

ANNEX I

CAMPUS / PUBLIC INFORMATION



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Annex I

Public Information

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ANNEX I

PUBLIC INFORMATION

I. AUTHORITY

See Section I of the Basic Plan for general authorities
Texas Local Government Code, Chapter 203 (Management and Preservation of Records)

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this annex is to outline the means, organization, and process by which the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) provides appropriate information and instructions to the campus community during emergencies. This annex also provides for campus education conducted in advance of an emergency to reduce the likelihood that students, faculty, and staff may place themselves in hazardous situations that may require an emergency response.

III. EXPLANATION OF TERMS

A. Acronyms

EAS	Emergency Alert System
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
HazMat	Hazardous Material
IC	Incident Commander
ICP	Incident Command Post
JIC	Joint Information Center
LWP	Local Warning Point
PIO	Public Information Officer
TDEM	Texas Division of Emergency Management
TV	Television
UTA	University of Texas at Arlington

B. Definitions

Public Information: Information before, during and after emergencies provided to the campus community may include instructions on how to protect personal health, safety, and property or how to obtain assistance.

IV. SITUATION & ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situation

1. UTA faces a number of hazards that may cause emergencies; see Section IV of the Basic Plan for a summary of those hazards and their possible impact.

2. During emergencies, UTA needs timely, accurate information on the emergency and appropriate instructions regarding protective actions to take to minimize injuries, loss of life, and damage to property.
3. For some slowly developing emergency situations (such as flooding or severe weather), there will be several days for campus administration or their designee and the media to provide detailed information about the hazard and what students, faculty, and staff should do.
4. For other emergencies, there may be no warning about the hazard or actions to take. For this reason, it is important that UTA have knowledge of likely hazards and what protective measures to take to lessen the effect of an emergency from those hazards.

B. Assumptions

1. An effective program combining both education and emergency information can significantly reduce loss of life and property. However, many people are unconcerned about hazards until they are affected and do not participate in or retain pre-emergency education; therefore, during emergencies and disasters special emphasis must be placed on the delivery of emergency information.
2. Local media will cooperate in disseminating warnings during emergencies and may participate in pre-disaster awareness programs and other disaster education activities on campus.
3. Some emergencies will generate substantial media interest and draw both local and national media attention, which may overwhelm the Communications Department on campus.

V. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. General

1. Pursuant to the National Incident Management System operating principles and protocols, public information efforts will generally focus on specific event-related information. This information will generally be of an instructional nature focusing on such things as warning, evacuation, and shelter, see Support Document 2 that describes the basic emergency information needs.
2. A special effort to keep UTA informed of the general progress of events, reporting positive information regarding emergency response will help to reassure UTA that the situation is under control. Rumor control will be a major aspect of the informational program. A measure of the program's effectiveness is through campus feedback.
3. Education efforts directed toward increasing campus awareness about potential hazards and how students, staff, and faculty will prepare is essential. All informational and education efforts rely heavily on the cooperation of every type of media organization on and off

campus.

4. Local or regional radio and television (TV) stations will broadcast Emergency Alert System (EAS) messages when requested by Arlington's local warning point (LWP). To use Emergency Alert System (EAS) EAS effectively, Arlington's officials and broadcasters must coordinate the procedures used to transmit warning messages and instructions from the campus to broadcasters.
5. The focal point of Arlington's warning function is the LWP, which operates around the clock. Dispatch Services operate the city's LWP. The UTA LWP is located and operated in the UTA Police Dispatch Center. UTA LWP will receive communications from Arlington's LWP. To learn more about the concepts of operations, see Annex A Warning.

B. Information Dissemination

1. In the initial stages of an emergency, the LWP may have to take action on time-sensitive hazards. Within the limits of the authority delegated to it, the LWP, located at Arlington's Communication Center, will determine if a warning should be issued, formulate a warning if necessary, and disseminate the warning through available resources. Pre-scripted emergency messages have been prepared for likely hazards and are included in Annex A, Warning, Support Document 5 provides a list of these messages. These pre-scripted messages may be used as written or tailored.

As EAS messages are limited to two minutes, warning messages will need to be supplemented with "special news advisories," prepared by the public information officer (PIO) staff that contains amplifying emergency information. Media outlets typically receive special news advisories by email or social media. Arlington's warning point and Emergency Operations Center (EOC) have copies of the pre-scripted messages, which include warning messages and special news advisories. These messages are maintained on computers for quick modification.

- a. Broadcasters and cable companies must carry national security warnings and messages initiated by the president; they will broadcast alerts and messages initiated by state and local governments. The Federal Communications Commission encourages licensees to broadcast local warning and instruction messages, but the final decision on broadcasting such messages rests with the broadcasters.
 - b. Broadcasters and cable operators expect EAS to be used for life-threatening emergencies.
 - c. When Arlington's incident command system activates for an emergency, Arlington's incident commander (IC) will warn UTA. A designated Arlington PIO at the incident command post (ICP) will provide information on the emergency to the media if Arlington's EOC is not activated. Arlington should notify UTA of such updates. UTA PIO should relay information to the campus community.
2. Arlington's EOC manager may determine the need for additional warning and instructions after the EOC activates.

3. The UTA PIO staff will formulate additional warning messages and university instructions, using the sample messages contained in Annex A as a basis. The LWP will execute such warnings by activating all appropriate warning systems. If there is no IC, the UTA PIO staff will disseminate “special news advisories” and other emergency public information materials directly to the media using its contact list.
4. In case of large-scale emergencies or disasters where there are substantial external responders from other jurisdictions and/or state and federal agencies and the response and recovery effort will continue for an extended period, a Joint Information Center (JIC) may be established. The JIC, an element of the joint information system developed to provide information to the public during an emergency, is a working facility where emergency efforts of all participating jurisdictions, agencies, volunteer organizations, and other responders can be coordinated to ensure consistency and accuracy. In federally declared disasters, a JIC will be set up as part of the joint field office.
5. The following resources may be used to provide emergency information and instructions to UTA:
 - a. Fire panels and outdoor enunciation systems.
 - b. UTA website.
 - c. MavAlert, the UTA branded name for a mass notification system that includes e-mail, text messages, and phone messages.
 - d. EAS broadcasts by radio, TV, and cable companies.
 - e. Special news broadcasts by radio, TV, and cable companies.
 - f. University local newspapers and online media outlets.

C. Providing Emergency Information to Special Populations

The following methods will provide emergency information and appropriate instructions to special populations:

1. Visually impaired: EAS messages and news advisories on radio, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration weather radio, or by door-to-door notification.
2. Hearing impaired: Captioned EAS messages and news advisories on TV and/or print media.

D. Resources

The UTA PIO will maintain a media contact roster resource list that contains the names, telephone, address, facsimile numbers, and e-mail addresses of each of the media resources, see Support Document 1.

E. Phases of Management

1. Prevention

Develop systems to enhance information dissemination during emergencies.

2. Preparedness

- a. Develop and distribute educational materials and conduct campus education programs.
- b. In coordination with the UTA PIO and emergency management, prepare pre-scripted warning and public instruction messages for known hazards, see Annex A, Warning for messages that will be disseminated.
- c. UTA PIO will brief local media on UTA warning systems, and coordinate procedures for transmitting emergency information regarding UTA to the media.
- d. Conduct campus education on warning systems and the actions to take for various types of warnings.
- e. Train UTA PIO staff on types of hazards.
- f. UTA PIO will brief UTA faculty, staff, and emergency responders on working with the media, see Support Document 3, Working with the Media, PIO Checklist
- g. Review this annex.
- h. Identify suitable facilities for a JIC.

3. Response

- a. Develop, obtain authorization, and release public information relating to the emergency.
- b. Conduct media monitoring to determine the need to clarify issues, and distribute updated campus instructions.
- c. Manage rumor control.
- d. Conduct news conferences, and arrange interviews as needed.

4. Recovery

- a. Provide public information relating to recovery process and programs.
- b. Compile record of public information events.
- c. Assess effectiveness of public information, and education program.

VI. ORGANIZATION & ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

A. General

1. The overall responsibility for providing emergency information and instructions to the campus rests with the UTA PIO.
2. The vice president of communications will provide general guidance for public information programs and appoint a UTA PIO when requested by the IC.
3. The UTA PIO will manage and coordinate all emergency public information related activities and direct such staff as assigned or recruited to assist in those activities.

B. Task Assignments

1. Vice president of communications

- a. Appoint a UTA PIO.
- b. Ensure that UTA has implemented and institutionalized processes and procedures to coordinate and integrate public information functions including the development of a campus education program for emergencies.
- c. Ensure activation of a Joint Information Center (JIC) when warranted by the incident.

2. UTA PIO

- a. Advise the IC on all public information matters relating to the incident.
- b. Get IC approval of release of all incident-related information.
- c. Coordinate and integrate public information functions with Arlington's PIO.
- d. Develop accurate and complete information on the incident for internal and external dissemination.
- e. Coordinate the overall emergency public information efforts of UTA.
- f. Serve as the official UTA representative in the JIC.
- g. Conduct university education programs as an ongoing activity.
- h. Develop and disseminate public information materials, and maintain a stock of materials for emergencies. Such materials may include:
 1. Dealing with the nature of hazards and basic protective actions during an emergency.
 2. Hazard specific instructions on "where to go and what to do" in an emergency.
 3. Information on emergency warning dissemination and the meaning of warning signals.
- i. Keep the Executive Policy Group informed of news releases, major web and social media messages.
- j. Monitor media coverage of emergency operations for accuracy of reports and issue corrections as needed.
- k. Take action to control rumors.
- l. Brief IC on basic public information needs, working with the media, and media access during emergency operations, see Support Document 2 Public Information Needs, Support Document 3 Working with the Media, and Support Document 4 Media Assess & Identification, for further information.
- m. Maintain a media contact roster resources list, example in Support Document 1 Media Contact Roster List.
- n. Compile printed, photographic, and video documentation of the emergency/disaster.
- o. Develop public information emergency checklists for known hazards; see Support Document 6 Public Information Checklist for Flooding.
- p. Anticipate and be prepared to handle unscheduled inquiries from the media and the public.
- q. Train a group of volunteers to staff the PIO position and assistant positions at the ICP and in the EOC.
- r. The PIO may address in public information activities, identified concerns raised by the campus community, rumors, and other issues involving students, staff, and faculty on campus.

3. Emergency Management
 - a. Advise the Executive Policy Group on potential damage, severity and disaster impact to UTA.
 - b. Coordinate with the UTA PIO in the development of pre-scripted emergency messages.
 - c. Work with the UTA PIO on campus education activities relating to emergency management.
 - d. Coordinate with Arlington emergency management information, data, and actions both city and campus may encounter regarding all phases of emergency management.
4. UTA departments and agencies
 - a. Refer media inquiries to the PIO.
 - b. Assist the PIO in responding to requests for information from the students, staff, and faculty or the media.
5. Media companies
 - a. Disseminate warning messages and special news advisories provided by UTA to the students, staff, and faculty as rapidly as possible.
 - b. Participate in periodic tests of the EAS and other warning systems.
 - c. Provide coverage of emergency management activities.
 - d. Work with PIO and emergency management on campus regarding educational programs relating to emergencies.
 - e. Check the accuracy of information on emergency operations with the PIO or emergency management.

VII. DIRECTION & CONTROL

A. General

1. The vice president of communications has overall responsibility for the emergency public information program, and providing general guidance for emergency-related campus education, information activities, in conjunction with the Executive Policy Group and IC, they will approve all information released to the news media.
2. The PIO will direct all emergency public information activities, coordinating as necessary with other individuals, departments, and agencies performing other emergency functions.
3. To the extent possible, the PIO will release, upon approval from Executive Policy Group or IC, all information to the campus community and the media during emergency operations. During emergency operations, departments and agencies will refer media inquiries to the PIO.

B. Line of Succession.

The line of succession for the PIO:

1. Associate vice president for University Communications
2. Assistant Director for Media Relations
3. Senior Video Producer

VIII. READINESS LEVELS

A. Normal Conditions - Level 4

See the prevention and preparedness activities in Section V.E., Emergency Management Activities by Phase.

B. Increased Readiness - Level 3

1. Monitor the situation.
2. Check and update media contact roster resource list.
3. Alert the campus community and media of the increased threat of the situation and be prepared to disseminate warnings and campus instructions.

C. High Readiness - Level 2

1. Monitor the situation.
2. Review pre-scripted warning messages and campus instruction messages; draft updated versions or additional messages tailored for the impending threat.
3. Alert personnel for possible emergency operations; identify personnel for increased staffing during primary vulnerability period.
4. Determine requirements for additional pre-emergency public information.
5. Consider placing campus personnel on shifts to provide for increased situation monitoring and to conduct additional campus planning.

D. Maximum Readiness - Level 1

1. Monitor the situation.
2. Update warning messages as necessary.
3. Update public information materials based on current threat and disseminate.
4. Provide information to the media on local readiness activities.
5. Place selected off-duty personnel on standby to increase staffing if necessary.
6. Staff public information positions in the EOC or at the ICP.

IX. ADMINISTRATION & SUPPORT

A. Media Contact Roster Resources

The UTA PIO will maintain a contact media roster list for the media organizations that are involved in local emergency management programs, see Support Document 1.

B. Records

1. The UTA PIO will maintain a file of all news advisories and news releases issued during emergency operations.
2. The UTA PIO will also compile and maintain electronic copies of newspaper articles, digital video files of broadcast stories about emergency operations, and other media materials distributed for use in post-incident analysis and future training activities.

C. Educational Programs

1. The UTA PIO and emergency management will conduct disaster educational programs to increase student, faculty, and staff preparedness. Educational programs may include presentations, displays at campus gatherings, campus meetings, distribution of educational materials, and other campus activities. The local media may be willing to assist with such activities and local businesses may be willing to sponsor such events and assist with costs. Distribution of educational brochures may occur during regularly scheduled campus events.
2. UTA emergency management is expected to obtain and maintain materials for disaster-related public education. A wide variety of educational materials dealing with emergency management and disaster preparedness are available. Materials include pamphlets, posters, video, CD-ROMs, and complete training curricula for students, faculty, and staff. Many publications are available in ready-to-distribute form or as fact sheets and easily incorporated into campus-developed materials. Available materials include emergency preparedness information of general interest and specialized preparedness publications for students, faculty, staff, the elderly, and people with various disabilities.
3. The principal providers of disaster-related educational materials are the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the American Red Cross, and the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM); many agencies and volunteer organizations publish specialized disaster-related educational materials. FEMA publishes a catalog of their publications and both FEMA and the American Red Cross include educational materials on their websites; see Section XI, references, for their addresses. TDEM also distributes hazard-specific awareness materials periodically throughout the year to local emergency management as part of state awareness campaigns.

D. Training

Members of the communication department for whom public information is not their primary daily work will attend public information training; such training will focus on emergency public information activities. Both TDEM and FEMA offer PIO training free of charge.

X. DEVELOPMENT & MAINTENANCE

A. Development

The UTA PIO in conjunction with Office of Emergency Management is responsible for developing and maintaining this annex.

B. Maintenance

This document is reviewed will be every two years and the update in accordance with the schedule outline found in Section X of the Basic Plan.

C. Operating Procedures

The UTA PIO is responsible for developing and maintaining guidelines covering recurring public information tasks.

XI. REFERENCES

- A. FEMA, *FEMA Publications Catalog*
- B. FEMA, *Guide to All-Hazard Emergency Operations Planning* (State and Local Guide 101)
- C. FEMA web site: www.fema.gov
- D. American Red Cross web site: www.redcross.org
- E. Department of Homeland Security, *National Incident Management System*