



MARIN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

3501 Civic Center Drive, Room 145, San Rafael, CA 94903

ROBERT T. DOYLE

Sheriff

DENNIS FINNEGAN

Undersheriff

August 19, 2002

Foreperson
Marin County Civil Grand Jury
3501 Civic Center Dr., Room 303
San Rafael, CA 94903

Subject: Response to the 2001-2002, Marin County Grand Jury Report of June 19, 2002, Regarding Emergency Management and Operations in Marin County.

Dear Foreperson:

The following reply is pursuant to the requirements of Penal Code Section 933.05, regarding the Marin County Grand Jury, June 19, 2002, Regarding Emergency Management and Operations in Marin County.
Emergency Management and Operations in Marin County.

Sincerely,

ROBERT T. DOYLE
SHERIFF

cc: Members, Board of Supervisors
Mark Riesenfeld, County Administrator
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
Marin County Grand Jury

AREA CODE 415

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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: Robert T. Doyle Title: Sheriff

FINDINGS

- I agree with the findings numbered: 1 - 5, 7 - 12
- I disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: 6, 13, 15

Findings that the Sheriff disagrees wholly or partially with:

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendations numbered 4, 5 have been implemented.
- Recommendations number 1-3, have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.
- Recommendations numbered 6-8 require further analysis.
- Recommendations numbered _____ will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.

Date: 8/8/02 Signed: Robert T. Doyle

Number of pages attached 8.



Marin County Sheriff Office of Emergency Services

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Response to the 2002 Civil Grand Jury Report: Emergency Management and Operations in Marin County

August 7, 2002

Findings

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:

Agree. The office underwent a significant reorganization in 2001. A civilian emergency program manager was hired, new information management systems implemented, and a five-year Strategic Plan adopted.

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 1200 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:

Agree. The environment in the current Emergency Operations Center space has been under review for many years. The increasing responsibilities of the County EOC have resulted in a larger EOC staff which, currently, cannot be adequately accommodated. Additionally, EOC operations continue to grow increasingly complex in the use of information systems and communications technology. This issue is being directly addressed by County staff (see Recommendation #1).

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:

Agree. The current EOC environment does not adequately support staff in each of the areas listed here. The location of the EOC and the lack of space directly prevent any

major improvements. The move to a temporary location (see Recommendation #1) will significantly enhance the EOC working environment and will directly increase EOC staff effectiveness. All of the deficiencies identified in the February 2002 countywide exercise will be addressed as part of the move to the new location.

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:

Agree. The present alternate EOC at the Exhibit Center is deficient in a number of areas with communications and backup electrical power among the most critical. New sites are being evaluated. The OES staff is currently working to improve the capabilities of the County Jail to serve as an alternate EOC (see Recommendation #2).

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:

Agree. Co-locating an OES administrative office and the EOC is standard practice in emergency management. Co-location offers several advantages including avoiding duplication of effort, ensuring that EOC systems are validated on a daily basis, and making the OES resources immediately available upon activation of the EOC. This will be addressed in the move to the temporary location (see Recommendation #1).

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:

Disagree partially. 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.

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:

Agree. 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 staff currently working in the space designated is unable to move out 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 for OES and the Communications Center.

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:

Agree. County leadership has taken steps to review the potential for constructing an essential services building near the Civic Center. This building would house the Emergency Operations Center and the Communications Center. This building as well as potential sites are listed in the County's new Master Facilities Plan.

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:

Agree. A number of federal grants are becoming available as summarized below:

1. First Responder Initiative Program
2002: \$2,100,000 est. For terrorism response equipment, planning, training and exercises
State will keep 25% of California's portion (total: \$400 million)
2003: TBD
2. Domestic Preparedness Equipment Grant
2001: \$ 51,000 Purchased primarily Hazardous Materials Team equipment
2002: \$ 134,000 Proposals include USAR, Dive Team, medical decon, communications
2003: \$ 140,000 est.
3. Bio-Terrorism (administered by County Health)
2002: \$ 430,000 est. Hiring and equipping three to four new staff positions
2003: TBD
4. Volunteer Medical Reserve Corps
2002: \$ 50,000 For setting-up a registry of volunteer medical specialists
County Health and Human Services is going to apply for this
5. Citizen Corps Council
2002: \$50,000 For setting-up a council of volunteers to provide input to local
government on using volunteers in the fight on terrorism.

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:

Agree. Notable recently constructed EOCs include Alameda County, San Francisco, and Oakland. Santa Cruz and Contra Costa County are currently building theirs. Sonoma County is currently undertaking a major renovation of their EOC.

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

Response:

Agree. 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.

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 a better-trained staff and regular exercises to practice required skills.

Response:

Agree. 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.

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:

Disagree partially. The Disaster Council, as per Section 2.99.025 of the Marin 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.

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:

This Finding does not pertain to OES because it does not administer MERA

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:

Disagree. Recent actions by the Board and the CAO demonstrate a renewed 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). The MESDP alone constitutes a significant commitment of personnel and financial resources, which may soon become the preeminent program in the Bay Area.

Recommendations

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 has not yet implemented but will be in the near future. The temporary EOC and OES offices should be installed in the Civic Center Hall of Justice by summer 2003.

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 has not yet implemented but will be 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 also enhance sustainability with dedicated kitchen, storage, security, and staff support areas. It will also be designed to meet ADA requirements for access, support systems and work areas.

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:

OES supports this recommendation and is working with County leadership to develop formal proposals.

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.

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. The MESDP was briefed to Department Heads at their May 2002 meeting.

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:

OES supports this 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 by all parties involved. The Emergency Operations Plan will be revised in 2003, and at that time this recommendation may be implemented as part of that process.

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, too, 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.

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 does not pertain to OES because it does not administer MERA.