

# VT Electric Cooperative Operating Procedure 57 Event Action Planning

Main Document

Revision 008

## Table of Contents

- I. SCOPE ..... 3
- II. IDENTIFICATION OF THREATS AND PLANNING LEVEL..... 3
- III. COMMUNICATION OF EVENT PLANNING LEVEL..... 5
- IV. INCIDENT COMMAND STRUCTURE ..... 5
- V. STAFFING, ROLES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ICS..... 5

## Appendices

Appendix	Title	Rev
A	EPL Criteria and Guidelines	000
B	ICS Organization Chart and Templates	000
C	Incident Commander Role, Responsibilities, Checklists	000
D	Operations Section Roles, Responsibilities, Checklists	000
E	Planning Section Roles, Responsibilities, Checklists	000
F	Safety Officer Role, Responsibilities, Checklists	000
G	Logistics Section Roles, Responsibilities, Checklists	000
H	IT Section Roles, Responsibilities, Checklists	000
I	Finance Section Roles, Responsibilities, Checklists	000
J	Press Information Officer/Public Liaison Officer Roles, Responsibilities, Checklists	000
K	Restoration Prioritization Criteria and Guidelines	000
L	ETRs and Communicating Information EPL Orange and Red	000
M	Mutual Aid Guidelines	000
N	ICS Forms, Lists, and Data Repositories	000
O	Cyber Response	

## I. SCOPE

The purpose of this document is to provide a framework and procedure by which VEC departments and employees will identify, prepare for, and respond to natural disasters, weather events, cyber events, and other emergent conditions that pose or may pose a threat to the reliability of the VEC electric system or business continuity. An “event” is any identified anomaly or threat. VEC utilizes an Incident Command System (ICS) structure, modelled after the FEMA National Incident Management System, for responding to these events. This system allows a consistent approach to responding to threats and is scalable, up or down, to meet specific needs of each event.

## II. IDENTIFICATION OF THREATS AND PLANNING LEVEL

- a. For purposes of identifying imminent or potential threats, the VEC System Operators and Operations Management will rely on tools available as described below. VEC personnel are not limited to these tools but should consider them in their decision-making, due to their focus on utility weather forecasts:
  - Roger Hill forecasts
  - NorthView Weather forecasts
  - Deep Thunder, current weather data provided in the VEC Control Room and public weather and news sources such as WCAX, WPTZ, NWS, NOAA and AccuWeather. The VEC Control Room should also monitor other threats that could jeopardize VEC business continuity such as cyber incidents, sabotage or facility failures.
- b. VEC personnel will review the EPL daily, and update as necessary.
- c. For the purposes of defining planning and preparedness levels, VEC utilizes four (4) levels of readiness, or **Event Planning Levels** – green, yellow, orange, and red. When there are no existing or potential threats, the Event Planning Level (EPL) will be green.
- d. VEC uses the criteria in Appendix I, EPL Criteria, to determine the appropriate Event Planning Level. VEC System Operations, in consultation with the Planning Section Chief and Operations Section Chief, will set the Event Planning Level. A high level overview of the planning levels is described below:
  - i. **Green** – no existing or potential threats or events in the next 24-72 hrs.
  - ii. **Yellow** – informational, notification of existing or potential minor events that may require additional resources over and above the schedule on-call or control center resources. At this level, there are no (anticipated) impacts or interruptions to normal business operations. Response to

events under an EPL Yellow should be in accordance with VEC Operating Procedure OP-56, Staffing and Callouts, and will be coordinated through the VEC Event Manager.

- The 24-hour forecast identifies minor weather threats with certainty.
  - The 24-48 hour forecast has identified the possibility of developing extreme weather threats.
  - The long-range forecast identifies forecasted minor weather related threats beyond the 48-hour period, with some certainty.
  - An emergent (existing) threat or event that is minor
- iii. **Orange** – potential or imminent events that could have a severe impact to one district or moderate impact that is widespread. We expect there will be minor to moderate impacts to normal business operations due to the need to apply some internal resources toward the event response. Under EPL Orange, there will be an assigned Incident Commander and a subset staffing of the ICS structure.. Depending on the nature of the event, we will distribute Operations functions among the Operations/District Supervisors.
- Significant weather related threats forecasted in the next 36 hours
  - Severe or extreme weather events forecasted in the next 36-72 hours
  - Significant cyber security threats
  - Significant threats to normal business operations
  - Emergent (existing) minor to moderate impacts to normal business operations
- iv. **Red** - potential or imminent events that could have significant or severe impact that is widespread. An EPL Red level event is an “all hands on deck” response and will have significant impacts on normal business operations. We will staff the full ICS structure and likely assign all VEC employees a role in the Event Action Plan.
- A weather warning indicating severe or extreme weather events that are probable or imminent in the next 36 hours.
  - Emergent severe weather
  - Emergent or existing critical cyber events
  - Emergent (existing) severe impacts to normal business operations
- e. Establishing and adjusting the EPL Level is at the discretion of the Event Manager or Incident Commander with reference to the EPL Criteria and in consultation with Operations and Planning Section Chiefs.

**III. COMMUNICATION OF EVENT PLANNING LEVEL**

Changes to the Emergency Planning Level occur as conditions change and are communicated using pagers, company cell phones, e-mails and the VEC intranet.

- a. System Controllers post the EPL status, reason for this status, and the Event Manager or Incident Commander to the VEC Intranet at all times. Posting the EPL to the home page of the internet at the top right and at the top of the "Outages" page.
- b. System Operators will send out a notification to pagers and e-mail, containing the EPL level and the reasons for this status.

**IV. INCIDENT COMMAND STRUCTURE**

VEC designed the ICS structure to enable effective and efficient incident management by integrating a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure. VEC identifies and assigns specific roles and responsibilities under the ICS structure to prevent confusion and overlap in effort. The ICS structure also establishes "unity of command", where one, and only one, person gives orders or directives to avoid conflict and maintain safety.

**V. STAFFING, ROLES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ICS**

For EPL levels green and yellow, there is no staffing of the ICS. The event is coordinated through the control center by the System Operators and Event Manager. The Event Manager is normally the Manager of System Operations. The Yellow EPL is primarily for informational purposes to make VEC field personnel aware of a minor threat that could result in the need for calling in additional resources over and above the on-call crews or field crews within a district. An EPL of Yellow also makes ICS staff aware of the potential for staffing the Incident Command Structure if the event worsens or if additional threats emerge.

- a. Upon declaring an Orange or Red EPL level, an Incident Commander, typically the Chief Operating Officer, is identified. The Incident Commander will then identify the ICS structure and staffing for the specific event. Each time the ICS Structure is staffed, the assignments will be entered into the in the ICS Organizational Chart found in Appendix G. This appendix contains typical staffing for both Orange and Red level events and a blank template if certain staff are unavailable.
- b. ICS Staffing and Organizational Chart (EPL Orange and/or Red)
  - i. Figure 1 shows the typical personnel assigned to the specific roles within the ICS structure
  - ii. Assigned Section Chiefs will review and perform the roles, responsibilities, action items, and checklists identified for the identified

EPL. The roles, responsibilities and checklists associated with each role can found in the appendices to this document as outlined below:

- Appendix A – EPL Criteria and Guidelines
- Appendix B – ICS Org Chard with Names
- Appendix C – Incident Commander/Event Manager
- Appendix D – Operations Section
- Appendix E – Planning Section
- Appendix F – Logistics Section
- Appendix G – Press Information/Public Liaison Officer
- Appendix H – Safety Officer
- Appendix I – Finance Section
- Appendix J – Information Technology Section
- Appendix L – ETRs and Communicating Information EPL Orange and Red
- Appendix M – Mutual Aid Guidelines

**c. Event Planning Level ORANGE**

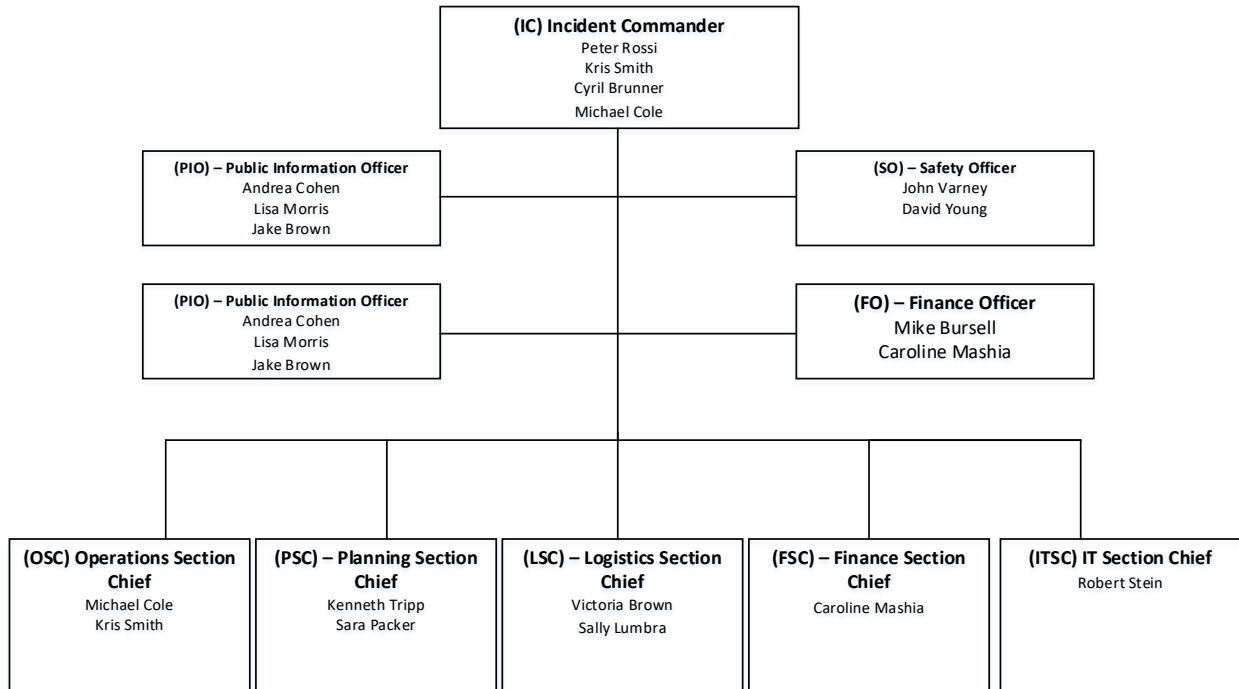
- i. VEC staffs the ICS at the onset of EPL Orange. The assignment of staff to ICS roles will be dependent on the nature of the threat or event. VEC establishes a minimum staffing of the Incident Commander, Operations Section, and Planning Section any time we identify an EPL level of Orange. Additional ICS staff can be assigned, such as logistics, as the need arises or if the nature of the event changes.
- ii. Upon instituting an EPL Orange, the T&D Branch Director (typically the Operations Supervisor for that district) may coordinate the response for one or more districts. This will be dependent upon the nature of the event and the severity of impact in each district.

**d. Event Planning Level RED**

- i. An EPL level of RED - is an “ALL HANDS ON DECK” event.
- ii. All functions of the ICS structure will be staffed
- iii. An identified T&D Branch Director, typically the Operations Supervisor for that district, will coordinate event response efforts in each district.



Figure 1 - Typical ICS Staffing





**Revision History**

Rev No.	Date	Description
000		Initial version. (Released)
001		
002	02/10/2011	Updated contact information
003	08/06/2012	Revised to include weather threat levels
004	06/24/2013	Section IV Texting of a level 2 change
005	01/13/2015	Section II Yellow definitions, Section IV District Supervisor responsibilities and EMS/SCADA Responsibilities
006	01/02/2016	Modified to implement ICS Management Structure, enhanced appendix plans/checklists
007	07/12/2016	Updated with direct references to cyber threats, EMS and IT cyber incident appendices
008	03/07/2019	Major document revision and complete revamp of appendices. Added EPL Orange, Distributed ICS

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