



Annex E: Emergency Support Function #5 – Information & Planning

October 2020

Coordinating Agency

Hamilton County Emergency Management & Homeland Security Agency

Supporting Agencies

Hamilton County Planning + Development
City of Cincinnati Fire Department
City of Cincinnati Police Department – Real Time Crime Center (RTCC)
Cincinnati Area Geographic Information Systems (CAGIS)
Greater Cincinnati Fusion Center
Hamilton County Fire Chiefs Association
United States Coast Guard

Introduction

Purpose

The purpose of Emergency Support Function (ESF) #5 – Information & Planning is to establish how emergency management activities will be coordinated prior to, during, and after disasters to meet the emergency needs of Hamilton County, OH. This ESF describes the operational components as well as roles and responsibilities of the entities necessary to fulfill the duties of ESF #5.

Scope

Emergency Support Function #5 – Information & Planning serves to support all Incident Management in Hamilton County through all phases of emergency management. Prior to incidents, ESF #5 facilitates the flow of information in order to place resources on alert to aid in response. During and shortly after the incident ESF #5 is responsible for the planning functions in the Hamilton County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and in support of Incident Command as requested.

Activities of ESF #5 include collecting, processing, and disseminating information in conjunction with the Joint Information Center and ESF #15 – Emergency Public Information, situational awareness and monitoring for potential hazards, intelligence gathering and sharing, incident action planning, and other support as required.

Assumptions

Planning requires assumptions based on statistics, history, behavior patterns and likely future trends. The following assumptions were made as consideration for ESF #5 – Information & Planning:

- Hazards may affect one or multiple jurisdictions within Hamilton County. Hazards may also extend beyond the borders of Hamilton County and may require a coordinated response and recovery effort between multiple jurisdictions at the local, county, or even state level.
- There will be an immediate and continuous demand for information on which decisions may be made involving the conduct of response and recovery actions.
- Early in most incidents little information will be available and initial information received may be vague or inaccurate.

- The receipt, analysis, and dissemination of timely and accurate disaster information is necessary to provide local, state, and federal governments with a basis for determining priorities, needs, and the availability of resources.
- The collection and organization of the incident status, situation information and the evaluation, analysis and display of that information for use by the EOC will be critical for decision making in the disaster response and recovery process.

Concept of Operations

Emergency Support Function (ESF) #5 – Information & Planning consists of four broad activities in relation to the Hamilton County Emergency Operations Plan. These activities are:

ESF #5 Activities	
1.	Collecting, Processing, and Disseminating Information
2.	Situational Awareness and Monitoring for Potential Hazards
3.	Intelligence Gathering and Sharing
4.	Incident Action Planning

Collecting, Processing, and Disseminating Information

When the EOC is activated, ESF #5 serves as the Planning Section Chief and oversees the Planning Section activities as outlined in the Hamilton County EOC Manual. As Hamilton County EMHSA is the Coordinating Entity for ESF #5, this ESF is usually the first ESF staffed. Once the EOC is active, EMHSA shifts from routine daily operations to focusing on information management and planning for the EOC and in support of the local jurisdictions and IC in the field.

ESF #5 will collect, analyze, process, and disseminate information about the incident. This means gathering information from sources both within and outside the Hamilton County EOC. ESF #5 will be responsible for determining what information is accurate and pertinent to the ongoing incident, what information should be shared with response partners, and how best to share the information.

Collecting Information

Information coming into the Hamilton County EOC can come from multiple sources. Once the EOC is active, ESF #5 should begin determining what the different sources of information about the incident are. The best source of information is what will be provided by the other ESFs. ESF #5 may request specific information from the other ESFs regarding the status of current and ongoing operations, as well as the planning for future operational periods.

Another important source of information will be ESF #15 – Emergency Public Information, which will collect information from the media and from members of the public (see Annex O – ESF #15 – Emergency Public Information for additional details on this process).

One of the key roles of ESF #5 is to ensure that all ESFs are inputting information into WebEOC as appropriate. WebEOC is a State-managed tool for sharing information during an incident, as it can be accessed by not only those who are physically located at the Hamilton County EOC, but also by those in the field, as well as those who cannot respond to the EOC.

With regards to information specific to the incident and its consequences, the Damage Assessment Unit, which is staffed by Hamilton County Planning + Development, should work to gather Damage Assessment information from the local jurisdictions. These reports can provide information on the impacts of the incident as well as the needs of those impacted. Specific details on Damage Assessment can be found in Tab A – Hamilton County Damage Assessment Plan.

Another source of information may be a phone bank for taking information from the public, as well as answering the public's questions. The City of Cincinnati Enterprise Technology Solutions (ETS) support telecommunications in the Hamilton County EOC. If necessary, the EOC Manager may request that ETS designate specific phone lines in the Radcliff Facility to serve as a phone bank. If a dedicated phone line is created for answering questions from the public, the number will be distributed in conjunction with the Joint Information Center (JIC). For more details on the public phone line and the JIC, see ESF #15.

Processing Information

Once the information has been collected by ESF #5, the information needs to be processed to help the EOC develop a common operating picture regarding the incident and to help the EOC Command Staff to make informed decisions. Processing information is something that every member of the EOC should be actively doing when new information comes in. Part of the process is simply asking whether or not other ESFs or external partners need to know the information and sharing it as appropriate.

For ESF #5, the information can be processed while developing different products that are eventually disseminated both within the EOC and to external partners. The EOC Action Plan (EOC-AP) and the Situation Reports (SitReps) both are developed following a process that includes determining what information is important and should be included when sharing with partners and may potentially affect the decisions of others.

The development of the EOC-AP, which is led by ESF #5, allows the information collected by the EOC to be used in determining EOC Priorities, Objectives and Strategies. By developing the EOC-AP, the EOC will process information received from the field as well as consider how to coordinate actions over future operational periods and support the overarching goals of the EOC, managing information, resources, and consequences. The development of the EOC-AP and other Incident Action Plans is described below.

Developing SitReps is a relatively straight-forward process; ESF #5 need only complete the incident information found in the SitRep template. One of the most important components of the SitRep is the section on Community Lifelines. As mentioned in the Basic Plan above, a community lifeline enables the continuous operation of critical government and business functions and is essential to human health and safety as well as economic security. Together, the community lifelines frame incident information to provide decision makers with root cause and impact analysis. The seven community lifelines represent only the most basic services a community relies on and which, when stable, enable all other activity within a community.



Figure 1: Community Lifelines for Incident Stabilization

Using the bulleted lists in the Community Lifelines section of the SitRep will allow ESF #5, and the rest of the EOC, to describe any current actions or impacts to the community lifelines while keeping the information succinct enough for quick processing.

Disseminating Information

Once the information is collected and process, ESF #5 is responsible for ensuring that the rest of the EOC and external partners can readily access the information. The principle method of disseminating information will be through sharing the EOC-AP and SitReps with external partners. These products are primarily shared via email, but should also be posted to WebEOC.

Other information that is not in those two documents may still need to be displayed throughout the EOC, and ESF #5 is the primary ESF responsible for making sure all relevant information is properly displayed. Geospatial data can be input into Raven911 or Google Maps to be displayed in the EOC. Raven911 is an internet-based mapping system developed from the perspective of an emergency operator utilizing exemplary technical expertise, and the latest in GIS (Geographic Information Systems) computer technology. If needed, CAGIS can provide personnel to assist staffing the GIS Unit, which falls under the Planning Coordination Section in the Hamilton County EOC. Maps can be included with the SitReps and in WebEOC as requested.

Information can also be shared back to ESF #15 – Emergency Public Information, especially if that information needs to be shared with the media or the public.

Situational Awareness for Monitoring for Potential Hazards

ESF #5 is responsible for maintaining situational awareness of incidents, serving as the centralized conduit for information. This means ESF #5 should work to ensure it has a comprehensive understanding of the incident at all times, including what activities are taking place in the field, what resources are being used and may be required, the location of important incident sites (e.g. Incident Command Post, Staging Areas, Mass Care Shelters, etc.), current and future weather, search and rescue grids, and utility outages, etc. ESF #5 is responsible for ensuring that all ESFs are in communication with their counterparts in the field to maintain situational awareness.

In addition to having situational awareness about the current incident, ESF #5 should also monitor for potential threats and hazards that could evolve into emergency situations or affect current response operations. For pre-planned events, this may be as simple as gathering information from the National Weather Service and sharing with the local jurisdictions and event organizers. For incidents with planned or active response, this may mean understanding what the incident is and any potential cascading hazards that may result and affect the response or the public at large.

For prolonged incidents occurring over multiple operational periods, this also means monitoring for pre-planned events or incidents that may occur concurrently. While concurrent pre-planned events and incidents may not directly related to one another, ESF #5 should maintain awareness of these events and assist the EOC in developing a common operating picture.

Intelligence Gathering and Sharing

Within the Planning Section of the EOC in an Intelligence Unit, which will be monitored by either the Greater Cincinnati Fusion Center (GCFC) or City of Cincinnati Police Department Real Time Crime Center (RTCC). The Intelligence Unit monitors law enforcement intelligence reports and shares information with the local jurisdictions to aid in prevention activities. The Intelligence Unit focuses on terrorism, criminal, and public safety matters in support of securing communities and enhancing the national threat picture. The Intelligence Unit receives, analyzes, gathers, produces, and disseminates a broad array of threat-related information and actionable intelligence to appropriate law enforcement entities.

Incident Action Planning

ESF #5 has two roles with regards to Incident Action Planning. The first is to serve as subject matter experts in helping the local jurisdictions and ICs in creating their own IAPs. The second is to oversee the developing of the Hamilton County EOC-AP.

The IAP is a plan that is central to managing the response to an incident using ICS. The team that is managing an incident develops an IAP each operational period, the time scheduled for executing a given set of actions as specified in the IAP, using the standard ICS incident action planning process. The IAP itself communicates the incident objectives and the tactics that will be used to manage the incident during the operational period that the plan covers.

The incident action planning process provides a tool to synchronize operations at the incident level and ensure that incident operations are conducted in support of incident objectives. A disciplined system of planning phases and meetings fosters collaboration and partnerships, and focuses incident operations.

In the field, the Operations Section has the primary responsibility for incident action planning and execution of the IAP. The Planning Section is responsible for producing the IAP and informing operations decision making through situational analysis, and adopting and executing applicable deliberate plans.

ESF #5 can help IC by offering subject matter expertise in developing IAPs, as well as reviewing or disseminating the plans. It is important the ESF #5 be familiar with any IAPs developed in the field to ensure that the Priorities, Objectives and Strategies in the EOC-AP support those in the IAP(s).

The EOC-AP is the central tool for planning actions during a response to an emergency situation. The plan is prepared by the Planning Coordination Section Chief and should be written during the first EOC operational period and revised continually during the response as the situation changes.

A written EOC-AP may not be necessary in an initial response for an incident which is readily controlled. Larger, more complex incidents will require a written plan to coordinate activities. The level of detail required in an EOC-AP will vary according to the size and complexity of the response. The plan must be clear, accurate, and completely communicate the information generated during the planning process. The EOC-AP is written for the next operational period.

The EOC-AP must be prepared and distributed prior to the Operations Shift Briefing and for each operational period after the initial operational period. A planning process known as the Incident Cycle or Planning P has been developed as part of NIMS to facilitate the development of an EOC-AP in an orderly and systematic manner.

Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

The Hamilton County Emergency Management & Homeland Security Agency (EMHSA) has the primary responsibility for the information and planning functions in Hamilton County. Hamilton County EMHSA will serve as the coordinating agency for this ESF.

Coordinating Agency Responsibilities

Hamilton County Emergency Management & Homeland Security Agency will:

1. Coordinate the activities of Support Agencies within ESF #5 to fulfill operational objectives.
2. Direct the activities of the ESF #5 in conjunction with assistance from ESFs at the local, State, or Federal levels as applicable.
3. Collaborate with other Coordinating Agencies to ensure an effective response between ESFs.
4. Designate sufficient representatives (no less than three) to support/staff 24-hour operations at the Hamilton County EOC. The Hamilton County EMHSA will maintain listings of these personnel, 24-hour contact information, and directions for contacting them in the event of communication outages.
5. Develop and train all staff responsible for implementing ESF #5 on standard operating procedures.
6. Share ESF #5 activity information with appropriate EOC personnel.
7. Prioritize ESF #5 operational strategies in alignment with the EOC and on scene objectives.
8. Oversee development of the EOC-AP.
9. Support local ICs in the development of IAPs.
10. Develop and distribute Situation Reports (SitReps) to document response and short-term recovery actions.
11. Support the electronic, geographic, and audiovisual display of data and information within the Hamilton County EOC.
12. Coordinate and produce maps and other geographic images that will assist in response and short-term recovery operations.

13. Collect, validate, and analyze received information with ESF #15 – Emergency Public Information.
14. In coordination with Hamilton County Planning + Development, compile damage assessment information from County agencies and local jurisdictions following an incident.
15. Receive, manage, and track resource requests for ESF #5 in accordance with established resource management procedures.
16. Coordinate with ESF #15 – Emergency Public Information for the inclusion of appropriate information for public dissemination.
17. Assist in the development of the After Action Report. This report is a detailed, written analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of county-level emergency response and short-term recovery activities based upon extensive research of the event and interviews with participating assessment, response, and short-term recovery personnel.

Supporting Agencies Responsibilities

Hamilton County Planning + Development will:

1. Designate sufficient representatives (no less than three) to support/staff 24-hour operations at the Hamilton County EOC. Hamilton County Planning + Development will maintain listings of these personnel, 24-hour contact information, and directions for contacting them in the event of communication outages.
2. Collect and compile Damage Assessment information from Hamilton County and the local jurisdictions as outlined in the Hamilton County Damage Assessment Plan.
3. Serve in the Damage Assessment Unit if activated by the Planning Section Chief within the Hamilton County EOC.

City of Cincinnati Fire Department may:

1. Provide personnel to support/staff 24-hour operations at the Hamilton County EOC. Maintain listings of these personnel, 24-hour contact information, and directions for contacting them in the event of communication outages.
2. Provide personnel from the City of Cincinnati ESF #5 to concurrently serve as the Hamilton County ESF #5 Coordinating Entity.

City of Cincinnati Police Department – Real Time Crime Center may:

1. Provide personnel to support/staff 24-hour operations at the Hamilton County EOC. Maintain listings of these personnel, 24-hour contact information, and directions for contacting them in the event of communication outages.
2. Provide any relevant intelligence information to the Planning Section in support of ongoing operations.
3. Serve in the Intelligence Unit if activated by the Planning Section Chief within the Hamilton County EOC.

Cincinnati Area Geographic Information Systems will:

1. Designate sufficient representatives (no less than three) to support/staff 24-hour operations at the Hamilton County EOC. CAGIS will maintain listings of these personnel, 24-hour contact information, and directions for contacting them in the event of communication outages.
2. Assist in the display of impact and damage assessment data and other information in all available visual forms as needed: maps, aerial photo imagery, GIS, photographic imagery, charts, graphs, tabular, and other forms.
3. Use WebEOC, GIS, and other systems and methods to produce maps and other visual images that will assist response and recovery operations.
4. Serve in the GIS Unit if activated by the Planning Section Chief within the Hamilton County EOC.

Greater Cincinnati Fusion Center will:

1. Designate sufficient representatives (no less than three) to support/staff 24-hour operations at the Hamilton County EOC. The Greater Cincinnati Fusion Center will maintain listings of these personnel, 24-hour contact information, and directions for contacting them in the event of communication outages.
2. Provide Critical Infrastructure/Key Resource (CIKR) information along with other pertinent information as needed in support of ongoing operations.
3. Provide any relevant intelligence information to the Planning Section in support of ongoing operations.
4. Analyze and disseminate information to appropriate personnel in the Hamilton County EOC to facilitate proper decision making and response tactics for all incidents in Hamilton County.
5. Serve in the Intelligence Unit if activated by the Planning Section Chief within the Hamilton County EOC.

Hamilton County Fire Chief's Association will:

1. Provide personnel to support/staff 24-hour operations at the Hamilton County EOC. Maintain listings of these personnel, 24-hour contact information, and directions for contacting them in the event of communication outages.

United States Coast Guard may:

1. Provide personnel to support/staff 24-hour operations at the Hamilton County EOC. Maintain listings of these personnel, 24-hour contact information, and directions for contacting them in the event of communication outages.

References

Hamilton County Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency. (2020). *Hamilton County Duty Officer Manual*.

Hamilton County Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency. (2020). *Hamilton County EOC Manual*.

Attachment

Tab A – Hamilton County Damage Assessment Plan