:
   - Preparing a communications plan for AEC support
   - Assisting with preparation of the Incident Radio Communications Plan (ICS Form 205), as may be requested by the COML
   - Coordinating through the COML for any additional communication needs
   - Verifying Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA) of personnel
   - Establish assignments based on incident requirements
   - Set schedules around operations requirements

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Assembling the 72 Hour AEC "Go Kit"

- Personal Care
  - Cash (potentially no working ATMs in the area)
  - Alarm Clock (manual or battery powered)
  - Appropriate clothing with 3 or more changes
  - Personal items, toiletries, toilet paper
  - Insect repellant, sunscreen, moisturizer, and hand wipes/gel

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Assembling the 72 Hour AEC "Go Kit" (Cont)

- First aid kit, medications/prescriptions
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Keys (including site access cards/keys)
- Foul weather gear

Assembling the 72 Hour AEC "Go Kit" (Cont)

- Sustenance and Shelter
  - Beverages (water) and food for 9 meals minimum
  - Snack items
  - Candles/electric lantern
  - Waterproof matches
  - Mess kit with cleaning accessories
  - Portable stove with extra propane tanks
  - Shelter (mattress, pillow, sleeping bag, tent)

Assembling the 72 Hour AEC "Go Kit" (Cont)

- Communications Equipment
  - Pads of paper, pencils, pens, tape, sticky-notes
  - ICS Forms (201, 205, 213, 214, 217A, and 309)
  - 24-hour clock
  - Hand-held GPS
  - Mobile and portable radio(s) as appropriate for the region and assignment, radio manuals, batteries, headset

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Assembling the 72 Hour AEC "Go Kit" (Cont)

- AEC radio programming equipment (adapters, cloning cable and/or computer, software, manuals for front panel radio programming)
- Patch cords
- Power supplies, chargers
- Standing wave Ratio (SWR) bridge(s), antenna analyzer
- Safety glasses

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Assembling the 72 Hour AEC "Go Kit" (Cont)

- Communications Equipment (Cont)
  - Multi-purpose knife
  - Volt-Ohm Meter (VOM/Multi-meter)
  - Climbing harness, if applicable and appropriate
  - Communications tool kit including soldering iron & solder (other than 110 volt)
  - Electrical, flagging, & duct tape
  - Antennas, coax, RF connectors, and proper tools

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Assembling the 72 Hour AEC "Go Kit" (Cont)

- Communications Equipment (Cont)
  - AEC Mobilization Guide
  - National Interoperability Field Operations Guide (NIFOG)
  - Local or State Field Operation Guides
  - Local system coverage maps
  - Current Repeater Directory

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Assembling the AEC 72 Hour "Go Kit" (Cont)

- Specifically added "Go Kit" items for the AEC Manager are:
  - Availability, capability and contact information for local and regional AEC personnel
  - Current SCIP and TICP for area(s) being served
  - ICS Forms 211 and 225

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AEC Communicator General Information

Plain Language:

All Public Safety Agencies are required to use plain language and common terminology in major emergencies

AEC Communicators need to do the same

- Don't use "Q Signals" or "10 Codes"
- Avoid abbreviations
- Only use local time in a 24hr hour format (i.e. 2330hrs = 11:30pm)

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AEC Communicator General Information (Cont)

ITU PHONETIC ALPHABET

A	ALFA	N	NOVEMBER
B	BRAVO	O	OSCAR
C	CHARLIE	P	PAPA
D	DELTA	Q	QUEBEC
E	ECHO	R	ROMEO
F	FOXTROT	S	SIERRA
G	GOLF	T	TANGO
H	HOTEL	U	UNIFORM
I	INDIA	V	VICTOR
J	JULIETT	W	WHISKEY
K	KILO	X	X-RAY
L	LIMA	Y	YANKEE
M	MIKE	Z	ZULU

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Word list adopted by the International Telecommunication Union.

AEC–When Support Is Needed

AEC Support is needed when:

- All communications have failed, been severely disrupted, or is insufficient to meet response needs for emergencies, planned events, etc.

During emergencies/incidents, AEC should:

- If directed by the COML, maintain contact with the local dispatch center using a Public Safety radio if the COML has one for you

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AEC–When Support Is Needed (Cont)

Examples of Communications Systems that may fail or become disrupted during a major incident:

- Cell phones
- FAX
- Internet connections
- Phone lines
- Public Safety radio systems

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Exercise 2-1: SOP Exercise

Terminal Learning Objective

- Develop a usable draft SOP for an AEC Organization

Enabling Learning Objective

- Describe the components of a SOP

Instructions

- Break into groups
- Review the SAFECOM Interoperability Continuum and <u>Writing Guide for SOPs</u> slides

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Exercise 2-1: SOP Exercise

Instructions (Cont)

Based on individual organization needs, for example:

- Communications Support Between EOCs
- Initial Deployment
- Logistics Support
- Net Management
- Shelter Management
- Support in Absence of Reliable Public Safety Comms

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Exercise 2-1: SOP Exercise (Cont)

Outputs

- Draft an SOP based on the review of the SAFECOM Interoperability Continuum and <u>Writing Guide for SOPs</u> presentation
- Present and discuss draft SOP details per group

Exercise Duration: 1 hour

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Background Document for Exercise
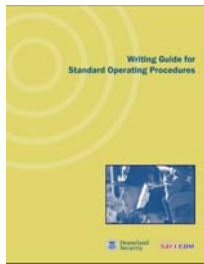
A softcopy can be downloaded from the SAFECOM Website at:

http://www.safecomprogram.gov/sitecollectiondocuments/sop.pdf

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Section 1: Introduction

Questions to consider:

- To what capability does this SOP apply
- What is the recognized need
- Are any established agreements already in place among responders
- Who will be using the SOP
- Why is this concern being addressed

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Section 2: Purpose
Section 3: Scope

Purpose:

- What is the principal objective
- What is authority, roles, and procedures
- Are there other communications alternatives to the proposed solution

Scope:

- Which agencies/groups are to be included
- What level of authority
- When will this resource be used
  - Critical incidents
  - Day-to-Day
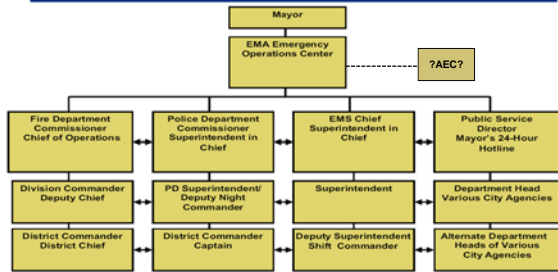 - Discretion of Emergency Manager
  - Planned events

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Section 4: Communications Structure

Sample Organization Chart

Section 5: Channel Patching and Monitoring

5a: Patching the Interoperability Channel

- What bands are going to be used
- What are the benefits of the current configuration?
- Are there more effective alternatives

5b: Interoperability Channel Monitoring

- Who will monitor the channel?
- What are the monitoring procedures once the channel is activated?

Section 6: Activation, Transfer and Discontinuation

6a: Rules of Use

- Use Common language
- Use the International Phonetic Alphabet
- NIMS/ICS compliance
- How will the channel be used
  - Emergency information transmissions

6b: Operational Procedure and Guidelines for Limited and Full Activation

- What are the requirements, procedures, and guidelines for:
  - limited activation (e.g., day-to-day incidents)
  - full activation (e.g., large-scale incidents)

Section 6: Activation, Transfer and Discontinuation (Cont)

6c: Activation Authority
- What are the procedures for requesting use of the resource
- What are the conditions for use for each organization using the resource
- What are proper uses of the resource

6d: Establishing and Transferring Net Control
- What are the procedures for requesting users to switch their radios to the support channel
- Who is involved in the procedure
- Who has the authority to order it
- Will a lead Net Control operator be designated

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Section 6: Activation, Transfer and Discontinuation (Cont)

6e: Notification Process for Establishing Command Control
- What are the notification procedures for establishing command and control among participating agencies?
- Who is authorized to activate the AEC resource?

6f: Discontinuation of AEC Support
- What are the procedures for discontinuing AEC support?
- Who will make the decision to discontinue use?
- How will all participants be notified?

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Section 7: Separation of the AEC Communications Channels Due to Interference

What procedures should be in place when there is intentional or unintentional interference with the AEC support resource?

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Section 8: Communications Alternatives

- Telephone Conference Bridges

- Cellular/Push-to-Talk Commercial Wireless Technology

- Computerized Emergency Notification System

- Internet/E-mail

- Satellite Phones

Section 8: Communications Alternatives (Cont)

- Cache of Portable Radios on Various Bands

- Mobile Capabilities with Conventional Channels

- Dispatch/Radio Communications Center to Dispatch/Radio Communications Center Messaging

- Runner System

Section 9: Training Requirements

- Who will be responsible for ensuring that participating agencies' and organizations' personnel are familiar with the SOP and are properly trained
- What will be the minimum training requirements for:
    - How the resource is set up
    - How to select the right channel
    - Proper terminology and radio etiquette
    - Who to notify if they have a radio problem

Section 10: Testing Requirements

- What are the standardized testing procedures

- Will there be different phases of testing (i.e., weekly net testing and operational testing)

- What are the procedures for each testing phase

- When should testing take place

- What agencies/organizations should be involved

Section 11: Responsibility

- Whose responsibility will it be to ensure that these SOPs are followed when necessary

- Whose responsibility will it be to be familiar with and comply with these SOPs

SOP Exercise 2-1

- Draft and present an SOP.
- Groups have 30 minutes to prepare and 30 minutes to present and discuss.

Conclusion

Creating and applying SOPs that foster AEC support communications across an area or region can be challenging due to differences in technology, organizational structures, and the overall experience of the volunteer responders.

However, SOPs are essential for successful incident response.

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Unit 2: Summary

1) Described the functions, responsibilities, and roles of personnel within the AEC organization.

2) Described the responsibilities of the AEC Communicator.

3) Described additional responsibilities of the AEC Manager.

4) Identified components of the AEC "Go Kit."

5) Participate in exercise 2-1 SOP.

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