EOP Part 6, Annex 2 – Communication and Emergency Notifications

GOAL:

Identify the processes, procedures, and responsibilities necessary for the rapid and efficient notification of personnel before, during, or after a crisis situation.

OBJECTIVE:

To provide emergency notification involving an immediate threat to health or safety of Aims students, faculty, staff, and visitors of any significant emergency or dangerous situation triggered by an event that is currently occurring on or imminently threatening the campus.

COURSES OF ACTIONS:

There are times on campus when we may be faced with emergency situations. If those occur, the College will use campus emergency notification systems to make announcements and provide instructions to follow.

The safety of our students, faculty, staff and visitors is our number one priority. If you hear the alarm, then that means to take action. Listen to the announcements, find a safe location, and await further instructions. For campus alarms or public address capabilities, the message used and the decision to activate the system takes place immediately at the campus level by either Campus Security or the TVAT.

The emergency notification system consists of the following delivery methods, listed in order of effectiveness (activation, delivery speed, audience reach, etc.). The College recognizes that emergency information will travel via word-of-mouth. However, in that this method is unreliable and cannot be controlled, it is not considered an official communication method.

Primary (immediate)
- RAVE, Alarms & Public Address
- SMS Text Message
- Bulk Email
- Aims Website
- Emergency Phone Trees

Secondary (15 minutes and beyond)
- Student & Employee Hotlines
- Voicemail Message
- Media Release / Press Conference

Emergency Mass Notification System Overview

The Aims Emergency Notification System is used to alert the College community of pending or on-going emergencies. In time of a weather warning, the system can dispense information via the RAVE Notification software, which is also linked automatically to Alertus. The system has some flexibility in determining which notification tools will be used. These include voicemail, text messages, emails, computer screen pop-ups, and the beacons.

Upon notification of a MAJOR EMERGENCY that is, or may soon be a threat to life and requires immediate protective action to be taken, determine the need and type of warning message that needs to be transmitted to one or more campus buildings as follows:

1. Emergency Evacuation: Immediate relocation of building occupants due to a health or life safety hazard.

2. Dangerous Situation: Generally an intentional human-generated health or life safety hazard such as: active shooter, hostile intruder, terrorist attack, etc.
3. Hazardous Condition: A technological accidental or intentional health or life safety hazard such as: hazardous materials leak or spill, biological threat, radiological emergency, etc.
4. Weather Emergency: A natural weather hazard that is an immediate health or life safety hazard such as: severe thunderstorm, tornado, flash/urban flood event, etc.
5. All Clear: When the emergency incident has been resolved and no longer a health or life threat.

Notifying 9-1-1:
1. The local 9-1-1 Public Safety Access Point should always be notified first of all major emergencies occurring on an Aims Community College campus.
2. After the local 9-1-1 Public Safety Access Point has been notified, all major emergencies should immediately be reported to Campus Security.
3. Campus Security must assure that 9-1-1 has been notified, if unable to verify, call them to be sure, and verify that they are in transit.

Alerts, Notifications and Warnings:
Campus Security determines the need and type of alert/notification/warning system(s) to be utilize, based on the following:

☐ Type of hazard
☐ Life safety and property protection issues
☐ Urgency of the situation
☐ Audience to receive the messaging
☐ Capabilities and limitations of the system(s) to be used

Notification Methods Overview

- **RAVE AND ALERTUS Emergency Alert Systems:** Capable of sending out emergency notifications through cell phone text messages, e-mail messages, land line phone calls, and the computer network via a pop up alert notification. The coordination of system testing is overseen by the Department of Campus Safety & Security in collaboration with the Information Technology division and is routinely tested during each semester.

- **Intercom:** Each building classroom and many offices have digital phones capable of doing mass notifications through a paging extension. Each Building Coordinator has instructions and the system is tested during each drill to notify occupants of the drill.

- **Emergency Back-up Communications System:** All buildings on the main campus have hand held radios with a secured FCC channel. The radios have a repeater system and have an 8 hour battery backup in the event of total power loss. The radios specifically have a 12 hour run time without the repeater system being functional. Monthly testing is completed with a roll call style of each building/location. Some buildings have multiple radios based on their student populations.

- **Aims Website:** The www.aims.edu website has a safety link at the bottom right corner of the main page that also follows the user throughout the site. On the "Safety" page is a section to advise individuals of campus related emergencies, closures, or any other pertinent information.

- **9-1-1 Direct-Dial:** Each classroom and office with a digital phone either has a red button or a white button with "Emerg" identified in the LCD window, designated to dial 911 without lifting the receiver. Users can simply hit the button and be connected to an Emergency Dispatch Communications Center to advise them of emergencies occurring on any of the campuses.

- **Fire Alarm Pull Stations:** Each building had Fire Alarm Pull Stations, which are used during a fire emergency or an incident requiring evacuation.

- **Telephone/Contact Tree.** The contact tree is a means of quickly spreading information to the persons in a building. The contact tree starts with notification to building team members who in turn contact more people until everyone in the building is efficiently contacted. In some instances, contact will not be possible prior to emergency action, such as in the event of a fire alarm. The use of the contact tree will occur primarily in circumstances where precautionary or preventive action is required, such as a storm alerts, tornado alerts or civil disturbance. In those events, precautionary action will be communicated to employees and students.

- **Flat Screen Monitors.** Several of our public gathering places have flat-screen televisions where emergency announcements get posted. These screens are owned by the departments that provide them and are dispersed throughout campus.

- **College Emergency Information Lines.** If there were an emergency or a campus closure, students, faculty and staff could call the main number for current information.

ALERT Activation Decision Criteria

Five criteria should be considered to determine if activation of the ALERT system is warranted, which methods will be utilized, and who authorizes activation of the system:

1. Hazard Type

- What is the hazard? (room fire, tornado)
- What is the impact to Aims? (minor, major, disaster)
- What is the potential for the situation to worsen?
- Is the situation under control?

2. Life Safety / Property Protection

- What is the potential for death?
- What is the potential for serious injury?
- What is the potential for minor injury?

- What is the potential for damage?
- What is the potential for disruption to normal course of business?

3. Urgency

- How soon does the message need to go out? (Seconds, minutes, hours, days)
- Is there time for approval?

4. Audience

- Who needs to be alerted? (Administration, faculty, staff, students, visitors)
- How many people need to be alerted? (dozens, hundreds, thousands)

5. Capabilities / Limitations

- What are the limitations of the system? (audience, delivery time, mass panic)
- Which system should be used? (Press conference, bulk text message, siren)
- How quickly can the messages be sent? (Immediately, minutes, hours)

Appendix 2 to Annex 2 - Public Information / Media Contact

Official Spokesperson

The College President and the Public Information Officer are the only official spokespersons for Aims who are authorized to complete interviews with the media during a declared college emergency. The College President or the Public Information Officer is authorized to designate other Aims official spokespersons as needed.

Public Information is a priority response action. The increased demand for public information after a major emergency can quickly overwhelm the capabilities of response personnel if it is not addressed appropriately. In response to a MAJOR EMERGENCY, Aims supports the creation of a Joint Information System (JIS). A JIS integrates incident information and public affairs into a cohesive organization designed to provide consistent, coordinated, timely information during emergency operations. The mission of the JIS is to provide a structure and system for developing and delivering coordinated interagency messages; developing, recommending, and executing public information plans and strategies; advising public affairs issues that could affect a response effort; and controlling rumors and inaccurate information that could undermine public confidence in the emergency response effort.

This EOP was developed under the assumption that a JIS will initially be developed and managed by the lead local emergency response agency. The Aims Public Information Officer is responsible for integrating the College's public information resources into the JIS and coordinating all official information regarding Aims via the JIS process.

Joint Information Centers

A Joint Information Center (JIC) is a designated location established to coordinate all incident-related public information activities and the JIS process. It is the central point of contact for all news media at the scene of the incident. Public information officials from all participating agencies should collocate at the JIC.

Designated Areas for Media

This EOP was developed under the assumption that there will be increased media presence during a campus MAJOR EMERGENCY. If the media is not controlled, they could interfere with response operations. Therefore, Aims will designate staging areas for media near each campus. A media staging area will be positioned outside the present and potential hazard zone and the secure perimeter of response operations, but close enough to accurately report the incident.

Rumor Control

This EOP was developed under the assumption that rumors and unofficial information will likely spread during a declared MAJOR EMERGENCY. The implementation of a Joint Information System and the activation of a Joint Information Center will help Aims control rumors, but may have limited results.

If further rumor control is needed, Aims can request assistance from the Greeley/Weld 9-1-1 Center. This EOP was developed under the assumption that current Aims hotlines and

departments will not be able to handle the call volume of a MAJOR EMERGENCY. The Greeley/Weld 9-1-1 Center has the telecommunication resources needed to handle the increased call volume of a MAJOR EMERGENCY.

The Greeley/Weld 9-1-1 Center supervisor will be asked to report the most asked questions hourly to the Aims Public Information Officer. The Aims Public Information Officer will evaluate the information provided by the Greeley/Weld County 9-1-1 Center supervisor and issue new press releases to the media as needed to clarify or correct any rumors being spread or questions going unanswered.

Appendix 3 to Annex 2 - Timely Warning & Emergency Notification Statement

Purpose

To provide emergency notification involving an immediate threat to health or safety of Aims students, faculty, staff, and visitors of any significant emergency or dangerous situation triggered by an event that is currently occurring on or imminently threatening the campus.

To also alert the campus community to certain crimes in a manner that is timely and will aid in the prevention of similar crimes or poses a continuing threat to our College community.

Requirements

The *Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act* (Clery Act) requires every institution, without exception, to have and disclose emergency response and evacuation procedures in response to a significant emergency or dangerous situation involving an immediate threat to the health or safety of students or employees occurring on the campus. Clery Act also requires alerting the campus community of certain crimes in such a manner that is timely and will aid in the prevention of similar crimes.

Accordingly, Aims will keep our campus communities informed by providing timely warning of crimes occurring on or near campus property which represent a serious or continued threat to students and employees, once reported to CSAs, as specified in the Clery Act:

1. Issue a timely warning for any Clery Act crime that represents an ongoing threat to the safety of students or employees;

2. Issue an emergency notification upon the confirmation of a significant emergency or dangerous situation involving an immediate threat to the health or safety of students or employees occurring on the campus.

Aims will use one or more delivery methods to communicate the threat to the College community or to the appropriate segment of the community, if the threat is limited to a particular building or segment of the population. Aims will, without delay and taking into account the safety of the community, determine the content of the notification and initiate notification protocols, unless issuing a notification will, in the judgment of the authorizing College officials or first responders, compromise the efforts to assist a victim or to contain, respond to, or otherwise mitigate the emergency situation.

Definitions

Clery Act: The Clery Act is a federal statute with implementing regulations in the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations. The Clery Act requires all Colleges and Universities that participate in federal financial aid programs to keep and disclose information about crime on and near their respective campuses. Compliance is monitored by the U.S. Department of Education, which can impose civil penalties for infractions and can suspend institutions from participating in federal student financial aid programs. The law is named for Jeanne Clery, a 19-year-old Lehigh University freshman who was raped and murdered in her campus residence hall in 1986. The criticism against unreported crimes on numerous campuses across the country prompted authorities to development the *Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1990*, which later became the Clery Act.

Campus Security Authority (CSA): Specific individuals on campus who are not Public Safety Officers could still have certain crimes disclosed to them. These individuals are considered "Campus Security Authorities" under the Clery Act. The Campus Security Authorities include but are not limited to the Director of Human Resources or his/her designee, the Director of Student Life or his/her designee, the Registrar or his/her designee, members of the Threat and Violence Assessment Team, and the Director of the Student Success Center or his/her designee. These individuals must report information on crimes disclosed to them to the College Resource officer or Department of Campus Safety & Security.

Clery Act Crimes: Aims must annually distribute statistics concerning the occurrence on campus, in or on non-campus buildings or property, and on public property for crimes involving Murder and Non-Negligent Manslaughter, Negligent Manslaughter, Sex Offenses (Forcible and Non-forcible), Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Burglary, Motor Vehicle Theft, Arson, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence and Stalking. In addition, any Hate Crime involving race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability, national origin or gender identity must also be reported.

Annual Security Report: By October 1 of each year, institutions must publish and distribute their annual campus security report to current and prospective students and employees. This report is required to provide crime statistics for the prior three years, policy statements regarding various safety and security measures, campus crime prevention program descriptions, and procedures to be followed in the investigation and prosecution of alleged sex offenses.

Crime Log: The institution's police department, security department, or public safety department, is required to maintain a public log of all crimes reported to them, or those of which they are made aware. The log is required to have the most recent 60 days' worth of information. Each entry in the log must contain the nature, date, time and general location of each crime and disposition of the complaint, if known. Information in the log older than 60 days must be made available within two business days. Crime logs must be kept for seven years, three years following the publication of the last annual security report.

Timely Warning: Timely warnings are triggered by crimes that have already occurred but represent an ongoing threat. The alerting of the campus community to certain crimes in a manner that is timely and will aid in the prevention of similar crimes. The timely warnings are focused on, but not limited to, Clery Act crimes. The Clery Act does not define or clarify the meaning of "timely"; the intent of a warning regarding a criminal incident(s) is to enable people to protect themselves, therefore the warning should be issued as soon as the pertinent information is available.

Emergency Notification: Emergency notification is triggered by an event that is currently occurring on or imminently threatening the College or one of its campuses. Initiated immediately upon confirmation that a dangerous situation or emergency exists or threatens. Emergency Notifications are made to students and employees for any significant emergency or dangerous situation occurring on the campus involving an immediate threat to their health

or safety. The emergency notification has a wide focus on any significant emergency or dangerous situations, but may include Clery Act crimes.

Notification Procedures

1. Most crime events or emergency situations on campus are going to be identified by students, faculty, staff or visitors. If students, faculty, staff or visitors are involved in or witness a life-threatening emergency, it is essential for them to immediately call 9-1-1 and the appropriate Campus Security office. This notification is the first step in the activation of the College EOP.

2. Non-emergency crimes committed on or near Aims campuses should be reported to any CSA as defined above. The CSA who observes or receives information regarding one of the Clery Act crimes must immediately report the information to Campus Security on the appropriate campus.

3. Any reported crime posing a serious or continued threat to the campus community will be called to the attention of the senior most Campus Security official available on that campus or their designee.

4. Once it is determined that a timely warning is necessary, as practical and without jeopardizing life safety, trained and authorized personnel shall activate the campus siren and public address delivery systems used during a life-threatening major emergencies.

Testing and Evaluation

An evacuation drill will be conducted at least once a year for all buildings that are occupied by students and/or employees. Campus Security will be responsible for scheduling and conducting these drills. Emergency response and evacuation procedures will be tested and evaluated during these drills. The purpose of these drills is to prepare building occupants for an organized evacuation in case of fire or other emergency situation.

1. These drills will provide the College opportunities to test the operation of different ALERT methods used for emergency notifications and timely warnings.

2. During these drills, occupants will practice basic self-protection actions, familiarize themselves with the locations of exists, and the different announcement methods used for notification.

Aims may also participate in exercises with federal, state, and/or local emergency response agencies in Colorado. The Department of Campus Safety & Security is responsible for coordinating these efforts via the Weld County Office of Emergency Management. It is an Aims goal to participate or conducts at least one exercise per calendar year with federal, state, and/or local emergency response agencies in Colorado to test and evaluate the College's Emergency Operations Plan.