

# MEMORANDUM

## State of Alaska

Department of Transportation & Public Facilities  
Office of the Commissioner

TO: DOT&PF Division Directors

DATE: November 02, 2024

FROM: Ryan Anderson, P.E.  
Commissioner



PHONE NO: 907-465-3900

SUBJECT: Incident, Event, and Disaster  
Guidelines for DOT&PF  
Division Directors

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has consistently demonstrated its capability as a responder to various events that disrupt transportation systems and communities. In times of crisis, it is crucial that our response addresses not only the essential work happening on the front lines but also the underlying work that ensures the resilience of our support systems. This memo provides step-by-step guidance for responding to incidents, events and disasters, ensuring that our actions comply with State and Federal guidance, regulations, and statutes.

### Definitions of events:

**Threatening Incident:** This is a physical event affecting state infrastructure where there is a risk of interruptions to public travel, facility use, loss of property, or financial risk to the State if no action is taken. By acting proactively, we can mitigate potential delays for the public and reduce future infrastructure losses and associated costs. An example would be increasing river erosion that is likely to impact a roadway within a short timeframe, or major system failure in a facility that if unrepaired, will cause disruptions for workers. Forecasted extreme weather events should be considered threatening incidents.

**Disruptive Event:** An event has occurred, causing disruption to roads, highways, airports, facilities or marine highway operations. These events may include damage or closure of infrastructure due to:

- Natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, storms, or wildfires, and seasonal storms of record.
- Intentional incidents like criminal activity or terrorism.
- Other disruptive events, such as bridge strikes, collapses, or major traffic disruptions.

Any closures of roads and highways, airports, or significant ferry route delays should be reported as disruptive events. Large scale office closures are classified as disruptive events.

**Declared Disaster:** A disaster declaration has been issued by the Governor for widespread damage and significant impacts to life and property. During this level of event, the Statewide Emergency Operations Center takes the lead role for the State of Alaska in its response efforts, and formal incident management procedures are followed.

### Protocols for responding to events:

1. **Communicate:** During a threatening incident, disruptive event, or declared disaster, it is imperative to communicate the threat immediately through the DOT&PF Emergency Events chat in Microsoft Teams. This communication tool serves as the primary channel for notifying the Commissioner's Office, the DOT&PF communications team, and teammates across the State. Ensure that the information shared is both timely and complete, allowing for appropriate public and stakeholder outreach. Photos and video are highly encouraged for the value in content they provide to our team. For disruptive events and disasters reporting should be at regular intervals (morning and evening or more frequently as needed) and provide sufficient information on the event consequences and actions being taken.

For disruptive events that affect the highway and marine highway system, ensure updates to 511 are implemented immediately with any pertinent information for the public, as specified in P&P 07.05.110 Alaska 511 Information Reporting. If a road closure occurs, ensure appropriate notifications are provided according to Alaska DOT&PF P&P 07.05.110 State Highway System Road Closure Reporting. For National Highway System winter closures exceeding 8 hours, refer to Federal Highway Administration Order 5181.1C for reporting requirements: [FHWA Order 5181.1C](#).

For disruptive events that require large scale closure of State of Alaska office facilities, follow the internal procedures for office closures located at this link: <https://dot.alaska.gov/dfs/leasing/office-closure.shtml>

Reference the latest version of the “Communications Standards” memo for communications protocols provided to all staff.

2. **Designate a response team and act:** In accordance with Incident Command System (ICS) principles, identify a team that will be responsible for managing the incident/event. This team should include key roles such as an Incident Commander, Operations Section Chief, and other essential positions based on the size and scope of the situation. Communicate the team’s designation, roles, and responsibilities in the DOT&PF Emergency Chat to ensure situational awareness across all involved parties.

For declared disasters, the Commissioner will designate an incident commander and incident response team responsible for ensuring communication protocols are maintained both internally and externally with the Statewide Emergency Operations Center. While coordination occurs amongst the incident response team using various methods, it is the responsibility of the DOT&PF incident commander that appropriate communications are shared via the DOT&PF Emergency Events chat for effective information distribution to the Commissioner’s Office as well as the larger DOT&PF team and resources across the State.

3. **Request Emergency Authorization:** To authorize emergency expenditures, a written determination of the emergency must be submitted to the Commissioner as soon as possible. This memo should follow the guidance provided in the January 24, 2024 Contingency, Non-Par & Emergency Requests Memo. This authorization serves as documentation for subsequent emergency procurement justification.
4. **Request Emergency Alternative Procurement:** Before issuing emergency construction procurements (either verbally or via informal written methods), efforts should be made to obtain authorization via email from the Commissioner for sole source procurements. Please provide the following information in the email request: Event description; proposed contractor scope of work; statement regarding practicality of contractor selection; and overall justification for the work. Proper documentation will help ensure transparency and compliance throughout the procurement process.

When an event happens, DOT&PF has a responsibility to the public to respond quickly and effectively. Following these guidelines will ensure a fast response by our team, supported by systems aligned with our policies, regulations, and statutes.

**Authority:**

AS 36.30.310 Emergency Procurements  
2AAC 12.440 through 12.460 Emergency Procurements  
AAM 81.510 Emergency Procurements  
AS 26.23.010 through 26.23.240 Alaska Disasters Act  
P&P 07.05.070 State Highway System Closure Reporting  
P&P 07.05.110 Alaska 511 Information Reporting

*“Keep Alaska Moving”*