

ALERT READY – DIRECT ACCESS

1. GENERAL

- A. This policy establishes roles, responsibilities and procedures related to Halifax Regional Police's (HRP) use of the Alert Ready national public alert system as the primary method of issuance.
- B. This policy is understood as governed by and in alignment with provincial and federal policies and regulations relating to the Alert Ready system.
- C. Public alerts through the Alert Ready system are intended for:
 - i. The most serious and time-critical emergencies,
 - ii. Soliciting the public's attention,
 - iii. Directing the public to act (be on the lookout for, shelter in place, evacuate, etc.).
- D. This policy applies to the "primary" alerting system that HRP shall use in the event that a public alert is required and approved. When the Alert Ready - Direct Access cannot be practically utilized, NS EMO remains the back-up process for issuing alerts.

2. POLICY

- A. The Chief of Police or designate authorizes activation, updating or cancellation of all public alerts issued by HRP through the Alert Ready system.
- B. HRP supports requests for public alerts through the Alert Ready system from other agencies at the discretion of the Chief or designate.
- C. Prior to issuing a public alert by HRP through the Alert Ready system, the following criteria shall be met:
 - i. There is an active threat/immediate action rapid deployment (IARD) incident; and
 - ii. The circumstances are believed to cause imminent threat to the public of serious bodily harm or death; and
 - iii. There is sufficient descriptive detail and information of the threat and the geographical location involved to provide clear direction and guidance to the public; and
 - iv. The issuance of a public alert would not place the public and/or responding emergency personnel at greater risk than not issuing an alert.

- D. HRP Information Management Officer ensures that all its Authorized Alert Issuers are trained to utilize the Alert Ready system. Only HRP staff who have been designated as Authorized Alert Issuers and who have been trained to use the Alert Ready system issue public alerts.
- E. The Corporate Affairs Office ensures that pre-approved message content is available to Authorized Alert Issuers for use within the Public Alert system.

PROCEDURE

- F. When any sworn or civilian member of HRP believes that the criteria for a public alert within the jurisdiction of HRP have been met, that member shall immediately contact their supervisor who shall initiate the notification process through the appropriate chain of command to the Duty Officer for review.
- G. If the Duty Officer is satisfied that the circumstances warrant a public alert, the Duty Officer advises the Chief or designate of the circumstances and requests public alerting. The Chief or designate makes the decision to issue a public alert.
- H. If the Chief or designate authorizes a public alert:
 - i. The Duty Officer:
 - 1. Contacts an Authorized Alert Issuer and directs them to prepare a public alert. Authorized usernames are held by the Divisional Commander responsible for IES.
 - 2. Maintains records in the HRP Records Management System (RMS) specifying the rationale to issue the initial alert and any subsequent alerts.
 - ii. The Authorized Alert Issuer:
 - 1. Develops a public alert message based on pre-approved message content.
 - a. Where deviation from a pre-approved message is required, the Authorized Alert Issuer confirms the message content with the Duty Officer.
 - 2. Specifies the geographic location to which the alert should be applied.
 - 3. Alerts the EMO Duty Officer to make them aware of the Alert Ready activation. Other public safety access points shall be informed as practical.
 - 4. Issues the public alert via the Alert Ready system.
 - iii. If active threat/IARD incident evolves to warrant one or more further public alerts, the Duty Officer repeats the relevant process, outlined in sections G and H (i) and (ii). above, to confirm the alert with the Chief or designate and to direct the Authorized Alert Issuer to prepare and transmit the public alert.

- iv. When the circumstances no longer warrant the public alert:
 - 1. The Duty Officer:
 - a. Confirms with the Chief or designate that the public alert can be terminated, and, if so:
 - i. Directs the Authorized Alert Issuer to issue a public alert message confirming that the alert is terminated.
 - 2. The Authorized Alert Issuer:
 - a. Develops a public alert message terminating the initial public alert and subsequent public alerts, based on pre-approved message content.
 - b. Issues the public alert termination via the Alert Ready system.
- v. Whenever the Alert Ready system is activated by HRP, the Public Information Officer:
 - 1. Supports the Duty Officer in preparing public alert message updates as needed.
 - 2. Provides additional updates to the public through news media and social media as outlined in relevant HRP policies on MAJOR OCCURRENCES, PUBLIC RELATIONS, and INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION.
 - 3. Does not provide any information to news media or through social media regarding any alert until that alert has been transmitted.
- vi. At the completion of the incident involving the alert, the Duty Officer shall submit an After-Action Report to the Chief for review

EXTERNAL AGENCIES

- I. In instances where multiple jurisdictions including HRP's are involved in responding to a Critical Incident, if the threat or incident moves from HRP's to another jurisdiction, HRP Duty Officer coordinates with the Involved agencies to ensure coordinated communications through the Alert Ready system.

3. DEFINITIONS

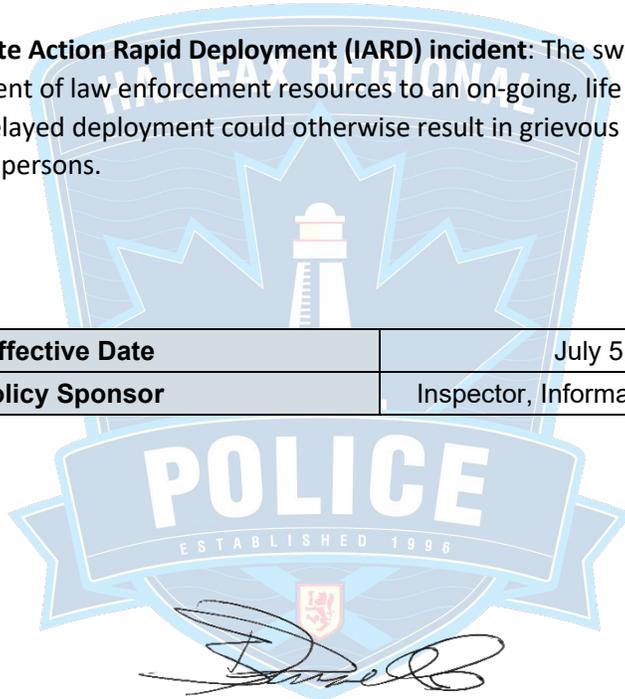
For the purposes of this policy:

- A. Active threat:** One or more individuals who seek out an environment that offers multiple victims for the purpose of inflicting death. An active threat is real, present, credible and has shown the determination to severely injure or cause death to those individuals.

- B. Alert Ready:** Is the public facing name of the National Alert and Aggregation Dissemination system and supporting national initiative.
- C. Authorized Alert Issuer:** All HRP personnel authorized to activate a public alert through the Alert Ready system.
- D. Emergency Management Organization (EMO):** An organization that is empowered by the Emergency Management Act federally, and at a provincial and territorial level by individually named Acts. EMOs are provincial and territorial level groups that are tasked with providing prevention and preparedness education & training before emergencies occur and manage responses when they do occur. EMOs collaborate with fire departments, fire marshals, hospitals, emergency medical services, police, search and rescue, and many others depending on jurisdictional services available.
- E. Immediate Action Rapid Deployment (IARD) incident:** The swift and immediate deployment of law enforcement resources to an on-going, life threatening situation, where delayed deployment could otherwise result in grievous bodily harm or death to innocent persons.

Effective Date	July 5, 2021
Policy Sponsor	Inspector, Information Management

By Order Of:



Dan Kinsella
Chief of Police