

**CITY OF SAN DIEGO
M E M O R A N D U M**

Date: November 18, 2003

To: Michael Uberuaga, City Manager
via Rey Arellano, Deputy City Manager & CIO

From: D.P. Lee, Homeland Security Director

Subject: Cedar After Action Report

The City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated by the Office of Homeland Security (OHS) at 9:45 a.m. on October 26, 2003 with the concurrence of Deputy City Manager Rey Arellano. This report is broken down into the two general categories of Activation and Operations with the specific questions from Mayor Murphy addressed for each category.

EOC Activation

An EOC activation involves the determination of a need, establishment of a staffing level, notification of personnel, notification of the San Diego County Office of Emergency Services (SD-OES) and finally opening the facility.

What did we do right?

Once the OHS Director received a situation status report from the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department (SDFD) and San Diego Police Department (SDPD) Department Operations Center (DOC) staff, Deputy City Manager Rey Arellano was advised and concurred to the EOC activation.

The staffing level was to be at a EOC Level II (partial staffing) with personnel to assume the roles and responsibilities of the five EOC Section Chiefs (Director, Operations, Logistics, Planning and Finance). SD-OES was notified. The OHS Director commenced the recall/notification process utilizing the EOC Callback Directory.

What did we do wrong?

OHS did not receive any notification of the pending emergency until approximately 8:45 a.m. on Sunday, October 26th. The OHS Director became aware of the threat or impingement of fire on the community of Scripps Ranch via a news broadcast.

The process of manually notifying or recalling personnel to staff the EOC is extremely slow and inefficient. Concurrently, the EOC facility and systems must be readied for the incoming staff.

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The trained Planning Section Chief, alternate and their support staff were not available due to their deployment in traditional fire related activities. A visible planning function was not implemented in the EOC and staff relied on the SDFD and SDPD DOC planners to address public safety planning and coordination issues at the field (Incident Command Posts) and DOC levels.

What needs to be changed?

Notification guidelines need to be reviewed and modified to insure timely notification of key City staff by the Public Safety Communications Centers (SDFD & SDPD).

An appropriate notification technology to disseminate timely accurate information needs to be identified, procured and implemented. A possible solution is to investigate the capacity and/or expansion of the utilization of the outcall notification system acquired by SDPD via a grant.

Do we need any changes in our force composition?

OHS has been authorized to hire four additional staff members. Staff has been working through the processes of classification, recruitment and selection and other competing immediate priorities. Once the new staff is on board, OHS should have adequate resources available to perform the concurrent activities required for an EOC activation.

The Planning Section function of the EOC needs to be transferred from reliance on Fire-Rescue staff to other City staff, who do not already have a Public Safety role. The Development Services Director has committed to assume the lead role as the primary EOC Planning Section Chief and will be working with OHS to identify an alternate and support staff to be trained.

EOC Operations

What did we do right?

The EOC was operational by approximately 11:00 a.m. on October 26th with most Section Chiefs in place and making subsequent notifications of other staff for the identified Branches of their Section. The first hourly briefing was held at the same time.

Media releases were well coordinated between the City's Public & Media Affairs Director in the EOC, SDPD Public Information Officer (PIO) in their DOC, SDFD PIO in their DOC and the Mayor's staff with routine press briefings at the Fire Communications Center in Kearney Mesa.

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The need to Proclaim a Local Emergency was discussed with the EOC Director by the OHS Director and SD-OES Director. Since San Diego County had already Proclaimed a Local Emergency, there was no need for a similar proclamation by the City (covered by the County's Proclamation).

A Job Order number was created by the Finance Section Chief and disseminated to all participating departments to track labor and expenditures associated with the fires in preparation for the reimbursement process.

What did we do wrong?

While contact was immediately established with the SDFD and SDPD DOC and the San Diego County EOC staff by their EOC peers, information regarding the situation status and resource deployment was extremely sketchy during the first several hours of the operation. Information from the Incident Command Posts (ICP) in the field to the DOCs and EOC was poor at best.

The transition from EOC operations to Local Assistance Center (LAC) operations should have been solidified well before the EOC was de-activated.

What needs to change?

Unified ICPs need to be established in the field early in the emergency with staff identified to provide information to the various City Command and Control Centers. Senior Fire-Rescue and Law Enforcement command staff need to co-locate their respective commands to insure a timely accurate exchange of information, the development and execution of mutual strategic and tactical objectives and advise their superiors of their position, progress and needs.

There needs to be a means of displaying graphically, using GIS, the extent of the incident and any other relevant information. Appropriate resources and processes need to be included such that information is created once (at the ICP or a DOC), then is made available to the EOC.

The LAC concept has just recently been developed and disseminated by California OES. The documentation for the activation of an LAC will be maintained in the EOC for future utilization by the EOC Planning Section in preparing for the Recovery Phase of a disaster or major emergency.

Do we need any additional equipment?

OHS has been working with Information Technology & Communications (IT&C), San Diego Data Processing Corporation (SDDPC) and SD-OES to procure and

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implement an information management application for the City and County EOCs and DOCs. Grant funds have been identified and staff has been working with a vendor. In order to maximize the utilization of the application (now and in the future), funding and support needs to be identified for EOC projection and switching equipment, replacement computer systems and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) integration.

EOC staffers expressed concern that Thomas Brothers Map Books and City Telephone Directories were out of date. The initial purchase of these documents was made a few years ago with some one time emergency management funds. Departments were advised that they needed to maintain all the resource material in their EOC desk. OHS will request funding to provide general support materials in all the EOC desks via the Fiscal Year 2005 budget process. Individual departments or agencies with positions in the EOC will still be required to maintain the support documents and/or materials that they need to carryout their EOC responsibilities.

I will be out of the office for the next couple of weeks for medical treatment but I should be reachable via my cell phone at (619) 990-5621 after Sunday, November 23rd, if you need any clarifications.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D.P. Lee', written in a cursive style.

D.P. Lee
Homeland Security Director