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THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF MARIN COUNTY

September 17, 2002

The Honorable Lynn O'Malley Taylor
 Marin County Superior Courts
 3501 Civic Center Drive
 San Rafael, CA 94903

Dear Judge Taylor:

Forwarded herewith is the Board of Supervisors' response to the 2001-02 Grand Jury Report "Emergency Management and Operations in Marin County". The Grand Jury requested Board responses to Findings 1 – 15 and to Recommendations 1 – 9.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Murray, President
 Marin County Board of Supervisors

cc: Sheriff Robert Doyle
 Marin County Civil Grand Jury ✓

F:/grand jury/2002/BOS cover ltr to Judge Emergency Mgmt 09-17-02

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RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT FORM

Report Title: Emergency Management and Operations in Marin County

Report Date: June 19, 2002

Response by: Board of Supervisors **Title:** Cynthia Murray, President

FINDINGS

- I (we) agree with the findings numbered: 1, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 14
- I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: 2, 5, 6, 8, 13 and 15
(Attach a statement specifying any portions of the findings that are disputed; include an explanation of the reasons therefor.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendations numbered 4, 5 have been implemented.
(Attach a summary describing the implemented actions.)
- Recommendations numbered 1, 2, 3, have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.
(Attach a timeframe for the implementation.)
- Recommendations numbered 6, 7, 8 require further analysis.
(Attach an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or director of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the grand jury report.)
- Recommendations numbered 9 will not be implemented because they are not applicable.
(Attach an explanation.)

Date: 9/19/2002 Signed: Cynthia L Murray

Number of pages attached 5

**Marin County Board of Supervisors
Response to Civil Grand Jury Report:
Emergency Management and Operations
In Marin County (June 19, 2002)**

FINDINGS

We agree with the findings numbered 1, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 14.

We partially disagree with the findings numbered 2, 5, 8 and 13.

We wholly disagree with finding numbered 6 and 15.

Finding 1: The Office of Emergency Services (OES) is currently well staffed and organized under experienced professional management. This highly motivated staff is working hard to update all aspects of the emergency service plans and operations.

Response: We agree with this finding.

Finding 2: The Marin County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is in a seismically suspect room in the utility corridor of the Civic Center. The space approximates 1,200 square feet, which is far short of the 3,000-3,500 square feet considered necessary for optimal performance in a major event, when between 65 and 75 people would need to be accommodated at one time.

Response: We partially disagree with this finding. We do not agree that the space is "seismically suspect" since it is part of a building that has just been seismically retrofitted. In addition, although we agree that more space is needed, we do not agree that there is a clear standard for an "optimal" amount of space.

Finding 3: In addition to space limitations, the present EOC location lacks bathroom facilities, a break area, feeding capabilities, noise suppression, adequate ventilation and capacity for more computer stations and communications equipment. It does not satisfy current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. A countywide functional disaster exercise held on February 21, 2002 highlighted a number of the physical and communication deficiencies described above.

Response: We agree with this finding. It is worth noting, however, that Civic Center was built before the enactment of ADA and is not subject to the same ADA standards as new construction.

Finding 4: The present alternate EOC is located in the Exhibit Hall at the Civic Center. There is limited computer and phone capability. There is no dedicated backup electrical power.

Response: We agree with this finding. It is also worth noting that we are planning to make space available at the County Jail for a back-up EOC.

Finding 5: The OES is located on North San Pedro Road, some distance from the Civic Center. The Department Operations Center (DOC) of the Health and Human Services Department (H&HS) is located in San Rafael's Northgate Industrial Park. Their co-location with the EOC would be advantageous as observed in other jurisdictions.

Response: We partially agree with this finding. Although the facilities are not co-located, we believe that the two offices communicate effectively and work well together. We will, however, consider co-location of these operations in developing both our interim and permanent EOC.

Finding 6: The organization of the OES and EOC does not clearly delineate the responsibilities and functions among the Board of Supervisors, the Sheriff's Department, H&HS, and the County Administrator regarding the reporting lines of the OES staff.

Response: We wholly disagree with this finding. The OES manager reports to the Sheriff for all operational and administrative issues, while coordinating with the CAO on Countywide personnel, space, and policy issues. The Board of Supervisors (via its appointed Director of Emergency Services) works with the OES manager to coordinate major policy and program initiatives. The CAO is charged with managing the EOC when it is operational.

Finding 7: Plans to relocate the present EOC to an interim location to overcome identified deficiencies are under consideration by the OES and the County Administrator. The interim period could be five years or longer. Several sites are under consideration, including administrative and conference areas in the County Jail, the Hall of Justice and off-site commercial space. A December 2002 completion date was originally targeted but is probably unrealistic.

Response: We agree with this finding. The Marin County Hall of Justice has been selected as the interim site for the EOC and OES offices. The move had been scheduled for late 2002; however, this has been delayed until Summer 2003. The Health and Human Services employees currently working in the space are unable to move until their new space at 120 North Redwood Drive is ready. 120 North Redwood Drive is undergoing significant renovations, which has delayed its availability until Spring 2003. Once Health and Human Services moves out of the Hall of Justice, the County will renovate the space and make it available to the Sheriff's Office for OES and the Communications Center.

Finding 8: The Board of Supervisors has commissioned a feasibility study to construct an "essential services" building which would house the EOC, communication department, dispatch center and other critical services. The timeline on development of such a structure, considering planning, funding and construction would span five years or longer.

Response: We partially agree with this finding. The CAO and the Department of Public Works are currently working with a consultant to develop an initial action plan; however, this a final plan has not yet been presented to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

Finding 9: Outside funding from State and Federal sources is available for disaster and terrorism projects and can be used to support training and first responder equipment.

Response: We agree with this finding.

Finding 10: "State-of-the-art" EOCs in nearby communities provide evidence of the importance of well-designed, spacious quarters for disaster workers. They are models for future building plans in the County. The majority of Bay Area counties have, or are in the process of establishing, contemporary EOCs.

Response: We agree with this finding.

Finding 11: EOC primary and alternate staff requires more training. The majority of EOC staff have attended at least one SEMS module, though typically only the introductory course. Classes are offered through OES but attendance is sparse.

Response: We agree with this finding. The Board of Supervisors recently adopted the Marin Emergency Staff Development Program (MESDP), which is designed to fully train all County employees with roles in a disaster or emergency. The MESDP identifies initial and continuing training requirements, integrates the existing Human Resources training management program, and provides resources for employees to attend training outside the County if required. The staff training identified in this program will be mandatory for assigned employees and department heads.

Finding 12: OES has not conducted sufficient exercises in the past. The recent OES exercise, *All Washed Up*, was well designed and executed, but confirmed the need for better-trained staff and regular exercises to practice required skills.

Response: We agree with this finding. The Board of Supervisors recently adopted the Marin Emergency Staff Development Program (MESDP), which is designed to fully train and exercise all County employees with roles in a disaster or emergency. The MESDP identifies initial and continuing training requirements, integrates the existing Human Resources training management program, and provides resources for employees to attend training outside the County if required.

Finding 13: The Marin County Disaster Council is charged with encouraging public participation in disaster preparedness through its Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) program. An opportunity exists for DISCO to expand its mission to include overall policy development, stronger plan coordination and priority setting for grant allocation.

Response: We partially disagree with this finding. The Disaster Council, as per Section 2.99.025 of the Marin County Code, is empowered only to a) review and evaluate preparedness progress in the public and private sector; b) promote disaster preparedness through communication and education; and c) report annually to the Board of Supervisors. The Council is limited in its abilities to direct the participation of member agencies and organizations. Future revisions of County Code as it relates to the Disaster Council could broaden its mission.

Finding 14: The Marin Emergency Radio Authority (MERA) radio communications system is designed and partially constructed. Final antennae installation in Tiburon is mired in a legal and neighborhood dispute over the selected site that could delay its completion beyond the end of 2002.

Response: We agree with this finding; however, the County does not administer MERA.

Finding 15: The Board of Supervisors and the County Administrator's Office appear to lack a sense of priority and urgency for disaster preparedness and the need for training and exercises among the County staff.

Response: We wholly disagree with this finding. Recent actions by the Board of Supervisors and the CAO demonstrate a commitment to disaster preparedness. These actions include hiring a civilian OES manager, allocating new space in the Civic Center to house OES offices and the EOC, committing to provide funding for training County staff, and adopting the comprehensive Marin Emergency Staff Development Program (MESDP).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations numbered 1 through 5 will be implemented.

Recommendations numbered 6 through 8 require further analysis.

Recommendation number 9 will not be implemented because it does not apply to the County of Marin.

Recommendation 1. The present, inadequate Emergency Operations Center (EOC) should be vacated and relocated on an interim basis to a more secure and efficiently designed space of at least 3000 square feet. Implementation of the project should be expedited to assure its completion no later than the end of 2002. The Board of Supervisors, Sheriff, County Administrator, H&HS, and OES need to work in coordination to address this issue with a sense of urgency.

Response: This recommendation will be implemented in the near future. The temporary EOC and OES offices should be installed in the Civic Center Hall of Justice by summer 2003.

Recommendation 2. The present alternate EOC should be upgraded to assure adequate communications as well as operational and utility sustainability, and to meet ADA requirements. If these standards cannot be achieved, a new location should be secured.

Response: This recommendation will be implemented in the near future. The relocation of the EOC to the temporary site will allow OES to upgrade telephone and radio communications as well as information technology systems. The new facility will be designed to meet ADA requirements.

Recommendation 3. The Board of Supervisors should actively pursue an effort to construct a permanent essential services building to house the EOC, dispatch center, the OES, the DOC, communications, operations, and other critical services. This building should meet current California building codes and have, at a minimum, a seismic safety structure, backup power and utilities, perimeter security, tie-in with dispatch centers, computer capabilities, and support for staff meals and breaks. A timeline of five years should be established to achieve this objective.

Response: This recommendation will be implemented.

Recommendation 4. OES should move forward with completion of the Marin Emergency Staff Development Program. The Board of Supervisors should adopt it with a sense of urgency. Implementation of the program should commence immediately.

Response: This recommendation has been implemented. The Board approved the Marin Emergency Staff Development Program (MESDP) on June 4, 2002. OES staff has published a calendar of training and exercise dates.

Recommendation 5. OES should conduct more frequent exercises. Participants should be made aware of the importance of the exercises and Department heads, managers and supervisors should support their staff and require participation.

Response: This recommendation has been implemented. The MESDP contains provisions for increased exercises. In approving the MESDP, the Board has clearly communicated to Department Heads the importance of the program and the need for their personnel to fully participate. This plan was presented to Department Heads at their May 2002 meeting.

Recommendation 6. The Board of Supervisors should encourage Department Division Heads within the county government to be more involved in supporting disaster preparedness. The Board of Supervisors should consider putting disaster preparedness in job descriptions and personnel evaluations and in the Mission Statements of the various departments.

Response: This recommendation requires further analysis to determine whether job descriptions, personnel evaluations and department mission statements should be revised to specifically include disaster preparedness responsibilities.

Recommendation 7. The Emergency Operations Plan should be revised to clearly identify the separation and/or overlaps in responsibilities between the BOS, the Sheriff and the County Administrator relative to the operations of the OES office. The OES staff should have a clear understanding of the various roles and their reporting relationships to each of the major participants in emergency operations.

Response: This recommendation requires further analysis. The Emergency Operations Plan will be revised in 2003, and this recommendation will be considered as part of that process.

Recommendation 8. The Board of Supervisors should expand the mission of the Marin County Disaster Council (DISCO) to include policy development, planned coordination with other jurisdictions, and priority setting in grant allocation.

Response: This recommendation requires further analysis. A review of the Disaster Council ordinance and by-laws is scheduled for 2003, and this recommendation may be implemented as part of that process.

Recommendation 9. MERA should continue to work toward resolving the stalemate with affected parties in the Town of Tiburon relating to the construction of a fixed antenna. The involved parties should, to the extent they are not already, be made aware that delays in constructing the antenna in Tiburon compromises activation of the system for the entire county.

Response: This recommendation is not applicable to the County since MERA is not a County-run operation.