I.   Purpose

This Annex provides guidance for the Kenai Peninsula Borough's ("KPB") joint information system as coordinated through multiple agencies and disciplines. It addresses concepts for shared, public communications or the collaborative distribution of individual agency messaging during the warning, response and recovery phases.

General in application, flexible for emergency response and recovery as well as for non-emergency events, this Annex provides the overall structure needed for operational planning and execution. This Annex should be used in conjunction with the Call Center Operations Annex 10. This Annex supplements the KPB Emergency Operations Plan ("EOP") which provides the overall guidance for emergency response activities in the borough.

II.   Authority

The KPB is authorized by AS 26.23.060 and KPB Code of Ordinances Section 2.45.010, to plan for and respond to public emergencies and disasters affecting the KPB. The KPB Office of Emergency Management ("OEM") may activate a Joint Information Center ("JIC") or OEM may assist the lead agency to activate a JIC upon request.

The lead agency should cite this Annex when defining a Delegation of Authority ("DoA"). The DoA will describe the coordination expected between the incoming incident management team and the activated JIC as well as the JIC manager's authorization and expectations as related to the incident.

III.   Situation and Assumptions

Situation

Coordinating agencies will collocate in the JIC to ensure the distribution of accurate information, to minimize duplication and to maximize resources. Agencies will assign staff(s) to the JIC, giving them authority to represent or speak for their agency. The JIC will function bay way of the established Joint Information System ("JIS").

The coordination of the JIS may begin when any of the following occur:
A. the anticipation of a known event, or in response to an escalating incident;
B. multiple agencies are involved regardless of timeframe or expected duration of incident type/kind;
C. the demand for information surpasses the capability of the affected organization; or
D. there is a significant impact on public safety.

The lead agency may request that the JIC be collocated with the call center. The OEM call center will always be operated in conjunction with some level of JIS operations (see, Annex 10). The JIS may include the use of the virtual joint information center ("JVIC"), allowing participating agencies or authorized subject matter experts to post official messaging onto an online blog during response. Virtual joint information is posted onto the OEM blog address - www.kpboem.com (described below).

Planning Assumptions

Planning and preparedness provide the foundation for an effective JIS. Training and exercise opportunities should be provided the collaborating agencies. These agencies are referred to as "JIS members" that often work together during multi-agency response, i.e. local municipalities, state and federal government agencies as well as non-government agencies that include but are not limited to first responders, foresters, health and social services, utilities, Tribal entities, etc.

The KPB OEM will invite JIS members to review JIS/JIC protocols and lessons learned through an annual meeting. For new agency members, JIS/JIC training will be provided at an individual venue or presented at formal meetings such as the Local Emergency Planning Committee or All Lands All Hands Interagency Group. (See addendum – "Just in Time Training.")

IV.   Concept of Operations

The JIS allows for a virtual and a collocated JIC that is scalable or expandable.

Preparedness

A JIS member may set up an initial teleconference, inviting agency public information officers or representatives to discuss the potential need to activate the JIS. This

teleconference does not officially launch the JIC, nor does it have to be initiated by the lead agency. The initial teleconference may serve as situational awareness and agency preparedness in the event that the JIS members are asked to participate in the JIC.

Initial Activation

JIS members may choose to post updates onto the OEM blog during ramp up and prior to the JIC activation. (The roll of a virtual JIC is described below).

For incidents that require coordination between two or more local jurisdictions, the lead agency will be responsible for managing and coordinating the JIC. However, the lead agency may launch the JIC or request that OEM launch the JIC. The lead agency will assign a JIC manager or OEM will assign a JIC manager when tasked with launching the JIC. The JIC manager will collaborate with the Incident Commander ("IC") to determine the public information plan, oversee JIC operations and staffing needs.

Operational Expectations

The JIC is scalable to increase or decrease operations based upon incident needs, impacts to the community, and remaining threats to public safety. The JIC manager will ensure JIS functionality during the incident response and recovery phases. The manager will create the scheduling and staffing needs for the JIC with agencies' representatives and subject matter experts as needed.

Each participating JIS member will be responsible for designating a representative and alternate(s) staff to ensure constant agency representation during JIC operations. The attending staff are referred to as JIC staff, and will be managed by the JIC manager using

the established JIS functions as approved by the IC or lead agency. JIC staff will be responsible for bringing additional equipment beyond the basics that will support them for at least 48 hours, i.e. Go Kit.

The JIC staff will be assigned duties such as developing shared key messages, talking points, daily summaries or incident-related stories for public distribution. Some duties include, but are not limited to:

- Update incoming JIS staff using the "Just in Time" methodology.
- Develop or update key messages.
- Develop the daily JIC summary that includes abridged details of operations, road closures, weather/air quality, public health notifications, etc. Each JIS member will be expected to contribute to the daily summary and to distribute the daily summary by predetermined deadlines.
- Maintain the VJIC blog (www.kpboem.com) and monitor social media.
- Correspond with and gather information from section chiefs or unit leaders as needed.
- Attend briefings to confirm the latest developments or upcoming operations that may affect JIC messaging.
- Answer public inquiries via the call center, email or through social media platforms.
- Distribute JIC products via JIS-established methods as well as individual agency distribution protocols, ensuring maximum distribution of information. JIS staff will be responsible for maintaining their agency's key contact lists and emailing any JIC products to those lists.
- Provide alternate staff representation through VJIC capabilities when agencies cannot physically participate at the collocated JIC.
- Provide written feedback prior to leaving the JIC. The JIC manager will present staff feedback during the after action review process.

The JIC Manager is responsible for resolving all collaborative JIC products that may be conflicting; which in turn, the lead agency, or designee, will proof the daily summary prior to release. NOTE: The JIS operational functions do not preclude individual agencies from sending their own communications. The JIC manager/staff are not responsible for developing an individual agency's messaging or representing the participating agencies. The JIC is responsible for the distribution of the agencies' official messaging.

Virtual Joint Information Center Protocols

Social media products are an important part of the KPB's JIS. When JIS members collocate in a JIC, the VJIC protocols must be established by the JIC manager to ensure consistency and accuracy. The VJIC is a high functioning resource, which supports the JIS from the initial JIC set-up to demobilization. The following exceptions complement the VJIC:

Incorporating the interagency blog as part of the VJIC is a standard operational procedure. Participating JIS members will receive access and have authorization to post official messaging onto the blog (www.kpboem.com). JIS members will be listed alphabetically on the blog.

- Agencies may use their own logo/letterhead when posting their information releases posted onto the blog.
- JIS members are encouraged to post onto their agency's social media and shared social media platforms, hence leveraging information being released.
- Any JIS member may post verified information from outside sources.
- The use of integrated social media tools supersedes individual agency limitations on posting information.
- All JIS members will be asked to include the www.kpboem.com link onto their agency website. Individual agency promotion of the JIC and VJIC operations is encouraged, but not required.

Demobilization

The JIC manager and staff will make the collaborative decision when considering the reduction of information, the glide path for demobilization and the transition to VJIC operations only. The JIC manager will make recommendations regarding individual JIC staff participation when their agency's involvement is not physically possible, may lessen, or is no longer needed. The lead agency or the DoA signers will have final approval to terminate the JIC and VJIC.

During demobilization, the physical equipment is removed and expended supplies are re-ordered. The transition plan and closure announcements are scheduled for public release. Additionally, all documentation is completed and submitted to the planning section. The JIC Manager will be responsible for compiling a documentation package to be distributed to all participating agencies. The lead agency will be the keeper of this documentation.

After Action Review Protocol

The JIC manager is required to coordinate and conduct an After Action Review ("AAR") of JIC operations as well as the JIS functionality. The JIC/JIS AAR Checklist includes a review of JIC staff participation and feedback from individual agencies. The final JIC/JIS AAR is given to lead agency as part of the incident AAR (see JIC AAR Checklist).

Recommended AAR actions:
- All participating agencies are present for the final AAR within thirty days after incident.
- Non-JIS members may attend by invitation of the JIC manager or IC.
- Lessons learned will be shared electronically and maintained as a separate document.
- The JIS Annex may be revised based on lessons learned.

V.   Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

The JIC is under the direct management of a qualified Public Information Officer (JIC manager) and overseen by the Incident Commander and/or the lead agency. The JIC manager should be chosen based upon his/her expertise, experience, qualifications, and ability to manage a JIC and selected for the position based upon experience specific to the type of incident. (See addendum "JIC Manager Role & Checklists.")

The JIS shall encourage flexibility, allowing the JIC manager to work with participating agencies to determine the JIC structure and work flow. JIC operations will include the use of standardized ICS forms; the Daily Unit Log (ICS-214) and the General Message (ICS 213) forms will be used at a minimum.

VI.   Direction, Control and Coordination

The JIC manager will coordinate the JIS functionality based upon JIS member participation and the involvement of subject matter experts (SMEs). As incident needs escalate or change, SMEs may be invited to participate in JIC and VJIC operations. The JIS manager and staff will evaluate SME expectations and level of involvement. The lead agency or IC will approve SME recommendations.

The JIC manager can be changed if any one of these assumptions is true: (1) there is a contingency plan to have a deputy JIC manager; or (2) there can be a 24-hour transitional overlap between the outgoing and the incoming managers.

The IC or lead agency, in conjunction with input from coordinating agencies, may replace the JIC manager, if necessary.

VII.   Communication

At a minimum, all JIC staff will use basic PIO communication protocols. JIS staff or SMEs that have not had formal PIO training should reference the KPB Emergency Operations Center Guide, pg 8-10.[1] The use of these minimum protocols enhances internal and external communications as well as ICS expectations.

Communication and connectivity with the Soldotna Public Safety Communications Center and the lead agency's dispatch unit is priority. Hard/cellular lines, hard/software needs, radio or network functionality must be determined prior to deploying the JIC; therefore, logistics must determine any technical requirements. Not all KPB owned or leased facilities may be able to support JIC communication needs.

Communications for Post Response or Educational Awareness

Social media tools by agency provide an excellent platform to distribute post response and recovery messaging as well as provide year-round educational awareness of the borough-wide JIS collaboration outside of an incident. Proactive messaging by individual JIC members may emphasize topics such as:

- Dedicated web, subpage or tab for incident specific safety and prevention information during recovery phases.
- Safety or prevention messaging, i.e. burn restrictions, flood awareness or expected utility outages.
- Promotion and periodical reminders of agency's involvement as a JIS member and how it benefits the public during area-wide response.

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[1] [1] Some examples of formal training courses include: National Wildfire Coordination Group NWCG-PIO S203 Basic PIO or Federal Emergency Management Agency FEMA-IS29 PIO Basic Awareness or FEMA-G290 Basic PIO.

Recommendations:

- Incident anniversary information will be initially approved and distributed by the most affected or lead agency. The release of anniversary information should be coordinated among JIS members that supported the response or recovery phases.
- An explanation should be provided when the VJIC blog or individual SME tools are dormant. The www.kpboem.com blog dormant notification states:

  "This blog is maintained as an effort to coordinate and collocate responding agencies' information for easier public access during events on the Kenai Peninsula. The information here is written and provided by the contributing agencies. NOTE: The blog will be updated as the need arises and may be dormant at times."

VIII.   Administration, Logistics and Finance

This Annex recognizes that emergency response is dynamic and changes rapidly; however, the importance of establishing administrative practices as soon as possible will enhance consistency. The JIC manager and staff should use inclusive, joint identification platforms from social media to documentation. Examples may include:

- A JIC logo consisting of JIS members listed by alphabetical order.
- Blog post formatting - naming and timestamp conventions.
- Public and media correspondence via phone, email or social media correspondence.

The primary location for a collocated JIC will be at the OEM Emergency Operations Center. KPB facilities identified as secondary locations, i.e. an OEM mobile command vehicle or the Donald E. Gilman River Center, will have the needed equipment and technical capacity (or be able to obtain it within 2-4 hours when requested by lead agency). JIS members should have an inventory of places that can serve as primary and secondary locations.

The KPB is responsible for appropriate costs associated with emergency response actions and directives issued by the KPB.

A. KPB personnel will track time and effort on timesheets with an assigned finance code issued by the finance section.

B. All logistical needs associated with a KPB response must be processed through the KPB OEM on a resource order form.

C. Any agency initiating an event response or expending funds without approval of the KPB will not be reimbursed by KPB.

D. Agencies participating in the JIC or VJIC operations will be responsible for all costs associated with their agency representatives or staff involvement. The tracking of time and effort specific to said involvement is highly recommended in the event that response or recovery costs may be eligible for reimbursement through state or federal disaster declarations.

E. The lead agency does not need approval to activate a JIC. However, KPB must approve any OEM-supported activation of a JIC and the expended funds needed to deploy a JIC on behalf of a lead agency request.

F. When a DoA is executed by the lead agency, Incident Management Team's level of participation in the JIC/VJIC and financial commitment as it relates to the incident needs will be defined. This Annex does not preclude the DoA expectations, guidelines or restrictions.