

Section 3: Plan Activation and Disaster Declaration

Introduction

This section outlines the plan activation, disaster emergency declaration, notification and reporting processes, call out procedures to activate the Incident Management Team, and damage assessment procedures, which the Emergency Preparedness Director and Incident Management Team personnel will implement in the event of a disaster emergency. Prompt and thorough reporting of the disaster conditions will enhance disaster assistance from mutual aid agencies and state and federal entities.

Plan Activation

This Emergency Operations Plan shall be activated or selectively applied in those cases where:

- The City of Seward is notified of a potential/occurring emergency by state or borough agencies; or
- City departments respond to a situation or emergency that cannot be effectively managed using department policies and standard operating procedures (SOPs); or
- City departments respond to a situation or emergency that require the resources and response of three or more city agencies; **or**
- **The City Manager determines that the situation or problem warrants activation of the EOP.**

Levels of Incidents

Activation of the plan will be based on the following definitions and criteria:

- **Level I Incident** - An incident that can be managed within normal operations of the various city departments and can be managed with department policies and SOP's. May require implementation of the entire or specific sections of the plan and/or individual Incident Management Team positions as requested by the Incident Commander. The EOC may be activated. Shelters may be required. A Level I Incident does not require a disaster declaration; therefore, it does not require emergency procurement or funding.
- **Level II Incident** - An incident where three or more city departments are involved, **or** an incident where the resources of one or more city departments are quickly exhausted, **or** a DECLARED disaster emergency where outside assistance is requested, **or** an incident that has special or unusual characteristics not readily managed by department policies and SOP. The EOC may be activated. Mutual aid may be required. Shelters may be opened.
- **Level III Incident** - A DECLARED disaster emergency that requires the coordinated response of all levels of city government to save lives of a large portion of the population and protect property and the environment. Such a disaster emergency may require the sheltering or relocation of the affected population. The EOC will operate on a 24 hour basis. Outside aid and resources may be required. Assistance from the Borough, the State or federal

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Agencies may be required. Under such conditions, this plan will be implemented.

- **Level I or II: In-City Disaster/Emergency:** This plan goes into effect at the direction of the City Manager, or Emergency Preparedness Director, when the resources of three or more City departments are necessary to respond to a man-made or natural disaster that has destroyed, or threatened, property or citizen safety.
- **Level II or III: Area Wide Disaster/Emergency:** This plan, in conjunction with the Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB) Emergency Response Plan, goes into effect during the following scenarios:
 - at the request of the KPB Emergency Preparedness Director
 - under the direction of the City Manager acting as the North Zone Emergency Preparedness Director
 - under the KPB emergency plan
 - when City resources are necessary to respond to an area wide disaster
 - when this involves use of city resources outside the city
 - situations under which outside agency resources are necessary to assist the city (This does not include routine emergency police and fire services received and provided under mutual aid or similar agreements.)

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Activation Procedures

Designation of Scene/Incident Commander

The City Manager, or Emergency Preparedness Director, may designate a scene/incident commander. This assignment may change as the City's response to the disaster changes. If the Emergency Preparedness Director is designating the scene/incident commander, the following general guidelines will be applied:

- During a response, or stage of response, when the primary focus of the operation is fire/hazardous materials/rescue, the Fire Chief, or designee, will perform this role.
- During a response, or stage of response, when the primary focus of the operation is security/evacuation/body recovery/investigation, the Police Chief, or designee, will perform this role.
- During a response, or stage of response, when the primary focus of the operation is flood control/debris removal/restoration of City services, the Public Works Director, or designee, will perform this role.

IMT Activation

When the Emergency Preparedness Director determines that EOP activation is necessary, the City of Seward Incident Management Team should be activated and directed to report to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The IMT activation procedure is summarized below. IMT activation proceeds through direct notification of at least one qualified person to fill each IMT position. Qualified personnel are listed in the activation table in order of priority. Dispatch uses this list to contact IMT members. Initial activation involves Command and General Staff, other positions will be filled as needed.

IMT members are assigned to one of two functional sections: the EOC or a Field Operations unit. EOC personnel report to the EOC upon activation. Most IMT positions, with the exception of the Operations Section, will report to the EOC. Some Operations Section personnel will report to the scene or to a field command post, while others will perform their duties from the EOC.

Depending upon the type and severity of the incident, not all IMT positions may be needed to manage the response. In this case, the Emergency Preparedness Director or Incident Commander may choose to deactivate certain IMT positions or functions.

The IMT positions are assigned to specific personnel depending on availability and the specifics of the incident. The position descriptions in the City of Seward EOP are meant to be guidelines for city personnel. Due to the number of personnel, the following may occur during an emergency: 1) one individual may need to fill two positions; and/or 2) any one position's description can be modified.

The position descriptions can be modified according to the incident. All modification must be directed by the City Manager and/or Incident Commander.

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Activation Procedure

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IMT Staffing

During a Level I incident, only a few select IMT positions would typically be activated. The following diagrams show the IMT functions that might be activated during a Level II or Level III incident. Functions may be activated or deactivated as the incident progresses.

Level II Incident IMT

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Level III Incident IMT

Section 4 contains additional ICS organization charts and describes the roles and responsibilities of Seward IMT members.

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Declaration of Local Disaster Emergency

The City of Seward City Manager has the legal authority to declare a local disaster emergency under AS 26.23.140. While a local disaster emergency declaration is not necessarily required to implement this Emergency Operations Plan, a disaster declaration may be necessary to expedite procurement of city and borough response resources and access state and federal disaster assistance.

If the City Manager is unable to act due to absence or incapacity, the Fire or Police Chief, or designee, will exercise local disaster emergency declaration authority. The declaration of a local disaster emergency must include a description of the situation and existing conditions, must delineate the geographic boundaries, and must outline what special powers are being activated by the city.

In the event that the City of Seward is declaring a local disaster emergency for the purposes of expediting procurement of city or borough response resources or requesting disaster assistance directly from the State of Alaska, use the model declaration forms found in this section. The Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) makes recommendations on disaster declarations with requests for State assistance and forwards those recommendations to the Governor's Office. The Governor's Disaster Policy Cabinet will also review most declarations before forwarding them, with DHS&EM's recommendations, to the Governor.

Within the Incident Management Team, the Command and General Staffs have the following responsibilities in the declaration process:

- Command: Assist with development of disaster declaration packages.
- Operations: Identify necessary resources, and outline special powers needed to respond to the emergency. Assist in initial damage assessment.
- Planning: Provide situation and resource summaries and initial and preliminary damage assessments.
- Logistics: Compile resource requests.
- Finance: Assist in preliminary damage assessment and coordinate damage survey activities.

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Reporting

Accurate incident status summaries are important to decision makers within the Incident Management Team (IMT) staff, as well as to assisting agencies and the public. The State of Alaska "Situation Report" shall be completed as soon as possible after the onset of an emergency, and shall be updated at least every 12 hours thereafter. The State of Alaska Situation Report shall be prepared by the Planning Section and distributed via phone, fax, e-mail, radio, hard copy, etc., to at least the following:

- Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
- Assisting federal and state agencies

The Public Information Officer may also distribute State of Alaska Situation Reports to the media, the public, assisting agencies, adjacent jurisdictions, and volunteer organizations at the direction of the Incident Commander. The State of Alaska Situation Report may also be used by the Emergency Preparedness Director to advise IMT members and department heads of an incident.

<p>Damage Assessment should begin immediately after the onset of a disaster, as preliminary damage assessment information may be crucial to obtaining outside assistance.</p>
<p>For damage assessment procedures, refer to SECTION 13 of this plan.</p>
<p>For Sample Disaster Declarations, the State of Alaska Situation Report, and the Incident Commander’s Delegation of Authority Form, see APPENDIX A</p>