



**State of Maine
State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC)**

COMMAND & GENERAL STAFF DESK GUIDE
Your Guide to SEOC Operations

April 2026

DO NOT REMOVE FROM THE SEOC



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HELLO AND WELCOME TO THE LEADERSHIP TEAM!

You have been selected to serve in a Command or General Staff role within the State Emergency Operations Center. Whether you are a veteran of past activations or stepping into this leadership role for the first time, your presence here is vital. You are the critical link between strategic policy and operational execution.

HOW TO USE THIS DESK GUIDE

We understand that SEOC leadership operations differ significantly from your daily business and responsibilities. This guide is designed to bridge that gap. It is your primary reference tool for the duration of your shift.

This Desk Guide focuses on EOC Governance: the management of strategy, resources, and information flow. As a Section Chief or Command Staff Officer, your role is not just to "do" the work, but to enable the work of others by establishing clear objectives, removing roadblocks, and ensuring unity of effort.

WHAT'S INSIDE THIS DESK BOOK

- **Section 1: Your Role Within the SEOC.** A guide to your leadership responsibilities and organizational structure.
- **Section 2: Managing by Community Lifelines.** How to use Lifeline data to make strategic decisions.
- **Section 3: Driving Information & Strategy.** Your contribution to creating the Incident Action Plan and validating information.
- **Section 4: Leading the Operational Rhythm.** When meetings happen and what you need to bring to them.
- **Section 5: Shift Handovers & Deactivation.** A guide to concluding your shift and ensuring a smooth transfer of command.
- **Section 6: Command & General Staff Job Aids.** Specific checklists and operational responsibilities for your position.
- **Section 7: Things You Can Refer To.** An assortment of checklists, tools, and summaries that can be used throughout your shift.

Immediate Actions

If you are new to the role or arriving for your first shift, follow this timeline to get up to speed immediately.

Arrival & Workstation Setup | Timeframe: 0–15 minutes of arrival

- Sign in at the Security Desk, receive your badge, and sign the SEOC Roster (as necessary).
- Find your designated seat in the Command/General Staff area and log into your computer and email.
- Log into WebEOC, sign in using the “Sign-In Out Board,” and review the Incident Board to familiarize yourself with the current situation.
[Note: If you encounter technical issues with login or access, please immediately contact the Communications Office.]
- Verify your phone is working and provide your phone number to the Documentation Unit so that it can be updated within the Contact Roster.

Table: Arrival & Workstation Setup, MEMA 2026

The Handover | Timeframe: 15 - 30 minutes of arrival

- Locate the person you are relieving for a face-to-face briefing (if appropriate).
- Ask the "Big Three" questions.
 1. What is the biggest problem you are trying to solve right now?
 2. What decisions/missions are pending or overdue?
 3. Who are the key people I need to talk to immediately?
- Ensure you have the current Incident Action Plan and any pass-down logs.

Table: The Handover, MEMA 2026

Stabilize Your Section | Timeframe: 30 - 60 minutes of arrival

- Gather your staff/Unit Leaders/Branch Directors for a quick stand-up meeting. Set your expectations for the shift.
- Open your specific Section Job Aid located in **Section 6: Command & General Staff Job Aids** of this guide.

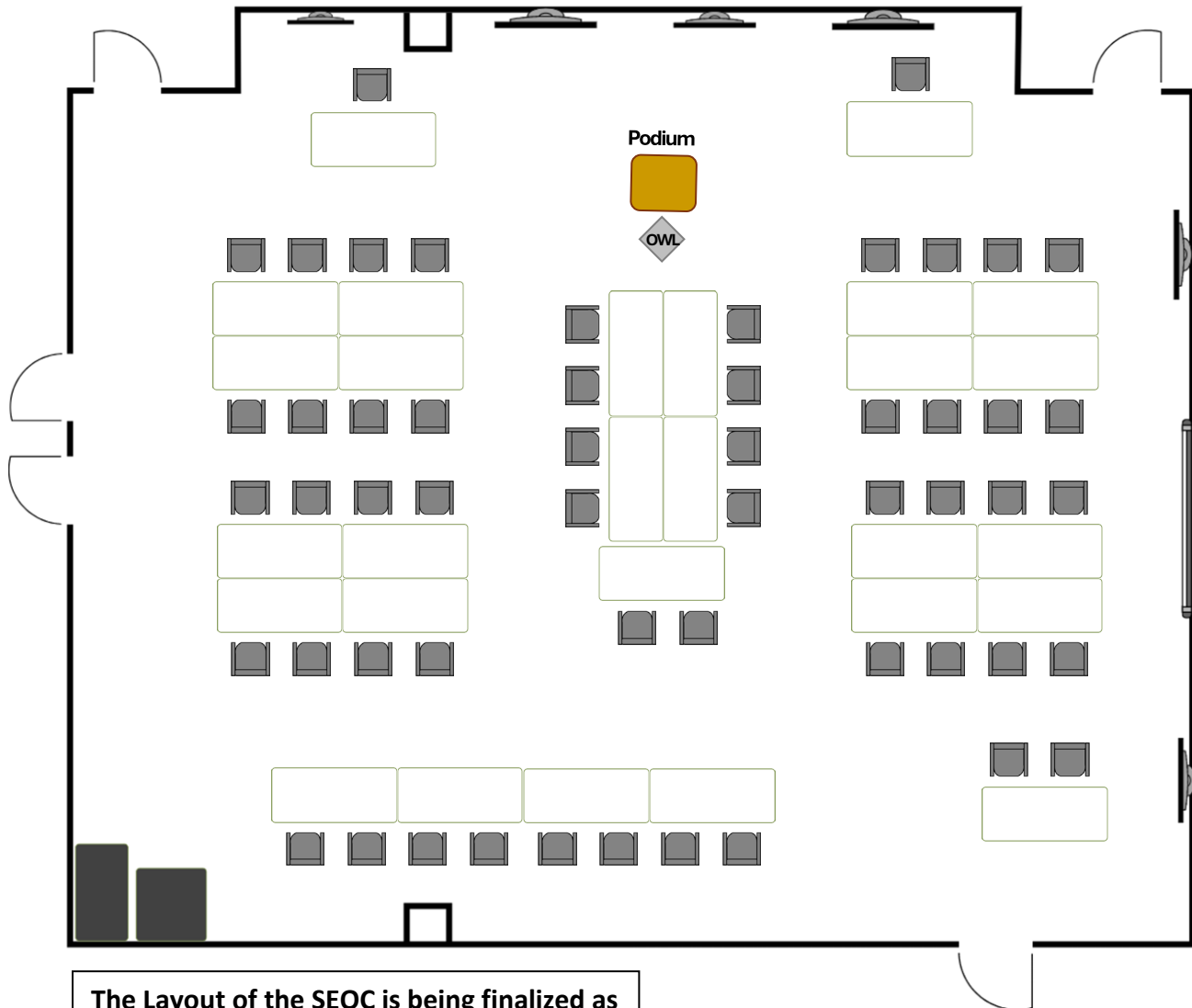
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The State Emergency Operations Center Layout

The physical layout of the SEOC is designed to optimize workflows and maintain shared situational awareness. Understanding this seating configuration is essential for all SEOC staff; knowing the specific seating locations of other section chiefs and support staff is vital for rapid collaboration and decision-making. The following graphic details the current operational layout.



The Layout of the SEOC is being finalized as of 15 April 2026. Once complete, this diagram will be updated.

Figure 1: SEOC Footprint, MEMA 2026

Section 1: Your Role Within the SEOC Leadership Team

The SEOC Leadership Team functions under the strategic direction of the Policy Group. The structure is divided into three functional layers:

Policy Group (Executive Direction)

Who You Are: The Governor, MEMA Director (Group Lead), Commissioner, and/or Senior Federal Officials.

Your Role: You provide the strategic direction and legal authority for the response. You do not manage daily operations; instead, you manage long-term consequences, inter-governmental/agency coordination, and legal declarations. You typically operate from the Governor's Conference Room, separate from the SEOC floor, but you do have an allocated space on the floor for all briefings and related meetings.

Command Staff (Enable)

Who You Are: SEOC Manager, Safety Officer, Liaison Officer, Public Information Officer (PIO), Communications Office Director.

Your Role: Your primary focus is the organization itself. You ensure the SEOC has the political authority, public trust, physical safety, technical connectivity, and interagency relationships required to function. You provide the "umbrella" of protection and support under which the General Staff operates.

General Staff (Execute)

Who You Are: Operations, Planning, Logistics, Finance, and Recovery Section Chiefs.

Your Role: Your primary focus is the operational execution of the incident objectives. You manage the Emergency Response Team (ERT) members, direct resources, and implement the strategies defined in the Incident Action Plan (IAP).

Key Takeaways

Your role is to manage strategy, arbitrate resource disputes, and remove roadblocks. You are here to enable the work of others, not just do the work yourself.

While your team handles the immediate crisis, your eyes must be 24 to 72 hours down the road. Anticipate needs before they become emergencies.

Your immediate priority upon arriving is to conduct a thorough handover. Do not dive into tasks until you have asked the outgoing chief the "Big Three" questions and held a stand-up huddle with your team.

Common Leadership Expectations

Regardless of your specific role, all SEOC Leaders are expected to:

- **Manage Span of Control:** If you have more than 3–5 units/personnel reporting to you, activate a Deputy or Branch Director immediately.
- **Look Forward:** While your staff focuses on the "Now," you must focus on the "Next." (What happens 24 hours from now?)
- **Arbitrate Disputes:** Resolve resource conflicts between your units/personnel before they reach the SEOC Manager.
- **Ensure Safety:** You are responsible for the physical and mental well-being of every person in your section. Mandate breaks and mealtimes.

SEOC Organization & Reporting Structure

The SEOC uses a hybrid Incident Command System structure. In our structure for instance, the PIO and Communications Office Director report directly to the Policy Group.

To maintain a manageable span of control, the SEOC operates on a strict chain of command. Before beginning your shift, review the hierarchy below to understand who you report to, and who reports to you. Additionally, familiarize yourself with the SEOC layout to ensure that you know where to source information and which subject matter experts are available for consultation during the operational period.

The graphic below depicts the various sections and branches within the SEOC. Section **7.E: SEOC Organizational Reference** provides additional information on each of the sections and their assigned function within the SEOC.

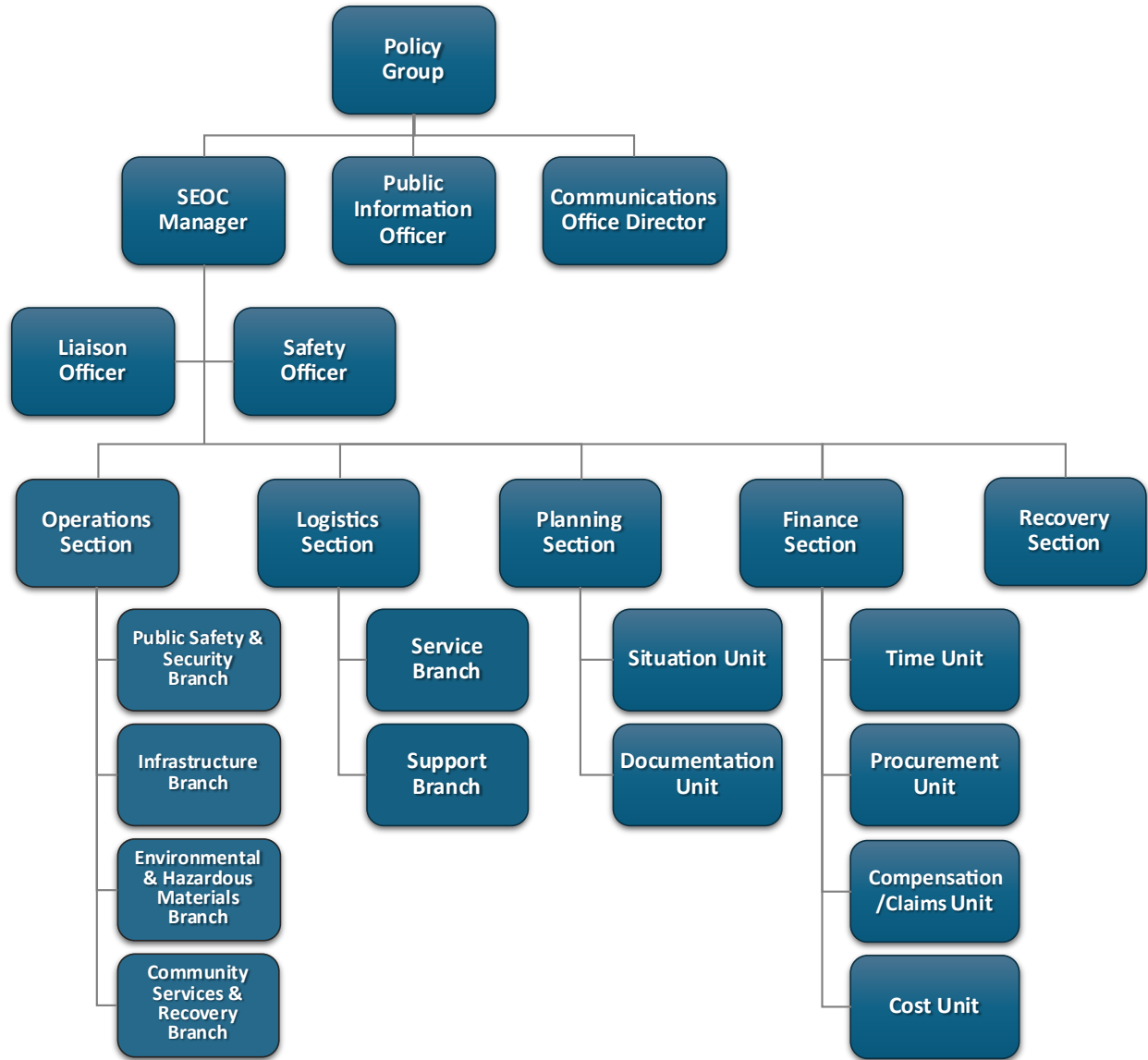


Figure 2: SEOC Organizational Chart (With Subordinate Section Branches), MEMA 2026

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Section 2: Managing by Community Lifelines

Key Takeaways

The SEOC organizes incident response around eight Community Lifelines. These represent the essential and interconnected services, such as Water and Energy, that communities depend on.

A Lifeline is "stabilized" once basic services are restored, even if provided through temporary measures like generators.

Always ruthlessly prioritize requests that stabilize a "Red" (Disrupted) lifeline over a "Yellow"/"Green" one.

Your goal is to mitigate the immediate threat to life and property, not to permanently fix the infrastructure. Once a lifeline is stable "Yellow," pivot your resources to the next "Red" lifeline.

What Is a Community Lifeline? (A Quick Primer)

A Community Lifeline represents the most fundamental services in the community that, when stabilized, enable all other aspects of society to function. During normal operations, Lifeline services are provided by public, private, and nonprofit entities that are organic within a community. They include a range of critical day-to-day services that communities rely on to protect life and property. When disrupted, decisive intervention (e.g., rapid re-establishment or employment of contingency response solutions) is required to stabilize the incident. To measure the progress of these stabilization efforts, community impact is re-evaluated from the start of an incident through the transition to short-term recovery.

Instead of organizing our response by individual agencies (e.g., "What is the Department of Transportation doing?"), we organize our response around eight core services to ensure we are addressing the impact on the public. This approach enables efficient reporting to federal partners, as well as aids in the establishment of a single, consistent common operating picture for the response.

We use Community Lifelines to emphasize outcomes (e.g., "Do hospitals in the impacted area have power?"). By working in this manner, the SEOC can:

- **Prioritize:** Distinguish the highest priorities and most complex issues from other incident information.
- **Visualize:** Quickly show leadership which sectors are stable, and which are failing.
- **Solve:** Focus our efforts on stabilizing the service, rather than just deploying assets.

The Eight Community Lifelines

The SEOC organizes information using the following eight FEMA structured Community Lifelines. Each Lifeline is comprised of multiple components and subcomponents that help define the services that make up that Lifeline.



Figure 3: FEMA Community Lifeline Toolkit, Version 2.1 -07/2023

1. SAFETY AND SECURITY

Includes responder safety, community safety, and the continuity of government.

Components: Law Enforcement/Security; Fire Service; Search and Rescue; Government Service; Community Safety

2. FOOD, HYDRATION, & SHELTER

Includes traditional feeding and hydration services, mass care operations, and agricultural infrastructure/food distribution. (Note: Focuses on the resource availability to the public).

Components: Food; Hydration; Shelter; Agriculture

3. HEALTH AND MEDICAL

Includes all aspects of medical services required during an incident, including survivor care, fatality management, public health, and the medical supply chain.

Components: Medical Care; Patient Movement; Fatality Management; Public Health; Medical Supply Chain

4. WATER SYSTEMS

Includes all water movements related to intake, treatment, storage, collection, distribution, and discharge.

Components: Potable Water Infrastructure; Wastewater Management

5. ENERGY (Power and Fuel)

Includes the power grid (transmission and distribution) and fuel supply chains (gas stations, fuel depots).

Components: Power Grid; Fuel

6. COMMUNICATIONS

Includes all types of communications necessary to effectively respond to and help survivors, in addition to banking and electronic payment needs.

Components: Infrastructure; Alerts, Warnings, and Messages; 911 and Dispatch; Responder Communications; Finance

7. TRANSPORTATION

Includes all forms of transportation of people and resources to and from the incident.

Components: Highway/Roadway Motor Vehicle; Mass Transit; Railway; Aviation; Maritime

8. HAZARDOUS MATERIAL

Includes the management (including containment and removal) of all hazardous materials.

Components: Facilities; HAZMAT, Pollutants, Contaminants

A NOTE ON INTERDEPENDENCY

Lifelines do not operate in a vacuum. Failure in one typically causes failures in others. For example, a failure in Energy (power outage) often causes a failure in Communications (cell towers cease to operate) and Transportation (traffic signals no longer work).

The Leadership Decision Framework (Using Lifeline Status)

As a member of the Command and General Staff, your job is to use a lifeline status to make operational decisions. Incident objectives for the entire state are derived directly from unstable, failing lifelines.

The SEOC uses a standardized "Traffic Light" system to visualize this data. *The Health and Medical Lifeline is used as an example.*



Grey
Unknown

Indicates the extent of disruption and impacts to Lifeline services is unknown.

Required Action: This is a knowledge gap and an unknown threat is an unmanaged threat. The Planning and Operations Chiefs must prioritize efforts to gather information on this sector immediately.



Green
Minimal
Impact

Indicates the Lifeline is functioning at pre-incident levels, with only minor disruptions or limitations.

Required Action: Monitor for changes. Begin looking at demobilizing state resources from this sector to save costs and reduce footprint.



Yellow
Moderate
Impact

Indicates there are disruptions or limitations to the delivery of normal, pre-incident services and resources. The situation requires attention and proactive measures to prevent further deterioration and ensure community needs are met.

Restoration of this Lifeline is still in progress, and the community has not returned to pre-incident levels of service. This includes instances in which Lifeline restoration is being addressed through temporary means.

Required Action: The Operations Section must assign resources to prevent this from degrading into a Red status.



Red
Significant
Impact

Indicates there are severe challenges and obstacles hindering the essential services and resources associated with the Lifeline. Immediate attention and resources are required to address the situation and restore functionality.

Required Action: The Top Priority. The SEOC Manager and Section Chiefs must dedicate the majority of effort and resources to stabilizing this lifeline immediately.



Blue
Administrative

Does not indicate an operational status or condition; used for administrative purposes such as presentations and briefings.

Required Action: No immediate action required.

Determining The Status of a Community Lifeline

The status of a Lifeline depends on the capability of the underlying components, and is informed by situational awareness reports, impact assessments, and conversing with partners across the public, private, and non-profit sectors.

Emergency Response Team members are generally responsible for providing and assessing information that will aid in updating the status of Lifeline components and subcomponents. However, **depending on the activation level and ERT member availability, the Operations Section Chief, in conjunction with the Planning Section Chief, may need to determine the status of selected community lifelines.** The information that needs to be provided to assess and categorize a Lifeline is detailed in **Section 7E: Assessing Community Lifelines.**

Prioritizing Resources using Lifelines

When demand exceeds supply, the Command and General Staff use Lifeline status to adjudicate the conflict. Do not distribute resources on a "first-come, first-served" basis. Use this scale:

Priority 1: Resources that stabilize a Red Lifeline (e.g., providing a generator to a hospital without power).

Priority 2: Resources that prevent a Yellow Lifeline from turning Red (e.g., providing sandbags to a water treatment plant that is threatened but still operational).

Priority 3: Resources for routine operations or Green Lifelines.

Stability Targets (Perfection vs. Stability)

A critical concept for SEOC leaders to understand is the difference between "Stabilized" and "Fixed." A Community Lifeline is considered "stabilized" when basic services are provided to survivors, removing the immediate threat to life and property. This does not always mean the infrastructure is fixed; it means the immediate need is met.

Stabilization is achieved in two ways: Contingency Response (short-term, temporary solutions like setting up a field hospital or delivering bottled water) or Rapid Re-establishment (restoring normal providers via emergency repairs, such as using generators to power a facility). These measures bridge the gap until permanent infrastructure repairs are completed, ensuring the community can function even while long-term recovery is still underway. At this point, the SEOC can shift its primary focus to the next Red Lifeline. Perfection is not the goal; stability is.

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Section 3: Driving Information and Strategy (Incident Action Plan Development)

The SEOC does not physically put out fires, clear roads, or treat patients. The primary currency of the SEOC is information. As a Command or General Staff leader, your core responsibility is to gather raw data, process it into actionable information, and use it to drive the statewide strategy (the Incident Action Plan.)

The plan functions as the formal, written articulation of the strategy for the state response. It communicates the incident objectives and the tactics incident personnel use for a set operational period. This plan synchronizes the efforts of government agencies, NGOs, and private partners to ensure coordinated action toward shared goals. Creating the IAP is the central focus of the General Staff.

While the Planning Section Chief facilitates the compilation of the document, the entire leadership team drives the strategy and content through a structured process. This process, detailed below, is aligned with the SEOC Operational Rhythm and is detailed in the Briefings and Meetings section.

Step One: Understand the situation and establish the "Leader's Intent" (SEOC Manager).

The process begins with the SEOC Manager, in conjunction with the Policy Group, evaluating the current information and defining the strategic "Leader's Intent."

Initial situational awareness involves the gathering of information from as many sources as possible, as quickly as possible, to ensure that decision makers have the knowledge they need to make the best possible decisions.

The SEOC Manager then dictates the overarching goals for the next operational period. For example, the intent might be: "For

Key Takeaways

The SEOC is flooded with raw data during an activation. Your job is to filter the "noise" and elevate actionable intelligence to the people who actually need it.

Not all information is created equal. Learn the difference between routine situational updates and urgent, operational triggers that require an immediate decision.

Information flow is a two-way street. If the field sends you data, they need the processed strategy and resource updates sent back down to them. Information shouldn't die at your desk.

the next 12 hours, our priority is ensuring access to life-saving medical care and preventing exposure in shelters."

Gaining Initial Situational Awareness: Where does information come from? Where does information go?

In a disaster, information is just as critical as physical supplies like sandbags or generators. Without a clear picture of what is actually happening on the ground, resources are inevitably wasted, and lives are put at risk. The SEOC acts as the central nervous system for the state's entire response, constantly receiving, processing, and distributing information.

Where information comes from (Sources)

To build an accurate Common Operating Picture (COP), the SEOC relies on a massive influx of raw data from diverse sources. Because you cannot manage what you cannot see, your primary sources of information include:

- **County Emergency Management Agencies:** These represent the primary source of "ground truth." Counties roll up local impact reports from municipalities and push them up to the state level.
- **Emergency Response Team (ERT) Members:** State agency representatives sitting on the SEOC floor who are talking directly to their deployed field personnel (e.g., DOT reporting on washed-out bridges, State Police reporting on major evacuation bottlenecks).
- **Private Sector & NGO Partners:** Utility companies, hospital associations, and volunteer organizations reporting on their statuses and internal capacities.
- **Technical Sensors and Systems:** Automated data feeds, such as National Weather Service forecasts, river gauges, power outage maps, and online cameras.
- **Media and the Public:** News broadcasts and social media sentiment to identify emerging public narratives or unverified hazards.

Who information goes to (Recipients)

Gathering the data is only part of your responsibility. If information simply stays on your desk, it is completely useless. You must actively push processed, verified information to the right audiences:

- **The Policy Group:** They need high-level executive summaries and impact forecasts to make legal declarations, approve emergency funding, and communicate strategically with the public.
- **County EMAs:** County EMA Leadership and responders need to know what the state is actively doing to support them. They need accurate delivery schedules for requested resources, pending safety warnings, and an understanding of the statewide strategy.
- **Federal Partners (FEMA):** FEMA requires verified, formal damage assessments and clear operational shortfalls to legally justify moving federal resources and funding into Maine.
- **The Public:** Through the Public Information Officer, the public receives life-saving warnings, evacuation route instructions, and active shelter locations.

At the leadership level, the integrity of this information flow is the primary safeguard against the uncertainty and misinformation that can hinder a crisis response. When the SEOC effectively distills raw field data into actionable situational awareness, it empowers the Policy Group to make high-stakes decisions with confidence and precision.

Ultimately, this system transforms a chaotic environment into a managed one. It ensures that every executive order, resource allocation, and public communication is backed by a unified ground truth. In this framework, information is more than a logistical necessity. It is the strategic tool that preserves public trust and ensures the continuity of government during the state's most vulnerable moments.

The Two Types of Information

During a Level 1 or 2 activation, the SEOC can become overwhelmed with incoming data points. To effectively manage and prioritize the flow of data, emergency management categorizes information into two distinct types.

TYPE	DEFINITION	THE "LITMUS TEST"	ACTION REQUIRED
Critical Information Requirement (CIR)	<p>"The Game Changer"</p> <p>Information regarding immediate threats to life, safety, or major infrastructure failure. This is news that changes how we manage the disaster right now.</p>	Does this mean people are dying or a system is collapsing immediately?	<p>SHOUT IT OUT. Do not wait for a meeting. Use your microphone, or stand up, and verbally announce it to the SEOC immediately. Start with "Attention in the EOC," and provide the information.</p>
Essential Element of Information (EEI)	<p>"The Status Update"</p> <p>Standard data points we need to track progress (e.g., number of shelters open, percent of power restored).</p>	Is this a number or status update needed for the next update briefing, or meeting?	<p>LOG IT. Enter this into WebEOC or provide it during your scheduled report time.</p>

Table: Information Types, MEMA 2026

Critical Information Requirements

CIRs are urgent, highly time-sensitive pieces of information that indicate a significant change or deterioration in the incident. CIRs represent the "trigger points" that demand immediate leadership attention because they will likely force a sudden change in strategy, prompt a major resource deployment, or require an immediate public safety warning.

Depending on the hazard or threat being experienced, additional CIRs and EEIs may be assigned. These can be found in the Hazard Information Sheets found in **Section 7.C Hazard Information Sheets and Associated CIRs/EEIs**.

Note: CIRs apply to ALL Lifelines. If any Lifeline turns "Red/Unstable," that is a CIR. Also, any event, not captured below, that poses a significant and imminent threat to public health and safety, property, or the environment is classified as a CIR.

1. Life Safety & Mass Casualty

- **Fatalities:** Any confirmed fatalities, serious injuries, or hospitalization of all residents/nonresidents resulting from the disaster/emergency.
- **State Centric Incidents:** Any accident involving state vehicles, equipment, or facilities that results in a loss or serious damage to equipment or property.

- **Mass Casualty Incident:** Any incident overwhelming the medical transport or treatment capacity of a local jurisdiction (e.g., >10 simultaneous critical transports).
- **Evacuations:** Any Shelter in Place or mandatory evacuation order of a populated area, or area including key infrastructure or facilities requiring special care (i.e. hospital, nursing home, school).

2. Critical Infrastructure Failure/Disruption

- **911/Comms Failure:** Complete loss of 911 receiving capability or public safety radio network in any county.
- **Dam Integrity:** Notification of a "Potential Failure" or "Imminent Failure" condition for any High Hazard Potential Dam.
- **Transportation Systems Status Changes:** Any complete closure or significant restriction of commercial airports (e.g., PWM, BGR), deep-water harbors, or ferry services. This includes closures or restrictions of any Interstate (I-95, I-295), US Route, primary State supply route, or major line of communication (rail/bridge) anticipated to last >4 hours.
- **Grid Instability:** Loss of power to any Level 1 Critical Facility (Hospital, EOC, 911 Call Centers) where backup generation has failed or is unstable.

3. Operational Escalation

- **County Declaration:** Any County Emergency Management Agency, in coordination with county leadership, declaring a "State of Emergency" or activating their EOC to "Full" levels.
- **Request for Assistance:** Any major Request for Assistance from a county or other agencies that the SEOC is unable to support or cannot support on a timely basis.
- **Resource Exhaustion:** Formal requests for State Assets (National Guard, Forestry, State Police) or Mutual Aid (EMAC/IEMAC) due to the exhaustion of local/county resources.
- **Civil Unrest:** Confirmed reports of civil unrest, looting, or violence hindering emergency response operations.

Essential Elements of Information Requirements

EI are standardized data points required for consistent reporting and situational awareness. They are standard metrics you collect continuously to track operational progress, evaluate resource burn rates, and measure the stability of Community Lifelines over time. To streamline

this process, EEI are categorized by Community Lifeline. The tables below indicate which ERT members are assigned to each community lifeline, and the related EEIs.

SAFETY & SECURITY EEIs	
<p>Assigned Agencies/Organizations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry – Maine Forest Service • Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife – Maine Warden Service • Department of Marine Resources – Marine Patrol • Department of Public Safety – Maine State Police • Department of Corrections • U.S. Coast Guard [Also directly contributes to Transportation and Hazardous Materials Lifelines] 	<p>Refer to Page 7D-2</p>
FOOD, HYDRATION, & SHELTER EEIs	
<p>Assigned Agencies/Organizations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Defense, Veterans, and Emergency Management – Maine Emergency Management Agency • Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry • Department of Health and Human Services – Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention • Department of Education (Sheltering Operations) 	<p>Refer to Page 7D-3</p>
HEALTH & MEDICAL EEIs	
<p>Assigned Agencies/Organizations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Health and Human Services - Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention • Department of Public Safety - Maine Emergency Medical Services 	<p>Refer to Page 7D-4</p>
WATER SYSTEMS EEIs	
<p>Assigned Agencies/Organizations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Health and Human Services – Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention • Department of Environmental Protection 	<p>Refer to Page 7D-5</p>
ENERGY EEIs	
<p>Assigned Agencies/Organizations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Energy Resources • Public Utilities Commission 	<p>Refer to Page 7D-6</p>

COMMUNICATIONS EEs	
<p>Assigned Agencies/Organizations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Defense, Veterans, and Emergency Management – Maine Emergency Management Agency Communications Office & External Affairs • Maine Office of Information Technology 	Refer to Page 7D-7
TRANSPORTATION EEs	
<p>Assigned Agencies/Organizations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Transportation • Maine Turnpike Authority • U.S. Coast Guard [Also directly contributes to Safety & Security and Hazardous Materials Lifelines] 	Refer to Page 7D-8
HAZARDOUS MATERIAL EEs	
<p>Assigned Agencies/Organizations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Environmental Protection • Department of Marine Resources • U.S. Coast Guard [Also directly contributes to Transportation and Hazardous Materials Lifelines] 	Refer to Page 7D-9

Step Two: Develop the Incident Objectives (Command & General Staff)

Once the SEOC Manager establishes the broad intent, the leadership team collaboratively turns that intent into specific, measurable, and achievable Incident Objectives. These objectives are the "What" that needs to be accomplished, not the "How." Objectives for the next operational period are typically discussed during the Command & General Staff meeting, so that important information regarding incident management, or things that might impact future objectives, can be shared with the staff.

NOTE: Section 6, Procedural Reference 1: How to Develop Incident Objectives provides additional detail on the creation of objectives.

Step Three: Define the Operational Strategy (Operations Section Chief)

With the objectives set, the Operations Section Chief assumes the lead in the development of a strategy. Strategies establish the foundation for operational decisions. If SEOC staff are directly managing an incident, strategies also drive the required tactics.

The Operations Chief completes the ICS 215 (Operational Planning Worksheet). This form dictates how the state will achieve the objectives by assigning missions, tasks, and geographic responsibilities. While field commanders define specific tactics (the physical execution of tasks, such as where to park a fire engine or how to clear a roadblock), the SEOC develops overarching operational strategies and Courses of Action (COAs). A COA specifies the who, what, where, and when for allocating state-level resources to achieve the state objectives.

The process of developing strategies does not occur during a formal meeting. The Operations Section staff begins the process of developing strategies immediately when they receive the incident objectives for an operational period. The Section Chief develops strategies collaboratively with section staff and in consultation with others such as Logistics, Safety, and Security personnel to ensure that the strategies are fully supportable. All strategies must be weighed against available resources, time, and the probability of achieving the desired outcomes.

After broad strategies have been established, Operations personnel are responsible for developing the COAs to implement them. This requires taking into account statewide constraints, logistical limitations, and other strategic considerations. For example, the Operations Section must consider whether there are major regional road closures affecting supply chains, or if the necessary resources will even be available for the next operational period.

Once the kind, type, and qualification of available resources are known, and constraints are identified, the Operations Section Chief uses the following activities to develop COAs on the Operational Planning Worksheet:

1. **Identify the Requirement:** Determine what state-level actions must be done to implement the strategy and what method(s) are likely to achieve success.
2. **List Required Resources:** Develop a comprehensive list of resources (personnel, specialized teams, equipment, mass care supplies, and facilities) that are required.
3. **Identify Available Resources:** Provide a list of currently available state and mutual aid resources (done in coordination with the Resource Unit/Logistics).
4. **Compare and Resolve:** Compare the resources required with the resources available. Discuss any shortfalls and findings with the Command and General Staff prior to the formal Planning Meeting.

5. **Draft the COA:** Draft the COA based on this analysis. Request additional personnel, supplies, services, and equipment needed to implement the COA, with the understanding that newly requested resources will usually not arrive in time to be applied in the immediate next operational period.

The definition of the operational strategy concludes with the selection of specific resources to perform specific work assignments. They then write these broad work assignments for each resource and identify reporting locations on the ICS 215.

Step Four: Validate the Resource Requirements (Logistics & Finance Chiefs)

A strategy is only viable if it can be executed and funded. As Operations builds the strategy, the Logistics Section Chief and Finance Section Chief validate the ICS 215. Logistics confirms the requested resources are available. Finance ensures the emergency procurement of these resources aligns with legal authorities.

Step Five: Conduct the Safety and Strategy Alignment Analysis (SEOC Manager)

Before the plan is finalized, the SEOC Manager reviews the proposed strategies to ensure that they are aligned with the leader's intent. If inherent risks are identified, appropriate mitigation plans must be in place. If any proposed strategy is unacceptably dangerous, the SEOC Manager must halt and have it re-developed.

Step Six: Align Public Messaging (Public Information Officer)

The Public Information Officer provides the public messaging strategy. This step ensures operational plans align with statements released to the public, preventing a disconnect between what the state is doing and what the state is saying.

Step Seven: Compile and Distribute (Planning Section Chief)

After the Command and General Staff define, resource, and secure the strategy, the Planning Section Chief collects the necessary data from each section within WebEOC. The Planning Section Chief compiles this information into the final IAP record, secures the approving signature of the SEOC Manager within the system, and distributes the published plan to all personnel via the WebEOC Incident Log.

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Section 4: Leading in the Operational Rhythm

Key Takeaways

You dictate the schedule. Enforce deadlines, keep meetings on the agenda, and ensure information reaches the correct staff.

Avoid using meeting time to discover data. Review your section status, validate reports, and identify resource needs before you enter the room.

Prioritize immediate life safety actions over formal meetings during the initial response phase. Transition to a stable schedule as the incident expands to align state efforts, support federal partners, and prevent staff fatigue.

The SEOC Manager establishes a structured rhythm for all operations. This schedule defines a continuous 24-hour cycle broken into distinct operational periods. Its tempo synchronizes state actions, forces command decisions to occur on time, and ensures information transfers to the correct people.

During the initial response phase, the first operational period adapts to the unpredictable timeline of the event. The schedule remains fluid. Leaders prioritize immediate life safety actions and resource deployments over formal meetings. However, as the incident expands and transitions into a sustained response, the SEOC Manager stabilizes the schedule. A predictable operational rhythm prevents staff fatigue, aligns state efforts with federal partners, and creates a reliable structure for the Incident Action Plan development process.

As a Command or General Staff leader, you dictate this rhythm. You enforce deadlines, validate data, and facilitate decisions. If you miss a deadline or allow a meeting to derail, the entire state response stalls

Core Meetings and Leadership Responsibilities

The Planning Section Chief manages the meeting schedule, as well as facilitates most meetings, but specific leaders own the content and execution of each meeting.

SEOC meetings require strong discipline. As a leader, you enforce the rules to maintain the operational rhythm:

- **Come Prepared:** Do not use meeting time to discover data. Review your section's status, resource shortfalls, and critical information requirements before the meeting begins.

- **Be Concise:** Stick to the agenda. Present only the information that affects other sections, alters the timeline, or requires a strategic decision.
- **Delegate Attendance:** If a crisis requires your attention, send your deputy. A section must always have representation.

Note: A full description, agenda, and script for each of these meetings can be found in **Section 7B: Operational Rhythm Briefings/Meetings.**

EVENT/MEETING	FREQUENCY	RESPONSIBILITY	PURPOSE
Initial Response & Assessment Briefing	One Time (Activation + 20 min)	SEOC Manager [Operations Section Chief Backup]	Provides SEOC staff, Emergency Response Team members, and key stakeholders with basic information regarding the situation and any allocated resources.
Process and Procedures Meeting	One Time (Activation + 90 min)	Planning Section Chief	Communicates essential organizational processes, or deviations to SEOC staff and Emergency Response Team members.

Table: Initial Activation Meetings, MEMA 2026

EVENT/MEETING	FREQUENCY	RESPONSIBILITY	PURPOSE
Operational Period Transition Briefing	Start of Shift (0700-0800 1900-2000)	SEOC Manager [Ops Section Chief Backup]	Formal transition. Final brief for the outgoing shift; kickoff for the incoming shift.
Objectives Meeting	Early Shift (0830-0900 2030-2100)	SEOC Manager	Sets operational period objectives. (Attendance usually limited to Command/General Staff).
Situation & Strategy Briefing	Mid-Shift (1100-1200 2300-0000)	Operations Section Chief	Comprehensive status check. Confirm progress, identify issues, coordinate strategy.
SEOC Command & General (C&G) Staff Meeting	Mid-Shift (1200-1300 0000-0100)	SEOC Manager	Leadership alignment on priorities.
Planning Meeting	Late-Shift (1600-1700 0400-0500)	Planning Section Chief	Approves the IAP for the next operational period.
Executive Briefing [If required]	Daily or as directed	SEOC Manager [Ops Section Chief Backup]	Briefing for State Leadership/Governor's Office.

Table: Reoccurring Operational Period Meetings, MEMA 2026

This **EXAMPLE** schedule repeats every operational period (e.g., 12 or 24 hours).

TIME D-Day/N-Night	EVENT / MEETING	ATTENDEES (Mandatory)	LEADERSHIP ACTIONS
(D) 0630-0700 (N) 1830-1900	Staff Arrival & Shift Change	All Incoming/Outgoing Staff	Conduct individual handovers with outgoing counterparts. Receive the pass down log.
(D) 0700-0800 (N) 1900-2000	Operational Period Transition Briefing	All Incoming/Outgoing Staff	Attend formal transition. Review the published Incident Action Plan.
(D) 0800 (N) 2000	Status Check	Section Chiefs and Emergency Response Team members	Verify all section systems, personnel, and communications function.
(D) 0830-0900 (N) 2030-2100	Objectives Meeting	Policy Group, SEOC Manager, Planning Section, Operations Section	Review all incident and operational period objectives and align actions/efforts
(D) 1000 (N) 2200	Lifeline Assessments – Situation Updates Due	All Sections and Emergency Response Team members	Enforce deadline. Validate data submitted by Emergency Response Team members.
(D) 1100-1200 (N) 2300-0000	Situation & Strategy Briefing	All SEOC staff, Emergency Response Team members, Relevant Counties, Tribal Nations, and Stakeholders	Operations Section Chief leads. All leaders confirm progress and identify shortfalls.
(D) 1200-1300 (N) 0000-0100	Command & General Staff Meeting	Policy Group, SEOC Manager, Public Information Officer, All General Staff Sections	SEOC Manager leads. Resolve interagency conflicts and finalize resource priorities.
(D) 1600-1700 (N) 0400-0500	Planning Meeting (for Next Ops Period)	Policy Group, Command Staff & General Staff (All)	Planning Section Chief leads. Command and General Staff finalize assignments for the next operational period.
(D) 1700-1715 (N) 0500-0515	Incident Action Plan Approved & Published	Planning Section	Planning Section distributes the finalized plan to all stakeholders.
(D) 1800 (N) 0600	Lifeline Assessments – Situation Updates Due	All Sections and Emergency Response Team members	Enforce deadline. Validate data for the end of shift Situation Report.
(D) 1830-1900 (N) 0630-0700	Section Clean-Up & Position Hand Off	All Staff	Update WebEOC logs. Prepare briefing notes for incoming shift relief.
(D) 1900-2000 (N) 0700-0800	Operational Period Transition Briefing	All Incoming/Outgoing Staff	Start of new Ops Period / Formal transition of shifts

Table: EXAMPLE Meeting Schedule, MEMA 2026

The Operational Rhythm

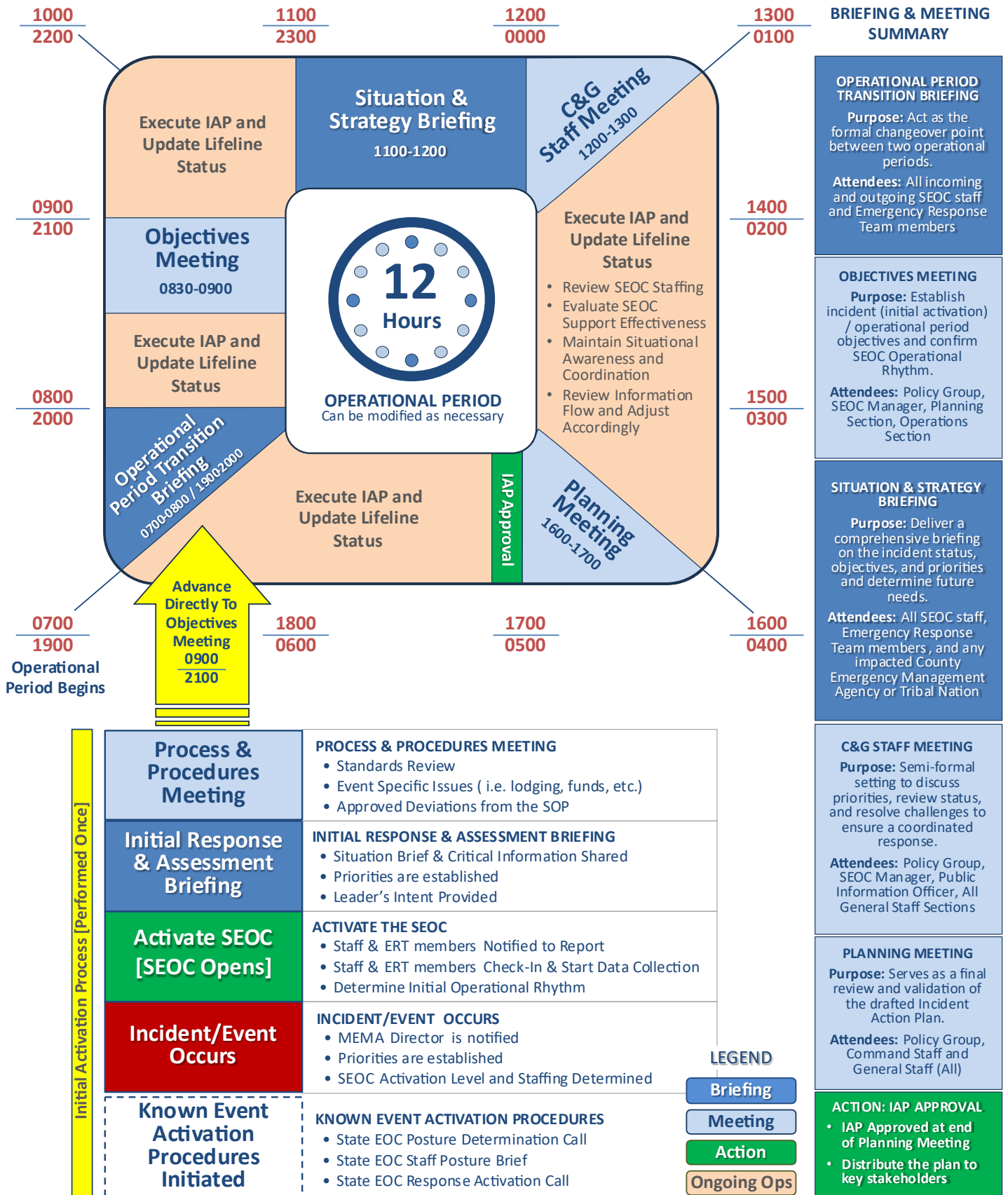
The graphic on the following page illustrates how each meeting fits into the SEOC operational period. The rhythm is the master schedule for the SEOC and is typically divided into two main parts:

1. **The Initial Activation (Bottom Section):** This is the "start-up" phase. It covers the moment an emergency happens, the notification of key leaders, and the opening of the command center.
2. **The Daily Routine (The Large Circle):** Once the center is open, the team follows this 12-hour clock. It includes specific times for briefings to share "what is happening," meetings to decide "what we do next," and periods of focused work to get the job done.

The Initial Activation Process transforms the immediate complexity of a sudden event into a structured response through five distinct stages. The process begins with Known Event Activation Procedures and culminates in the Process and Procedures Meeting. This sequence transitions the SEOC from a reactive posture into a formal structure that supports the primary 12-hour operational period. By establishing this initial rhythm, the SEOC shifts from the surprise of an incident toward long term management and sustained situational awareness.

Within the circular operational cycle, personnel share information at specific intervals instead of a disorganized stream. This 12-hour battle rhythm coordinates hierarchical communication through targeted sessions like the Situation & Strategy Briefing, the Command & General Staff Meeting, and the Planning Meeting. These gatherings align high level strategy from the Policy Group with the operational level actions of the General Staff. The process emphasizes the Incident Action Plan through a continuous loop where teams execute tasks, update lifeline status, evaluate effectiveness, and refine the plan for the subsequent shift.

As a reminder, operational periods can vary depending on the circumstances. The graphic depicts a "typical" shift. The SEOC Manager will make the final determination and publish the schedule shortly after the SEOC is activated.



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Section 5: Shift Handoffs and Deactivation

Continuity of command requires a formal transfer of power and information. A disaster environment produces constant change. As a leader, you must ensure your replacement understands the operational reality before you exit the building. You must also lead the systematic reduction of the SEOC footprint as the incident stabilizes.

The Leadership Handover

You must arrive 30 minutes before your shift begins to conduct a face-to-face briefing with your outgoing counterpart. Do not leave your post until your replacement assumes control.

Use the following checklist to close out your shift:

END OF SHIFT CHECKLIST

- Update WebEOC:** Ensure your section staff updates all log entries, resource requests, and Lifeline status boards prior to shift change.
- Clean Up Pending Actions:** Document the precise next steps for unfinished tasks to guarantee a seamless transition for your relief.
- After Action Review (AAR):** Add observations and strategic lessons learned to the AAR board within WebEOC. (Ideally, this is to be done throughout the shift.)
- Prepare "Transition" Notes:** Write a short summary (bullet points) covering:
 - **Current Status:** State the major operational effort for your section right now.
 - **Resource Status:** List the critical resources deployed and major shortfalls.
 - **Critical Issues:** Detail the unsolved problems and failing lifelines.
 - **Pending Decisions:** Identify strategic choices the incoming leader must make.

Key Takeaways

You must brief your replacement on the current situation, pending decisions, and resource shortfalls before you leave your post.

You must evaluate your staffing needs during each shift and release personnel as incident objectives conclude.

Ensure your team resolves open requests, submits final logs, and prepares financial packets before you depart the facility.

- **Staff Welfare:** Report any personnel issues, injuries, or fatigue concerns within your section.
- **Key Contacts:** List crucial external partners, liaison officers, or policy group members engaged today.
- Face-to-Face Briefing:** Walk your relief through your transition notes, the physical pass down log, and the current Incident Action Plan. Never just hand them a document.
- Tour the Floor:** Conduct a joint walk of the SEOC floor with your replacement to visually inspect operations and introduce them to key personnel (as necessary).
- Computer Closeout:** Sign out of WebEOC and any other related state systems.
- Sign Out:** Sign out on the SEOC Staff Roster after your relief assumes command.

Demobilization Planning

Demobilization begins the moment the SEOC activates. As response efforts succeed and Community Lifelines stabilize, you must shrink the operational footprint to save taxpayer funds and return staff to their routine duties.

- Review your section staffing scale during every shift.
- Identify Emergency Response Team members you can release as specific incident objectives conclude.
- Submit personnel release recommendations to the Planning Section Chief to incorporate into the daily Demobilization Plan.

Deactivation and Documentation

When the SEOC Manager declares the facility deactivated, all leaders must secure their records to support the recovery phase.

Planning Section Chief: Collects all incident logs, meeting notes, and situation reports to build the After-Action Review.

Finance Section Chief: Verifies all personnel time, equipment usage, and emergency procurement costs to support federal reimbursement claims.

FULL DEMOBILIZATION/DEACTIVATION CHECKLIST (All Leaders)

- Resolve Open Requests:** Ensure your section staff marks every resource request as filled, cancelled, or demobilized in WebEOC. Do not allow pending requests to remain.
- Submit Final Logs:** Verify the activity logs for your entire section are complete. Submit copies, not already within WebEOC, to the Documentation Unit (Planning Section).
- Process Financial Packet:** Compile and submit copies of all financial documents, contracts, and receipts from your section to the Finance Section to support federal reimbursement.
- Contribute to the After-Action Review (AAR):** Add any comments or observations to the AAR board within WebEOC.
- Notify Leadership:** Inform your executive leadership (as necessary) that the SEOC is deactivating and you are returning to routine duties.
- Computer Closeout:** Sign out of WebEOC and any other related systems.
- Clean Section Workspaces:**
 - Remove all personal items.
 - Delete temporary files from the desktop (not the shared drive).
 - Sanitize your workspace (wipe down phone, keyboard, desk).
- Return Equipment:** Ensure your staff returns all issued equipment and badges to the Logistics Section.
- Checkout:** Sign out on the SEOC Staff Roster. Inform the SEOC Manager you are departing the facility.

Section 6: Command & General Staff Job Aids

Command Staff Job Aids:

- SEOC Manager
- Public Information Officer
- Communications Office Director
- Safety Officer
- Liaison Officer

General Staff Job Aids:

- Operations Section Chief
- Logistics Section Chief
- Planning Section Chief
- Finance Section Chief

Procedural References:

- How To Develop Incident Objectives

COMMAND STAFF JOB AIDS

POSITION: SEOC MANAGER

The State Emergency Operations Center Manager serves as the designated lead responsible for the overall operational readiness, leadership, and management of the response facility and its assigned staff. Unlike an Incident Commander who directs tactical actions at the scene of an emergency, this position focuses on strategic support, multi-agency coordination, policy implementation, and information management across multiple jurisdictions. The manager handles the organizational aspects of the response, implementing state-level strategic objectives and directing resources to ensure a unified effort.

This role functions as the vital link between senior executive leadership and operational response elements. The manager ensures policy alignment to prioritize resources based on Lifeline impacts, translating broad strategic guidance into actionable objectives for SEOC Sections, including Planning, Operations, Logistics, Finance, and Recovery. Key duties include establishing command, developing the Incident Action Plan, authorizing resource allocation, and ensuring personnel safety. Throughout the event, the manager maintains strategic oversight through a Common Operating Picture and manages the eventual transition from response to recovery.

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities are ongoing, dynamic, and require continuous judgment, meaning they cannot be marked as "complete" on a binary checklist

Tier 1: Critical Strategic Decisions & Resource Authority

- Continually assess the operational environment to determine if triggering the agency Continuity of Operations (COOP) plan is required due to impacts on essential functions or threats to the SEOC facility itself.
- Arbitrating conflicting demands for scarce resources, retaining final approval authority for high-priority requests, specifically those requiring significant financial commitment or extraordinary State liability, prioritizing based on life safety.
- Determining the need to reduce activation levels or completely deactivate the SEOC based on incident status, leading final briefings and notifying relevant parties when the decision is made.

Tier 2: Situational Awareness & Policy Alignment

- Ensuring the creation and continuous dissemination of a Common Operating Picture by continually reviewing reports detailing resource commitments and the status of Community Lifelines so that all stakeholders have shared situational awareness.
- Serving as the primary advisor to the Policy Group regarding emergency status, response capabilities, and necessary policy decisions.
- Maintains contact with the Policy Group to periodically validate and/or update strategic goals as the situation evolves, translating that direction into specific SEOC objectives.

Tier 3: SEOC Management & Coordination

- Providing overall direction and supervision to the SEOC General Staff (Section Chiefs) and Command Staff.
- Maintaining the SEOC operational rhythm (ensuring adherence to the schedule amidst disruptions).
- Facilitating multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional coordination, including with Federal partners, to ensure unified effort and prevent duplication of resources.
- Ensuring proper staffing levels for all activated SEOC sections, including planning for sustained 24/7 operations through shift rotations.

Tier 4: Recovery Transition

- Coordinating the dynamic transition from response operations to short-term and long-term recovery phases.

SEOC MANAGER CHECKLIST

INITIAL ACTIVATION

- Receive a briefing from the MEMA Director or outgoing Duty Officer.
- Determine the SEOC activation level. Depending on activation level, perform the following actions:
 - Notify leadership and select subject matter experts as necessary.
 - Appoint Section Chiefs and determine the necessary service levels and staffing to manage specific functional areas (supported by staff activation matrix data).
 - Identify ERT members, Disaster Response Team, or other subject matter experts required to initially support response efforts.
 - Determine staffing requirement for damage assessments as required.
 - Implement notification actions in accordance with the SEOC Activation Procedures document.
- Establish the operational period (e.g., 12-hour shifts) and rhythm for the activation.
- Direct the establishment and publishing of the WebEOC Common Operating Picture.
- Establish initial priorities based on core capabilities and Policy Group direction.
- Initial Response & Assessment Briefing:** Lead the meeting. Provide opening comments and establish the leader's intent. Output: Provide immediate action directives to all sections.
- Verify Operations Section Chief has received Incident Command Post objectives.
- Process & Procedures Meeting:** Attend to provide management oversight on SEOC procedures. Approve and procedural deviations from SEOC standard operating or administrative management procedures. Receive financial threshold.
- Identify resource shortfalls, critical capability gaps, support requirements (such as aviation), or potential hazards/risks to the response. Assign staff to determine mitigation plans as necessary.

OPERATIONAL PERIOD

- Receive a briefing from the MEMA Director or outgoing SEOC Manager to receive or update Leader's Intent.

- Initial review the status of Community Lifelines to determine if priorities are in alignment.
- Review (or initiate) the ICS 214 Activity Log. This will be in WebEOC or hardcopy depending on SEOC operational status.
- Operational Period Transition Briefing (Start of Shift):** Lead the meeting. Provide a concise overview of the situation, objectives, community lifeline status, and the approved plan to incoming personnel. Output: Shift transition with established COP and leadership intent.
- Objectives Meeting:** Serve as the meeting lead. Conduct the situation review, designate priorities, designate objectives, and propose the operational rhythm. Output: Approved Incident Objectives and finalized SEOC operational period (next period), verified meeting schedules.
- Situation & Strategy Briefing:** Attend to monitor situational development and potential adjustments to strategic direction. Provide closing comments and guidance. Output: Strategic alignment with Operational Objectives.
- Command & General Staff Meeting:** Lead the meeting. Provide assistance in the update of objectives, prioritization, guidance, and/or strategies using proposed priorities and operational challenges. Output: Plan for a unified and coordinated response.
- Planning Meeting:** Attend to confirm readiness. Provide overall coordination updates to guarantee support for the draft plan. Output: Approval of the finalized IAP.
- Review and sign the Incident Action Plan for the following operational period.
- Approve required situation report (SITREP) for the current Operational Period.
- Conduct limited “Hot-Wash” After-Action Review for the Operational Period (as necessary or desired)
- Operational Period Transition Briefing (End of Shift):** Lead the meeting. Provide a concise overview of the situation, objectives, community lifeline status, and the approved plan to incoming personnel. Output: Shift transition with established COP and leadership intent.

DEACTIVATION/DEMOBILIZATION

- Leads the scheduling and execution of After-Action Reviews, defining the scope and establishing review objectives to formally close out the emergency response.

POSITION: PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER (PIO)

The Public Information Officer serves as the Command Staff lead responsible for the interface between the SEOC and the public, media, and other agencies regarding incident information. Unlike a local spokesperson focused on a single scene, the SEOC PIO operates at a strategic level. This role involves managing/supporting state level messaging, coordinating external communications, and ensuring that all disseminated information remains accurate, timely, and accessible.

The PIO functions as the primary advisor to the SEOC Manager and the Policy Group on matters of public perception, media relations, and crisis communication. This role ensures that the public receives clear guidance on life safety actions and resource availability. By establishing a Joint Information Center (JIC) when necessary, the PIO synchronizes messaging across local, state, federal, and private sector partners. This synchronization prevents conflicting information and strengthens the Common Operating Picture.

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities remain ongoing and dynamic. These tasks require continuous judgment and are not enacted as a binary checklist. Tasks marked with an asterisk (*) may be delegated to subordinate staff.

Tier 1: Crisis Communication & Policy Integration

- Serve as a member of the EOC Policy staff to advise the Policy Group on public information matters relating to event management.
- Provide strategic counsel to the Policy Group and SEOC Manager regarding the communication impacts of operational decisions.
- Authorize the release of emergency public information, including evacuation orders or shelter locations, following approval from the SEOC Manager or Policy Group.
- Coordinate with the Governor Communications office on key messages, situation information, and the role of the Governor in public appearances.
- Verify that information is clear, confirmed, and approved by the appropriate authority, using the established approval process, before release to the media or public.

- Determine the need to activate or deactivate the Joint Information Center based on the scale of the incident.

Tier 2: Messaging Synchronization

- Lead coordination efforts with county PIOs, federal counterparts, and private industry to ensure all partners speak with a unified voice.
- Establish a State Media Center at the SEOC during protracted or escalating events.
- Direct the development of talking points, news releases, and social media updates that reflect current operational objectives.
- Monitor media and social media platforms to identify rumors, misinformation, or public concerns.
- Implement rumor control measures to correct inaccurate information that threatens public safety or response efforts.
- Ensure official spokespersons are briefed and provide talking points prior to media appearances.

Tier 3: SEOC Support & Information Flow

- Facilitate the flow of critical information within the Joint Information Center and the SEOC.*
- Track incidents and significant events to share information with appropriate SEOC staff.
- Participate in all SEOC operational rhythm meetings to provide required inputs and gather outputs.
- Support the SEOC Manager in the development of the Common Operating Picture by providing updates on public sentiment and media trends.
- Maintain the PIO Activity Log in WebEOC or physical format to record all significant actions, decisions, and communications.*
- Monitor all incoming emails to jic.eoc@maine.gov and ensure all outgoing email originates from this address.*

- Supervise PIO staff, monitor the status of assigned tasks, and follow up on overdue items.*
- Coordinate with the Liaison Officer to ensure that agency representatives receive consistent messaging for their stakeholders.
- Collect and archive newspaper clippings, online articles, and broadcast video.*
- Keep Public Information Officers in other jurisdictions informed of released information.
- Check public information staff for signs of fatigue and reassign or relieve personnel to maintain operational readiness.

Tier 4: Recovery & Long-Term Public Awareness

- Transition messaging from immediate life safety alerts to recovery resource information.
- Confirm and disseminate information on the restoration of utilities and any active travel restrictions.
- Accommodate federal information officers and coordinate public information regarding assistance programs such as FEMA and the Small Business Administration.
- Manage public expectations regarding the timeline for debris removal, utility restoration, and financial assistance programs.
- Issue media releases or advisories regarding long term recovery.

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER CHECKLIST

INITIAL ACTIVATION

- Receive a briefing from the MEMA Director.
- Determine the staffing requirements for the PIO section and activate additional personnel as needed.
- Establish the Joint Information Center, as directed by the Policy Group, and request involved agencies and private industry to participate.
- Establish a liaison with 211 Maine.
- Activate a Help Line Center at the SEOC or secure surge capacity if the volume of public calls exceeds 211 Maine capacity.
- Notify media outlets of the SEOC activation and provide initial contact information.
- Initial Response & Assessment Briefing:** Attend the meeting. Note the leader intent and immediate action directives to align initial messaging.
- Identify critical information gaps that the public needs to know immediately (e.g., road closures, weather warnings).
- Process & Procedures Meeting:** Attend to confirm the approval process for news releases and public statements.
- Verify that the WebEOC Common Operating Picture includes a public information status update.
- Establish a schedule for regular media briefings and social media updates.

OPERATIONAL PERIOD

- Receive a briefing from the SEOC Manager to receive updated Leader Intent.
- Operational Period Transition Briefing (Start of Shift):** Attend the meeting. Provide a summary of the current communication strategy and any major media trends.
- Review the status of Community Lifelines to identify areas where public information can support stabilization.
- Objectives Meeting:** Attend to ensure communication goals are integrated into the overall incident objectives.
- Situation & Strategy Briefing:** Attend to monitor situational development. Note any changes in strategy that require public notification.

- Command & General Staff Meeting:** Attend the meeting. Provide updates on media inquiries, rumor control efforts, and the status of the Joint Information Center.
- Planning Meeting:** Attend to confirm the communication plan within the draft IAP. Provide input on public safety messaging.
- Review and contribute to the "Public Information" section of the Incident Action Plan.
- Provide a daily summary of public sentiment and media trends to the SEOC Manager.
- Conduct limited "Hot-Wash" After-Action Review for the Operational Period (as necessary or desired)
- Operational Period Transition Briefing (End of Shift):** Provide a summary of pending media requests and the status of the current communication plan to incoming personnel.

DEACTIVATION & DEMOBILIZATION

- Notify all Joint Information Center staff to deactivate.
- Gather all records kept during all phases of the emergency.
- Prepare a chronological summary of events, actions taken, inquiries made, and responses given.
- Survey Joint Information Center, Media Center, 211 Maine, and Help Line staff for suggestions to improve emergency response procedures.
- Provide the Planning Section with copies of all public messaging logs for formal documentation.
- Participate in After Action Reviews to identify successes and challenges in the communication effort.

POST DEACTIVATION & DEMOBILIZATION

- Continue to issue appropriate media releases or advisories regarding long term recovery.

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POSITION: COMMUNICATION OFFICE DIRECTOR

The Communications Office Director serves as a Command Staff level advisor reporting directly to the Policy Group and coordinating with the SEOC Manager. Formerly housed within the Operations Section, this elevated position manages state level communication functions, technological strategy, and information systems. The Communications Office Director establishes the technological framework for the Common Operating Picture and controls the Primary, Alternate, Contingency, and Emergency (PACE) communication plan.

This role functions as the primary authority for maintaining resilient communication networks across the state. The Communications Office Director manages WebEOC administration, ensures uninterrupted lines of communication to county Emergency Management Agencies, and coordinates broader communication strategies to support the response. By overseeing both the hardware and software required for information flow, this position ensures all SEOC sections and external partners maintain shared situational awareness.

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities remain ongoing and dynamic. These tasks require continuous judgment and do not conclude as a binary checklist. The tiers below prioritize actions from high level strategic policy to long term recovery coordination.

Tier 1: Strategic Communications Policy & Infrastructure

- Advise the Policy Group and SEOC Manager on state level communication capabilities, infrastructure vulnerabilities, and technological policies.
- Develop, control, and implement the PACE communication plan.
- Establish overarching communication strategies to support incident objectives and ensure continuity of government operations.
- Authorize the deployment of specialized state communication assets (e.g., mobile command vehicles, radio caches) to support local jurisdictions.

Tier 2: County Connectivity & External Network Management

- Ensure resilient lines of communication to county Emergency Management Agencies and local Incident Command Posts.

- Coordinate with private sector telecommunication partners to monitor, bolster, or restore critical infrastructure.
- Coordinate interoperability plans with federal partners, tribal nations, and neighboring states.
- Arbitrate communication conflicts and frequency allocations between responding agencies to ensure a unified effort.

Tier 3: SEOC Support & COP Maintenance

- Establish and maintain the technological framework for the Common Operating Picture.
- Manage WebEOC administration, resolve access issues, and ensure system stability for all users.
- Provide technical support for all SEOC presentation hardware, displays, and virtual meeting platforms.
- Participate in all SEOC operational rhythm meetings to represent communication capabilities and gather technological requirements.
- Maintain the Communications Office Activity Log to record significant actions, decisions, and network status changes.
- Supervise Communications staff and monitor the status of assigned tasks to maintain operational readiness.

Tier 4: Recovery & Demobilization

- Transition emergency communication systems and temporary networks back to steady state operations.
- Coordinate the retrieval, maintenance, and inventory of all deployed state communication assets.
- Develop after action reports detailing communication system successes, failures, and required technological upgrades.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE DIRECTOR CHECKLIST

INITIAL ACTIVATION

- Receive a briefing from the Policy Group or SEOC Manager.
- Determine the staffing requirements for the Communications Office and activate additional personnel as needed.
- Verify SEOC technological systems, including WebEOC and display boards, are operational.
- Establish initial contact with county emergency management agencies to verify functional communication lines.
- Implement the Primary communication systems outlined in the PACE plan.
- Initial Response & Assessment Briefing:** Attend the meeting to note immediate communication capability gaps and technological needs.
- Process & Procedures Meeting:** Lead the Communications Review portion of the meeting. Brief staff on communication policies, allocated frequencies, amateur radio support, and equipment issues.

OPERATIONAL PERIOD

- Receive a briefing from the SEOC Manager to receive updated Leader Intent.
- Operational Period Transition Briefing (Start of Shift):** Attend the meeting. Provide a summary of the PACE plan status, WebEOC functionality, and county connectivity.
- Review the status of the Communications Community Lifeline to anticipate repair or support requirements.
- Objectives Meeting:** Attend to ensure incident objectives align with available communication capabilities and technological bandwidth.
- Submit the Incident Radio Communications Plan (ICS Form 205) and Communications List (ICS Form 205A) for the Incident Action Plan.
- Situation & Strategy Briefing:** Attend to monitor situational development and identify new communication support needs for field operations.
- Command & General Staff Meeting:** Attend the meeting to resolve challenges related to technological infrastructure and external connectivity.

- Planning Meeting:** Attend to confirm the communication plan within the draft Incident Action Plan. Provide concurrence to the Planning Section Chief.
- Review and contribute to the Communications section of the Incident Action Plan.
- Ensure all WebEOC incident logs and Common Operating Picture displays remain functional and accessible to SEOC staff.
- Operational Period Transition Briefing (End of Shift):** Provide a summary of ongoing communication strategies and system status to incoming personnel.

DEACTIVATION & DEMOBILIZATION

- Demobilize temporary communication networks and retrieve deployed field equipment.
- Archive all WebEOC data, user logs, and communication records for formal historical and legal retention.
- Participate in After Action Reviews to identify successes and challenges in communication management.
- Provide the Documentation Unit with copies of all communication plans and logs for formal archiving.

POSITION: SAFETY OFFICER

The Safety Officer serves as the Command Staff lead responsible for monitoring incident operations and advising the SEOC Manager on all matters relating to operational safety, including the health and safety of emergency responder personnel and SEOC staff. Unlike a field safety officer focused on a single scene, this position operates at a strategic level. The SEOC Safety Officer focuses on state level risk mitigation, the safety of deployed state resources, and the physical security of the SEOC facility.

The Safety Officer functions as the primary advisor to the SEOC Manager and the Policy Group regarding responder welfare and hazard mitigation. This role ensures the integration of safety protocols into the Incident Action Plan through the completion of the Incident Action Plan Safety Analysis (ICS Form 215A). The Safety Officer maintains the emergency authority to halt any unsafe operations.

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities remain ongoing and dynamic. These tasks require continuous judgment and do not conclude as a binary checklist. The tiers below prioritize actions from high level strategic policy to long term recovery coordination.

Tier 1: Strategic Risk Management & Policy

- Advise the Policy Group and SEOC Manager on matters relating to the safety of incident operations and SEOC personnel.
- Exercise emergency authority to stop or prevent unsafe acts during response operations.
- Approve the Incident Action Plan Safety Analysis (ICS Form 215A) to ensure the proposed operational strategy incorporates necessary hazard mitigations.
- Coordinate with the SEOC Manager and Logistics Section to ensure proper access, badging, and identification protocols exist for the SEOC facility.

Tier 2: Field Safety Coordination

- Coordinate with the Operations Section to identify risks, hazards, and possible mitigations for ongoing and future missions.

- Ensure local Incident Command Posts receive guidance on state safety protocols and resource availability for hazard mitigation.
- Review the Medical Plan (ICS Form 206) in coordination with the Logistics Section.
- Arbitrate safety conflicts between responding agencies to ensure a unified and secure effort.

Tier 3: SEOC Facility Support

- Monitor the SEOC facility to identify and mitigate physical hazards.
- Participate in all SEOC operational rhythm meetings to provide required inputs and gather outputs.
- Deliver the mandatory safety and medical review during the Operational Period Transition Briefing.
- Maintain the Safety Officer Activity Log to record significant actions, decisions, and communications.
- Monitor SEOC staff for signs of fatigue or stress to maintain occupational health and operational readiness.

Tier 4: Recovery & Demobilization

- Ensure safety protocols remain active during the physical breakdown and demobilization of the SEOC facility and staging areas.
- Review safety procedures for field damage assessment teams and recovery personnel.
- Ensure all injury claims and accident reports route to the Finance Section for documentation.

SAFETY OFFICER CHECKLIST

INITIAL ACTIVATION

- Receive a briefing from the SEOC Manager.
- Determine the staffing requirements for the Safety function and activate Assistant Safety Officers as needed.
- Assess the SEOC facility for immediate physical hazards and confirm access controls are established.
- Initial Response & Assessment Briefing:** Attend the meeting to note immediate hazards and capability gaps.
- Process & Procedures Meeting:** Attend to confirm the approval process for safety plans and procedural deviations.

OPERATIONAL PERIOD

- Receive a briefing from the SEOC Manager to receive updated Leader Intent.
- Operational Period Transition Briefing (Start of Shift):** Lead the Safety and Medical Review portion of the meeting. Brief all personnel on potential hazards, safety protocols, and the medical plan.
- Review the status of Community Lifelines to identify emerging threats to public or responder safety.
- Objectives Meeting:** Attend to ensure incident objectives incorporate realistic safety parameters.
- Consult with the Operations Section Chief during strategy development to ensure missions are supportable and safe.
- Complete the Incident Action Plan Safety Analysis (ICS Form 215A) in coordination with the Operations Section.
- Situation & Strategy Briefing:** Attend to monitor situational development and review proposed strategies.
- Command & General Staff Meeting:** Attend the meeting to resolve safety challenges and provide risk mitigation updates.
- Planning Meeting:** Attend to confirm the safety plan and risk mitigation measures. Provide concurrence to the Planning Section Chief.

- Review and sign the approved Incident Action Plan.
- Evaluate SEOC personnel for fatigue to ensure operational readiness.
- Operational Period Transition Briefing (End of Shift):** Provide a summary of ongoing hazards and the safety plan to incoming personnel.

DEACTIVATION & DEMOBILIZATION

- Ensure a safe demobilization of SEOC personnel and field resources.
- Gather all safety logs, injury reports, and risk assessments kept during the emergency.
- Participate in After Action Reviews to identify successes and challenges in safety management.
- Provide the Planning Section with copies of all safety documents for formal documentation.

POSITION: LIAISON OFFICER

The Liaison Officer serves as the Command Staff lead responsible for acting as the primary diplomatic contact and coordinator for assisting external agencies (e.g., FEMA, NGOs, and private sector partners) who are not embedded within the Operations Section. Unlike operational personnel managing tactical missions, this position focuses on interagency coordination and relationship management. The Liaison Officer ensures that external partners integrate into the SEOC environment and that their capabilities support the overall response strategy.

This role functions as the central point of contact for external representatives. The Liaison Officer manages agency integration, initiates specialized resource requests, and provides vetted situational awareness back to the home organizations of represented agencies. By acting as the voice for assisting organizations during the Incident Action Plan planning process, the Liaison Officer ensures the state leverages external capabilities without duplicating efforts.

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities remain ongoing and dynamic. These tasks require continuous judgment and do not conclude as a binary checklist. The tiers below prioritize actions from high level strategic policy to long term recovery coordination.

Tier 1: Strategic Coordination & Policy Integration

- Act as the voice for assisting agencies and organizations to represent their capabilities and limitations during the formal Incident Action Plan planning process.
- Advise the Policy Group and SEOC Manager on the integration of external agency resources and potential policy conflicts.
- Determine the need to establish specific coordination protocols between the state and federal or international partners.

Tier 2: Agency Integration & Resource Management

- Welcome external agency representatives and ensure they receive necessary security badges, functional workspaces, and full technical access to WebEOC.
- Initiate and manage specialized resource requests on behalf of represented organizations using established Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and prior agreements.

- Engage and coordinate with organizational representatives regarding shared logistical resources and the cascading effects of the disaster on specific sectors.
- Arbitrate resource or mission conflicts between external agencies and state response operations.

Tier 3: SEOC Support & Information Flow

- Provide vetted situational awareness back to represented home organizations to keep external leadership informed of the state overarching strategy.
- Participate in all SEOC operational rhythm meetings to provide required inputs and gather outputs.
- Deliver updates on external partner capabilities and limitations during briefings.
- Maintain the Liaison Officer Activity Log to record significant actions, decisions, and communications.
- Monitor external agency representatives for signs of fatigue or stress to maintain operational readiness.

Tier 4: Recovery & Demobilization

- Coordinate the demobilization of external agency representatives as their specific capabilities are no longer required.
- Ensure external partners transition their focus to long term recovery programs and support operations.
- Verify the closure of specialized resource requests and MOUs initiated during the response phase.

LIAISON OFFICER CHECKLIST

INITIAL ACTIVATION

- Receive a briefing from the SEOC Manager.
- Determine the staffing requirements for the Liaison function and activate Assistant Liaison Officers as needed.
- Establish a reception area or process to welcome incoming external agency representatives.
- Coordinate with the Logistics Section and Security to provide security badges and functional workspaces for external partners.
- Ensure external representatives receive technical access to WebEOC.
- Initial Response & Assessment Briefing:** Attend the meeting to identify required external agencies and immediate coordination gaps.
- Process & Procedures Meeting:** Attend to confirm the approval process for specialized resource requests and the activation of MOUs.

OPERATIONAL PERIOD

- Receive a briefing from the SEOC Manager to receive updated Leader Intent.
- Operational Period Transition Briefing (Start of Shift):** Attend the meeting. Provide a summary of external agency integration and available partner capabilities.
- Review the status of Community Lifelines to identify where external agency support can assist stabilization efforts.
- Objectives Meeting:** Attend to ensure incident objectives align with the capabilities and limitations of assisting agencies.
- Submit specialized resource requests on behalf of represented organizations.
- Situation & Strategy Briefing:** Attend to monitor situational development and identify opportunities for external partner integration.
- Command & General Staff Meeting:** Attend the meeting to resolve interagency challenges and provide updates on external resource availability.
- Planning Meeting:** Attend to represent assisting agencies and confirm their integration into the draft Incident Action Plan. Provide concurrence to the Planning Section Chief.
- Review and sign the approved Incident Action Plan.

- Send vetted situational awareness updates to the home organizations of represented agencies.
- Operational Period Transition Briefing (End of Shift):** Provide a summary of external partner status and ongoing interagency coordination to incoming personnel.

DEACTIVATION & DEMOBILIZATION

- Ensure a coordinated demobilization of external agency representatives.
- Gather all interagency logs, resource requests, and coordination notes kept during the emergency.
- Participate in After Action Reviews to identify successes and challenges in external agency coordination.
- Provide the Planning Section with copies of all liaison documents for formal documentation.

GENERAL STAFF JOB AIDS

POSITION: OPERATIONS SECTION CHIEF

The Operations Section Chief serves as the General Staff lead responsible for the direct management of all operational activities during an incident. While the SEOC Manager dictates the strategic "what," the Operations Section Chief determines the "how." This position directs state resources, coordinates the missions of Emergency Response Team members, and ensures that the response actively mitigates threats to life, property, and the environment.

This role functions as the central point of coordination for field operations and state agency deployments. The Operations Section Chief develops the operational strategy, organizes the task structure (branches, divisions, and groups), and works closely with the Planning Section to integrate operational data into the Common Operating Picture. By assigning specific tasks to ERT members, this position ensures that state capabilities directly support the needs of local Incident Command Posts.

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities remain ongoing and dynamic. These tasks require continuous judgment and do not conclude as a binary checklist. The tiers below prioritize actions from high level strategic policy to long term recovery coordination.

Tier 1: Operational Strategy & Execution

- Direct the execution of the incident objectives established by the SEOC Manager and the Policy Group.
- Develop the overall operational strategy and determine the resources required to achieve specific objectives.
- Reorganize the Operations Section into geographical or functional branches to maintain a manageable span of control based on the incident scope.
- Prioritize missions based on life safety, incident stabilization, and property protection.

Tier 2: Mission Coordination & ERT Management

- Assign tasks and coordinate the missions of all Emergency Response Team members and state agencies represented in the SEOC.

- Evaluate information from field Command Posts to determine the status of current and future missions.
- Identify resource requirements and logistical needs for ongoing operations and submit requests to the Logistics Section.
- Arbitrate operational conflicts between responding agencies to ensure a unified effort.

Tier 3: SEOC Support & Information Flow

- Gather the status of resources and activities from Emergency Response Team members to identify risks, hazards, and possible mitigations.
- Provide operational updates and Essential Elements of Information to the Planning Section to maintain the Common Operating Picture.
- Participate in all SEOC operational rhythm meetings to present strategy and outline task organization.
- Supervise Operations staff, monitor the status of assigned tasks, and evaluate personnel for fatigue.
- Maintain the Operations Section Activity Log to record significant actions, decisions, and communications.

Tier 4: Recovery & Demobilization

- Transition tactical life safety missions to debris clearance, infrastructure repair, and initial recovery operations.
- Identify operational assets no longer required for the response and coordinate their release with the Demobilization Unit.
- Support damage assessment teams with operational logistics and field access.

OPERATIONS SECTION CHIEF CHECKLIST

INITIAL ACTIVATION

- Receive a briefing from the SEOC Manager.
- Determine the staffing requirements for the Operations Section and activate additional personnel or Branch Directors as needed.
- Establish contact with on-scene Incident Command Posts and local Emergency Management Agencies to gather initial information.
- Initial Response & Assessment Briefing:** Attend the meeting. Lead, in place of SEOC Manager, if necessary. Provide a high-level Situation Brief outlining what is known, what is unknown, and any critical information gaps.
- Process & Procedures Meeting:** Attend to confirm the operational reporting structure and standard operating procedures.
- Ensure the Operations Section is organized to support the immediate response efforts.

OPERATIONAL PERIOD

- Receive a briefing from the SEOC Manager to receive updated Leader Intent.
- Operational Period Transition Briefing (Start of Shift):** Lead, in place of SEOC Manager, if necessary. Lead the Operations Review. Present the plan for the new operational period, detailing specific missions, assignments, and task organization.
- Review the status of Community Lifelines and assign Emergency Response Team members to address lifelines indicating yellow or red status.
- Complete and submit ICS Form 215 (Operational Planning Worksheet) and coordinate with the Safety Officer on ICS Form 215A.
- Objectives Meeting:** Attend to provide input on the feasibility of proposed incident objectives.
- Situation & Strategy Briefing:** Lead the Situation Review portion. Provide awareness of current conditions, Community Lifelines, and emerging threats. Follow with a Strategy Update detailing required actions and resources.
- Command & General Staff Meeting:** Attend the meeting. Facilitate the discussion to resolve operational challenges, limitations, and resource shortfalls.
- Planning Meeting:** Attend to confirm that the Operations Section can execute the draft Incident Action Plan. Confirm assignments and resource allocation.

- Review and contribute to the Operations section of the Incident Action Plan (including ICS Form 204 Assignment Lists).
- Maintain the Operations Section Activity Log with significant actions and incident updates.
- Operational Period Transition Briefing (End of Shift):** Provide a summary of ongoing missions and the approved plan to incoming personnel.

DEACTIVATION & DEMOBILIZATION

- Recall all deployed state assets and personnel in accordance with the Demobilization Plan.
- Demobilize ERT members and Operations Section staff as missions conclude.
- Gather all records, maps, and reports kept during the emergency.
- Participate in After Action Reviews to identify successes and challenges in operational execution.
- Provide the Planning Section with copies of all operational logs for formal documentation.

POSITION: LOGISTICS SECTION CHIEF

The Logistics Section Chief serves as the General Staff lead responsible for providing the facilities, services, and material support needed to sustain both incident responders and the SEOC facility itself. Unlike operational personnel who execute tactical missions, this position focuses on securing the resources necessary to make those missions possible. The Logistics Section Chief oversees supply chain management, transportation, and personnel support.

This role functions as the primary authority for resource ordering, tracking, and fulfillment. The Logistics Section Chief ensures that the SEOC environment remains operational by managing administrative needs such as facility access, meals, and specialized equipment. By coordinating with the Finance Section and the Operations Section Chiefs, the Logistics Section Chief guarantees that the response effort maintains a sustainable operational tempo.

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities remain ongoing and dynamic. These tasks require continuous judgment and do not conclude as a binary checklist. The tiers below prioritize actions from high level strategic policy to long term recovery coordination.

Tier 1: Strategic Resource Allocation & Policy

- Meet with the Policy Group and SEOC Manager to identify immediate resource needs for SEOC operations.
- Arbitrate conflicting demands for scarce logistical resources and elevate unresolvable resource shortages to the SEOC Manager.
- Determine the scalable structure of support branches to ensure an effective span of control.
- Oversee the ordering, obtaining, and accounting of essential personnel, equipment, and supplies.

Tier 2: Facility & Supply Chain Coordination

- Manage facilities to include access control, power generation, safety coordination, and workspace allocations.
- Direct the Supply Unit to secure requirements, office supplies, and equipment.

- Activate and manage the Food Unit to coordinate headcounts, secure funding sources with the Finance Section, and arrange meal deliveries and clean up.
- Direct the Medical Unit to assess personnel health needs and complete ICS Form 206 for the Incident Action Plan.

Tier 3: SEOC Support & Information Flow

- Coordinate with the SEOC Manager and Safety Officer to ensure badging, identification, and proper direction for responding personnel upon arrival.
- Monitor incoming emails to log.eoc@maine.gov and ensure all outgoing email originates from this address.
- Track resource requests (ICS Form 213 RR) in WebEOC and fulfill orders using state assets, mutual aid, or commercial vendors.
- Participate in all SEOC operational rhythm meetings to provide required inputs and gather outputs.
- Maintain the Logistics Section Activity Log to record significant actions, decisions, and communications.
- Evaluate section staff for fatigue to maintain operational readiness.

Tier 4: Recovery & Demobilization

- Coordinate the physical breakdown and demobilization of the SEOC facility and staging areas.
- Reconcile all outstanding resource orders and transition vendor payment processes to the Finance Section.
- Collect and archive all equipment maintenance logs and supply inventories.

LOGISTICS SECTION CHIEF CHECKLIST

INITIAL ACTIVATION

- Receive a briefing from the SEOC Manager or outgoing Duty Officer.
- Determine the staffing requirements for the Logistics Section and activate additional personnel as needed.
- Verify facility readiness, ensure lights and systems are operational, and establish access controls for incoming personnel.
- Provide initial supplies (e.g., coffee, pens, paper, sign-in sheets) to the SEOC floor.
- Initial Response & Assessment Briefing:** Attend the meeting to note immediate resource capability gaps.
- Process & Procedures Meeting:** Lead the Logistics Review portion of the meeting. Brief the staff on procedures for administrative management, supply requests, and meal provisions.
- Establish the purchasing process with the Finance Section.

OPERATIONAL PERIOD

- Receive a briefing from the SEOC Manager to receive updated Leader Intent.
- Operational Period Transition Briefing (Start of Shift):** Attend the meeting. Provide an overview of critical support information, resource availability, supply status, and changes to staging areas.
- Review the status of Community Lifelines to anticipate emerging resource demands.
- Objectives Meeting:** Attend to ensure logistical capabilities can support the proposed incident objectives.
- Monitor incoming emails to log.eoc@maine.gov and route all outgoing emails through this address.
- Submit ICS Form 205 (Communications Plan) in conjunction with Communications Office and ICS Form 206 (Medical Plan) to the Planning Section for the Incident Action Plan.
- Situation & Strategy Briefing:** Attend to monitor situational development and identify constraints, challenges, or requests for support.
- Command & General Staff Meeting:** Attend the meeting to provide updates on resource shortfalls and support operations.

- Planning Meeting:** Attend to confirm resource support and needs for the draft Incident Action Plan. Provide concurrence to the Planning Section Chief.
- Review and contribute to the logistics section of the Incident Action Plan.
- Ensure all procured resources are tracked and assigned to the requesting entity.
- Operational Period Transition Briefing (End of Shift):** Provide a summary of pending resource requests and facility status to incoming personnel.

DEACTIVATION & DEMOBILIZATION

- Direct the return of all rented or borrowed equipment to appropriate vendors or agencies.
- Demobilize SEOC facility support services (e.g., catering, supplementary cleaning).
- Gather all records kept during the emergency.
- Participate in After Action Reviews to identify successes and challenges in resource management.
- Provide the Planning Section with copies of all logistics logs and resource request forms for formal documentation.

POSITION: PLANNING SECTION CHIEF

The Planning Section Chief serves as the General Staff lead responsible for the collection, evaluation, and dissemination of incident information. This position manages the operational rhythm of the SEOC, ensuring that all meetings occur on schedule and that decision-makers receive actionable intelligence. The Planning Section Chief transforms raw data into a Common Operating Picture and drives the Incident Action Planning process.

This role functions as the primary facilitator for the SEOC Manager. The Planning Section Chief ensures that the objectives set by leadership translate into documented strategies. By supervising the Situation, Resource, Documentation, and Demobilization Units, the Planning Section Chief maintains historical records, tracks the status of all deployed assets, and coordinates the eventual release of resources.

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities remain ongoing and dynamic. These tasks require continuous judgment and do not conclude as a binary checklist. The tiers below prioritize actions from high level strategic policy to long term recovery coordination.

Tier 1: Strategic Information Management

- Advise the SEOC Manager and Policy Group on the status of Community Lifelines, anticipated threats, and long-range incident forecasts.
- Design and enforce the SEOC operational rhythm to ensure leadership maintains a proactive planning cycle.
- Ensure all intelligence, including data from the Maine Information and Analysis Center, integrates securely into the Common Operating Picture.
- Determine the need to trigger advance planning mechanisms for protracted or escalating incidents.

Tier 2: Incident Action Plan & Demobilization

- Lead the development, compilation, and distribution of the Incident Action Plan for each operational period.
- Direct the Resource Unit to track the status, assignment, and location of all personnel and equipment.

- Direct the Demobilization Unit to develop a sequenced plan for the safe and efficient release of resources.
- Ensure the Incident Action Plan aligns directly with the leader's intent and established objectives.

Tier 3: SEOC Support & Meeting Facilitation

- Synthesize raw data to maintain the Common Operating Picture via WebEOC and visual displays.
- Serve as the primary facilitator (Process Owner) for SEOC meetings to watch the clock, call on speakers, and keep discussions on track.
- Direct the Documentation Unit to maintain incident files for legal, historical, and analytical purposes.
- Supervise Planning Section staff, monitor the status of assigned tasks, and evaluate personnel for fatigue to maintain operational readiness.
- Maintain the Planning Section Activity Log to record significant actions, decisions, and communications.

Tier 4: Recovery & Documentation

- Transition the Common Operating Picture from response tracking to damage assessment mapping.
- Lead the collection and evaluation of information from all stakeholders to draft the After-Action Review report.
- Ensure all historical files, public messaging logs, and financial records are archived correctly.

PLANNING SECTION CHIEF CHECKLIST

INITIAL ACTIVATION

- Receive a briefing from the SEOC Manager.
- Determine the staffing requirements for the Planning Section and activate additional personnel as needed.
- Ensure the WebEOC Common Operating Picture and physical status boards are established and active.
- Create and distribute the SEOC daily meeting schedule (ICS Form 230CG) based on the SEOC Manager guidance.
- Initial Response & Assessment Briefing:** Facilitate the meeting. Confirm the presence of key attendees using the roll call sheet.
- Process & Procedures Meeting:** Facilitate the meeting. Lead the SEOC Standards Review portion to discuss operational procedures, information flow, and demobilization plans.
- Distribute initial leader intent and objectives to all SEOC staff.

OPERATIONAL PERIOD

- Receive a briefing from the SEOC Manager to receive updated Leader Intent.
- Operational Period Transition Briefing (Start of Shift):** Facilitate the meeting. Use the roll call sheet to identify personnel. Formally relieve outgoing personnel and initiate the new operational period.
- Review the status of Community Lifelines and ensure updates reflect current data on the Common Operating Picture.
- Objectives Meeting:** Facilitate the meeting to guide the establishment of specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound objectives.
- Collect Essential Elements of Information from all sections and Emergency Response Team members.
- Situation & Strategy Briefing:** Facilitate the meeting. Display the slide deck and ensure the Operations Section leads the situational review.
- Draft the Incident Action Plan components (e.g., ICS Form 202, 203, 204).
- Command & General Staff Meeting:** Facilitate the meeting. Present proposed priorities based on analysis from the Situation Briefing.

- Planning Meeting:** Lead the meeting. Walk the group through the key components of the draft Incident Action Plan and conduct a roll call to secure mandatory concurrence from all Section Chiefs.
- Obtain the SEOC Manager signature on the finalized Incident Action Plan and distribute it prior to the next shift change.
- Operational Period Transition Briefing (End of Shift):** Facilitate the meeting to ensure incoming personnel receive the approved plan.

DEACTIVATION & DEMOBILIZATION

- Execute the approved Demobilization Plan.
- Gather all records, logs, and IAPs kept during the emergency.
- Prepare a chronological summary of events and response actions.
- Lead the scheduling and execution of After-Action Reviews to identify strengths, weaknesses, and lessons learned.
- Draft the final After Action Review report and set of corrective actions.

POSITION: FINANCE SECTION CHIEF

The Finance Section Chief serves as the General Staff lead responsible for managing all financial, administrative, and cost analysis aspects of an incident. This position ensures that the state can fund the necessary response operations while adhering to legal and administrative protocols. The Finance Section Chief monitors incident costs, administers procurement contracts, tracks personnel time, and manages injury or liability claims.

This role functions as the primary advisor to the SEOC Manager and the Policy Group regarding emergency expenditures and spending limits. The Finance Section Chief establishes cost reporting procedures, authorizes major purchases in coordination with the Logistics Section, and compiles the financial data required for future state or federal reimbursement. This position is activated when the incident requires specific financial services, commercial procurement, or extensive mutual aid coordination.

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities remain ongoing and dynamic. These tasks require continuous judgment and do not conclude as a binary checklist. The tiers below prioritize actions from high level strategic policy to long term recovery coordination.

Tier 1: Financial Policy & Expenditure Authority

- Advise the Policy Group and SEOC Manager on funding constraints, spending limits, and emergency procurement authorities.
- Establish the financial threshold and authorization limits for the operational period.
- Authorize the release of emergency funds to support critical resource requests following approval from the SEOC Manager or Policy Group.
- Support the Policy Group in gathering the financial data necessary to justify Governor State of Emergency proclamations or Presidential Disaster Declarations.

Tier 2: Cost Accounting & Procurement

- Establish cost reporting procedures to ensure appropriate elements of expenditure are tracked across all sections.
- Negotiate and administer commercial vendor contracts to support the Logistics Section.

- Coordinate cost sharing agreements and financial protocols between the state and other jurisdictions.
- Establish third party billing procedures.
- Ensure all support agencies utilize necessary cost accounting measures and generate summary reports.

Tier 3: SEOC Support & Administrative Flow

- Estimate, track, and analyze overall event cost data to prepare cost display summaries for the SEOC Manager.
- Track personnel time and attendance for all activated SEOC staff and deployed resources.
- Process and log compensation claims for property damage or personnel injury related to the incident.
- Participate in all SEOC operational rhythm meetings to provide required inputs and gather outputs.
- Coordinate with the Logistics Section to establish funding sources for routine SEOC administrative purchases (e.g., food, basic supplies).
- Maintain the Finance Section Activity Log to record all significant actions, decisions, and communications.

Tier 4: Recovery & Documentation

- Transition expenditure tracking from immediate response operations to long-term recovery programs.
- Compile and organize all financial records, timesheets, and procurement logs required for FEMA Public Assistance or other reimbursement programs.
- Transfer financial oversight of ongoing projects to the Recovery Section.

FINANCE SECTION CHIEF CHECKLIST

INITIAL ACTIVATION

- Receive a briefing from the SEOC Manager.
- Determine the staffing requirements for the Finance Section and activate additional personnel as needed (e.g., Time Unit, Procurement Unit, Cost Unit).
- Determine the financial threshold and immediate spending limits for the activation.
- Initial Response & Assessment Briefing:** Attend the meeting to note immediate financial needs and funding mechanisms.
- Process & Procedures Meeting:** Attend to receive the established spending limits and brief the SEOC on financial tracking requirements.
- Establish emergency purchasing procedures with the Logistics Section.
- Provide sign in sheets or electronic time tracking links to all activated personnel.

OPERATIONAL PERIOD

- Receive a briefing from the SEOC Manager to receive updated Leader Intent.
- Operational Period Transition Briefing (Start of Shift):** Attend the meeting. Provide a brief overview of relevant financial procedures, timekeeping requirements, and documentation needs.
- Review the status of Community Lifelines to anticipate the financial impact of major stabilization efforts.
- Objectives Meeting:** Attend to ensure incident objectives fall within feasible financial parameters.
- Review and approve pending Resource Requests (ICS Form 213 RR) that require commercial procurement.
- Situation & Strategy Briefing:** Attend to monitor situational development and identify new missions that require financial authorization.
- Command & General Staff Meeting:** Attend the meeting to provide updates on overall incident costs and administrative challenges.
- Planning Meeting:** Attend to confirm financial support for the draft Incident Action Plan. Provide concurrence to the Planning Section Chief.
- Produce a daily summary report of incident costs and share it with the Command Staff.

- Ensure all personnel submit time and attendance records prior to shift change.
- Operational Period Transition Briefing (End of Shift):** Provide a summary of pending procurements and incident costs to incoming personnel.

DEACTIVATION & DEMOBILIZATION

- Finalize all timesheets and submit them to the appropriate agency payroll offices.
- Gather all financial records, receipts, and procurement contracts kept during the emergency.
- Prepare a comprehensive chronological summary of expenditures.
- Participate in After Action Reviews to identify successes and challenges in financial management.
- Provide the Documentation Unit and Recovery Section with copies of all financial logs for formal documentation.

POSITION: RECOVERY SECTION CHIEF

The Recovery Section Chief serves as the General Staff lead responsible for assisting in restoration and resilience efforts, serving as the primary authority for the transition from crisis response to long term sustainability. Unlike the Operations Section which focuses on immediate life safety, the Recovery Section handles the aftermath of the response. This position directs damage assessment, economic impact analysis, and the administration of state and federal assistance programs.

This role functions as the primary advisor to the SEOC Manager and the Policy Group regarding disaster declarations and long-term community rebuilding. The Recovery Section Chief coordinates Initial Damage Assessments and Preliminary Damage Assessments to capture the critical data needed for future federal funding. By operating in parallel with response operations, this position ensures the state maximizes eligibility for disaster relief funding and establishes a strategy for hazard mitigation.

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities remain ongoing and dynamic. These tasks require continuous judgment and do not conclude as a binary checklist. The tiers below prioritize actions from high level strategic policy to long term recovery coordination.

Tier 1: Strategic Recovery Policy & Declarations

- Advise the Policy Group and SEOC Manager on disaster declaration thresholds and long-term recovery strategies.
- Prepare the documentation and narrative justifications required for Governor State of Emergency proclamations and Presidential Disaster Declaration requests.
- Establish the strategic framework for long term community recovery and hazard mitigation.

Tier 2: Damage Assessment & Program Administration

- Coordinate, schedule, and lead Initial Damage Assessments and Preliminary Damage Assessments in conjunction with local jurisdictional leaders and FEMA representatives.
- Serve as the primary coordinator with state and federal agencies, including FEMA and the Small Business Administration, to activate, manage, and oversee Public Assistance and Individual Assistance funding programs for affected communities.

- Coordinate the establishment of Disaster Recovery Centers in impacted jurisdictions.
- Coordinate with the Public Information Officer to manage public expectations regarding the timeline for financial assistance programs and utility restoration.

Tier 3: SEOC Support & Transition Coordination

- Monitor the WebEOC Damage Assessment board to track the financial threshold of destruction.
- Monitor the WebEOC Significant Events board to understand the geographic scope and scale of the impact.
- Support the Planning Section in transitioning the Common Operating Picture from response tracking to damage assessment mapping.
- Coordinate with the Finance Section to ensure incident cost tracking aligns with FEMA reimbursement requirements.
- Participate in all SEOC operational rhythm meetings to represent long-term recovery considerations during the Incident Action Plan planning process.
- Maintain the Recovery Section Activity Log to record significant actions, decisions, and communications.
- Supervise Recovery Section staff and monitor the status of assigned tasks to maintain operational readiness.

Tier 4: Long Term Recovery Implementation

- Develop and write the strategic plan outlining how the state will transition from the response phase into the long-term recovery phase.
- Assume full coordination of operations as the SEOC transitions from immediate response to steady state recovery.
- Transfer financial oversight of ongoing recovery projects from the Finance Section.
- Develop comprehensive after-action reports detailing recovery transition successes and challenges.

RECOVERY SECTION CHIEF CHECKLIST

INITIAL ACTIVATION

- Receive a briefing from the SEOC Manager.
- Determine the staffing requirements for the Recovery Section and activate additional personnel as needed.
- Identify initial damage assessment requirements based on the scope of the incident.
- Initial Response & Assessment Briefing:** Attend the meeting to note widespread infrastructure impacts and capability gaps.
- Process & Procedures Meeting:** Attend to confirm the procedures for tracking damage assessments and cost metrics.
- Establish contact with FEMA regional counterparts to forecast potential federal assistance needs.

OPERATIONAL PERIOD

- Receive a briefing from the SEOC Manager to receive updated Leader Intent.
- Review current Incident Objectives to identify and anticipate long term compounding economic and structural impacts of tactical decisions.
- Establish direct communication lines with County Directors to begin gathering initial damage reports.
- Operational Period Transition Briefing (Start of Shift):** Attend the meeting. Provide an overview of the recovery plan, damage assessment status, and proximity to financial thresholds for disaster declarations.
- Review the status of Community Lifelines to anticipate long term infrastructure repair and economic recovery requirements.
- Objectives Meeting:** Attend to ensure incident objectives incorporate a transition to recovery operations.
- Deploy field teams to conduct Preliminary Damage Assessments.
- Situation & Strategy Briefing:** Attend to monitor situational development and identify new areas requiring damage assessment.
- Command & General Staff Meeting:** Attend the meeting to resolve challenges related to damage assessment operations and state assistance programs.

- Planning Meeting:** Attend to confirm long-term recovery considerations for the draft Incident Action Plan. Provide concurrence to the Planning Section Chief.
- Review and contribute to the Recovery section of the Incident Action Plan.
- Ensure all collected damage assessment data integrates into the WebEOC Common Operating Picture.
- Operational Period Transition Briefing (End of Shift):** Provide a summary of ongoing damage assessments and disaster declaration progress to incoming personnel.

DEACTIVATION & DEMOBILIZATION

- Ensure a seamless transition of SEOC operations to long-term recovery task forces.
- Finalize all Preliminary Damage Assessment data and submit it to the appropriate federal agencies.
- Gather all damage reports, logs, and economic impact analyses kept during the emergency.
- Participate in After Action Reviews to identify successes and challenges in the transition to recovery.
- Provide the Documentation Unit with copies of all recovery logs for formal historical and legal archiving.

Procedural Reference 1: How To Develop Incident Objectives

Management by objective is a key characteristic of NIMS and one that MEMA follows. As such, incident objectives serve as the focal point for all coordination, support and recovery activities in the SEOC. They represent the Policy Group’s intent for the incident. Writing clear objectives can be challenging, but using the following rules and frameworks can help to develop effective Incident Action Plans. Always remember: Objectives define **WHAT** we do. Strategies define **HOW** we do it.

INCIDENT OBJECTIVES ARE BASED ON INCIDENT PRIORITIES

Incident priorities define the senior leadership perspective on overarching requirements and reflect core capabilities from the National Preparedness Goal. Incident objectives stem from these priorities and provide the basis for operational guidance, strategies, tactics, and work assignments.

	Source of Guidance	Answers...				Documented in IAP
		Who	What	Where	When	
Incident Priorities	Governor, Regional Administrator	Policy Group	Yes	No	No	No
Incident Objectives	Priorities, Situation, Resources	Policy Group	Yes	Sometimes	Sometimes	Yes (ICS 202)
Tasks / Assignments	Incident Objectives	Ops Section	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (ICS 204)

FEMA, Incident Action Planning Guide, 2015, Responsibility and Documentation Matrix

INCIDENT OBJECTIVES AND SMART CRITERIA

Incident objectives are concise statements of what needs to be done or attained; they are not descriptions of specific tasks.

- May include details on where and when; they do not indicate how or why.
- Should not address normal, inherent incident management activities, e.g., “Initiate incident action planning,” or “Gain situational awareness.”

- Are established for every operational period but they do not need to be accomplished in that single operational period; they frequently carry over from one operational period to the next.
- Are the exclusive responsibility of the Policy Group and are generally developed with input from the command staff and general staff.
- Are general during the initial operational periods of an incident and become more specific, in terms of where and by when, as awareness of the situation improves.
- Must be measurable to make it possible to determine when a given objective has been accomplished, achieved, or attained.
- Are specifically intended to guide incident operations and are not the appropriate place to highlight the concerns of specific constituencies.

Before finalizing any objective, validate it against the SMART acronym. This ensures the objective provides enough detail for the Operations Section to build a plan.

- **Specific:** State exactly what the incident personnel must accomplish.
- **Measurable:** Include a metric or clear end state to prove completion.
- **Action Oriented:** Start the sentence with an active verb.
- **Realistic:** Match the objective to the available resources and capabilities.
- **Time Bound:** Specify a deadline or the specific operational period for completion.

OBJECTIVES VS. STRATEGIES VS. TACTICS

It can be easy to confuse objective development with other levels of planning. Use this hierarchy to maintain clear lines of authority.

Level	Responsibility	Focus	Example
Objective	Policy Group	The "What"	Restore power to impacted hospitals by 1800 hours.
Strategy	Operations Section Chief	The "Method"	Provide portable generators to Somerset County EMA to bypass the damaged grid.
Tactics	Division/Group Supervisor	The "Action"	Deploy Strike Team A with two 500kW generators.

FEMA, Incident Action Planning Guide, 2015, Responsibility and Documentation Matrix

THE PLANNING P: WHEN TO WRITE OBJECTIVES

Objectives change as the incident evolves. Objectives are developed or updated during specific phases of the SEOC Operational Rhythm (The Planning P).

1. **Initial Response:** The SEOC Manager sets basic objectives to stabilize life safety.
2. **Objectives Meeting:** The command staff meets to formalize objectives for the next operational period. The Operations Section Chief then uses the objectives to create the "how" (strategies and tactics, as necessary).
3. **Planning Meeting:** The team verifies objectives remain attainable.

OBJECTIVES DRAFTING RULES

Incident objectives must remain concise. Follow these stylistic constraints:

- **Avoid Adverbs:** Delete modifiers like "safely" or "promptly." The operational context implies speed and competence. Rely on powerful verbs instead of modifiers to deliver clear messages and eliminate document clutter.
- **Avoid Soft Verbs:** Do not use "support," "ensure," or "monitor." These verbs lack measurable outcomes.
- **Focus on Outcomes:** Describe the result you want, not the process to get there.

Use These Verbs	Avoid These Verbs	Avoid These Modifiers
Augment, Implement, Dispose	Assess, Continue, Coordinate	Quickly, Safely, Completely
Determine, Complete, Provide	Monitor, Work with, Support	Prompt, Accessible, Thorough
Finalize, Devise, Deliver	Ensure, Reinforce	Reliable, Compassionate
Carry out, Pre-stage, Execute	Assist, Facilitate, Participate	Effectively, Efficiently, Successfully
Develop, Conduct, Establish	Address, Handle, Oversee	Adequately, Appropriately, Fully

Table: Word Selection Guide

THE "SO WHAT?" TEST

Test every objective by asking "So what?"

- **Weak Objective:** "Monitor river levels." (So what? Monitoring is a task, not an outcome).
- **Strong Objective:** "Establish a river level warning system for counties to trigger evacuation orders." (This provides a clear purpose and outcome).

ICS FORM 202 TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Display only incident objectives. Do not include priorities, strategies, or other extraneous information.
- Assign individual tracking numbers to incident objectives serially from the beginning of the incident to its conclusion.
- Do not renumber incident objectives. Each objective retains its original tracking number until the objective is accomplished or achieved at which point the objective and its tracking number are retired.
- Once an incident objective has been retired, do not include it on the ICS Form 202.
- If an objective is modified but retains its original intent, assign its tracking number a new sub-letter and retire the original objective. For example, if objective 2 is modified, its tracking number becomes 2a, and objective 2 is retired.
- If an incident objective is modified in a way that changes its original intent, retire the original objective and assign revised objective a new tracking number.
- Prioritize incident objectives based on urgency, operational period requirements, and guidance from the Policy Group.
 - List the incident objectives on the ICS Form 202 in order of their priority, regardless of their tracking number. The first objective listed is the highest priority. The last listed objective is the lowest priority.
 - Let incident priorities guide the prioritization of objectives. "While objectives must be based on requirements," the Incident Management and Support Keystone states, "the status in which they must be addressed is guided by priorities."

EXAMPLES OF INCIDENT OBJECTIVES

The following table provides examples of good objectives using SMART principles. This list is not exhaustive and only meant to illustrate the rules above.

Example Incident Objectives
1. Identify and stage five swift water rescue teams and three aviation assets by 0800 hours on October 15.
2. Extract 50 stranded patients from the Central Maine Medical Center flood zone by 1200 hours on October 16.
3. Evacuate 500 residents from the Route 1 coastal inundation zone by 1600 hours on Thursday.
4. Establish overnight sheltering for 300 displaced individuals at the Cross Insurance Arena by 1900 hours on October 15.
5. Open three commodity distribution sites in the mid-coast area by 0700 hours on Friday.
6. Deliver 500 cases of water to isolated communities in the Carrabassett Valley by 1400 hours on October 16.
7. Open five State Disaster Recovery Centers by October 20 and two additional centers by October 25.
8. Clear debris from Interstate 95 between Augusta and Bangor to open two lanes for emergency traffic by 0600 hours on Friday.
9. Publish debris sorting guidelines for municipal public works directors by 1000 hours on Thursday.
10. Complete food safety inspections at 50 commercial distribution centers in the impacted region by 1700 hours on Friday.
11. Deploy 20 crisis counselors to the three state managed shelters by 1200 hours on Tuesday.
12. Deliver 50 residential generators to the Somerset County staging area for shelter in place operations by 1700 hours on Friday.
13. Complete search operations in the Kennebec River basin by 1800 hours on Friday.

Table: Examples of Good Incident Objectives

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Section 7: Things You Can Refer To

This section serves as a central reference library. It contains essential documents, checklists, rosters, and reference sheets to support your duties as a Command & General Staff member.

This section contains the following tabs:

- A. **Ground Rules and Professional Standards:** Outlines the code of conduct, behavioral expectations, and operational etiquette required for all personnel working within the SEOC environment.
- B. **Operational Rhythm Briefings/Meetings:** Provides information for each briefing and meeting in the operational cycle, detailing the purpose, required attendees, and expected outcomes.
- C. **Hazard Information Sheets and Associated CIRs/EEIs:** Provides hazard-specific guidance to support accurate reporting. This tab details the supplemental Essential Elements of Information and Critical Information Requirements necessary for distinct incident types (e.g., winter storms, floods).
- D. **Essential Elements of Information:** Represents the critical data points leadership requires to make informed decisions during an incident and establish the foundation of the Common Operating Picture.
- E. **Assessing Community Lifelines:** provides information on how to assess a Community Lifeline using six categories that capture essential information for decision-makers.
- F. **SEOC Organizational Reference:** Defines the specific roles and responsibilities of Command and General Staff sections.
- G. **WebEOC Guide:** Offers instructions for navigating the WebEOC software, including logging in, board management, and resource requests.
- H. **Acronyms:** A glossary defining the common acronyms and abbreviations used within this manual and the broader emergency management community.

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7.A Ground Rules and Professional Standards

SEOC operations depend on discipline, professionalism, and mutual respect. You are expected to adhere to the following ground rules to ensure the facility remains focused and efficient.

7.A.1 General SEOC Etiquette

- **Noise Discipline:** The SEOC floor is an open work environment. Keep conversations low and brief. Move extended discussions to breakout rooms or hallways. Silence all cell phones and radios as needed.
- **Professionalism:** Maintain a professional demeanor at all times. Stress levels will be high; patience and courtesy are mandatory.
- **Workspace:** Keep your assigned station clean and organized. Do not leave sensitive documents unattended. Do not eat at workstations near critical equipment (radios/consoles).
- **Chain of Command:** Respect the established Incident Command System structure. If you have an issue with SEOC operations, report it to the Operations Section Chief, not the SEOC Manager directly, unless it is a life-safety emergency.
- **Self-Dispatch:** NEVER self-dispatch your agency or organization's resources based on hearsay or side conversations. All resource movements must be coordinated through the SEOC process (WebEOC/IAP) to ensure tracking and safety.
- **Media:** Do not speak to the media or post incident photos/information to personal social media accounts. Refer all media inquiries to the Public Information Officer immediately.

7.A.2 Meeting Conduct

- **Plain Language:** Avoid agency-specific codes (10-codes). Use clear English.
- **Be Punctual:** Arrive 5 minutes early. Meetings start exactly on time. If you are late, enter silently; do not interrupt.

- **Be Prepared:**
 - Know your agency or organization's current status before you walk in.
 - Bring your notes or laptop.
 - Anticipate questions about resource shortfalls.
- **Be Concise:** Stick to the facts. Use the "Bottom Line Up Front" (BLUF) method. State the critical issue first and report exceptions only (what is wrong, what is missing, what has changed) rather than reading a routine list of "normal" operations.
- **Stand and Speak Up:** When it is your turn to report, use desk microphones. If these are disabled, stand up (if possible) and speak clearly so the entire room can hear.
- **No Private Conversations (Sidebars):** Do not hold private conversations during the briefing. It distracts others and causes you to miss critical information.
- **"Take It Offline":** If a specific issue only affects two agencies or organizations, do not debate it in a briefing. Identify the issue, agree to meet immediately after the briefing, and move on.

7.A.3 Information Security and Data Management

- **Need to Know:** Share sensitive information only with those who have a valid operational need.
- **Computer Security:** Lock your computer screen whenever you step away from your desk (Windows Key + L).
- **Passwords:** Do not share your WebEOC or network login credentials with anyone.
- **WebEOC and Activity Logging:** WebEOC is the primary system of record for all SEOC operations. You are responsible for documenting your actions in the Activity Log Report. Mission-critical information must be entered immediately to maintain situational awareness. If you take handwritten notes during your shift, they must be transcribed into WebEOC. Paper ICS 214 forms are reserved solely for use during WebEOC outages.

7.B Operational Rhythm Briefings/Meetings

The SEOC Operational Rhythm consists of a series of briefings and meetings designed to maintain a common operating picture, ensure effective information flow across all functional areas, and synchronize response activities.

The Initial Response & Assessment Briefing and the Process & Procedures Meeting are singular events. They occur only once during the initial SEOC activation to establish operations before the recurring cycle begins.

INITIAL RESPONSE & ASSESSMENT BRIEFING [Initial Activation Process – One Time Only]

Briefing Purpose: The Initial Response & Assessment Briefing provides SEOC staff and key stakeholders with basic information regarding the situation and any allocated resources.

Attendees:

- **Required:** All SEOC staff, Emergency Response Team members, and any impacted County Emergency Management Agency or Tribal Nation.
- **Optional:** Observers and other stakeholders as appropriate

PROCESS & PROCEDURES MEETING [Initial Activation Process – One Time Only]

Meeting Purpose: The SEOC Process & Procedures Meeting communicates essential organizational processes, or deviations, reporting timelines, and any necessary deviations from standard SOPs to SEOC staff and Emergency Response Team members.

Attendees:

- **Required:** Policy Group, Command & General Staff (All)
- **Optional:** Federal Emergency Management Agency, Maine National Guard

The remaining five briefings and meetings occur as part of a reoccurring operational period. A ‘standard’ period begins with the Operational Period Transition Briefing and proceeds through each of the events detailed below until a full 12-hour period (or the timeframe established by the SEOC Manager) has completed. The period then starts again with the same meeting events.

OPERATIONAL PERIOD TRANSITION BRIEFING / SHIFT CHANGEOVER

Briefing Purpose: The Operational Period Transition Briefing acts as the formal changeover point between two operational periods. It serves as a crucial final briefing for personnel ending their shift and the official kickoff of the next shift.

Attendees:

- **Required:** All incoming/outgoing SEOC staff and Emergency Response Team members
- **Optional:** Observers and other stakeholders as appropriate

OBJECTIVES MEETING

Meeting Purpose: The Objectives Meeting establishes the incident and operational period objectives for the initial operational period. In subsequent periods, the meeting is used to review and validate current objectives, modify them based on changing conditions, or develop new objectives for the next operational period.

Attendees:

- **Required:** Policy Group, SEOC Manager, Planning Section, Operations Section
- **Optional:** Federal Emergency Management Agency, Maine National Guard

SITUATION & STRATEGY BRIEFING

Briefing Purpose: The purpose of the Situation & Strategy Briefing is twofold: to deliver a comprehensive briefing on the incident's current status, objectives, and priorities to all relevant stakeholders; and to determine future needs, impacts, and issues in order to develop a cohesive strategy for ongoing coordination and support.

Attendees:

- **Required:** All SEOC staff, Emergency Response Team members, and any impacted County Emergency Management Agency or Tribal Nation.
- **Optional:** Observers and other stakeholders as appropriate.

COMMAND & GENERAL (C&G) STAFF MEETING

Meeting Purpose: This meeting provides a semi-formal setting to discuss priorities, review current status, and resolve challenges to ensure a coordinated response.

Attendees:

- **Required:** Policy Group, SEOC Manager, Public Information Officer, All General Staff Sections
- **Optional:** Communications Office Director, Safety Officer, Liaison Officer

PLANNING MEETING

Meeting Purpose: Serves as a final review and validation of the drafted Incident Action Plan (IAP) prior to the SEOC Manager or Policy Group Lead approval of the Incident Action Plan and its subsequent distribution.

Attendees:

- **Required:** Policy Group, Command Staff and General Staff (All)
- **Optional:** Federal Emergency Management Agency, Maine National Guard

The following pages in this tab detail each of the briefings and meetings. They have been designed to be separated from this Desk Guide as needed. As such, page numbers are not accurate.

The briefings and meeting documents are presented in the following order:

1. Initial Response & Assessment Briefing
2. Process & Procedures Meeting
3. Operational Period Transition Briefing
4. Objectives Meeting
5. Situation & Strategy Briefing
6. SEOC Command & General Staff Meeting
7. Planning Meeting

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7.C Hazard Information Sheets and Associated CIRs/EEIs

The following documents comprise a set of State of Maine Severe Seasonal Hazard Response SEOC Quick Reference guides. They detail emergency protocols for severe summer weather, severe winter weather, hurricanes and tropical storms, flooding, and drought. Each guide outlines the SEOC timeline, triggers, and actions for enhanced monitoring, partial activation, and full activation. The appendices also identify critical information requirements, essential elements of information, and hazard-specific data to coordinate multi-agency responses.

SEVERE SEASONAL WEATHER - SUMMER

SEVERE SEASONAL HAZARD RESPONSE | SEOC QUICK REFERENCE

Severe summer weather includes heat waves, thunderstorms, lightning, damaging winds, hail, tornadoes, and microbursts. Unlike long-duration winter storms, these localized events materialize with little warning. They cause concentrated infrastructure damage, sudden power outages, and critical public health emergencies, such as heat stroke among vulnerable populations.

APPENDIX PURPOSE

Coordinates the multi-agency response to rapid-onset summer weather extremes. Staff members use Appendix 1 to mobilize public cooling centers, target welfare checks, monitor statewide critical facilities, and deploy damage assessment teams following sudden microbursts, tornadoes, and heat waves.

LEAD AGENCY

Maine Emergency Management Agency
 Establishes National Weather Service (NWS) communication, coordinates Emergency Management Assistance Compact requests, and advises the Governor.

SEOC TIMELINE, TRIGGERS, & ACTIONS

Enhanced Monitoring (L3)

- NWS forecasts extreme heat
- NWS issues thunderstorm watches
- Coordinate initial messaging
- Track municipal cooling capacities

Partial Activation (L2)

- NWS issues severe storm warnings
- Monitor localized utility disruptions
- Assess tourist and transient populations
- Track structural damages

Full Activation (L1)

- Sudden impact events strike
- Confirm mass power outages
- Monitor the staging of life-saving rescue teams
- Stabilize community lifelines

CRITICAL INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

MASS CASUALTIES & HEALTH SURGES
 Have emergency medical services experienced surges in heat illnesses or injuries?

GRID INSTABILITY & VULNERABILITY
 Has peak cooling demand caused rolling brownouts or threatened critical facilities?

PATH OF DESTRUCTION
 Have wind and flood damage isolated communities and strained resources?

HAZARD FOCUS

COASTAL & INLAND FLOODING **EXTREME HEAT** **HIGH-IMPACT SUSTAINED WINDS**

THUNDERSTORMS & LIGHTNING **TORNADOES** **MICROBURST & HAIL**

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF INFORMATION

<p>Universal Impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damage: Debris type & clearance volume. • Roads/Bridges: Real-time status of closures. • Power: Customer outages by utility & restoration time estimates. • Search & Rescue: Locations, numbers evacuated. • Resource Needs: Requests for specialized assets. 	<p>Hazard-Specific Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heat: Forecast maximum heat index & duration. • Inland Floods: USGS river gauge readings and dam spill way rates. • Wind: Max wind gusts from official stations. • Tornado/Microburst: Path length, width, and Enhanced Fujita Scale (EF Scale) rating.
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CRITICAL DEFINITIONS FOR PLANNING

Extreme Heat Warning	Issued when heat index values expected to reach 105°F or greater for 2 hours or more in the next 12 to 48 hours.
Flash Flood Warning	Issued for sudden, violent flooding occurring within minutes or a few hours of intense rainfall or a dam failure.
Severe Thunderstorm Warning	Issued for storms producing wind gusts of at least 58 mph or hail 1 inch in diameter or larger.
Tornado Warning	Issued when a tornado is either sighted by trained observers or indicated by weather radar.
Watch vs. Warning	Watch: Hazardous weather is possible . Warning: Hazardous weather is occurring or imminent .

TORNADO ENHANCED FUJITA (EF) SCALE RATINGS

EF Scale Rating	Wind Speed (MPH)	Typical Damage Observations
EF-0	65 – 85	Light damage. Peels surface off some roofs; some damage to gutters or siding; branches broken off trees; shallow-rooted trees pushed over.
EF-1	86 – 110	Moderate damage. Roofs severely stripped; mobile homes overturned or badly damaged; loss of exterior doors; windows and other glass broken.
EF-2	111 – 135	Considerable damage. Roofs torn off well-constructed houses; foundations of frame homes shifted; mobile homes completely destroyed; large trees snapped or uprooted; light-object missiles generated; cars lifted off ground.
EF-3	136 – 165	Severe damage. Entire stories of well-constructed houses destroyed; severe damage to large buildings such as shopping malls; trains overturned; trees debarked; heavy cars lifted off the ground and thrown; structures with weak foundations blown away some distance.
EF-4	166 – 200	Devastating damage. Well-constructed houses and whole frame houses completely leveled; cars thrown and small missiles generated.
EF-5	200 +	Incredible damage. Strong frame houses leveled off foundations and swept away; automobile-sized missiles fly through the air in excess of 109 yards; high-rise buildings have significant structural deformation; incredible phenomena will occur.

Citation: <https://weather.com/storms/tornado/news/2024-05-03-enhanced-fujita-scale-tornado-explained>

SEVERE SEASONAL WEATHER - WINTER

SEVERE SEASONAL HAZARD RESPONSE | SEOC QUICK REFERENCE

Severe winter weather includes blizzards, ice storms, heavy snow, extreme cold, and snow squalls. While winter storms offer days of predictive lead time compared to summer events, they still pose significant risks. These storms cause prolonged transportation disruptions, damage the electrical grid, and create public health emergencies during extended power outages.

APPENDIX PURPOSE

Coordinates the multi-agency response to severe winter weather extremes. Staff use this appendix to sustain public warming centers, execute welfare checks, coordinate large-scale grid restoration, and monitor critical transportation infrastructure during blizzards, ice storms, and extreme cold events.

LEAD AGENCY

Maine Emergency Management Agency

Establishes National Weather Service (NWS) communication, manages response activities, synchronizes resource requests, coordinates public information, and advises the Governor.

SEOC TIMELINE, TRIGGERS, & ACTIONS

Enhanced Monitoring (L3)

- NWS forecasts significant winter system
- Conduct initial coordination
- Review heating fuel levels
- Monitor municipal road salt stockpiles

Partial Activation (L2)

- NWS issues severe winter watches
- MaineDOT pre-treats roads
- Coordinate warming center standby
- Issue public travel plan warnings

Full Activation (L1)

- NWS issues severe winter warnings
- Manage highway blockages
- Clear priority transportation routes
- Track real-time power outages

CRITICAL INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

TRANSPORTATION DISRUPTION

Have impassable interstates trapped motorists and halted critical supply chains?

GRID COLLAPSE & FUEL

Have ice accumulations caused catastrophic electrical failure, and have regional heating fuel shortages been identified?

STRUCTURAL THREATS

Have excessive snow loads caused widespread roof collapses on commercial buildings, agricultural facilities, and residential homes?

HAZARD FOCUS



ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF INFORMATION

<p>Universal Impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roads: Status of state roads and interstate highways. • Power: Customer outages by county and estimated restoration time. • Mass Care: Capacities of open warming centers. • Commodities: Status of home heating fuel deliveries, diesel supplies, and municipal road salt stockpiles. • Resources: Requests for specialized assets. 	<p>Hazard-Specific Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blizzard: Snowfall rates and visibility restrictions. • Ice Storm: Radial ice accretion totals. • Cold: Forecasted wind chill minimums. • Squall: Visual confirmation of highway conditions via MaineDOT cameras.
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CRITICAL DEFINITIONS FOR PLANNING

Blizzard Warning	Sustained winds of 35 mph or greater combined with falling or blowing snow to reduce visibility to 1/4 mile or less for at least 3 hours.
Ice Storm Warning	Crippling ice accumulations of 1/2 inch or more that snap tree limbs and down utility lines.
Nor'easter	Disruptive low-pressure system bringing heavy snow, gale-force winds, and coastal storm surge.
Wind Chill Warning	Wind and cold temperatures combine to create dangerous conditions that accelerate heat loss from exposed skin.
Winter Storm Severity Index	Scale used by the National Weather Service to communicate the operational impact of winter weather based on factors like snow amount, ice accumulation, and wind.
Watch vs. Warning	Watch: Hazardous weather is possible . Warning: Hazardous weather is occurring or imminent .

WINTER STORM SEVERITY INDEX (WSSI)

Scale	Typical Damage and Effects
Limited	Rarely a direct threat to life and property. Typically results in little inconveniences to daily life.
Minor	Rarely a direct threat to life and property. Typically results in an inconvenience to daily life and minor travel disruptions.
Moderate	Often results in some disruptions to daily life. Hazardous driving conditions and localized infrastructure impacts are possible.
Major	Extensive property damage is likely (e.g., roof collapses, severe ice damage to the utility grid). Significant disruptions to daily life and travel are expected. Immediate life-saving actions may be needed.
Extreme	Extensive and widespread severe property damage. Results in extreme disruptions to daily life and the complete paralysis of the Transportation Lifeline. Immediate life-saving actions will be needed.

Citation: https://www.weather.gov/ict/WSSI_Overview

HURRICANES & TROPICAL STORMS

SEVERE SEASONAL HAZARD RESPONSE | SEOC QUICK REFERENCE

Hurricanes and Tropical Storms are large, organized storms that can produce dangerous winds, extreme rainfall, storm surge, and tornadoes. These massive systems can also cause fatalities, injuries, property damage, infrastructure damage, agricultural loss, and business interruption.

APPENDIX PURPOSE

Coordinates the multi-agency response to tropical cyclones. Staff implement this appendix to manage complex coastal evacuations, mass sheltering, commodities distribution, debris management, and fatality management prior to and following landfall.

LEAD AGENCY

Maine Emergency Management Agency
Establishes National Hurricane Center communication, coordinates Emergency Management Assistance Compact requests, and advises the Governor.

SEOC TIMELINE, TRIGGERS, & ACTIONS

Enhanced Monitoring (L3)

- National Hurricane Center issues 5-day forecast track
- Draft SEOC manning roster
- Verify staging areas & MOUs
- Initiate mass care coordination

Partial Activation (L2)

- Establish Evac Ops Group
- Assess mass transit requirements
- Request State of Emergency
- Initiate shelter operations

Full Activation (L1)

- General evacuations begin (E0)
- Close bridges/transport routes
- Stage life-safety rescue teams
- Secure infrastructure before winds

CRITICAL INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

COASTAL EVACUATION & PORTS

Do multiple coastal towns require mass evacuation or show infrastructure failure?

DAM STABILITY & BASINS

Have major river basins exceeded flood stage, and are dams facing overtopping risks?

WIDESPREAD POWER FAILURE

What percentage of the state population lacks power, and what is the estimated time of re-establishment?

HAZARD FOCUS



INLAND FRESHWATER FLOODING



AMPLIFIED COASTAL STORM SURGE



ISOLATED RAIN BAND TORNADOES



HIGH-IMPACT SUSTAINED WINDS

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF INFORMATION

<p>Universal Impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damage: Debris type & clearance volume. • Roads/Bridges: Real-time status of closures. • Power: Customer outages by utility & restoration time estimates. • Search & Rescue: Locations, numbers evacuated. • Resource Needs: Requests for specialized assets. 	<p>Hazard-Specific Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coastal: Actual tide levels vs. forecast levels. • Inland Floods: USGS river gauge readings and dam spill way rates. • Wind: Max wind gusts from official stations. • Tornado/Microburst: Path length, width, and Enhanced Fujita Scale (EF Scale) rating.
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CRITICAL DEFINITIONS FOR PLANNING

H Hour	Marker signifying the arrival of tropical storm force winds. High-profile vehicle movement must end before H Hour.
E Hour	Marker indicating the start of evacuation operations. Calculated by subtracting clearance time from H Hour.
HURREVAC	Decision-support tool used to calculate evacuation clearance times and inform evacuation timing.
Cone of Uncertainty	Graphic showing probable track based on forecast errors. Does not represent storm size, wind extent, or impact area.
Storm Surge	Abnormal, destructive rise of ocean water above predicted astronomical tides, driven by severe storm winds.

SAFFIR-SIMPSON HURRICANE WIND SCALE

[Including an excerpt of Beaufort Wind Scale for tropical depression category]

Category	Sustained Wind Speed	Effects
Tropical Depression	0 to 38 mph	Tropical disturbances originate in tropical waters
	Beaufort Scale 5 19-24 mph	Moderate waves (6-10 ft), small trees begin to sway
	Beaufort Scale 6 25-31 mph	Large waves (9-13 ft), large branches in motion
	Beaufort Scale 7 32-38 mph	High wind, moderate gale, large 13-19 ft waves, large trees in motion
Tropical Storm	Winds: 39-73 mph	Sustained winds capable of causing structural damage, typically at ≥ 58 mph
Hurricane Category 1	Winds: 74–95 mph	Very dangerous winds will produce some damage
Hurricane Category 2	Winds: 96–110 mph	Extremely dangerous winds will cause extensive damage
Hurricane Category 3	Winds: 111–129 mph	Devastating damage will occur
Hurricane Category 4	Winds: 130–156 mph	Catastrophic damage will occur
Hurricane Category 5	Winds: 157+ mph	Catastrophic damage will occur

FLOODING

SEVERE SEASONAL HAZARD RESPONSE | SEOC QUICK REFERENCE

Flooding is one of Maine's most frequent and destructive natural disasters, threatening infrastructure, property, and local economies. Because flood conditions escalate with little warning, the response demands the immediate deployment of life-saving resources, efforts to restore disrupted transportation networks, action to address contaminated water supplies, and the safeguarding of displaced populations.

APPENDIX PURPOSE

Coordinates the multi-agency response to destructive flood events. Staff use this appendix to mobilize high-clearance water vehicles, support municipal sandbagging, coordinate life-saving evacuations, monitor dam integrity, and execute boil-water advisories for compromised systems.

LEAD AGENCY

Maine Emergency Management Agency

Establishes National Weather Service (NWS) communication, coordinates resource requests, monitors hydrological data, synchronizes public information, and advises the Governor.

SEOC TIMELINE, TRIGGERS, & ACTIONS

Enhanced Monitoring (L3)

- NWS issues specific flood watches
- Monitor USGS river gauge telemetry
- Conduct coordination calls with DEP
- Verify sandbag and pump stockpiles

Partial Activation (L2)

- NWS issues specific flood warnings (Moderate flood)
- Stage state managed assets
- MaineDOT pre-positions barricades
- Issue coordinated evacuation warnings

Full Activation (L1)

- NWS issues specific flood warnings (Major flood)
- Rivers crest or flash flooding occurs
- Monitor the securing of compromised roads & bridges
- Synchronize mass care logistics

CRITICAL INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

RIVERINE & DAM THREATS

Have major river systems exceeded flood stage, and are any dams facing structural failure or overtopping?

COMMUNITY ISOLATION

Have rising floodwaters or washed-out bridges isolated communities from medical/supply access?

COASTAL INUNDATION

Does peak storm surge coincide with astronomical high tides, and have severed causeways isolated islands?

HAZARD FOCUS



INLAND FRESHWATER FLOODING



COASTAL FLOODING AND STORM SURGE

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF INFORMATION

<p>Universal Impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washouts: Status of state highways, local roads, and bridges. • Shelters: Geographic locations, capacities, and unmet needs. • Water Systems: Operational status of drinking and wastewater facilities. • Rescues: Number and location of active swift-water boat rescues. • Hazmat: Number and severity of environmental spills. 	<p>Hazard-Specific Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washouts: Status of state highways, local roads, and bridges. • Shelters: Geographic locations, capacities, and unmet needs. • Water Systems: Operational status of drinking and wastewater facilities. • Rescues: Number and location of active swift-water boat rescues. • HAZMAT: Number and severity of environmental spills.
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CRITICAL DEFINITIONS FOR PLANNING

Flash Flood Warning	Urgent warning issued when a sudden, violent flood develops in minutes or hours.
100-Year Flood	Base flood event with a 1 percent annual chance of being equaled or exceeded.
Hydrostatic Pressure	Pressure exerted by standing or slow-moving water against infrastructure.
Storm Surge	An abnormal, destructive rise of ocean water above predicted astronomical tides, driven by severe storm winds and low pressure.
Watch vs. Warning	Watch: Hazardous weather is possible . Warning: Hazardous weather is occurring or imminent .

FLOOD SEVERITY & INTENSITY CATEGORIES

Flood Category	Typical Damage Observations
Minor	Minimal property damage occurs. Primary threats are public nuisance, such as the temporary inundation of secondary dirt roads, public parks, and known low-lying agricultural fields. There is typically no immediate threat to life safety, though minor traffic detours may be required.
Moderate	Damaging inundation of residential structures and paved roads near streams and coastlines begins to occur. Floodwaters may breach residential basements or low-elevation commercial spaces. Localized, targeted evacuations of vulnerable populations and the transfer of valuable property (vehicles, livestock) to higher elevations become necessary, prompting the activation of municipal shelters.
Major	Extensive, catastrophic, and deep inundation of residential structures, commercial districts, and primary transportation arteries (including state highways). Significant, widespread, and formally mandated evacuations are required to preserve life safety. Communities may face multi-day isolation due to structural collapses.
Record	Flooding that equals or exceeds the highest documented water stage or volumetric discharge ever previously observed at a specific geographic location. This represents an unprecedented, highly destructive event requiring massive mutual aid support, federal intervention, and long-term recovery phases spanning months or years.

Citation: <https://forecast.weather.gov/glossary.php?word=flood+categories>

DROUGHT

SEVERE SEASONAL HAZARD RESPONSE | SEOC QUICK REFERENCE

Unlike rapid-onset hazards, droughts are insidious creeping disasters characterized by a prolonged, compounding period of low precipitation that damages municipal water supplies, commercial agriculture, and the environment. Effective response demands the long-term, sustained coordination of water management strategies, agricultural support programs, and the monitoring of public reservoirs.

APPENDIX PURPOSE

Coordinates the multi-agency response to severe and prolonged drought conditions. Staff use this appendix to synchronize water management strategies, support agricultural relief programs, manage the deployment of emergency drinking water, and mitigate wildland fire risks.

LEAD AGENCY

MEMA & U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)

MEMA manages the SEOC, synchronizes public information, and advises the Governor. USGS collects scientific data, monitors groundwater levels, and tracks precipitation deficits.

SEOC TIMELINE, TRIGGERS, & ACTIONS

Enhanced Monitoring (L3)

- USDM indicates D0 (Abnormally Dry) conditions
- Drought Task Force convenes
- Establish operational readiness
- Conduct interagency coordination call

Partial Activation (L2)

- USDM classifies regions as D1 (Moderate Drought) or D2 (Severe Drought) – MEMA Director Determination
- Request voluntary water conservation
- Elevate wildland fire readiness postures

Full Activation (L1)

- USDM classifies regions as D3 (Extreme Drought) or D4 (Exceptional Drought) – MEMA Director Determination
- Coordinate the deployment of emergency potable water buffaloes
- Request federal agricultural disaster relief

CRITICAL INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

CRITICAL WATER SUPPLY FAILURE

Do rural communities lack groundwater entirely, and do they require state-level deployments of emergency water buffaloes?

AGRICULTURAL THRESHOLDS

Do sustained crop and livestock losses reach the financial thresholds required to trigger USDA disaster designations?

INDUSTRY STOPPAGE

Does streamflow drop to levels that force the mandatory shutdown of hydroelectric facilities and paper mills?

HAZARD FOCUS



DROUGHT

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF INFORMATION

<p>Universal Impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drought Status: Weekly geographic categorization of counties (D0-D4). • Public Systems: Reservoir capacity percentages and days-of-supply. • Dry Wells: Tracked number and geographic clustering of failed residential wells. • Fire Danger: Keetch-Byram Drought Indices and number of active wildland fires. 	<p>Hazard-Specific Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yield Estimates: Verified percentages of crop loss calculated by DACF. • Soil Moisture: Standard Precipitation Index percentages indicating root-zone dryness. • Groundwater: Depth-to-water measurements from USGS telemetry networks. • Restrictions: Estimated public compliance rates for mandatory water conservation.
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CRITICAL DEFINITIONS FOR PLANNING

Agricultural Drought	Condition where precipitation deficits and reduced groundwater impact agricultural yields.
Hydrologic Drought	Condition where low water supply occurs in streams, reservoirs, and groundwater levels
Keetch-Byram Index	Continuous reference scale used by the Maine Forest Service to estimate soil and duff layer dryness.
Meteorological Drought	Condition where dry weather patterns dominate an area and disrupt continuous rainfall cycles.
U.S. Drought Monitor	Weekly map identifying the geographic footprint and severity classification of drought conditions.

DROUGHT SEVERITY & INTENSITY CATEGORIES

Drought Category	Typical Damage Observations
D0 - Abnormally Dry	Short-term dryness slowing the planting and growth of crops or pastures. This typically represents a region going into a drought or some lingering water deficits for a region coming out of a drought.
D1 - Moderate Drought	Some visible damage to crops and pastures occurs. Streams, reservoirs, or local wells run low. Minor water shortages develop, and state agencies typically request voluntary water-use restrictions.
D2 - Severe Drought	Crop or pasture losses become likely. Streams, reservoirs, and wells reach low levels. Widespread water shortages develop, and state authorities may implement localized mandatory water-use restrictions.
D3 - Extreme Drought	Major crop and pasture losses occur. Widespread water shortages exist across multiple counties, resulting in enforced mandatory water restrictions and the mobilization of emergency water assets.
D4 - Exceptional Drought	Exceptional and devastating crop and pasture losses occur. Shortages of water in reservoirs, streams, and private wells create total water emergencies, requiring federal intervention and emergency drinking water distribution.

Citation: <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About/AbouttheData/DroughtClassification.aspx>

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7.D Essential Elements of Information

Essential Elements of Information represent the critical data points leadership requires to make informed decisions during an incident. They establish the foundation of the Common Operating Picture and guide the incident action planning process.

Enabling the Response through Community Lifelines

When the SEOC collects EEI data points across the various Community Lifelines, it enables the response by transforming raw field reports into actionable intelligence. Tracking the operational status of these specific lifelines allows the Command and General Staff to identify capability gaps, prioritize resource allocation based on life safety, and direct missions to stabilize the community.

FEMA establishes the following standardized metrics to ensure a common operating language across local, state, and federal partners. While this standardization provides a baseline for status reporting, the SEOC Manager or Policy Group can supplement or modify the EEIs at any time. This flexibility allows leadership to define new metrics to address incident specific challenges, forecast emerging threats, or meet unique state level policy needs.

SAFETY & SECURITY LIFELINE







LIFELINE	SAFETY & SECURITY
 <p>Safety and Security</p>	<p>Stabilization Target: Threats to life-safety are no longer a concern for all response personnel and impacted communities. Government essential functions, including executive leadership, are operational. Sufficient search and rescue assets are on scene to assist all survivors. Sufficient fire resources are available to support fire suppression efforts.</p>
 <p>Law Enforcement / Security</p>	<p>Law Enforcement/Security</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Reception centers / Family reunification centers established?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Evacuation orders and approximate population impacted Select Type: () Voluntary () Mandatory () Total</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Curfews in place?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Planned reentry procedures established?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Police station facilities status: ___ # Fully Operational ___ # Partially Operational ___ # Non-Operational</p>
 <p>Fire Services</p>	<p>Fire Service</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fire station facilities status: ___ # Fully Operational ___ # Partially Operational ___ # Non-Operational</p>
 <p>Search & Rescue</p>	<p>Search & Rescue (SAR)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Search and Rescue Teams operating in division Select Type: () Local () State () Federal</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Status of ongoing SAR operations (include plans for remaining need or demobilization):</p>
 <p>Government Services</p>	<p>Government Services</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> City Hall / Municipal / County / Emergency Management facilities status: ___ # Fully Operational ___ # Partially Operational ___ # Non-Operational</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> School closures: Number of closures: Cause and anticipated reopening dates:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Postal services: Status and gaps in capabilities:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Long Term Recovery Groups: Status and plans:</p>
 <p>Community Safety</p>	<p>Community Safety</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Dams / Levees: <input type="checkbox"/> At risk of failure? Location and population impacted: <input type="checkbox"/> At least moderate damage? Location and population impacted:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Communities requiring sandbag operations?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cemeteries Disrupted: Select Type: () Private () Public</p>

Table: Community Lifelines Toolkit-Safety & Security, FEMA 2024

FOOD, HYDRATION, & SHELTER LIFELINE






LIFELINE	FOOD, HYDRATION, & SHELTER
 <p>Food, Hydration, Shelter</p>	<p>Stabilization Target: All survivors, their pets, and service animals have access to food, water, and sanitation. Sheltering, including cellular reception, capacity, accessibility, and wrap-around services, is supporting the displaced population. Sufficient resources are in place to sustain agricultural requirements.</p>
 <p>Food</p>	<p>Food</p> <p>[] Unmet feeding needs? Details:</p> <p>[] Feeding stations or Points of Distribution providing food Number of stations: Locations:</p> <p>[] Grocery store chain closures, cause, and anticipated reopening Details:</p>
 <p>Hydration</p>	<p>Hydration</p> <p>[] # or % of people without potable water:</p> <p>[] # or % and locations of Points of Distribution providing water Details:</p>
 <p>Shelter</p>	<p>Shelter</p> <p>[] Capacity, overnight census, and # of: Congregate shelters Select Type: () Red Cross () Independent () State Managed Census / Capacity: Non-congregate shelters Census / Capacity:</p> <p>[] Pet shelters Status:</p> <p>[] Large animal shelters Status:</p>
 <p>Agriculture</p>	<p>Agriculture</p> <p>[] Commercial food supply impacts Details:</p> <p>[] Plant disease outbreaks Details:</p> <p>[] Animal disease outbreaks Details:</p>

Table: Community Lifelines Toolkit-Food, Hydration, & Shelter, FEMA 2024

HEALTH & MEDICAL LIFELINE







LIFELINE	HEALTH & MEDICAL
	<p>Stabilization Target: All survivors, their pets, and service animals have access to required medical and veterinary care. Emergency medical systems can manage patient movement requirements. Public health services are accessible to all survivors. Sufficient temporary fatality management support is in place to meet processing demand. Medical supply chain capable of adequately resupplying medical care providers.</p>
	<p>Medical Care</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> # of confirmed injuries:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hospital and Emergency Medical Facility Status: Operational Status: ___ # Fully Operational ___ # Partially Operational ___ # Non-Operational</p> <p>Closures/Disruptions: Cause and anticipated re-opening dates:</p> <p>Capacity: # / % of beds available:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other Medical Facility and Veterans Affairs Facilities status and impacts: Details:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Dialysis Centers and Pharmacies status: ___ # Fully Operational ___ # Partially Operational ___ # Non-Operational</p>
	<p>Patient Movement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unmet patient movement resource requirements? Details:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hospital evacuations: Select Status: () Planned () Executed Details:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Aeromedical evacuation operations underway?</p>
	<p>Public Health</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Radiation health concerns? <input type="checkbox"/> Food safety concerns? <input type="checkbox"/> Chemical exposure? <input type="checkbox"/> Vector control concerns? <input type="checkbox"/> Air quality concerns? <input type="checkbox"/> Medical waste concerns? <input type="checkbox"/> Disease outbreaks?</p>
	<p>Fatality Management</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unmet fatality management resource needs? Details:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> # of confirmed fatalities:</p>
	<p>Medical Supply Chain</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Medical commodity production facilities impacted? <input type="checkbox"/> Medical gas service providers impacted?</p>

Table: Community Lifelines Toolkit-Health & Medical, FEMA 2024

WATER SYSTEMS LIFELINE




LIFELINE	WATER SYSTEMS
	<p>Stabilization Target: Survivors have access to temporary or permanent potable water infrastructure providing drinking water and wastewater management services. Sufficient resources are in place to support the temporary or permanent delivery of baseline water systems services.</p>
	<p>Potable Water Infrastructure</p> <p>[] Population without water: Population count and center location</p> <p>[] Population under Boil Water Advisory: Locations of Advisory: Water Service Provider:</p> <p>[] Water treatment facilities status: ___ # Fully Operational ___ # Partially Operational ___ # Non-Operational</p> <p>[] Intake, pump stations, pipeline, or other distribution system component impacts Details:</p>
	<p>Wastewater Management</p> <p>[] Wastewater treatment facilities status: Select Status: () Bypass () Offline () Limited</p> <p>[] Lift stations, force main, or other system component impacts Details:</p>

Table: Community Lifelines Toolkit-Water Systems, FEMA 2024

ENERGY LIFELINE




LIFELINE	ENERGY
	<p>Stabilization Target: Generators are providing temporary emergency power at critical facilities necessary to stabilize other Lifelines. Fuel distribution is available for responders. Sufficient fuel distribution is available for survivors, including to support individuals dependent on power for life-sustaining medical care.</p>
 <p>Power (Grid)</p>	<p>Power (Grid)</p> <p>[] # / % of population/jurisdiction without power: ___ / ___%</p> <p>[] Cause of power outages including impacts to: Select Impacted: () Generation () Transmission () Distribution systems</p> <p>[] Critical infrastructure requiring federal generators: Select Phase: () Assessment () Approval () Installation () Deinstallation</p> <p>[] Non-mission capable generation facilities: Type (nuclear, hydro, coal, LNG, other):</p> <p>[] Actions taken to restore power and estimated time of restoration: Details:</p>
 <p>Fuel</p>	<p>Fuel</p> <p>[] Critical infrastructure with non-federal generators anticipated to have unmet needs? Details:</p> <p>[] # / % of gas stations: ___ # / % Fully Operational ___ # / % Partially Operational ___ # / % Non-Operational</p> <p>[] # and location of fuel distribution points: Select Type: () Commercial () Responder Locations:</p> <p>[] Fuel shortages in supply chain anticipated or actual?</p> <p>[] Fuel distribution impacts (refineries, bulk fuel storage, pipelines): Details:</p>

Table: Community Lifelines Toolkit-Energy, FEMA 2024

COMMUNICATIONS LIFELINE







LIFELINE	COMMUNICATIONS
 <p>Communications</p>	<p>Stabilization Target: Survivors have access to commercial communications infrastructure to contact or be contacted by emergency services. LMR communications network is operational. PSAPs are available to the public. Survivors have access to financial services.</p>
 <p>Infrastructure</p>	<p>Infrastructure</p> <p>[] % population without cellular service: [] Telecommunications provider disruptions / outages Include cause, actions, and estimated time of restoration:</p>
 <p>Alerts, Warning, and Messages</p>	<p>Alerts, Warning, and Messages</p> <p>[] Impacts to local capacity to provide public alerts Details:</p>
 <p>911 and Dispatch</p>	<p>911 and Dispatch</p> <p>[] 911 / Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) Operational Status: Select Status: () Fully () Partially () Non-Operational Routing: Method of receiving and routing calls:</p>
 <p>Responder Communications</p>	<p>Responder Communications</p> <p>[] Locations with degraded communications Details: [] Unmet needs for communications devices Details: [] Unmet needs for communication systems Details:</p>
 <p>Finance</p>	<p>Finance</p> <p>[] # / % of facilities non-mission capable: [] # / % of banks/ATMs inoperable:</p>

Table: Community Lifelines Toolkit-Communications, FEMA 2024

TRANSPORTATION LIFELINE







LIFELINE	TRANSPORTATION
	<p>Stabilization Target: Multimodal routes (air, rail, road, port) are clear of debris and accessible by normal or alternate means.</p>
	<p>Highway/Roadway</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Emergency route clearance requirements / completed Status:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Impacts to highways / roadways / bridges Describe impacts to access, detours available, emergency repairs, and estimated time to restoration:</p>
	<p>Mass Transit</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Impacts to mass transit Especially systems used for mass evacuation (bus / airport / other):</p>
	<p>Railway</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Railway bridges impacted Details:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Commodity and passenger rail line disruptions Details:</p>
	<p>Aviation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Airport infrastructure impacts Runways, towers, ground support status:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Commercial airline impacts Details:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ability for responder air operations to occur Status:</p>
	<p>Maritime</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Port facilities impacted (landside and seaside) Operational Status: Select Status: () Fully () Partially () Non-Operational</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> US Coast Guard Port Status: Details:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Navigable waterway impacts, debris, other: Details:</p>

Table: Community Lifelines Toolkit-Transportation, FEMA 2024

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS LIFELINE




LIFELINE	HAZARDOUS MATERIALS
	<p>Stabilization Target: All contaminated areas are identified and secure.</p>
	<p>Facilities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Oil systems facilities impacted Operational Status: Select Status: () Fully () Partially () Non-Operational</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hazardous materials facilities impacted Operational Status: Select Status: () Fully () Partially () Non-Operational</p>
	<p>HAZMAT, Pollutants, Contaminants</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Debris total (cubic yards or tons):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> # of Derelict vessels:</p>

Table: Community Lifelines Toolkit-Hazardous Materials, FEMA 2024

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7.E Assessing Community Lifelines

What Is a Community Lifeline?

A Community Lifeline represents the most fundamental services in the community that, when stabilized, enable all other aspects of society to function. During normal operations, Lifeline services are provided by public, private, and nonprofit entities that are organic within a community. They include a range of critical day-to-day services that communities rely on to protect life and property. When disrupted, decisive intervention (e.g., rapid re-establishment or employment of contingency response solutions) is required to stabilize the incident. To measure the progress of these stabilization efforts, community impact is re-evaluated from the start of an incident through the transition to short-term recovery.

The SEOC organizes state-level response actions by directly assigning coordination and information gathering responsibilities to an Emergency Response Team member based on federally recognized Community Lifelines. This approach enables efficient reporting to federal partners, as well as aids in the establishment of a single, consistent common operating picture for the response.

We use Community Lifelines to emphasize outcomes (e.g., "Do hospitals in the impacted area have power?"). By working in this manner, the SEOC can:

- **Prioritize:** Distinguish the highest priorities and most complex issues from other incident information.
- **Visualize:** Quickly show leadership which sectors are stable, and which are failing.
- **Solve:** Focus our efforts on stabilizing the service, rather than just deploying assets.

The Eight Community Lifelines

The SEOC organizes information using the following eight FEMA structured Community Lifelines. Each Lifeline is comprised of multiple components and subcomponents that help define the services that make up that Lifeline.



Figure: FEMA Community Lifeline Toolkit, Version 2.1 -07/2023

2. SAFETY AND SECURITY

Includes responder safety, community safety, and the continuity of government.

Components: Law Enforcement/Security; Fire Service; Search and Rescue; Government Service; Community Safety

7. FOOD, HYDRATION, & SHELTER

Includes traditional feeding and hydration services, mass care operations, and agricultural infrastructure/food distribution. (Note: Focuses on the resource availability to the public).

Components: Food; Hydration; Shelter; Agriculture

8. HEALTH AND MEDICAL

Includes all aspects of medical services required during an incident, including survivor care, fatality management, public health, and the medical supply chain.

Components: Medical Care; Patient Movement; Fatality Management; Public Health; Medical Supply Chain

9. WATER SYSTEMS

Includes all water movements related to intake, treatment, storage, collection, distribution, and discharge.

Components: Potable Water Infrastructure; Wastewater Management

10. ENERGY (Power and Fuel)

Includes the power grid (transmission and distribution) and fuel supply chains (gas stations, fuel depots).

Components: Power Grid; Fuel

11. COMMUNICATIONS

Includes all types of communications necessary to effectively respond to and help survivors, in addition to banking and electronic payment needs.

Components: Infrastructure; Alerts, Warnings, and Messages; 911 and Dispatch; Responder Communications; Finance

12. TRANSPORTATION

Includes all forms of transportation of people and resources to and from the incident.

Components: Highway/Roadway Motor Vehicle; Mass Transit; Railway; Aviation; Maritime

13. HAZARDOUS MATERIAL

Includes the management (including containment and removal) of all hazardous materials.

Components: Facilities; HAZMAT, Pollutants, Contaminants

A NOTE ON INTERDEPENDENCY

Lifelines do not operate in a vacuum. Failure in one typically causes failures in others. For example, a failure in Energy (power outage) often causes a failure in Communications (cell towers cease to operate) and Transportation (traffic signals no longer work).

Determining The Status of a Community Lifeline

The status of a Lifeline depends on the capability of the underlying components, and is informed by situational awareness reports, impact assessments, and conversing with partners across the public, private, and non-profit sectors.

Analyzing Lifeline Components

Lifeline components (Power Grid and Fuel components of the Energy Lifeline for example) can be analyzed using six assessment categories that capture essential information for response decision-makers.

Categories	Description
Component	Identify the component.
Status (What?)	Summarize the root cause(s) of disruption to Lifelines services.
Impacts (So What?)	Explain the disaster impacts to specific communities, disaster survivors, and response operations. Detail how the survivor experience or response operation will improve if this component is addressed. Specify the impacted areas and population totals.
Actions (Now What?)	Describe the actions that are being taken to address the disrupted services. Summarize the most critical actions being taken across the whole community.
Limiting Factors (What's the Gap?)	Express issues that are preventing services from being re-established. Such issues can stem from another Lifeline/component, resource shortfall, management or policy.
Estimated Time to Status Change and Re-establishment Requirements (When?)	Provide current component condition or an estimated timeframe for when a change in condition is expected.

Table: FEMA Community Lifeline Toolkit, Version 2.1 -07/2023

Component Analysis Example

Categories	Description
Component	Transportation Lifeline, Mass Transit Component, Sub-component: Bus
Status (What?)	Bus service is unavailable due to road debris.
Impacts (So What?)	100,000 survivors have no access to public transportation nor emergency support services.
Actions (Now What?)	Local jurisdictions are prioritizing route clearance to critical facilities, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers assigned to supplement state and local authorities with route clearance and debris removal efforts, modified mass transit schedules are being executed as roads become passable, messaging of modified routes through numerous messaging platforms and outlets (radio, television, social media).
Limiting Factors (What's the Gap?)	Full service will not resume until the routes are cleared and roads inspected.
Estimated Time to Status Change and Re-establishment Requirements (When?)	Full service estimated to resume in a week, with a modified service available as roads become clear.

Table: FEMA Community Lifeline Toolkit, Version 2.1 -07/2023

Lifeline Status Color Scheme

Once the components have been analyzed, that information needs to be converted into a status color. The SEOC uses a standardized "Traffic Light" system to visualize this data. This allows staff to identify critical impact areas at a glance without reading detailed situation reports. *The Health and Medical Lifeline is used as an example.*



Grey
Unknown

Indicates the extent of disruption and impacts to Lifeline services is unknown.



Green
Minimal
Impact

Indicates the Lifeline is functioning at pre-incident levels, with only minor disruptions or limitations.



Yellow
Moderate
Impact

Indicates there are disruptions or limitations to the delivery of normal, pre-incident services and resources. The situation requires attention and proactive measures to prevent further deterioration and ensure community needs are met.

Restoration of this Lifeline is still in progress, and the community has not returned to pre-incident levels of service. This includes instances in which Lifeline restoration is being addressed through temporary means.



Red
Significant
Impact

Indicates there are severe challenges and obstacles hindering the essential services and resources associated with the Lifeline. Immediate attention and resources are required to address the situation and restore functionality.



Blue
Administrative

Does not indicate an operational status or condition; used for administrative purposes such as presentations and briefings.

Assigning a Status (Putting All of the Information Together)

After gathering sufficient information, use the flow chart below to think through the process of assigning a status to Lifelines. **Note:** Color designations represent a snapshot in time during an operational period. You must continually assess conditions as the incident evolves.

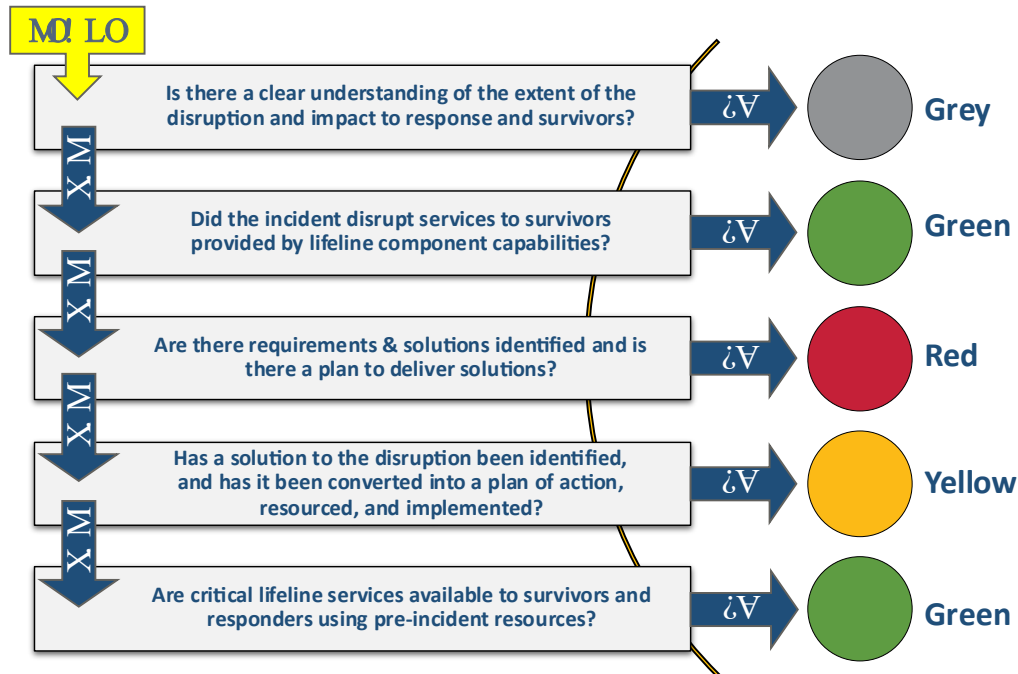


Figure: FEMA Community Lifeline Toolkit, Version 2.1 -07/2023

The baseline to which Lifelines should be compared is how the Lifeline itself functions in pre-incident conditions.

There are likely to be different perspectives and interpretations between various partners as to the significance of an impact on a Lifeline. As such, you should remember that the Lifelines construct is just as much about qualifying impacts as it is interpreting them. The Operations Section Chief, Operations Branch Director, or SEOC Manager (depending on current staffing) will adjudicate any conflicts regarding the status of a Lifeline.

What does it mean to “Stabilize a Community Lifeline?”

A Community Lifeline is considered "stabilized" when basic services are provided to survivors, removing the immediate threat to life and property. This does not always mean the infrastructure is fixed; it means the immediate need is met. Stabilization is achieved in two ways: Contingency Response (short-term, temporary solutions like setting up a field hospital or delivering bottled water) or Rapid Re-establishment (restoring normal providers via emergency repairs, such as clearing debris from a road or using generators to power a facility). These measures bridge the gap until permanent infrastructure repairs are completed, ensuring the community can function even while long-term recovery is still underway.

The Merging of Structure and Data

In an incident, the official SEOC organizational chart tells you who you report to, but it does not tell you who you need to talk to. The 'Merging of Structure and Data' concept acknowledges that while our hierarchy provides order, our data is inherently interdependent. No Lifeline exists in a vacuum; a failure in Energy is often the root cause of a failure in Water or Communications. By identifying potential 'Data Partners,' you move beyond siloed reporting and begin to build a shared situational awareness that anticipates cascading failures before they occur.

The following SEOC Lifeline Collaboration Matrix provides a starting point to identify "real-world" dependencies that C&G Staff and ERT members can use to facilitate awareness.

Primary Lifeline	Key Data Partner(s)	Why Synchronization is Critical (Example)
Safety & Security	Transportation	To coordinate route clearances and traffic control for emergency vehicle priority.
Food, Hydration, & Shelter	Water Systems	To ensure mass care sites have adequate potable water and sanitation services.
Health & Medical	Energy	To prioritize power restoration or generator fuel for hospitals and long-term care facilities.
Water Systems	Energy Health & Medical	Water pumps require power to maintain pressure; hospitals and shelters cannot operate without potable water.
Energy	Transportation Communications	To synchronize grid repair with the restoration of cellular and emergency radio towers.; clearing debris is required for utility crews to reach downed lines and substations.
Communications	Safety & Security	To ensure 911 dispatch and responder radio networks remain operational for field teams.
Transportation	Energy	To ensure fuel supply chains remain open for both repair crews and the general public.
Hazardous Materials	Water Systems	To monitor and mitigate contamination threats to the public water supply.

Table: Collaboration Matrix, MEMA 2026

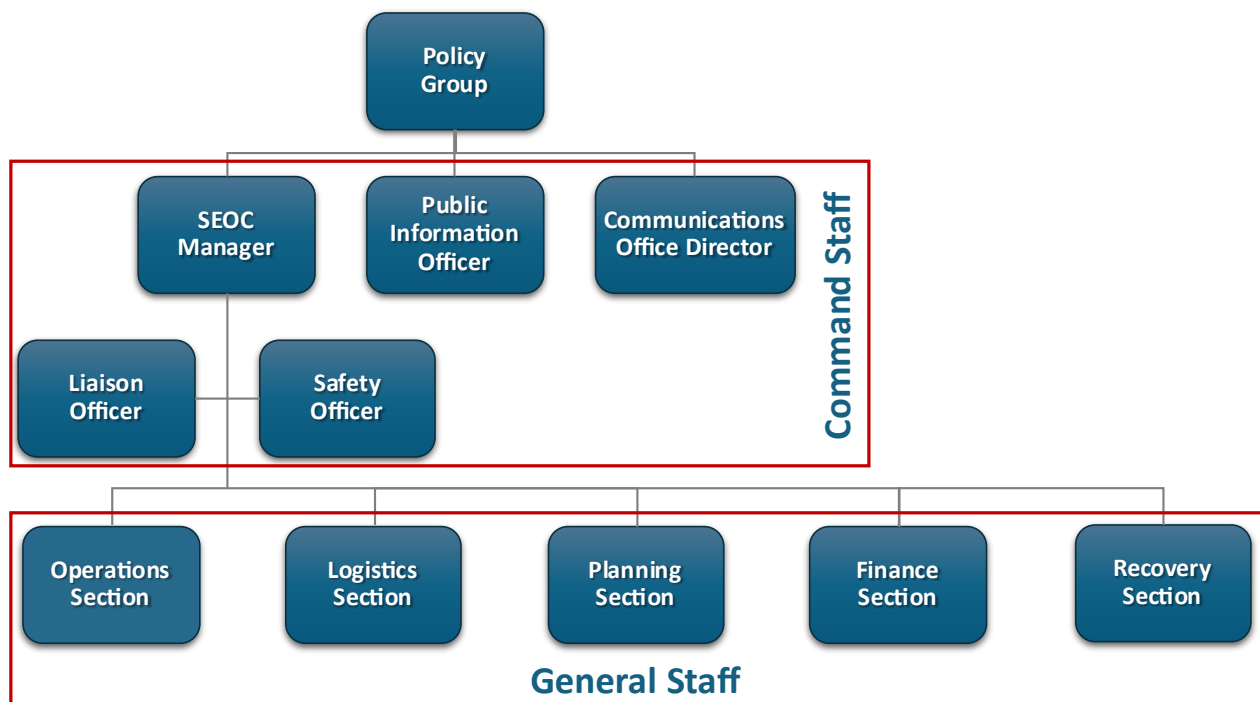
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7.F SEOC Organizational Reference

Use this section to orient yourself within the Maine SEOC structure and to identify the correct points of contact for your specific needs. Your success depends on understanding how your role integrates with the wider response organization. The following descriptions below can be used to determine which Section or Officer handles can be of assistance.

All descriptions are based on the organizational chart, depicted below. These sections are scalable and may, or may not, be activated depending on the event or incident response.



Note: Once you have identified who you need to reach, consult Section 5: Understanding the SEOC Structure and How to Communicate for the specific protocols on how to move that information effectively.

POLICY GROUP

An executive-level group that manages high-level government relations and strategic guidance.

- **Major Functions:** Advising on legal implications, waivers, declarations, and making high-impact decisions.
- **Group Lead Responsibilities:** The Group Lead is typically the MEMA Director or Deputy Director but can be augmented by other authorities. They provides executive strategic

policy guidance and manages interagency relations at the highest level of state government.

COMMAND STAFF

A specialized group of officers who report directly to the Policy Group Lead, unless otherwise noted. They handle critical activities that fall outside the functional responsibilities of the General Staff sections, specifically regarding SEOC management, public engagement, and communications. The staff are part of a hybrid-organizational structure used by MEMA and as such it differs from a standard Incident Command structure.

SEOC Manager

The designated lead for the SEOC, serving as the primary authority for the activation. This position replaces the traditional "Incident Commander" title to distinguish the strategic, state-level coordination role from tactical field operations.

- **Major Functions:** Focuses on strategic coordination, state-level objectives, and organizational management of the response. The SEOC Manager handles the "organization of the response" rather than the incident itself.
- **Responsibilities:** In coordination with the MEMA Director, the SEOC Manager establishes overall operational priorities, authorizes resource deployment, and serves as the primary communicator with relevant stakeholders.

Public Information Officer (PIO)

The primary conduit for information release, serving as the official voice of the SEOC activation. This position functions as a critical link between the technical data of the emergency response and the public's understanding of the incident.

- **Major Functions:** Focuses on the gathering, verification, coordination, and dissemination of accurate information to the public, media, and response partners. The PIO ensures the "Right Information, to the Right People, at the Right Time." This position also oversees the Joint Information Center (JIC) and ensures alignment between MEMA, the Governor's Office, and other agencies.
- **Responsibilities:** Under the direction of the Policy Group, and in coordination with the SEOC Manager and the Communications Office Director, the PIO drafts/approves content for emergency alerts, manages media inquiries, monitors public sentiment and rumors, and conducts on-camera briefings to maintain public trust.

Communications Office Director

The lead for the Communications Office, serving as the primary authority for ensuring secure, interoperable connectivity for the activation. This position oversees the technical pathways required for data and voice transmission.

- **Major Functions:** Focuses on planning, installing, and maintaining technical infrastructure (LAN/WAN), managing the radio frequency spectrum, and providing technical help desk support. The Communications Office Director handles the "systems of communication" ensuring the network exists for operations to occur.
- **Responsibilities:** In coordination with the SEOC Manager and technical partners, the Communications Office Director ensures the reliability and security of information systems and manages the technical infrastructure required for the SEOC and field response to communicate effectively.

Liaison Officer

The lead for interagency cooperation, serving as the primary bridge between the SEOC and supporting partners. This position acts as the central point of contact for Agency Representatives, external organizations, and stakeholders not directly involved in the command structure. This is one of two positions within the Command Staff that reports to the SEOC Manager.

- **Major Functions:** Focuses on stakeholder management, resource coordination across jurisdictions, and ensuring that assisting agencies are fully integrated into the SEOC workflow. The Liaison Officer handles the "relationships of the response" to ensure unity of effort.
- **Responsibilities:** In coordination with the SEOC Manager, the Liaison Officer maintains a directory of assisting agencies, addresses concerns from external agency representatives, and ensures that cooperating organizations are kept informed of the incident status and operational planning.

Agency Representative

An Agency Representative is an individual assigned to an incident from an assisting or cooperating agency. The Agency Representative facilitates coordination, cooperation, and communication between the Incident Command Post, the Incident Management Team, the County, and MEMA. The Agency Representative reports to the Liaison Officer or to the Incident Commander in the absence of a Liaison Officer.

- **Major Functions:** Serves as the official MEMA representative and a conduit for information flow between the home agency and the incident site. They identify emerging risks, anticipate coordination gaps, and ensure state resources integrate effectively into the overall response. Additionally, they maintain a Common Operating Picture for state leadership while representing MEMA interests and statutory requirements.
- **Responsibilities:** Maintain situational awareness at the Incident Command Post and the SEOC, update WebEOC logs, and provide scheduled situation updates on Community Lifelines and protective actions. They facilitate the resource request process, attend essential planning and tactics meetings, and track the status of all deployed MEMA personnel. The representative also maintains a continuous activity log with timestamps and transitions all incident records to the documentation unit upon demobilization.

Safety Officer

The designated lead for strategic risk management, serving as the primary authority for analyzing hazards that affect responders across multiple regions. This position distinguishes strategic-level safety coordination from tactical, site-specific safety officers found at the local level. This is second of two positions within the Command Staff that reports to the SEOC Manager.

- **Major Functions:** Focuses on issues that impact responders across large swaths of the state, such as radioactive releases or widespread weather events, while also overseeing the physical and mental well-being of SEOC staff. The Safety Officer handles the "strategic safety posture" rather than incident site safety.
- **Responsibilities:** In coordination with the SEOC Manager, the Safety Officer monitors operational conditions and reviews the Incident Action Plan (IAP) for safety implications at a state level. They assess broad-scale risks to ensure that

state-wide operational objectives can be achieved without compromising the safety of responders across the affected regions.

GENERAL STAFF

The functional teams for the SEOC, handling the operational execution of the SEOC activation. This group comprises the Section Chiefs and their respective staffs (Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance) who are responsible for the primary aspects of the response mission.

Planning Section

The strategic hub of the SEOC responsible for the ongoing incident planning cycle. It ensures all responders share a Common Operating Picture.

- **Major Functions:** Collecting and evaluating intelligence, developing the Incident Action Plan, tracking resources, managing risk, and maintaining incident documentation (archives/logs).
- **Section Chief Responsibilities:** Collects situation and resource status info, evaluates it, and processes it into action plans. Disseminates information via the IAP, formal briefings, and map/status board displays.

Operations Section

The bridge between high-level strategy and the organizations executing operational objectives. It utilizes a flexible, modular structure based on the incident's scope.

- **Major Functions:** Directing the execution of the Incident Action Plan, managing deployed resources, and coordinating with Emergency Response Team members based on Community Lifelines.
- **Section Chief Responsibilities:** Directs operations, anticipates resource needs, manages safety/execution of response, and works with Emergency Response Team members to collect data for the Common Operating Picture.

Logistics Section

The primary coordinator of resources and support required to sustain both responders and the SEOC facility itself.

- **Major Functions:** Securing facilities, managing supplies, coordinating transportation, and meeting personnel administrative needs (meals, lodging, welfare).
- **Section Chief Responsibilities:** Oversees the ordering, obtaining, and accounting of essential personnel, equipment, and supplies. Manages the scalable structure of support branches to ensure effective span of control.

Finance Section

The section responsible for managing all financial and cost-analysis aspects of an incident. It is activated only when specific financial services are required.

- **Major Functions:** Monitoring incident costs, administering procurement and vendor contracts, tracking personnel time, and managing injury/liability claims.
- **Section Chief Responsibilities:** Directs the management of financial matters, including contract negotiation, cost-effectiveness analysis, and documentation for future reimbursement.

Recovery Section

The section responsible for assisting in restoration and resilience efforts, serving as the primary authority for the transition from crisis response to long-term sustainability. This section operates in parallel with response operations to capture critical data needed for future federal funding and community rebuilding.

- **Major Functions:** Focuses on damage assessment, economic impact analysis, and the administration of state and federal assistance programs (Public Assistance and Individual Assistance). The Recovery Section handles the "aftermath of the response" to ensure the state maximizes eligibility for disaster relief funding.
- **Section Chief Responsibilities:** In coordination with the SEOC Manager, the Recovery Section Chief directs the compilation of Initial Damage Assessments (IDA) from local jurisdictions, preparation of necessary documentation for Governor's State of Emergency proclamations and Presidential Disaster Declarations, and oversees the development of the strategy for long-term community recovery and hazard mitigation.

7.G WebEOC Guide

To Be Incorporated at a Later Time: This section will demonstrate how to log on, where to go in NEXUS/WebEOC and other tasks designed to address the most common errors.

Estimated time of completion: April 2026

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7.H Common Acronyms in the SEOC

Like many specialized fields, Emergency Management has its own language filled with acronyms. This list covers several of the most common terms you will hear in the SEOC, helping you translate 'alphabet soup' into actionable information. Keep this reference handy during briefings and shift changes.

AAR: After Action Report. A document that captures the performance of the response during an exercise or real-world event, identifying strengths to be maintained and areas for improvement.

CONOPS: Concept of Operations. A high-level overview describing "how" an organization will operate during a specific incident, outlining the sequence of actions and command relationships.

COP: Common Operating Picture. A single display of relevant operational information (e.g., maps, data) shared by all personnel to ensure everyone is working from the same data.

COOP: Continuity of Operations. An effort within individual agencies/departments to ensure that their "essential functions" (e.g., payroll, IT, vital records) continue to be performed even during a wide-scale emergency.

DMAT: Disaster Medical Assistance Team. A federally deployed team of medical professionals (doctors, nurses, paramedics) supported by the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) to provide rapid-response medical care.

EMA: Emergency Management Agency. Refers to the local or county-level counterpart to MEMA (e.g., "The County EMA Director").

EMAC: Emergency Management Assistance Compact. A congressionally ratified mutual aid agreement that allows states to share resources (personnel, equipment, commodities) during governor-declared states of emergency. It provides legal protections and reimbursement mechanisms for assisting states.

EMS: Emergency Medical Services. The system of emergency medical care dedicated to providing acute medical care and transport to definitive care.

EOC / SEOC: Emergency Operations Center / State Emergency Operations Center. The physical location where the coordination of information and resources to support incident management activities normally takes place.

EOP: Emergency Operations Plan. The ongoing plan maintained by an organization that outlines response procedures for various hazards.

ESF: Emergency Support Function. The structure used to group resources and capabilities into functional areas (e.g., ESF-1 is Transportation, ESF-8 is Public Health).

FCO: Federal Coordinating Officer. The federal officer appointed by the President (usually from FEMA) to manage the federal resource support to the State during a major disaster declaration. (The FCO works in partnership with the State Coordinating Officer, or SCO).

HAZMAT: Hazardous Materials. Substances that pose a reasonable risk to health, property, or the environment (e.g., chemical spills, radiological materials).

IAP: Incident Action Plan. A written plan that defines the incident objectives and reflects the tactics necessary to manage an incident during an operational period.

ICP: Incident Command Post. The field location where the primary tactical-level, on-scene incident command functions are performed. (Distinct from the SEOC, which focuses on strategic support and coordination).

ICS: Incident Command System. A standardized approach to the command, control, and coordination of emergency response.

IEMAC: International Emergency Management Assistance Compact. A mutual aid agreement specifically between the New England states and the Eastern Canadian provinces to facilitate cross-border assistance during emergencies.

IPAWS: Integrated Public Alert and Warning System. FEMA's national system for local alerting that allows authorized public safety officials (alerting authorities) to send warnings to the public through multiple communications pathways, including Emergency Alert System (EAS) broadcasts, Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) on cell phones, and NOAA Weather Radio.

JIC: Joint Information Center. A location where public information staff perform public affairs functions; often closely linked to the SEOC.

NAWAS: National Warning System. A dedicated telephone warning system used to disseminate warnings (like severe weather or civil emergencies) to state and local warning points.

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization. A non-profit entity that is based on humanitarian or cooperative interests rather than commercial interests (e.g., The Salvation Army).

NIMS: National Incident Management System. The comprehensive, national approach to incident management that applies at all jurisdictional levels.

PIO: Public Information Officer. The person responsible for interfacing with the public and media and/or with other agencies with incident related information requirements.

POD: Point of Distribution. A centralized location where the public receives life-sustaining commodities (MREs, water, tarps) following a disaster.

PPE: Personal Protective Equipment. Specialized clothing or equipment worn by responders for protection against safety and health hazards (e.g., N95 masks, Tyvek suits, hard hats).

SitRep: Situation Report. A periodic report describing the current situation, including current actions, future plans, and resource status.

SME: Subject Matter Expert. An individual with deep technical knowledge in a specific area (e.g., a meteorologist or a hazardous materials specialist).

SLTT: State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial. A common acronym used to refer to all levels of non-federal government stakeholders.

SOP: Standard Operating Procedure. Detailed, written instructions to achieve uniformity of the performance of a specific function.

UC: Unified Command. An authority structure in which the role of incident commander is shared by two or more individuals, each having authority in a different operating agency or jurisdiction.

VOAD: Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster. A coalition of NGOs (faith-based, community-based) that coordinate to avoid duplication of effort and maximize support to disaster survivors (e.g., Maine VOAD).

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