



Jefferson County - City of Port Townsend  
**COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN**



**Part 3: Emergency Operations Guide**

**EOG 3.3.01  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DUTY OFFICER  
24-HOUR COVERAGE**

October 29, 2008 (Revised July 12, 2010)

**PURPOSE** - The diverse responsibilities of this department are not suspended at the end of the work day. We will maintain a 24/7 watch as a means of reacting to the unique needs of the community whenever they arise.

This mechanism also makes use of dedicated volunteer members of the EOC Incident Management Team to augment department personnel, and provides a training platform for the development of program depth.

The Duty Officer program provides for consistent Emergency Management coverage to meet the requirements of the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, initial response depth for rapid activation of the Emergency Operations Center, staffing continuity and identified chain of command, and maximum use of essential volunteer staff.

**DUTY OFFICER** - A Duty Officer is a designated representative of this department authorized to act as a receiving and reaction point of contact for the department. This system provides unbroken representation of the department for those incidents that occur unexpectedly during off hours.

It is expected that whenever possible, the Duty Officer will seek the assistance of DEM staff for resolution of issues not addressed in standing orders.

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CHAIN OF COMMAND** - The decision to mobilize resources, initialize the emergency management system, and implement Emergency Action Checklists will follow this chain of command (in order of contact):

- Program Manager
- Deputy Program Manager
- Assistant Program Manager
- DEM Duty Officer assigned

**ASSUMPTION OF LEAD ROLE** – The DEM Duty Officer acts as the EOC Manager until relieved by higher authority according to the above chain of command.

**SCHEDULED DUTY** - Scheduled duty means the period of time agreed upon by participating personnel and assigned by the Department of Emergency Management. The duty period will be noted in the DEM Duty Officer Activity Log.

**AVAILABLE FOR DUTY** - The assigned Duty Officer will remain available to act according to these procedures during the scheduled duty period. Available means within tone pager range (East Jefferson County), and able to personally respond to the Emergency Operations Center in a reasonable period of time. An alternate may be used when the assigned Duty Officer is temporarily unavailable for duty during the scheduled duty period.

**TONE PAGER** - Jeffcom standing orders require use of the EOC tone pager system for notification of the DEM DO. DEM DOs should ensure that pagers are properly set to receive EOC tones throughout the assigned duty period.

**GENERAL POWERS OF THE DUTY OFFICER** - The designated Duty Officer (DEM DO) has limited authority to act on behalf of the Department of Emergency Management on those matters requiring prompt attention or when no higher authority is immediately available. This may include the limited and temporary exercise of the powers including activation of the Emergency Operations Center and the implementation of standing orders and Emergency Action Checklists. The Duty Officer is the initial point of contact (POC) for emergency management activities.

**EMERGENCY ACTIONS ARE TEMPORARY** - It is not expected that volunteer Duty Officers will be held fully responsible for the Department of Emergency Management and the activation of emergency plans and procedures. Their actions will be either governed by standing orders or supported by Emergency Management staff when available. Any expedient action taken by a volunteer Duty Officer is considered interim and temporary based on the best information available at the time. The Department of Emergency Management retains full responsibility for the actions of the assigned volunteer Duty Officers.

**CONSIDERATION OF ALL POSSIBLE SCENARIOS NOT FEASIBLE** - It is not feasible to foresee all possible scenarios that may be encountered by a DEM DO. This procedure visualizes that the designated DO will take those reasonable steps to make contact with the Program Manager or other DEM authority when solutions are not evident. For events not covered by previous guidance, and when there is a threat to life or property, the DEM DO is authorized to act as appropriate to the mission of the department.

**AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES** - The DEM DO is authorized to take the following action without timely need for contact up the chain of command:

- Request a Search and Rescue (SAR) mission number from the State EMD Duty Officer when assisting the Sheriff's Office SAR coordinator or designee or Police Department supervisor.
- Notify the State EMD Duty Office of a minor hazardous materials incident to be forwarded to the State Department of Ecology.
- Activate the Emergency Operations Center in support of a Search and Rescue activity when requested by the JCSO SAR Coordinator. Activate the appropriate Emergency Action Checklist for EOC support to search and rescue.
- Activate the EOC and initialize the appropriate Emergency Action Checklists for an incident in progress.
- Develop an interim plan of action to respond to the initial stages of an emergency.
- Take steps to initiate action on behalf of the EOC while awaiting additional staff assistance.
- Make the notifications and alerts necessary to implement an interim plan of action.
- Authorize release of Emergency Management resources (including the radio cache, support services trailer, and incident tracking system) when requested by a local served agency.
- Receive and log a WATCH level bulletin from Jeffcom or the State EMD DO.
- Receive and log reports from the State EMD DO of hazardous materials incidents for which no further action is required.
- Begin follow up investigation on reports of unusual events within our jurisdiction and coordinate with Jeffcom to determine the nature and scope of the event.
- Request activation of the tone alert paging system for notification of personnel in the chain of command
- Represent the Department of Emergency Management at the City Command Center when activated for a city-only operation.
- Represent the Department of Emergency Management at the scene of an in-progress incident where DEM assistance may be required.
- Obtaining a NWS Spot Forecast when requested by a served agency.

- Keep the Program Manager (or designee) advised when Emergency Management resources are activated for an unusual occurrence.

**USE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT VEHICLE AUTHORIZED** - The assigned DEM DO is authorized to use the DEM Mobile when necessary to the performance of official duties during the scheduled duty period. The DEM DO will sign on the air with Jeffcom (fire radio) using assigned radio call numbers.

**WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS, ACT!** - Nothing in this procedure is intended to limit, prevent, or unreasonably delay the timely and prudent action on the part of a DEM DO acting on behalf of the Department of Emergency Management. Reasonable action will be focused on the needs of the agencies and citizens we serve.

**DUTY OFFICER ACTIVITY LOG** - The DEM DO will keep an activity log of all related actions and observations during an assigned shift (see attached). A Duty Officer Kit (aka Football) contains the necessary guidance and equipment to initiate action under the color of these procedures. Records are an important part of the process, and the Duty Officer will attempt to maintain an accurate and detailed account of activities associated with the duty period.

#### **CLARIFICATION OF SOME TERMS USED HERE**

- Activation – initialization of an Emergency Action Checklist. EOC activation means when the EOC (or alternate EOC) is occupied and becomes the primary work station in response to an emergency management activities.
- Continuity – interim assumption of certain duties in the absence of higher authority.
- DEM DO – Department of Emergency Management Duty Officer.
- EMD DO – Emergency Management Division Duty Officer (State of Washington Emergency Operations Center)
- Expedient – actions taken by the DEM DO that are necessary to the emergency at hand; provisional until affirmed by the Program Manager or designee.
- On duty – checked in and available by pager and reasonably ready to act as the designated representative of the department. On duty means remaining in the operational area during the scheduled duty time (unless temporarily relieved by an alternate).