

THE NATIONAL PLAN
for
Civil Defense and Defense Mobilization

Annex 13
WARNING



Executive Office of the President
OFFICE OF CIVIL AND DEFENSE MOBILIZATION



Preface

This annex supports and amplifies the National Plan for Civil Defense and Defense Mobilization, particularly Part V, Section D, **Warning of Attack**. It states the principles, responsibilities, requirements, and broad courses of nonmilitary action incident to this subject.

Under Section 201(c) of the Federal Civil Defense Act of 1950, as amended, the Director is authorized to "make appropriate provision . . . for dissemination of warnings of enemy attack to the civilian population."

While this annex is concerned with warning of attack and attack effects, the required methods and facilities can be used to warn of other major disasters and their effects.

(The term "States" as used herein, refers also to the District of Columbia and, where applicable, to Territories and possessions.)

Auxiliary documents will be issued as necessary and will be subordinate to and compatible with this annex and the National Plan.

The annex is published in looseleaf form in order that pages may be added or replaced easily whenever revisions are made.



Director

Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization

Issued September 1959

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ANNEX 13

WARNING

I. Definition

Warning is the alerting of people to the threat of extraordinary danger and the related effects of disasters. This includes the collection, evaluation, and dissemination of warning information by governments and the facilities needed to achieve this. The term "warning" includes, but is not limited to, warning of hostile aircraft and missiles, invasion, biological and chemical warfare agents, radiological contamination, clandestinely introduced weapons, conflagration, and various natural disasters.

II. Assumptions¹

A. Communication of adequate warning is contingent upon the ability of the Federal Government to detect and recognize imminent attack, before or after it is launched, and upon the capability of governments at all levels to detect and evaluate attack effects, including radiological, biological, and chemical contamination.²

B. Timely warning of possible or imminent attack or even of existing attack effects will materially assist in reducing the number of casualties.

C. Tactical warning time may range from a maximum of three hours for manned delivery systems to one-half hour maximum for unmanned delivery systems.

¹See Annex 1, Planning Basis, especially for a more detailed discussion of the kinds and possibilities of warning.

²See Annex 23, National Radiological Defense Plan, and Annex 24, National Biological and Chemical Warfare Defense Plan.

(Tactical warning is warning by mechanical or electronic means to the effect that the enemy attack has been launched.) **Attack could come at any time without warning.** However, the detonation of the first weapon could serve as warning for the entire country. Strategic warning is a possibility. (Strategic warning is evidence of enemy intentions to launch an attack against the United States.)

III. General Responsibilities

A. Federal

The Federal Government is responsible for establishing and maintaining a national warning system, for declaring and disseminating warnings to State governments and, by special arrangements, directly to political subdivisions, and for assisting State and local governments in warning the people.

B. State and Local

State and local governments are responsible for establishing and maintaining warning systems, for disseminating warnings and other emergency information throughout their political jurisdictions, and for prescribing the action to be taken by the respective government and the public upon receipt of warning.

C. Private Organizations and Individuals³

Private organizations are responsible for developing warning systems within their organizations as may be necessary to supplement and extend public warnings. Individuals are responsible for learning the Warning Signals and taking the recommended actions.

³See Annex 2, Individual Action.

IV. Functions

A. Provision of Warning Systems⁴

1. Objective

To assure the availability of adequate means and methods for disseminating warning.

2. Actions Required

- a. Establish, staff, equip, maintain, and test primary, secondary, and local warning points.
- b. Install and maintain devices and other equipment for transmitting warning at all levels.
- c. Develop reliable circuits, devices, and systems for warning and emergency instruction.
- d. Incorporate capability for relay, from, as well as to, any warning point, of essential "flash" reports of attack, other dangers, and damage.

B. Public Understanding of Warning Signals

1. Objective

To assure proper public recognition of and response to warning signals.

2. Actions Required

- a. Assure use of uniform warning signals.⁵
- b. Make use of all media to educate the public in recognizing the signals and the survival actions associated with those signals.⁶
- c. Test local warning devices periodically to familiarize the public with the sounds, as well as to check the equipment's operability.
- d. Study public reaction to these signals and determine ways to improve recognition and response.

⁴See Annex 15, Communications.

⁵See Part IV, Section E, Subsection 2, *infra*.

⁶See Annex 9, Public Information.

C. Obtaining Information for Warning

1. Objective

To obtain prompt and accurate information on impending or existing attack and other dangers.

2. Actions Required

- a. Maintain up-to-date estimates on capabilities of potential attackers and probable intentions regarding attack on the United States.
- b. Assure instant access to information, from military and other sources, indicative of attack or imminence of attack.
- c. Establish procedures for collecting and forwarding information on attack and other dangers, including "flash" and nuclear detonation reports, to the Warning Centers over the Attack Warning System.

D. Dissemination of Warning

1. Objective

To warn all concerned of attack and other dangers in time for proper protective actions.

2. Actions Required⁷

- a. Establish and test procedures at all levels for disseminating all types of warning received through the Attack Warning System.
- b. Establish criteria and procedures for the sounding of the "alert" and "take cover" signals.

E. Action on Warning

1. Governments and the public will take such action on receipt of warning as is prescribed by the government involved.

⁷For details see the OCDM *State and Local Warning Operations Manual: Procedures for Warning Points*.

- a. Evacuation or dispersal: Target cities and other areas near assumed targets will, if time and conditions permit, execute plans for evacuation or dispersal to prepared reception areas. (Other areas will "take cover," preferably in prepared shelters.)
 - b. Shelter: If time and conditions do not permit evacuation, full advantage will be taken of existing shelter, and fallout protection will be improvised.
 - c. THE ACTION TO BE TAKEN IS A LOCAL DECISION, predicated upon standard operating procedures in State and local plans and mutual-aid agreements. (Each jurisdiction within a metropolitan area will respond to a coordinated action.)
2. Where outdoor warning signals are used to warn the public, they will consist only of:
 - a. The "ALERT" signal—a 3- to 5-minute steady blast or tone, meaning "attack is probable—take action as directed by local governments."
 - b. The "TAKE COVER" signal—a 3-minute warbling tone or a series of short blasts meaning "attack is imminent—take cover immediately in the best available shelter."

V. Execution

A. OCDM

The Director, OCDM, shall:

1. Maintain liaison with the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD) at its Headquarters at Colorado Springs, Colo., and maintain Warning

Centers at NORAD Headquarters and such other NORAD installations necessary to obtain the required information.

2. Provide warnings and warning information to all States and, in accordance with Federal-State arrangements, directly to political subdivisions on the National Warning System (NAWAS), and continually maintain and operate the system for that purpose.
3. Provide warnings and warning information to Federal Agencies which request them and will install and maintain warning systems.
4. In conjunction with the State and local government concerned, establish Warning Points for the reception and further dissemination of warnings and other emergency information.
5. Establish requirements, make arrangements, and provide funds for research to improve warning methods and devices, and disseminate research findings.⁸
6. Develop and establish training courses for warning personnel at all levels of government and assist States and local governments in the execution of their warning training and public education programs.⁹
7. Provide financial and technical assistance to the States for establishment of warning systems and warning planning,¹⁰ and provide technical assistance to other Agencies of the Federal Government in the development of warning planning.

⁸See Annex 36, Research and Development.

⁹See Annex 37, Training and Education.

¹⁰See Annex 38, Federal Assistance.

8. Develop and institute periodic tests and exercises to determine the operational capability of the Attack Warning System to perform all warning functions.¹¹
9. Make NAWAS available for the further dissemination of severe weather, flood, and seismic wave information.¹²

B. Other Federal Agencies

1. The Department of Defense, through NORAD or other means, shall make available to OCDM information of impending or delivered attack.
2. Appropriate Federal Agencies shall provide OCDM with any information pertinent to strategic warning.
3. All Federal Agencies shall develop and maintain capability to warn their personnel during working hours of the imminence of attack and attack effects.

C. State and Local

State and local governments shall:

1. Operate, in conjunction with OCDM, Warning Points in accordance with Federal-State arrangements.
2. Establish, maintain, and operate warning systems and devices, with financial and technical assistance from the Federal Government.¹³
3. Provide, in accordance with section 10.9 of FCC rules, for the dissemination of attack warning by

¹¹See Annex 39, Review, Tests, and Inspection.

¹²See Annex 40, Natural Disasters.

¹³For grants-in-aid for approved systems, see OCDM Administrative Manual AM25-1, "Federal Contributions for Civil Defense Equipment," and Annex 38, Federal Assistance.

- those existing public safety communications systems, as needed.
4. Issue and publicize instructions for action to be taken by governmental agencies, industries and institutions, and the public upon receipt of warnings.
 5. Develop a capability to transmit to OCDM Warning Centers information concerning nuclear detonations, fallout, and chemical and biological hazards occurring in the area.¹⁴
 6. Conduct periodic tests and exercises to determine the operational capability of their portions of the Attack Warning System.
 7. Conduct training courses for their warning personnel.
 8. Develop plans for Warning Point personnel to use in determining the public action signal to be sounded when competent authority cannot be located within a specified time.

¹⁴See Annex 14, Damage Assessment; Annex 23, National Radiological Defense Plan; and Annex 24, National Biological and Chemical Warfare Defense Plan.