

**McCREARY COUNTY, KENTUCKY
EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN**



PUBLIC INFORMATION

ESF-15

Coordinates and organizes public information resources in preparing for, responding to and recovering from emergency/disaster incidents which impact the citizens of McCreary County.

PUBLIC INFORMATION
ESF-15

ESF Coordinators: McCreary County Judge Executive

Primary Agencies: McCreary County Judge Executive
McCreary County Emergency Management Agency

Support Agencies: **McCreary County Fiscal Court**
McCreary County Magistrates
McCreary County Sheriff's Office
McCreary County Road Department
McCreary County EMS
McCreary County Animal Control
McCreary County Jailor's Office
McCreary County Parks and Recreation Department
McCreary County Water Department
McCreary County Fire Departments

Other Local Agencies

McCreary County Public Schools
Lake Cumberland District Health Department
American Red Cross- Lake Cumberland Area Chapter

State Agencies

Kentucky Division of Emergency Management

Introduction

The Public Information Emergency Support Function (ESF-15):

- Identifies and organizes the resources (human, technical, equipment, facility, materials and/or supplies) available to McCreary County to address and support public information needs in the event of either a natural or man-made disaster or emergency situation;
- Identifies the responsibilities of organizations charged with providing public information in the case of a disaster or emergency situation;

- Is established to assure the provision of public information support to McCreary County and private-sector response before, during and after an incident/event;
- Provides personnel and resources to support prevention, preparedness, protection, response, recovery and mitigation in support of the primary emergency management objectives of public information in emergency and disaster situations.

Mission

The mission of the Public Information Emergency Support Function is to coordinate and organize public information resources in preparing for, responding to and recovering from emergency/disaster incidents which impact the citizens of McCreary County.

Scope

The scope of this ESF includes:

- Assessing public information system damage and determining the required resources to restore such public information systems;
- Coordinating with ESF-15/Public Information support agencies for assistance in helping public information suppliers obtain information, equipment, specialized labor, fuel and transportation;
- Coordinating information with local, state, and federal officials and suppliers about available public information supply recovery assistance;
- Providing technical assistance concerning public information systems.

ESF-15/Public Information is a functional annex to the McCreary County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and, to the extent possible, information contained in other sections of the EOP will not be repeated in this ESF annex. Many of the agencies involved in ESF-15/Public Information activities have existing emergency plans and procedures which this ESF Annex is designed to complement and support.

This Emergency Support Function applies to all agencies with assigned public information emergency responsibilities as described in the McCreary County Kentucky EOP.

Situations and Assumptions

Some of the situations and assumptions involved in planning ESF-15/Public Information planning include but are not limited to the following:

- The ESF-15 Coordinator may or may not be the Public Information Officer (PIO). If the ESF-15 Coordinator is not the PIO, then the Chief Elected Officials will appoint a PIO;
- An incident has occurred and public perception is such that people believe they have been placed in danger by a natural or manmade incident;
- Emergency public information actions will be determined by the severity of the situation as declared by involved entities, or as perceived by the public;

McCREARY COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

- Local jurisdictions and other response organizations will be notified when an emergency or disaster has occurred that requires an emergency public information response;
- The Emergency Alert System (EAS) is activated as the principal means to disseminate emergency warnings and priority emergency instructions to the public;
- The PIO will coordinate the dissemination of all official public information from county, local and private emergency services and disaster response agencies providing support during the incident;
- Responding agencies will provide instructions and information to the public about the incident and actions people should take to save and protect life, property, economy and the environment and provide information to reduce public concerns about the incident and response activities;
- The PIO has established close working relationships with the news media for the dissemination of emergency public information.

Concept of Operations

The McCreary County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) serves as the central location for interagency coordination and executive decision-making, including all activities associated with ESF-15/Public Information during a disaster/emergency event. The ESF-15 Primary Agencies work with the EOC management team to ensure that necessary public information tasks are accomplished. The Support and Partnering Agencies provide resources and personnel to assist in accomplishing ESF-15 activities as required by the size and demands of the event. As calls are received requesting services and resources during an emergency/disaster situation, they are routed to the ESF-15/Public Information desk to determine appropriate action.

General

ESF-15/Public Information is organized consistent with the requirements of the National Response Plan, the National Incident Management System and uses the Incident Command System (composed of Planning, Operations, Logistics and Finance/Administration Sections with their standardized Units, Teams, positions, forms and terminology) to manage its emergency/disaster responsibilities. This structure and system supports incident assessment, planning, procurement, deployment and coordination of public information support operations for McCreary County. Pursuant to the Incident Command System structure, the Planning, Logistics, Finance/Administration and Operations Section Coordinators and staff at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) assist the EOC Manager in achieving the overall mission. Sections, Units, Teams, staffing levels, etc. are modular and scalable, depending on the type, size, scope and complexity of the emergency or disaster event.

Procedures, protocols and plans for public information disaster response activities provide guidelines for operations at the McCreary County Emergency Operations Center and in the field.

- The Emergency Operations Plan and corresponding Appendices, Incident Annexes, Support Annexes and Standard Operating Guidelines that describe ESF-15/Public Information capabilities are based on National Planning Scenarios, Universal Task List and Target Capabilities and are the basis of these guidelines;
- Periodic training and exercises are conducted to enhance effectiveness;

- Public information planning is continuous, beginning well before impact of approaching natural disasters and immediately upon those not forecasted.

A large event requiring regional, state and/or interstate mutual aid assistance will require ESF-15/Public Information implementation. ESF-15/Public Information will coordinate with support agency counterparts to seek and procure, plan, coordinate and direct the use of any required public information assets.

When an event requires a specific type or response mode, public information technical and subject matter expertise may be provided by an appropriate person(s) from a supporting agency with skills relevant to the type of event. The individual will advise and/or direct operations within the context of the Incident Command System structure.

As illustrated in Figure 15-1: *ESF-15/Public Information Concept of Operation*, ESF-15 will give priority to five fundamental, interrelated functions:

- Use technology and human intelligence to collect, analyze and disseminate information on direct and indirect disaster impacts,
- Assess the capabilities of local government, the business community and volunteer agencies to effectively respond to the disaster;
- Assess and prioritize the immediate needs of impacted communities, neighborhoods and areas of the county;
- Incorporate the analyses into Incident Action Plans that establish operational objectives and identify resource requirements to accomplish these objectives;
- Utilize an Incident Action Matrix to establish priorities, assign tasks to agencies and track progress in meeting objectives.

Each public information organization which enters into a mutual aid agreement will furnish a copy of the agreement to the McCreary County Emergency Management Agency.

The McCreary County Emergency Management Agency will maintain up-to-date information of public information services in McCreary County including:

- Names of responsible officials (reviewed/updated annually),
- ESF-15/Public Information staffing directory (reviewed/updated annually),
- ESF-15/Public Information notification lists (reviewed/updated annually),
- Major public information equipment identified in Resource Typing and readiness status (reviewed/updated annually).

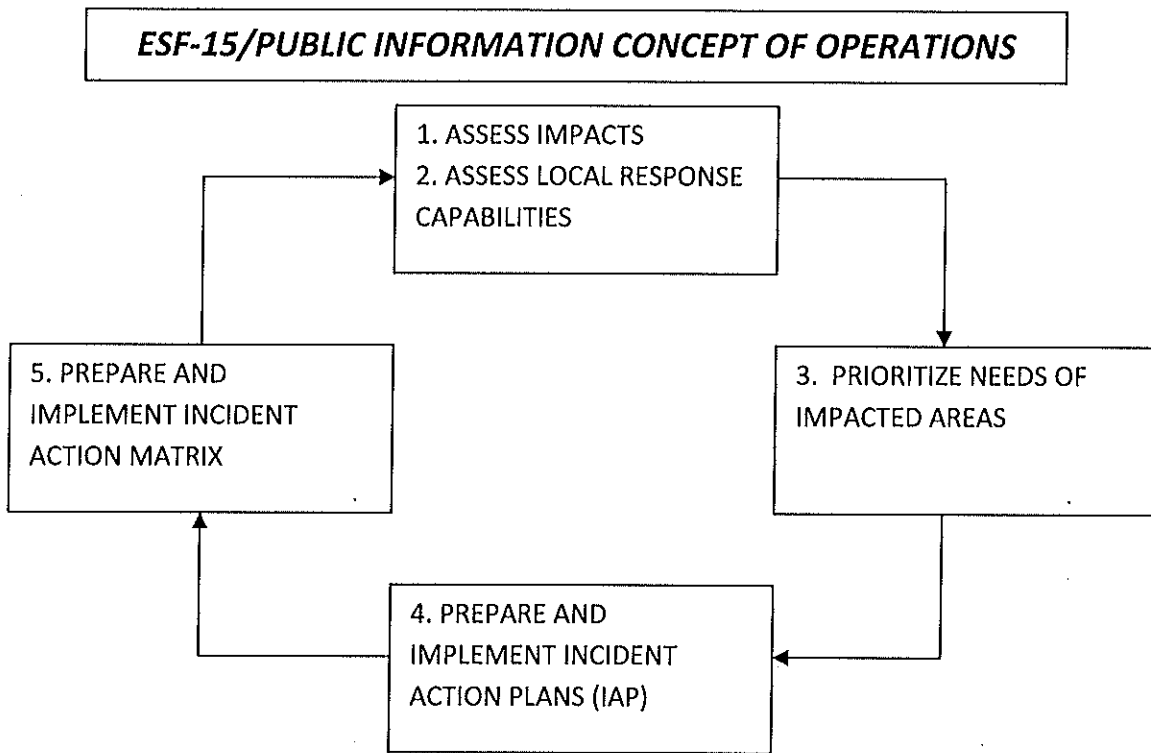


Figure 15-1: ESF-15/Public Information Concept of Operations

The ESF-15/Public Information Emergency Operations Plan plus accompanying Appendices, Annexes and Standard Operating guidelines are maintained by the McCreary County Emergency Management Agency and are reviewed and updated by the public information planning committee with the McCreary County Emergency Management Agency at least annually. Support agencies may develop and maintain their own similar documents for internal use, which must be compatible with and in support of the overall Emergency Operations Plan. All such documents must be compliant with the National Response Plan, National Incident Management System, Incident Command System and the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP).

Public information organizations are responsible for training and continuing education of their personnel.

The McCreary County Emergency Operations Center uses WebEOC (crisis management software) to supplement disaster management planning and actions. Specifically, all of the applicable Emergency Support Functions, agency based emergency operations centers, and other facilities or functions as appropriate are able to communicate their needs and status through WebEOC. This allows all of the information to be integrated for the specific event and to assess what actions, resources and needs exist.

Notifications

McCreary County 911 Dispatch is the county's 24 hour Warning Point.

When the county or an area of the county has been threatened or impacted by an emergency or disaster event, McCreary County 911 Dispatch will notify the McCreary County Emergency

Management Agency Director who in turn will notify the State Emergency Operations Center Duty Officer. The state Emergency Operations Center notifies applicable state agencies including the Regional Response Manager of KyEM Region 10.

ESF-15/Public Information will be activated or placed on standby upon notification by the McCreary County Emergency Management Agency. Upon instructions to activate this Emergency Support Function, the ESF-15 Coordinator and Support Agencies will implement their procedures to notify and mobilize all personnel, facilities and physical resources potentially needed, based on the emergency circumstance.

Direction and Control

The McCreary County Judge Executive and the McCreary County Emergency Management Agency are the lead agencies for ESF-15 and will manage the emergency activities of ESF-15/Public Information. Public Information operates from the McCreary County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) on a 24 hour/7 days a week schedule to help maintain the flow of public information services.

The McCreary County Emergency Management Agency functions as the official disaster organization for preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery within McCreary County and serves as the focal point for ESF-15 activities. It is responsible for ensuring that all appropriate program departments, support agencies, other Emergency Support Functions and private voluntary agencies have knowledge about the system and ESF-15 expectations.

The ESF-15/Public Information system operates at two levels – the Emergency Operations Center and field operations.

All management decisions regarding county and/or regional resource allocation are made at the Emergency Operations Center by the ESF-15/Public Information Coordinator during emergency activations. In accordance with a mission assignment from ESF-15 and further mission tasking by a local primary agency, each support organization assisting in an ESF-15/Public Information assignment will retain administrative control over its own resources and personnel but will be under the operational control of ESF-15.

Organization

Response to an emergency/disaster event in McCreary County is progressive as demonstrated in Figure 15- 2: *Progressive Requests for Emergency/Disaster Resources*. The initial response to an emergency/disaster situation is met by the use of the public information resources available at the local level. McCreary County Fiscal Court activates available resources. When the public information needs for resources and/or services exceed the capability of what is available in the jurisdictions within McCreary County, established mutual aid agreements with surrounding counties to provide public information, such resources are utilized. When needed public information resources cannot be located through mutual aid agreements, the McCreary County Emergency Operations Center requests resources through the state Emergency Operations Center. The state Emergency Operations Center locates resources through intra- and inter-state mutual aid agreements and federal assets.

Requests for Emergency Assistance Flow Upwards from the Lowest Level

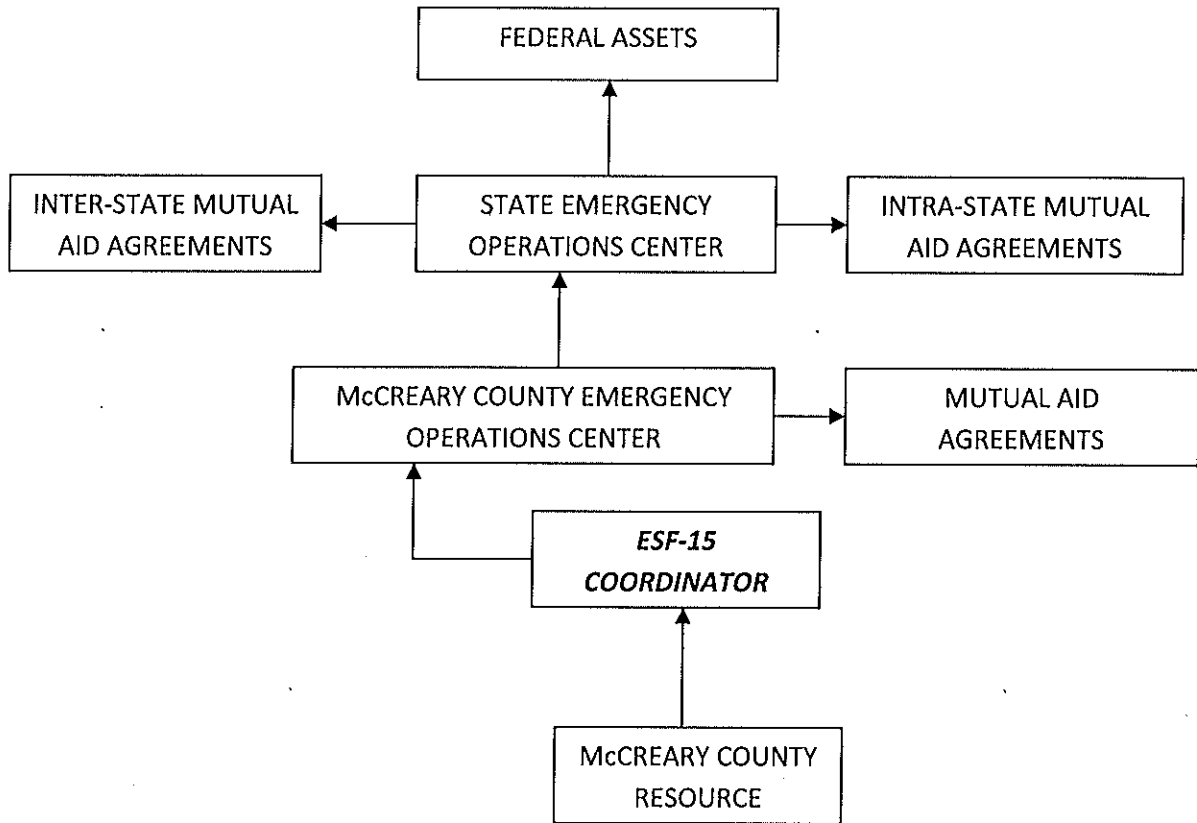


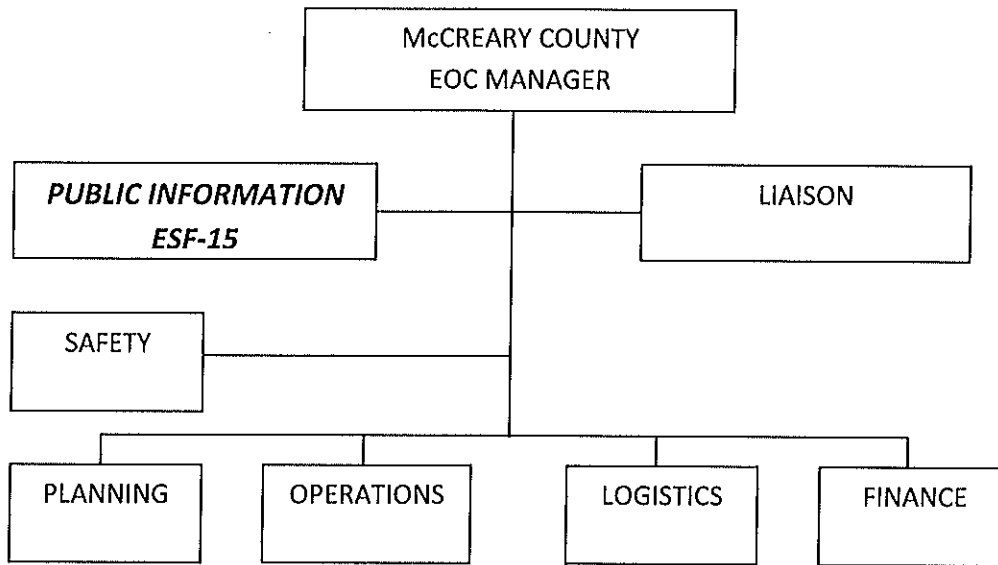
Figure 15-2: Progressive Requests for Emergency/Disaster Resources

County

McCreary County Emergency Management will initiate ESF-15/Public Information notification and will request assistance from the primary and support agencies to help staff the ESF-15 position in the McCreary County Emergency Operations Center.

In the Incident Command Structure, ESF-15/Public Information is located directly under the EOC Manager as shown in Figure 15-3: *Incident Command System Structure: ESF-15/Public Information*.

McCREARY COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN



During an activation of the EOC, support agency staff is integrated with the public information staff to provide support that will allow for an appropriate, coordinated and timely response.

Throughout the response and recovery periods, ESF-15/Public Information:

- Collects, analyzes, and disseminates tactical information on the nature, scope and potential impacts of an incident or major disaster related to public information;
- Evaluates and analyzes information regarding public information requests;
- Develops and updates assessments of current and anticipated future public information needs and resource requirements,
- Implements contingency planning to meet anticipated public information demands or needs;
- Incorporates this analysis into Incident Action Plans; and
- Uses this intelligence to support the Logistics, Operations and other ESFs in their impact assessment and response missions.

Region

When local resources are overwhelmed or depleted, additional public information resources are obtained through established mutual aid agreements McCreary County has with counties in the region. The Public Information Chief, in consultation with the requesting jurisdiction, contacts the agencies with whom mutual agreements are in effect to determine if the requested resources are available.

Additionally, either the KyEM Region 10 Response Manager or the state Emergency Operations Center can be contacted to determine the appropriate state agency serving as the lead agency for public information coordination/support at the state level. That agency can designate a liaison to the McCreary County EOC to assist Emergency Support Function 15 and to the extent capable provide coordinators, assessors and operational personnel in support of the EOC or field activities.

On activation of an emergency operations center in more than one county, the lead agency for public information coordination/support at the state level may support the coordination of the event response with regional resources or request additional resources through the State Emergency Operations Center.

State

During an emergency or disaster event, ESF-15/comparable primary and support agencies at the State Emergency Operations Center report and function under the overall direction of the Kentucky Division of Emergency Management Director.

During the response phase, ESF-15/Public Information evaluates and analyzes information regarding public information requests. ESF-15/Public Information also develops and updates assessments of the public information situation/status in the impact area and initiate contingency planning to meet anticipated demands and needs.

The Kentucky Division of Emergency Management develops and maintains the overall State Emergency Operations Plan and accompanying Appendices and Standard Operating Guidelines that govern response actions related to emergencies. Support agencies may develop and maintain their own similar documents for internal use, which must be compatible with and in support of the overall Emergency Operations Plan. All such documents will comply with the National Response Plan, the National Incident Management System and the Incident Command System.

Actions

Actions initiated by ESF-15 are grouped into the phases of emergency management: preparation, mitigation, response and recovery. Each phase requires specific skills and knowledge to accomplish. Each phase requires significant cooperation and collaboration between all supporting agencies and the intended recipients of service.

Preparedness Actions

Actions and activities that develop public information capabilities may include planning, training, orientation sessions and exercises for ESF-15 personnel and other emergency support functions that will respond with ESF-15. This involves the active participation of local inter-agency preparedness organizations, which collaborate in such activities on a regular basis.

Initiatives also include:

- Coordinating with local media on public information procedures, content of information, information dissemination strategies and roles and responsibilities of the Public Information Officer under the Incident Command System;
- Assisting in the dissemination of written and graphic disaster preparedness materials such as brochures and publications, public presentations, news releases and media events to
 - Encourage preparedness activities;
 - Raise awareness and personal responsibility to minimize the loss of life and property during a disaster;
 - Identify vulnerable areas for each hazard as described in the All Hazards Mitigation Plan;

- Training Public Information Officers in the role of the PIO under NIMS and the Incident Command System including legal issues, risk communication, communication in emergencies and the role of the Joint Information System;
- Training and preparing ESF-15 staff in the use of disaster intelligence from ESF 5, including how the intelligence can be effectively used in communications with news media on potential consequences of hazards on people, buildings and infrastructure;
- Coordinating with the Kentucky Division of Emergency Management, specifically the application of multimedia public information strategies, techniques and monitoring efforts;
- Coordinating public information resources by the Public Information Officer (PIO) at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

Response Actions

Response activities/initiatives include:

- Notifying the media of disaster impacts, protective measures and other topics that will facilitate and expedite response and recovery and address public information needs;
- Managing phone calls from individuals attempting to contact the McCreary County Emergency Management Agency for information;
- Providing updates to the news media about disaster conditions and actions taken in response to those conditions, primarily information and instructions provided for the survival, health and safety of the citizens in the impacted area.;
- Preparing informational releases using the following prioritization:
 - Lifesaving, including information essential to survival, health and safety;
 - Recovery, including instructions concerning disaster recovery, relief, programs and services;
 - Releasing non-emergency notices by participating government and volunteer agencies;
 - Training public information staff in support roles to assist local response and recovery efforts;
 - Coordinating with ESF-15 to provide public information concerning what types of volunteer service are required;
 - Participating in EOC briefings, Incident Action Plans, Situation Reports and meetings;
 - Providing staff if establishment of Joint Information Center is required;
 - Coordinating to provide citizens with information regarding available resources and services;

- All available means to disseminate emergency public information to the general public will be used if necessary, including:
 - Amateur radio;
 - Broadcast media;
 - Door to door notification;
 - Email lists;
 - Facsimile;
 - Official internet websites;
 - Mobile public address systems;
 - Print media;
 - Telephone;
 - Weather/tone alert radios via NWS/NOAA;
 - 1650 AM emergency alert radio.

Recovery Actions

Recovery actions/initiatives include:

- Coordination with ESF 5-Emergency Management in assessing disaster recovery issues, priorities, problems and other factors that need to be shared with the news media, including questions on damage assessment findings, disaster response performance and other potentially sensitive issues.
- Coordination with ESF 6-Mass Care to announce status of shelters, location of mass feeding and/or supplies distribution sites and comfort stations;
- Providing staff if establishment of a Joint Information Center is required;
- Maintaining records of all releases for documentation after the event;
- Including in informational releases-
 - Disaster assistance information;
 - Descriptions of recovery efforts;
 - Actions being taken to alleviate problems, and;
 - Available public assistance programs.

Mitigation Actions

Mitigation actions/initiatives:

- Coordinating with All Hazard Mitigation Project Staff and other mitigation officials in developing and disseminating messages to the media on-
 - The role of mitigation in reducing future disaster losses;
 - Mitigation success stories in McCreary County, and;
 - Other mitigation issues.

Responsibilities

All tasked agencies will:

- Develop applicable standard operating procedures, guidelines and/or checklists which clearly define the role of this emergency support function in the overall functioning of the McCreary County EOC and detail the accomplishment of their assigned functions;
- Train staff in the standard operating procedures, guidelines and/or checklists that outline the courses of action to be taken during a pending or actual disaster or emergency situation;
- Participate in drills to exercise these procedures and actions on a regular basis;
- Participate in honest appraisals of the performance of the Public Information role and actions after each drill, exercise and actual activation of the McCreary County EOC;
- Participate in a continuous quality improvement process that uses the findings of the performance appraisals and the lessons learned to continuously refine the role and actions of this emergency support function in the overall functioning of the McCreary County EOC and incorporate these into clearly written procedures which are shared with all staff and involved agencies;
- Deploy a representative to the EOC to assist with emergency management activities;
- Provide on-going status reports as requested by the Emergency Management Coordinator;
- Document all costs and expenses associated with response and recovery activities taking care to clearly separate disaster-related work from daily work in the event that State and Federal reimbursement becomes available;
- Maintain up-to-date rosters for notifying personnel and 24-hour EOC staffing capabilities, and provide this information to the McCreary County Emergency Management Agency;
- Perform other emergency responsibilities as assigned.

Primary Agencies: McCreary County Judge Executive
McCreary County Emergency Management Agency

ESF-15 disseminates emergency information to the general public during disasters. ESF-15 provides information to the news media in briefings, Situation Reports, news releases, or emergency alert announcements. ESF-15's duties during activations include:

- Disseminating information concerning the disaster and its associated threats and protective actions to the news media and general public;
- Determining appropriate vehicle/format for all communications, releases, advisory bulletins and interviews;
- Correcting misinformation being disseminated by media;
- Providing information for website press releases;
- Approving emergency information for publication on the McCreary County website;

McCREARY COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

- Coordinating public information concerning needed volunteer goods and services;
- Coordinating with support agencies in the preparation of consistent and accurate messages and the dissemination of messages through timely briefings and news conferences;
- Maintaining a contact list of media and ESF-15 staff in the EOC;
- Creating bulletins and handouts for the public;
- Scheduling personnel coverage to overlap to ensure continuation of function;
- Maintain a log of events via WebEOC and/or On-line Incident Log.

Support Agencies:

Support agencies will provide assistance to the Emergency Support Function with:

- Performing the above-outlined tasks as requested by the ESF Coordinator;
- Services, staff, equipment, and supplies that complement the entire emergency response effort
- Reporting current resources capabilities on a regular basis.

The Public Information Officer, Judge Executive's Communication Staff, will work closely with Public Information Officers from support agencies to ensure consistency and accuracy in the development and delivery of messages on disaster impacts, actions taken, protective measures for the public and other issues. ESF-15 will coordinate with the media representatives or PIOs from the following agencies:

- McCreary County Emergency Management Agency;
- National Weather Service/Emergency Alert system.

ESF-15 will also coordinate with PIOs from other agencies to include state and federal, especially if a Joint Information Center is established. Each agency can provide one PIO to the JIC for information processing and dissemination.

Administration and Support

Support

Requests for emergency assistance will be resolved at the lowest level direction and control facility with appropriate response resources capabilities. Unresolved assistance requests will normally flow upward from cities to the county and/or field deployed command posts to responsible representatives in the State Emergency Operations Center, and as required to other states or the federal government for assistance support.

Agreements and Understandings

All agreements and understandings entered into for the purchase, lease, or otherwise use of equipment and services, will be in accordance with the provision of laws and procedures.

Status Reports

The primary agency will maintain status of all outstanding assistance requests and unresolved ESF-15/Public Information related issues. This information will be summarized into periodic status reports and submitted in accordance with applicable operating procedures.

Expenditures and Recordkeeping

Each ESF-15/Public Information agency is responsible for establishing administrative controls necessary to manage the expenditure of funds and to provide reasonable accountability and justification for federal reimbursement in accordance with the established guidelines. The first source of funds for expenditures by agencies in response to emergency, imminent disaster, or recovery from a catastrophic incident, is to be from funds associated with each local agency.

ESF-15/Public Information is responsible for managing financial matters specific to ESF-15/Public Information activity and related to resources procured/used during an event and forwarding that information to the Finance/Administration Section. However, each local government/agency/department must also track and record its own expenditures to ensure accuracy with any submissions for potential reimbursement. Information will be provided post-event as to application procedures for reimbursement.

The Finance/Administration Section will coordinate with the Logistics Section to ensure that procurements and staff hours are properly documented and processed for potential reimbursement. It will also be responsible for follow-up on all financial issues through coordination with * _____ * County Government and other local governments' fiscal and personnel management officials, Kentucky Division of Emergency Management fiscal agents, Federal Emergency Management Agency fiscal agents and directly with vendors as necessary.

Expenditures by other departments for activity not directly related to ESF-15/Public Information will be documented by those entities and submitted directly to the Finance/Administration Section as soon as possible.

After Action

Following the conclusion of any significant emergency, incident or exercise, the primary agency representative will facilitate a critique of the group activities during the emergency/incident/exercise with the ESF-15/Public Information agencies, identifying the successes and identifying areas that can

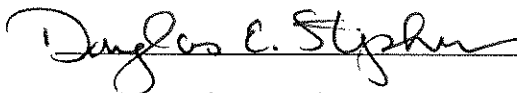
McCREARY COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

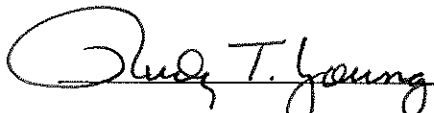
be strengthened and enhanced for efficiency in a continuous quality improvement process for the overall performance of the McCreary County Emergency Operations Center.

Statement of Concurrence
PUBLIC INFORMATION **ESF-15**

The signature appearing below indicates the individual has the authority to commit resources of the agency represented and agrees to the functions and tasks prescribed for this ESF.

PRIMARY AGENCIES: McCreary County Judge Executive
McCreary County Emergency Management Agency

 Douglas E. Stephens 10/22/12
(Signature) (Printed Name) (Date)

 Rudy T. Young 22 Oct. 2012
(Signature) (Printed Name) (Date)