ANNEX B

COMMUNICATIONS

February 2021

BRAZOS COUNTY INTERJURISDICTIONAL
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

APPROVAL & IMPLEMENTATION

Annex B

Communications

(signature)
BVWACS Radio System Manager

2-23-2021
Date

(signature) Michele Bailey-Meade
Brazos County EM Coordinator

2-4-2021
Date

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City of Bryan Police Chief

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City of College Station EM Coordinator

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(signature) Michele Bailey-Meade
City of Kurten EM Coordinator

2-4-2021
Date

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City of Wixon Valley Mayor

2/12/2021
Date

(signature)
Texas A&M University EM Coordinator

2/10/2021
Date

RECORD OF CHANGES

Annex B

Communications

Change #	Date of Change	Entered By	Date Entered

ANNEX B

COMMUNICATIONS

I.   AUTHORITY

See Basic Plan, Section I.

II.   PURPOSE

This annex provides information about our communications equipment and capabilities available during emergency operations. Our entire communications system is discussed and procedures for its use are outlined.

III.   EXPLANATION OF TERMS

A. Acronyms

ARES	Amateur Radio Emergency Service
BVWACS	Brazos Valley Wide Area Communications System
CATV	Cable TV
CEOC	Community Emergency Operations Center
COG	Council of Government
DDC	Disaster District Committee
EAS	Emergency Alert System
EMC	Emergency Management Coordinator
EC	Emergency Coordinator
EMP	Electromagnetic Pulse
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
IC	Incident Commander
JOC	Joint Operations Center
JIC	Joint Information Center
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NRF	National Response Framework
PD	Police Department
SOC	State Operations Center
SOG	Standard Operating Guidelines
RACES	Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service
TLETS	Texas Law Enforcement Telecommunications System
TRCIP	Texas Radio Communications Interoperability Plan

B. Definitions

Local Computer Network	Local, Metropolitan, or Wide-Area Networks.
State Warning Point	Warning Point for the State operated by the SOC.

IV. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situation

1. As noted in the general situation statement in the basic plan, we are at risk from a number of hazards that could threaten public health and safety as well as personal and government property. A reliable and interoperable communications system is essential to obtain the most complete information on emergency situations and to direct and control our resources responding to those situations.

2. The Communications Center(s) are located at the Brazos County 9-1-1 Communications District, College Station PD, and Texas A&M University PD and EMS. They are staffed on a 24-hour basis by Communications personnel. Equipment is available to provide communications necessary for emergency operations.

3. Brazos County 9-1-1 District has a Backup Center located in Downtown Bryan available on a hot-standby basis with 9-1-1 and non-emergency phone capabilities, in addition to regional radio system radios and consoles. This backup center is available to be used, when needed, by all Brazos County dispatch entities to conduct their normal emergency operations in the event that their primary facility may become unavailable, or if additional capacity is needed due to an abnormal event.

B. Assumptions

1. Adequate communications are available for effective and efficient warning, response and recovery operations.

2. Any number of natural or manmade hazards may neutralize or severely reduce the effectiveness of communications currently in place for emergency operations.

3. Additional communications equipment required for emergency operations will be made available from citizens, businesses, volunteer organizations, and/or other governmental agencies.

V. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. General

1. A common operating picture within our jurisdiction and across other jurisdictions provides the framework of our communications capabilities. This framework is made possible by interoperable systems. Extensive communications networks and facilities are in existence throughout Brazos County to provide coordinated capabilities for the most effective and efficient response and recovery activities. A table of the communications network is in Appendix 1.

2. Local Dispatch/Communications Center(s) communications network consisting of telephone, computer, teletype, and radio facilities will serve to perform the initial and basic communications effort for emergency operations. Telephones, when available, will serve as the primary means of communication with other communication systems as back up.

3. During emergency operations, all departments will maintain their existing equipment and procedures for communicating with their field operations units. They will keep the IC informed of their operations and status at all times.

4. To meet the increased communications needs created by an emergency, various state and regional agencies, amateur radio operators, and business/industry/volunteer group radio systems might be asked to supplement communications capabilities. These resource capabilities will be requested through contracts, local and regional mutual-aid agreements and/or the Disaster District, as required.

B. Activities by Phases of Emergency Management

1. Prevention

   a. Maintain a current technology-based, reliable, interoperable, and sustainable communications system.

   b. Ensure warning communications systems meet jurisdictional needs.

   c. Ensure intelligence and other vital information networks are operational.

   d. Ensure integrated communications procedures are in place to meet the needs and requirements of the jurisdictions covered by this plan.

2. Preparedness

   a. Review and update this communications annex.

   b. Develop communications procedures that are documented and implemented through communications operating instructions (wherever necessary, include connectivity with private-sector and nongovernmental organizations).

   c. Thoroughly and continually review the system for improvement including the implementation and institutionalized use of information management technologies.

   d. Ensure communications requirements for Emergency Operations Center and potential Joint Information Center (JIC) are regularly reviewed.

   e. Review After Action Reports of actual occurrences and exercises and other sources of information for lessons learned.

f. Ensure the integration of mitigation plans and actions into all phases of emergency management as applicable.

g. Acquire, test, and maintain communications equipment.

h. Ensure replacement parts for communications systems are available and make arrangement for rapid re-supply in the event of an emergency.

i. Train personnel on appropriate equipment and communication procedures as necessary.

j. Conduct periodic communications drills and make communications a major element during all exercises.

k. Review assignment of all personnel.

l. Review emergency notification list of key officials and department heads.

m. Provide telephone companies with a list of circuit restoration priorities for essential governmental systems.

3. Response

a. Select communications personnel required for emergency operations according to the incident.

b. Incident communications will follow ICS standards and will be managed by the IC using a common communications plan and an incident-based communications center.

c. All incident management entities will make use of common language during emergency communications. This will reduce confusion when multiple agencies or entities are involved in an incident.

d. Ensure emergency equipment repair or replacement on a 24-hour basis.

e. Initiate warning procedures as outlined in Annex A - Warning, if required.

4. Recovery

All activities in the emergency phase will continue until such time as emergency communications are no longer required.

VI.	ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

A. General

1. Emergency communications systems are organized and coordinated within the CEOC (when activated). Components of these systems include groups from the public and private sector as outlined in Section VII.C of this annex.

2. The affected dispatch center will ensure that warning information is disseminated to the appropriate Bryan, College Station, Brazos County, Kurten, Wixon Valley and TAMU personnel. The responsibility for ensuring that the communication systems are operational and incorporate all available resources rests with each jurisdiction's Communication Coordinator. EMC(s) may serve as Communications Coordinator(s) for some jurisdictions.

B. Task Assignments

1. The BVWACS Radio System Manager:

   a. Be responsible for all activities enumerated in this annex in sections V.B.1.A and V.B.2.E, Activities by Phases of Emergency Management.

   b. Advise the EMC(s) as necessary regarding the BVWACS Radio System.

2. Communications Coordinator(s)/EMC(s) will:

   a. Coordinate common communications procedures.

   b. Develop and maintain a communications resource inventory (See Annex M, Resource Management).

   c. Ensure a communications capability exists between the Communications Center(s) and the Community Emergency Operations Center to include coordination with the telephone company for installation of dedicated telephone lines into the Communications Center(s) and the CEOC.

   d. Ensure communication restoration procedures are developed.

   e. Ensure procedures are in place for dissemination of message traffic.

   f. Coordinate the inclusion of business/industry and amateur radio operators into the communications network.

   g. Develop and maintain SOGs to include message-handling procedures and recall rosters for essential personnel.

3. Radio Operators will be:

   Responsible for proper screening and routing of all incoming telephone calls and for proper use and maintenance of the equipment and for correct message handling procedures, including routing of all incoming messages and logging all incoming and out-going messages.

4. Public Information Officer(s) will be:

   Responsible for monitoring commercial radio and telephone broadcasts for accuracy of public information.

VII. DIRECTION AND CONTROL

A. General

1. The Emergency Management Director(s) establish general policies for emergency communications.

2. The Sheriff and/or Police Chief(s) are directly responsible for facilities, equipment, and operation of the Communications Center.

3. Communications personnel from individual departments and support agencies, while under control of their own department or agency and operating their own equipment, are responsible for knowing and following the procedures outlined in this annex.

4. During emergency situations involving multiple agencies and/or jurisdictions, the various code systems used for brevity will be discontinued and normal speech will be used to insure comprehension. In addition, local time will be used during transmissions.

5. During emergency situations, communications will be maintained between the Disaster District and the CEOC.

B. Continuity of Government

Each department or agency with communications responsibilities shall establish a line of succession for communications personnel.

C. Existing Communications Systems

1. Local Networks

    a. Brazos County 9-1-1 Emergency Communications District

    b. Brazos County Road and Bridge Maintenance

    c. Brazos County Sheriff's Department

    d. Cities of Bryan and College Station Police Departments

    e. Cities of Bryan and College Station Fire Departments

    f. Cities of Bryan and College Station Parks Departments

    g. Cities of Bryan and College Station Utilities Departments

    h. Cities of Bryan and College Station Public Works Departments

    i. City of College Station Emergency Communications System

j. Texas A&M University Police Department

k. Texas A&M University Emergency Medical Services

l. Texas A&M University Transportation Services

m. SSC Service Solutions Facilities Services Communications Center (on TAMU campus)

n. Brazos Valley Wide Area Communications System

2. Other Networks

a. Texas Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (TLETS) is a statewide telecommunications network connecting the State Warning Point (the SOC), with city, county, state, federal, and military law enforcement agencies in Texas. Emergency communications between state, district, and local governments will be transmitted through this system. The principal terminals are located at the Brazos County 9-1-1 Communications District, College Station Communications System and the Texas Department of Public Safety area office.

b. Joint Information Center (JIC), Joint Operations Center (JOC), and SOC.

c. Individual Amateur Radio Operators

d. Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) is a state sponsored program composed of amateur radio operators. It is used to supplement state and local government communications systems in emergencies or disaster operations.

e. Skyline Communications System

VIII.   READINESS LEVELS

A. Readiness Level IV - Normal Conditions

See the prevention and preparedness activities in paragraphs V.B.1 and V.B.2 above.

B. Readiness Level III - Increased Readiness

1. Alert key personnel.

2. Check readiness of all equipment and facilities and correct any deficiencies.

C.   Readiness Level II – High Readiness

1. Alert personnel for possible emergency duty.

2. Monitor situation of possible issuance of warning or alerts.

D. Readiness Level 1 – Maximum Readiness

1. Institute 24-hour operations.

2. Conduct periodic communication checks.

IX.	ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT

A. Facilities and Equipment

A complete listing of equipment is included in Appendix 1 of Annex M.

B. Maintenance of Records.

All records generated during an emergency will be collected and filed in an orderly manner so a record of events is preserved for use in determining response costs, settling claims, and updating emergency plans and procedures.

C. Preservation of Records

Vital records should be protected from the effects of disaster to the maximum extent feasible. Should records be damaged during an emergency situation, professional assistance in preserving and restoring those records should be obtained as soon as possible. This should be done in compliance with state records retention guidelines and state retention schedules.

D. Communications Protection

1. Radio

   a. Electromagnetic Pulse (EMP)

   One of the effects of a nuclear detonation that is particularly damaging to radio equipment is EMP. Plans call for the disconnection of radios from antennas and power source when an Attack Warning is issued. A portable radio unit will then be employed as a backup to maintain limited communications with field units. This procedure will be used until an All Clear is announced. Telephones will also be used while operable.

   b. Lightning, Wind, and Blast

   1) Standard lightning protection is used including arrestors and the use of emergency power during severe weather.

   2) Damaged antennas can be quickly replaced with spare units kept in the inventory of each respective department.

   3) Mobile repeaters kept in the inventory of each respective department can be quickly positioned at predetermined locations to resume radio communications in the event of damage to radio towers.

c. Overloaded Telephone Circuits

1) To avoid overloaded circuits during emergencies, citizens will be advised to monitor local broadcast systems for EAS messages for information, and to use telephones only if they have a genuine emergency. If overloaded circuits do become a problem, coordinate with the telephone companies to begin immediate restoration of priority circuits.

d. Computer Equipment and Facilities

1) The physical protection of computer equipment and facilities will be maintained under normal and emergency operations to help ensure continuity of communications.

E. Security

1. Measures will be taken to ensure that only authorized personnel will have access to the Dispatch/Communications Centers.

2. Communications security will be maintained in accordance with national, state, and local requirements.

F. Training

1. Each organization assigning personnel to the CEOC for communications purposes is responsible for making certain those persons are familiar with the agency's operating guidelines.

2. The Communications Coordinator(s) will provide additional training on emergency communications equipment and procedures as necessary.

G. Support

If requirements exceed the capability of local communications resources, the County Judge and/or Mayor will request support from nearby jurisdictions or state resources from the Disaster District in Bryan, Texas.

X.   ANNEX DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

A. The BVWACS Radio System Manager, will assist the EMC(s) with maintaining this annex. Each agency will develop SOGs that address assigned tasks.

B. This annex will be updated in accordance with the schedule outlined in Section X of the Basic Plan.

XI.　　REFERENCES

A. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG-101)

B. Division Of Emergency Management *Local Emergency Management Planning Guide.* (DEM-10)

APPENDICES

COMMUNICATIONS

FACILITY	Radio	T	R	Cable TV	Phone/Fax	TLETS	RACES	Cell Ph.	Sat. Ph.	Computer Network	Internet
Bryan PD	X	BWWACS		X	X	X		X		X	X
Bryan FD	X	BWWACS		X	X			X		X	X
Bryan FD Alternate	X	153.9500	154.4150							X	X
Bryan Utilities (BTU)	X	47.7200	48.0600	X	X			X		X	X
Bryan Water/Waste Water	X	806 Trunked Radio		X				X		X	X
Bryan Public Works	X	806 Trunked Radio		X				X		X	X
Bryan EM	X	BWWACS		X	X			X		X	X
Bryan EM Alternate	X	154.0400	155.8050							X	X
CEOC	X	Various Frequencies		X	X		X	X	X	X	X
College Station PD	X	BWWACS		X	X	X	X	X		X	X
College Station FD	X	BWWACS		X	X			X		X	X
College Station FD Alternate	X	156.2250	154.3400							X	X
College Station Parks	X	BWWACS		X	X			X		X	X
College Station Utilities	X	BWWACS		X	X			X		X	X
College Station Public Works	X	BWWACS		X	X			X		X	X
College Station EM	X	BWWACS		X	X		X	X	X	X	X
College Station (alternate) EOC	X	BWWACS		X	X		X	X		X	X
City of Kurten				X	X			X			X
TAMU PD	X	BWWACS		X	X	X	X	X		X	X
TAMU EMS	X	BWWACS		X	X			X		X	X
TAMU EM	X	BWWACS		X	X		X	X		X	X
TAMU Facilities Service	X	806 Trunked Radio		X	X			X		X	X
Brazos County SO Primary	X	154.7700	155.4150					X			X
Brazos Co. SO Secondary	X	BWWACS	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Brazos County VFDs (primary)	X	BWWACS						X			
Brazos County VFDs (secondary)	X	153.9800	155.9400	X	X			X		X	X
Brazos County EM	X	BWWACS		X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Brazos County R&B	X	458.3750	453.3750	X	X			X	X	X	X
Texas DPS	X	154.6800	155.4800		X	X	X	X	X		X
Texas DOT	X	158.9925	151.0025	X	X		X	X		X	X
Red Cross	X	47.4200	47.4200	X	X		X	X		X	X
RACES	X	146.0800	146.6800	X	X		X	X		X	X

FACILITY	Radio	T	R	Cable TV	Phone/ Fax	TLETS	RACES	Cell Ph.	Sat. Ph.	Computer Network	Internet
St. Joseph Hospital - Bryan	X	150.7900	155.2800	X	X			X		X	X
St. Joseph Hospital – College Station	X	467.8250	467.8250	X	X						
City of Wixon Valley				X	X			X			X
8CALL90 (located in Bryan)	X	806.0125	851.0125								X
8TAC94 (located in Bryan)	X	808.0125	853.0125								X

BRAZOS COUNTY ARES/RACES
Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) / Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES)

The Amateur Radio Service is authorized under Part 97, Section 1(a) of the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) rules as a "voluntary noncommercial communication service, particularly with respect to providing emergency communications."

The ARES organization, affiliated with the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), consists of licensed amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment, with their local ARES leadership, for communications duty in the public service when disaster strikes.

The RACES organization, established by FCC Part 97.407 and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), consists of organized and trained volunteer radio amateur operators as appointed by local, state and federal authorities to provide emergency communications when activated and to supplement existing communications when and where deployed. RACES is intended to provide radio communications for civil-preparedness purposes only, during periods of declared local, regional or national emergencies.

The State RACES organization, under the Texas Department of Emergency Management, is supported in Brazos County and will interface with County RACES operators when necessary.

While ARES and RACES are separate entities, the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) has long advocated dual membership and cooperative efforts between both groups. The best solution has been found in combining the membership and leadership of both units. If the ARES Emergency Coordinator and the RACES Radio Officer is the same individual, all the group need do is 'change hats' and continue to function before, during and after a disaster.

The Brazos County ARES and RACES Communication Plans outline the appointments, duties, responsibilities and emergency communications planning for Brazos County in the event of an emergency or activation by State or local authorities. Upon request by the emergency management coordinators of Brazos County, Bryan, College Station, Kurten, Wixon Valley, Texas A&M University, the County Sheriff's Office, Police Chiefs of Bryan, College Station, Texas A&M University and the County or City Fire Chiefs - the ARES County Emergency Coordinator (EC) or Races Officer is responsible for mobilizing the County ARES/RACES units for additional communication support. Any time ARES/RACES is activated, the County Emergency Management Coordinator will be notified. All tests and drills will be initialized by the EC or County RACES Officer in accordance with FCC rules and appropriate SOP's. The County EC or RACES Officer will coordinate tests and drills with the County Interjurisdictional Coordinator if local agencies are to be involved.

ARES/RACES units authorized by Brazos County Emergency Management office can be relieved of their assignments as an official County ARES/RACES unit by the County Emergency Management Coordinator for non-compliance with rules as outlined in the ARES/RACES plans and SOP's or other misconduct.

_____   _____

Brazos County EM Coordinator   Date

_____   _____

RACES Radio Officer   Date

_____   _____

ARES County Emergency Coordinator   Date