

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT FORM

Report Title: Emergency Communications at Marin Schools: A Tale of Catastrophe

Report Date: March 13, 2008

Response by: Sausalito Marin City School Dist. Title: President & Superintendent

FINDINGS

- I (we) agree with the findings numbered: F-3, F-5, F-9, F-10 & F-11
- I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: -

(Attach a statement specifying any portions of the findings that are disputed; include an explanation of the reasons therefor.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendations numbered - have been implemented.
(Attach a summary describing the implemented actions.)
- Recommendations numbered R-1 have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.
(Attach a timeframe for the implementation.)
- Recommendations numbered R-1, R-2 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 - will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.
(Attach an explanation.)

Date: 5/22/08 Signed: Whitby Dist
Rebecca Bradley

Number of pages attached 2

**Marin Country Grand Jury
Emergency Communications
Report March 13, 2008**

Finding

F3: No public or private school in Marin is part of MERA.

RESPONSE: Each school District has their independent Radio system within their district site. Marin County Office of Education (MCOE) does have an old radio system in which they do emergency radio checks on a monthly basis.

F5: The present public school emergency radio communication system is about to go belly up, leaving the schools with no emergency radio communications capabilities.

RESPONSE: Sausalito Marin City School District is aware of the antiquated communications emergency radio system and is working with the Marin Country Office of Education to promote and implement a new and reliable system for our district and others.

F9: Both Red Cross and the Department of Health & Human Services recognize the importance of school sites as a gathering place in times of emergency. Both have contacted with various school districts for their use in times of crises.

RESPONSE: The Sausalito Marin City School District is registered with The American Red Cross for the use of the multi purpose building at Bayside Elementary School in case of an emergency; we act as an over flow center. The Bay Models building in Sausalito is the main center if a disaster would occur and there's a need for emergency shelter.

F10: There is a belief that installing MERA radios now could install a false sense of security in the schools, because any major crisis the MERA system would be overwhelmed with immediate help unlikely in spite of MERA.

RESPONSE: We agree

F11: An alternate plan to equip the schools with an emergency radio communications system that could be outside the MERA radio network is an early stage of consideration.

RESPONSE: Sausalito Marin City School District operates with Nextel radios for regular and emergency communications. We also have a pair of two way radios for each schools in our district designated for emergency purposes to communicate with in the sites. Sausalito Marin City School District is in the process of acquiring two (2) satellite telephones. One (1) will be kept in the district office and other will be kept in the Director of Maintenance and Operations office. The district is also in the process of getting an automatic emergency call system through Honeywell. This system will automatically call and inform parents/gardens of students in the district of an emergency and will release information and directions that they will need when an emergency occurs.

Recommendation

R1: The board of Supervisors, the Marin Emergency Radio Authority, the Disaster Council, the Marin County Office of Education, the Marin County Office of Emergency Services, the Marin County Department of Public Works, the Marin County Administrator's Office, the Marin County Department of Health & Human services, the various public school districts and the private schools should immediately work together to fund and install the MERA system and its radios in all of Marin's public and private schools.

RESPONSE: It is clear now that further planning on the part of the school entities is needed. Once intensified, the coordinated efforts of the Marin County Office of Education and the school entities to determine all of the needed steps and information to become a part of MERA is complete and the ability of MERA to serve the school entities is determined, we will continue working with all of our partners to find a way to activate an update system.

R2: In the event it is determined that MERA is not a feasible option for Marin's schools, an effective, alternative emergency radio communication network, independent of MERA, should be immediately modeled, funded and installed in Marin's public and private schools through the collective efforts of the entities identified in Recommendation 1(R1) above.

RESPONSE: Please see the Response to R1.