

Program for Interagency Coordination

March 26, 2024



King County

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Executive Summary

As part of fulfilling its King County Code (KCC) responsibilities, KCOEM is responsible to ensure interagency coordination when planning for and responding to emergencies and disasters.¹ Emergency operations has many layers of complexity and, over time, emergency managers have come to rely on multiple methods and resources to ensure all relevant parties are operating with the same facts and assumptions. KCOEM's coordination efforts are addressed through multiple nested emergency plans and utilize different technological platforms. Collectively, these resources make up the elements of the interagency coordination program. Thus, rather than a standalone program; rather, interagency coordination is achieved through the content of emergency management plans and programs, as well as established emergency management coordinating groups and relationships.

As required by Ordinance 19592, this report on the County's interagency coordination provides a description of the elements of coordination work, the ways in which County departments and agencies coordinate, and the Office of Emergency Management's role in coordinating the departments and agencies.²

Primary coordination functions are embedded across three principal areas, beginning with the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP).³ This plan details the overarching strategy KCOEM applies as an organization concerning emergency management. The Continuity of Operations (COOP) Program concerns departmental plans for the restoration of essential functions should an emergency occur that disrupts normal operations to the extent response actions are necessary (e.g., seeking an alternate operating space). The Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP) outlines a multiyear schedule of trainings and exercises that are needed to ensure readiness in the event of an emergency.⁴

KCOEM hosts multiple forums intended to provide for coordination during all phases of an emergency. The Emergency Management Coordinating Committee (EMCC), as outlined in King County Code (KCC) 2A.310.070, is the coordinating body for emergency management issues concerning King County government.⁵ Like EMCC, the Emergency Support Function Lead Agency Group (ESFLAG) is primarily comprised of partners from internal County entities, however, these are representatives that have been identified from lead organizations for the various support functions necessary to an emergency response. Neither group above would be active during an emergency, but rather they serve to coordinate on planning for disasters and to provide advice to KCOEM on how coordination efforts best fit together.

The Emergency Operation Center (EOC) is the physical location where information is gathered and shared, resources needs are collected and addressed, and policy decisions on actions and allocations are made during an emergency. KCOEM maintains a 24/7 Duty Officer program. The Duty Officer is typically the first point of contact when an incident occurs. Their job is the analyze the situation and decide when/if the matter needs to be elevated to higher leadership. They are the first point of contact in any potential EOC activation.

¹ [KCC 2.56](#)

² [Ordinance 19592](#)

³ [Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan](#)

⁴ [Integrated Preparedness Plan](#)

⁵ [KCC 2A.310.070](#)

Located in the EOC is the Joint Information Center (JIC), which is tasked with coordinating messaging for both internal and external partners. KCOEM also facilitates a Regional Coordination Call (RCC) which occurs on a weekly basis and provides KCOEM the opportunity to share and gather information with partners across the county. The RCC occurs outside of any emergency activation, but the frequency can be increased to daily or greater should an incident occur. Similarly, during an activation, particularly for incidents that involve multiple County departments or agencies, a Business Continuity Call (BCC) is hosted with the County cabinet and other pertinent senior leadership. The BCC is intended to apprise the relevant parties of potential impacts to County operations and to make decisions on agreed upon responses.

Situational awareness is a key output of the information and intelligence sharing activities that KCOEM undertakes. To facilitate this, KCOEM utilizes multiple resources, both software and hardware based. WebEOC is a cloud-based solution for incident management in an emergency. This resource allows KCOEM to collaborate and share situational awareness with partners anywhere they have internet service. CodeRED is the software used to distribute messaging across the county. It can be used to rapidly distribute information based on different variables. CodeRED is the backbone of both KCIInform (for internal King County staff) as well as ALERT King County (for the general public). The Puget Sound Emergency Radio Network (PSERN) is the system used for 800 MHz radio communications across King County. This robust and resilient system allows for interagency communication and acts as a redundancy for typical communication modes.

The plans KCOEM prepares outline the strategies for collaboration. The workgroups and committees KCOEM hosts serve as forums for collaboration. The facilities and systems KCOEM maintains are resources that can be utilized to communicate with internal and external partners to collect and disseminate information. Each element is a component of the overall interagency collaboration program.

Background

Department Overview: The Department of Executive Services (DES) provides internal services to King County government agencies and public services directly to King County residents. The divisions and offices that make up DES include the Business Resource Center, Finance and Business Operations Division, Office of Emergency Management, Facilities Management Division, Fleet Services Division, Inquest Program, King County International Airport-Boeing Field, Office of Risk Management Services, and the Records and Licensing Services Division.

The King County Office of Emergency Management (KCOEM), pursuant to KCC 2.56,⁶ is responsible for preparing and planning for disasters and emergencies, as well as providing effective direction, control, and coordination of County government emergency services functional units before, during, and after emergencies and disasters. KCOEM liaises with other governments and the private sector. It serves as the coordinating entity for cities, County governmental departments, and other agencies before, during, and after emergencies and disasters. This work is done in compliance with a state-approved comprehensive emergency management plan.⁷

⁶ [KCC 2.56.030](#)

⁷ [KCC 2.56.040](#), [RCW 38.52.070](#)

KCOEM implements strategies and conducts activities to enhance the capability and capacity of the King County region to prepare for, and then operate in, all types of emergency and disaster situations across five mission areas: prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery. Preparedness establishes the risk environment; establishes frameworks for roles, responsibilities, tasks; provides for integration of various capabilities; and uses training and exercises to validate and revise those capabilities. These capabilities can then be executed, or operationalized, prior to, during, and after emergencies and disasters. Capabilities, in the context of emergency management and throughout this report, are distinct, yet interdependent elements that provide the means to accomplish missions, functions, or objectives through the execution of related tasks.

In July 2022, King County earned its second consecutive accreditation through the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP). EMAP accreditation demonstrates that King County has proven its capabilities in disaster preparedness and response systems. Overall, the EMAP process ensures that programs evaluate plans, policies, and procedures to gauge compliance with standards certified by the American National Standard Institute (ANSI). The KCOEM-led full accreditation means that the County's emergency management enterprise demonstrated compliance with 64 standards considered by the industry to be performance criteria for emergency management programs.

As of July 2022, there were only 91 accredited programs worldwide. King County was one of only 23 accredited counties in the US, and one of four programs in Washington State. EMAP accreditation is valid for five years and the program must maintain compliance with the Emergency Management Standard through submissions of annual reports. Programs are completely reassessed every five years to maintain accreditation status.

Key Context: The following elements describe key components of the County's emergency management planning, policies, and functions. These elements are also referenced in subsequent sections of this report. Interagency coordination is achieved through these elements as content of emergency management plans and programs, as well as established emergency management coordinating groups and relationships. Ultimately, interagency coordination allows for unity of effort to prepare and plan for emergencies, and then have that unity of effort in executing emergency management capabilities during operations to deal with those emergencies.

[The Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan](#) - The King County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) is a strategic plan that guides elected and appointed County officials, and King County government department directors, managers and staff, and County partners (39 cities, 120+ special purpose districts, nonprofit organizations, etc.) in preparing and planning for, and carrying out emergency functions pursuant to RCW 38.52.070⁸ and KCC 2.56.040. The CEMP also references and incorporates other plans and programs, including the Continuity of Operations (COOP) Program and technology to support emergency management coordination, both described below.

The CEMP includes four nested operational support plans:

- The Prevention/Protection Plan, which is designed to coordinate actions and activities that support preventing or stopping terrorism and protecting people and assets from the greatest threats and hazards;

⁸ [RCW 38.52.070](#)

- The Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, which is designed to coordinate actions and activities that reduce the impacts of threats and hazards and/or reduce vulnerabilities to threats and hazards;
- The Response Plan, which is designed to coordinate actions and activities for saving and sustaining lives, stabilizing emergency incidents, and protecting property and the environment, and
- The Recovery Plan, which is designed to coordinate actions and activities for timely restoration, strengthening, and revitalization of infrastructure, housing, the economy, and key health and social attributes of the community.

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Each of the four nested plans includes the following strategies:

- Establish “one voice” throughout the region, helping to ensure communication with partners is clear and consistent, and using multiple methods to reach the whole community for the respective mission area.⁹
- Determine regional roles and responsibilities, and the mechanism for collaborative decision making and coordination for the respective mission area.
- Develop and promote the region’s shared vision, through recommendations on policies, processes, structures, organizations, resources, trainings, and exercises for the respective mission area.

In addition, the CEMP addresses the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA’s) 32 [core capabilities](#). It meets the requirements of Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 118-30¹⁰ and the FEMA planning guidance for Comprehensive Emergency Management Plans¹¹ and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).¹² It also satisfies the Washington State Emergency Management Division’s evaluation criteria. KCOEM maintains the CEMP and nested frameworks by coordinating planning efforts among County departments, cities, special purpose districts, and select private and nonprofit sector partners.

The strategic, operational, and tactical components that make up the CEMP identify the who, what, when, where, why, and how the County (both King County Government and partners in the geographic area) carry out emergency management responsibilities.

Continuity of Operations Program - Continuity of Operations (COOP) plans are frameworks for the restoration of County agency essential functions in the event of an emergency that impacts operations. These COOP plans also enable County agencies to continue critical services during and after any potential disruption to normal operations, not just during emergencies or major disasters.

Through their respective COOP plans, County agencies identify essential functions, prioritize continuance/restoration, and define the resources (e.g., facilities, critical systems, vital records, and personnel) needed for continuity or restoring essential functions. They provide or reference procedures for organizational and personnel readiness, communicating and making notifications, and identifying

⁹ [Mission Areas and Core Capabilities | FEMA.gov](#). Mission areas include prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery.

¹⁰ [WAC 118-30](#)

¹¹ [Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101](#)

¹² [National Incident Management System](#)

lines of succession, delegations of authority, and operations at alternate facilities. Interruptions to normal operations may be the result of the inability to access a facility, system or equipment failures, or a reduction in workforce. The KCOEM COOP program captures good practices that help to ensure the safety and well-being of employees and the community.

Technological Elements of King County’s Emergency Management Work – KCOEM utilizes technology to support its work. The three key technology elements are:

- CodeRED, which is a robust alerting software used by County agencies and city jurisdictions to provide alert and notification to governments, key partners, and the public; it is the backbone of both KCInform and ALERT King County.
- WebEOC, which is an incident management software that allows emergency management partners to coordinate operational activities; collect, analyze, and report incident data; and share situational awareness.
- 800 MHz radio system, which is operated by the Puget Sound Emergency Radio Network (PSERN) to provide primary first responder radio coverage throughout the county and serves as a redundant communications platform should other means of communications go down.

Report Methodology: This report was compiled by KCOEM staff. Data sources used to develop information in the report include plans and technological resources described above.

Report Requirements

KCOEM conducts overall interagency coordination functions through and across multiple plans, groups, and locations as well as software and hardware-based platforms. Collectively, these components represent the overarching interagency coordination activities.

This section is structured to follow the requirements of Ordinance 19592.

A. Elements of the Interagency Coordination Program

Rather than a standalone program, interagency coordination is achieved through the content of emergency management plans and programs, as well as established emergency management coordinating groups and relationships. The CEMP establishes the emergency management enterprise doctrine for King County and the region, with the central principle of coordination of effort inherent throughout the document. The CEMP references and incorporates the components of interagency coordination, including other plans, technology, groups, and structures; each of these is described below.

Interagency coordination provides for unity of effort to prepare and plan for emergencies, and then have that unity of effort in executing emergency management capabilities during operations to deal with those emergencies. Interagency coordination involves all King County Government departments and agencies, with some having primary roles and responsibilities in the emergency management enterprise, such as the Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS), Public Health – Seattle & King County (PHSKC), and the King County Sheriff’s Office (KCSO), among others. Interagency coordination takes place prior to, during, and after emergencies, and includes risk assessments, planning, training, exercises, and operations; the key areas of interest for interagency coordination are

information sharing, resource management, and emergency operations. Interagency coordination is achieved through relationship-building efforts, planning processes and the resulting plans and other documents, and technological resources to facilitate these efforts.

Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

The EOC supports incident management activities through regional coordination of information and resources, from and for both County agencies and other partners. The personnel in the EOC serve some or all the following roles and responsibilities, depending on the incident or event:

- Collecting, analyzing, and sharing information.
- Supporting resource needs and requests, including allocation and tracking.
- Coordinating plans and determining current and future needs.
- Providing coordination and policy direction.

During emergency operations in any of the five mission areas, which are prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery, County departments and other partners provide emergency management capabilities to meet the needs of the operation. KCOEM, through the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), coordinates and facilitates operations activities, especially when they involve more than one County agency or more than one jurisdiction. The EOC does not direct tactical or “on the scene” activities. In many cases, the County departments and partners, such as DCHS, PHSKC, and KCSO, among others, also contribute personnel resources to the EOC to support its role of communication, collaboration, and coordination. These personnel generally help staff the Operations Coordination Section within the EOC management structure.

Joint Information Center/Joint Information System

As part of EOC activation operations, the Joint Information Center (JIC) coordinates incident-specific messaging with King County partners using the Joint Information System (JIS). The JIC is a physical location within the EOC specifically set up to manage coordinated messaging. The JIS is used to ensure standard, consistent, and comprehensive monitoring and analysis of news media, social media, incident information, and other information related to an emergency. Generally, the JIC is staffed by public information officers (PIO) from OEM and other County agencies. The JIS and JIC help to ensure that messaging about the emergency is clear, concise, and consistent from the various involved County and partner organizations.

Each fall, OEM holds a familiarization training or exercise with partners before the winter weather season to support winter preparedness activities. To enhance the ongoing partnership between King County and other jurisdictional communication partners, KCOEM hosts bimonthly public information officers (PIO)/JIC skills trainings for any interested PIO. The KCOEM PIO also communicates biweekly with a partner list of nearly 600 PIOs on training opportunities, job openings, and other pertinent information.

Duty Officer Program

KCOEM Duty Officers monitor regional events and situations, respond to requests for assistance, and makes recommendations on escalating levels of activation to include additional resources as incidents increase in size, scope, or complexity. They are available 24/7 as the primary entry point for King County Government and partner agencies into the emergency management system. Duty Officers collect, analyze, and distribute information related to the critical information requirements (CIR) list categories

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of situations. Sources of information include the National Weather Service, first responder organizations, state and federal agencies, jurisdiction partners, and King County departments, among others.

This process helps KCOEM, and partners inform operational decisions, such as changing the level of preparedness for an incident, activating the EOC, and dispatching resources to support an incident response operation.

Continuity of Operations (COOP) Program

In 2023, KCOEM launched an enterprise-wide Continuity of Operations (COOP) Program in response to findings identified in the 2022 King County Auditor’s report on emergency preparedness and planning gaps.¹³ Subsequent to this report, the Executive proposed and the Council approved changes in the KCC 2.56.060¹⁴ regarding continuity of operations planning.

KCOEM coordinates with identified COOP points of contact within County departments and agencies regarding the status of their respective plans. Under the COOP Program departments and agencies receive the planning, training, and exercise support necessary to develop and maintain individual COOP plans. This is accomplished through monthly workshops held in conjunction with the Emergency Management Coordinating Committee (EMCC) regular meetings, as well as other COOP-specific workshops and seminars, and individual support from KCOEM staff. Some of the trainings provided to date include:

- Introduction to Continuity of Operations
- Continuity Communications Workshop
- Business Process Analysis and Business Impact Analysis Workshop

In 2023, all existing Continuity of Operations Plans from each executive department were reviewed by OEM staff against industry standards and best practices. OEM established standards for County continuity plans using information gathered from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP), and business continuity practices. This review helped to further the development of the County Continuity of Operations Program.

The Continuity of Operations Program:

- Establishes a KCOEM point of contact for COOP Planning.
- Includes an evaluation framework based on industry standards to evaluate individual plans.
- Establishes a timeline for regular plan review.
- Creates a plan approval process with steps for revision as needed.

Integrated Preparedness Plan

The Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP) is a multi-year schedule of integrated trainings and exercises in support of the County’s overall preparedness for emergencies and disasters. It is a best practice recommended by the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP)¹⁵ and is provided to partners to detail KCOEM’s blueprint for trainings and exercises over a multi-year period. Plan development occurs in coordination with partners from multiple jurisdictions throughout King County as

¹³ [Emergency Preparedness Limited by Planning Gaps](#)

¹⁴ [KCC 2.56.060](#)

¹⁵ [Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program](#)

well as information surveyed from partners internal to King County Government. During plan development, KCOEM is able to garner support from state and federal emergency management partners to bring critical training and exercise offerings to the region to match gaps identified from assessments and reporting results. To ensure the program remains both contemporary as well as responsive to evolving needs, a continuous improvement program is also maintained by KCOEM.

By continuously monitoring improvement actions, KCOEM can examine capabilities to ensure they are sufficient, accurate, and effective to handle the threats, hazards, and risks facing the region.

Emergency management program reporting entails:

- Compiling and recording areas for improvement from exercises and real-world incidents;
- Determining actions and linking capabilities needed to address identified areas for improvement and associated corrective actions;
- Prioritizing, assigning, tracking, reporting, and updating corrective action progress, and
- Incorporating changes, completed corrective actions, identified potential best practices, and lessons learned into future iterations of the preparedness cycle¹⁶ and Integrated Preparedness Plan.

B. Ways County Departments and Agencies Coordinate

As described above, the effectiveness of the County's preparedness and operations programs rely on input from the many partners. KCOEM leverages existing and has established new forums, groups, and activities to ensure agency coordination, based on the principles of the CEMP, COOP Program, and IPP, outlined below.

Emergency Management Coordinating Committee (EMCC)

The King County Emergency Management Coordinating Committee (EMCC) is the coordinating body for emergency management issues concerning King County government per KCC 2A.310.070. The committee acts in an advisory capacity to KCOEM to promote, advise, assist, and review emergency management issues and to enhance preparedness for King County employees and the departments and other County entities that they serve.

The committee is composed of representatives from each County department and agency, as determined appropriate by the head of each department or agency. The committee's functions are as follows.

- Address issues and concerns relating to emergency preparedness, planning and response brought forward by members on behalf of the department or agency they represent.
- Assists in the review, development, and maintenance of the CEMP.
- Assists in the review, development and maintenance of department and agency continuity of operations plans.
- Participates in regional strategic planning to identify and document objectives that will strengthen resilience.
- Provides input to FEMA's annual Core Capabilities assessment and the analysis and documentation of strategic planning accomplishments and gaps.

¹⁶ [Preparedness cycle](#) and [National Preparedness System](#)

- Assists in the review, development and maintenance of any other plans, programs, rules, and policies concerning emergency management, as requested by KCOEM and consistent with state law.
- Provides County Departments a forum to discuss Continuity of Operations (COOP) planning to identify interdependencies and opportunities for cross-department support and better understand the County mission and functions. Departments receive technical assistance, planning templates, and exercise support.
- Provides a platform for County agencies to facilitate emergency management-related planning efforts such as debris management, mass casualty/mass fatality planning, and human resources.

Business Continuity Calls

During emergencies, especially when the EOC is activated and particularly for incidents that involve multiple County departments or agencies, a business continuity call (BCC) is hosted with the County cabinet and other pertinent senior leadership. The BCC is intended to apprise key decision makers of potential impacts to County operations and to determine agreed upon responses. The purpose of a BCC is to:

- Identify potential impacts on County Services.
- Identify actions that should be elevated beyond operational and departmental levels.
- Coordinate messaging to employees and the public.

During an emergency activation, two types of BCC calls normally happen in the following order:

1. A “Planning” BCC involves select individuals and agencies responsible for operational decision-making.
2. A “Countywide” BCC includes all departments and separately elected officials to convey the decisions made during the Planning BCC

King County Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

When activated, the King County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) coordinates and facilitates operations activities laterally across County departments and agencies, with cities and special purpose districts, with neighboring jurisdictions and private sector partners, and up to the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC), which is managed by the Washington Emergency Management Division (EMD).

Prior to a formal EOC activation, the KCOEM Duty Officer is the primary entry point for King County Government and partner agencies into the emergency management system, and performs many of the same duties as the EOC once activated. Duty officers provide regional situational awareness to King County Government and partner organizations and answer calls for support and resources in response to incidents and emergencies.

When activated, the King County EOC facilitates the responsibilities of the Duty Officer on a greater scale. The Duty Officer or EOC is responsible for:

- Emergency response (24/7 support) and coordination
- Establishing a common operating picture
- Providing situational awareness
- Providing resource support
- Issuing alerts and notifications

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Designated individuals from County departments have roles and responsibilities in the EOC, such as representing their organization for response operations, coordinating information gathering and dissemination, and obtaining resource needs and orders. The EOC organization is structured to allow for effective and efficient workflow, using collaboratively developed objectives that further the goals of saving and sustaining lives, stabilizing the incident, and protecting property and the environment.

Situational Awareness: Common Operating Picture

A common operating picture (COP) is a continuously updated overview of an incident compiled from data shared between integrated communication, information management, and intelligence and information sharing systems. The goal of a COP is real-time situational awareness across all levels of incident management, with all partners and across jurisdictions. A COP offers a standard overview of an incident, thereby providing incident information that enables KCOEM and supporting agencies and organizations to make effective, consistent, and timely decisions. Compiling data from multiple sources and disseminating the collaborative information COP ensures that all responding entities have the same understanding and awareness of incident status and information when conducting operations.

WebEOC

WebEOC is a web-based tool for used by Emergency Management to maintain a common operating picture during emergencies and disasters. WebEOC is an incident management software that allows emergency management partners to coordinate operational activities; collect, analyze, and report incident data; and share situational awareness with partners.

Alert and Notification

KCOEM is responsible for communicating emergency information out to residents, businesses, and government employees. A robust alerting software, CodeRED, is used by County agencies and city jurisdictions to provide alert and notification to governments, key partners, and the public. CodeRED is the platform on which KCInform and ALERT King County are based.

KCInform and ALERT King County

ALERT King County is the public-facing regional notification system serving residents, businesses, and visitors. As of June 2022, enhancements were made to the underlying system that controls ALERT King County, and KCOEM was able to add eight additional languages for people to register and receive alerts: Arabic, Chinese, French, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish.

KCInform is King County Government's branded system for alerting employees to incidents and emergencies. County employees have their work email address and work phone (if known) automatically enrolled in KCInform and are encouraged to enhance their accounts with personal contact information.

Situational Awareness: Weekly Coordination Calls

KCOEM facilitates weekly coordination calls with regional partners to include County agencies, city and state jurisdiction representatives, non-profits, the private sector, and other special purpose districts. The coordination calls provide essential situational awareness and an opportunity to raise other issues of immediate concern. The calls are a forum for regional partners to hear from subject matter experts, and exchange information among peers. The calls average 40-50 participants. The agenda is adapted weekly

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to include relevant and emerging topics, including briefings from the National Weather Service, the Washington State Fusion Center, the King County Flood Warning Center, the King County Regional Homelessness Authority, and others.

Additional calls may be added outside of the weekly calls as situations require additional support or coordination. KCOEM initiates coordination calls between County agencies during extreme weather events, such as heat, flooding, cold, and other emergency situations. Following established processes, the Duty Officer convenes lead agency points of contact for a coordination call to discuss the situation, expected actions, issues/concerns, and resource needs.

Other Coordination Calls (as needed)

- PIO Coordination Calls
- Jurisdictional Partner Calls (situational)
- County Agencies (situational)
- State and Regional Emergency Management Calls
- Puget Sound Emergency Management / Public Health Calls

Situational Awareness: Snapshot and Situation Reports

During emergencies, KCOEM plays a critical role in informing partner agencies of the situation and impacts to support the implementation of protective actions. Situational awareness information is shared through various methods, including incident snapshots¹⁷ and incident Situation Reports.¹⁸ These provide decision-makers with relevant information regarding the nature and extent of the situation, any cascading effects, and the status of operations. In 2021, as part of an improvement process, KCOEM updated the snapshot template to include status color-coding of Community Lifelines¹⁹.

Situational Awareness: Radio Communications

Day-to-day communication tools such as cell phones, email, and text messaging have the potential to be disrupted during emergencies and disasters, both man-made and natural. KCOEM owns and manages multiple radio communication devices as part of a redundant system should other forms of communication go down. Twice monthly, KCOEM Duty Officers test the 800 MHz radio system with County, State, and Tribal agencies, cities/towns, and special purpose districts. In addition, KCOEM supports the Puget Sound Emergency Radio Network (PSERN) in providing radio support to cities, towns, and special purpose districts in King County.

Emergency Support Function Lead Agency Group (ESFLAG)

The Emergency Support Function Lead Agency Group (ESFLAG) is made up of representatives from the lead agencies of the County's Emergency Support Functions²⁰ (ESF), which are part of the CEMP mission

¹⁷ A snapshot is more abbreviated than a situation report and intended to provide immediate updates, particularly when conditions have changed.

¹⁸ An incident situation report captures the entire scope of the status of an emergency. It is sent out at a set schedule and is a product of the planning process within an incident response.

¹⁹ [Community Lifelines](#)

²⁰ The 15 Emergency Support Functions include 1) transportation, 2) communications, 3) public works and engineering, 4) firefighting, 5) information and planning, 6) mass care, emergency assistance, temporary housing,

area plans. ESFs provide the structure that groups resources and capabilities into functional areas most frequently needed in a response to best coordinating interagency support during incidents and events. County departments identify representatives who would serve in the EOC during emergencies and disasters. The ESFLAG better prepares the EOC team and critical partners for response operations in the EOC and to address lessons learned from exercises and actual activations.

Each ESF has a County department or agency identified as its coordinator. During response operations, the coordinating agency forms and activates a team responsible for working with the appropriate officials to identify unmet resource needs. The team also coordinates the flow of resources and assistance provided by the federal government to meet these needs.

PIO Coordination Group

For identified hazards such as severe heat, wildfire smoke, and winter weather, Public Information Officer Coordination Standard Operating Guidelines has been developed. With predetermined triggers, the KCOEM PIO initiates a call to the identified partner PIOs, both internal to King County and some external. These include PIOs and communication professionals from DES, Department of Local Services (DLS), Department of Natural Resources and Parks, DLS Road Services Division, Department of the Executive, PHSKC, and KCSO. The goal of the call is to begin discussions on coordinated preparedness messaging to the public and to plan for possible response and recovery messaging if needed. If the EOC is activated, this is the precursor action to the opening of the JIC and use of the JIS.

C. Role of the Office of Emergency Management in Coordination

Overall, coordination involves gathering and filtering pertinent information, sharing this information with the identified necessary parties, and sharing the decisions made based on this information and a subsequent course of action. As authorized by the KCC and through the Executive, KCOEM is charged with coordinating emergency management efforts across the enterprise of King County Government.

KCOEM functions as a clearinghouse for information before, during, and after emergencies. This responsibility entails capturing critical information relevant to an incident and routing it to appropriate parties. Emergency managers must constantly follow the mantra of “I know something...who else needs to know what I know and have I shared what I know with them?” To serve in this capacity KCOEM must first establish both effective tools to create the lines of communication as well as cultivate the proper relationships with the identified organizations and sources of information. The effective tools to facilitate this process are outlined above. The necessary relationships are fostered through several different forums (e.g., such as the EMCC and ESFLAG). The processing of this information requires the expertise needed to quickly route the given knowledge and the ability to filter out what information is not relevant in an incident.

This function then builds into the KCOEM responsibility of hosting various forums and meetings to ensure the necessary parties both know pertinent information and acts as a space where decisions can be made and shared based on the most up to date facts available. The parties involved are expected to bring information back to their organization and provide consistent feedback and updates. KCOEM uses

and human services, 7) logistics, 8) public health and medical services, 9) search and rescue 10) hazardous material, 11) agriculture and natural resources, 12) energy, 13) public safety, 14) disaster recovery, and 15) external affairs.

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technology to facilitate coordination, including receiving, processing, and distributing information to the people and organizations who need to know.