

Running head: FAMILY SUPPORT SYSTEM

Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management

Building a Family Support System for City Employees in Times of Disaster

James R. Clark Jr.

Sioux City Fire Department

Sioux City, Iowa

September 2006

Certification Statement

I hereby certify that this paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicated, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

### Abstract

The Hurricanes that hit the Gulf Coast of September, 2005 brought to light the needs of responder's families. Sioux City had no plan in place to care for the family members of employees during disasters. The purpose of this research is to implement a plan for family support in times of disaster. Action research methodology was used to: (a) find best practices from other jurisdictions, (b) assess the needs of Sioux City employees, and (c) discover what changes can be incorporated into the city EOP. Based on research findings changes were made to the EOP to allow for designation of a dependent care officer, family disposition logs, and improved information to employees on disaster preparedness through the city's web site.

Table of Contents

Certification Statement .....2

Abstract.....3

Table of Contents.....4

Introduction.....5

Background and Significance .....5

Literature Review.....8

Procedures.....14

Results.....17

Discussion.....23

Recommendations.....26

References.....30

APPENDIX A Job Description Of City Engineer .....33

APPENDIX B Fire Department Phone Questionnaire .....36

APPENDIX C Family Support Questionnaire.....37

APPENDIX D Section VI of Sioux City Emergency Operations Plan .....39

APPENDIX E Sioux City Fire Department Dependent Family Disposition Log Procedures .....45

APPENDIX F Sioux City Dependent Family Disposition Log .....46

## Introduction

When the hurricanes hit the Gulf Coast region of the United States in September of 2005, there were many reports of police officers and other city employees not reporting to work in New Orleans and other cities impacted by the storms. One of the reasons given was that they were seeing to their own families' safety. In times of disaster often emergency workers must choose between going to work and protecting the citizens they were sworn to serve, and their own families. These recent disasters brought to light the needs of responder's families during extended duty cycles. Sioux City has no family support plan in place to care for family members while the employees work extended duty cycles during emergencies.

The purpose of this research is to implement a plan for family support to employees' families in time of disaster and extended work periods. Action research will be used to determine best practices from other jurisdictions and implement procedures in the Emergency Operations Plan for Sioux City by answering the following questions; what are the best practices available from other jurisdictions, what are the needs of the employees of the City of Sioux City in times of disaster, and what changes can be incorporated into the Emergency Operations Plan to address the family needs of the responders?

## Background and Significance

Sioux City has a total full-time work force of 742 employees, many of whom could be called into action in times of crisis or disaster, and no plan to support the families of the employees enabling them to work extended shifts without worrying about taking care of their families.

Sioux City is a community of over 85,000 people located in the Northwest corner of Iowa where the juncture of the Big Sioux River, and the Missouri River, separate the states of South Dakota, Nebraska, and Iowa. Sioux City is the largest city in Woodbury County with over 80 % of the county population residing in Sioux City. Sioux City is the largest city within seventy—five miles and the greater metropolitan area made up of surrounding communities in all three states is called Siouxland.

Surrounded by two rivers, with another river and several creeks running through the town, Sioux City is vulnerable to floods. This was evident as recently as 1993 when Perry Creek flooded a large portion of town. There were devastating floods of the Floyd River in the 1940's and 50's, before flood control measures were put in place by rerouting and creating a large river channel with wide banks and considerable green space.

Sioux City experiences its share of thunderstorms with temporary blackouts and power outages. Ice storms, such as the one that impacted South Dakota in November of 2005 when power was out for some residents in the rural areas for two weeks or more, caused thousands of residents to be without power and hundreds to seek shelter from the bitter cold in state and private shelters (AP, 2005). This storm was large enough to qualify for a presidential declared disaster (AP, 2005). Sioux City is also susceptible to tornados, and has been hit by many tornados and strong windstorms in the last century. The state of Iowa experiences on average 47 tornados per year with 120 tornados reported in the state in 2004 (Cogil, 2005) There is also the potential for a large rail, highway, or fixed facility accident involving Hazardous Materials that could necessitate the evacuation of portions of the city. Sioux City was the site of one of the worst air disasters of the last century; United Airlines flight 232 on July 19, 1989, showing that disaster can strike at any time. A total of 112 people died and 184 survived in the crash that took

place on the airport grounds. Had the plane crashed in a residential area of the city, instead of on the airport property, the death toll would have been much higher.

Sioux City had been working on its own Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) for several years. The County had a plan that was generic enough to be used in any community, or unincorporated section of the county. The generic nature of the county plan did not lend enough specificity to Sioux City, for the desired framework with which to manage an emergency effectively. The City Manager tasked the Fire Department to develop a separate Sioux City EOP.

Sioux City was fortunate enough to receive a 5.9 million interoperability grant to build a communications system that covers all of Woodbury County in Iowa, Dakota County in Nebraska, and Union County in South Dakota. The new 88 MHz system is compliant with all the current interoperability standards and allows emergency services personnel and public works personnel to communicate with each other across jurisdictional lines. The system was completed in June of 2006. Communications between more than thirty different agencies is possible with ability to create new talk groups when necessary. Each of the five new towers has its own back-up generator and can run for more than 24 hours on the fuel at that location. A portable generator is also available to be towed to a tower site and provide power if the back-up generator should fail. A mobile 911 Communications Bus is also part of the system so it can be sent out to a location where operators can set up and dispatch and receive calls. There is a redundant microwave system that connects all of the towers and can simultaneously send out the same signal in different directions to ensure that if there is a problem with one of the towers, the information gets fed to all the other towers to avoid dropped transmissions.

There are 113 employees in the fire department with 109 sworn firefighters and 4 support personnel. The normal schedule for firefighters is 24 hours on shift and 48 hours off. Public works employees working in the field work four 10-hour days during summer months and five 8-hour days in the winter months. Many of the Public works employees work 12- hours shifts in the winter to remove snow, but they are usually have some warning of pending snow storms so they can plan on working longer shifts. Recently job descriptions for many positions in the city have been amended with the following language: “Expected to temporarily perform duties outside of the normal classification in the event of a declared emergency. In the event that an employee is excused from work other than being sick, they will be required to report to work in a state of declared emergency” (Appendix A) (Sioux City Human Resources Department, 2006).

Whenever and wherever large disasters strike, firefighters and others employees are put into action working extended shifts or periods of overtime that keep them from their families longer than normal. Accommodations for employee’s families have been discussed, but no formal plan has been researched or adopted in Sioux City. One of the foundations of the Executive Analysis of Emergency Operations and Emergency Management course is planning. Without any type of planning for employee’s families, it is feared that Sioux City will not be able to respond to disasters at peak efficiency if employees are worried about their family’s welfare.

### Literature Review

While this subject seems to have little research in the way of Executive Fire Officer Applied Research Projects (ARP) there is considerable information on the subject from various sources. Periodicals, web sites, and personal interviews were used to develop information from which to assess best practices from various jurisdictions. Research available on family support



yielded included information on plans and polices dealing with information management and planning, and also stress the job creates on firefighters and their families and the need to manage that stress.

The concept of family support is not new. Smith (1990) wrote and Applied Research Paper (ARP) on the subject incorporating her findings into a program for the Pike Township, Indian fire department. A personal information base on firefighters and their families, and a dependent care program were developed based on employee needs and best practices of the military and fire departments with family support programs.

Potter (2004) wrote an ARP exploring the subject and creating a disaster plan for the Puyallup, Washington Fire Department. Potter found that few employees had discussed and worked out a plan with their families in case of disaster. Family members did not have sufficient supplies to be self sufficient for 72 hours, and most did not know how to communicate with their firefighter family member about their welfare.

In the Puyallup plan, training and assuring 72 hour self-sufficiency for the families as well as the firefighters is prescribed. Mutual aid agreements with other fire departments to assist in checking on firefighters families are in place. A system for reporting family situation information to the fire stations is addressed and a method for getting that information to the firefighters on duty is approved (Potter, 2004).

In 1989 during an earthquake in the San Francisco and Monterey Bay, California area there was concern over the well being of fire department family members. Officers of the Scotts Valley Fire Protection District Fire Department noticed an increased level of anxiety in their firefighters that did not know where or how their family members were doing. One off-duty firefighter that responded that day was given the sole responsibility of locating all of the on-duty

firefighter's families. Within hours all of the family members were located with the exception of one boy. The firefighter was released from duty to search for his son whom he later found by his at the home of his soccer coach. Since that time the Scotts Valley Fire Protection District Fire Department has established a policy of having family members either phone the fire station, go to the fire station, or send word to the station of their whereabouts and condition. Each Firefighter is encouraged to fill out a family locator matrix to aid in locating family members in times of crisis. Employees are also encouraged to establish a plan with family members to aid them in taking care of themselves in various types of emergencies (Tranchina, 1991). Tranchina believed that employee anxiety levels would be reduced by having a system in place to notify them of their family's welfare.

After the Laguna Beach fire in Orange County California in 1993 the Santa Barbara City Fire Department saw a similar need to create a program that would revolve around the firefighter's families in times of a disaster (Albertson, 1996). They established a "Dependent Care Officer" to contact on-duty personnel's families. The department then focused on a three part plan that included pre-event preparation by the firefighters and their families for disasters by providing training and education for the family members. The next part was a mutual aid agreement with neighboring departments to check on the homes and families of their neighboring departments. One way was for off-duty firefighters to check on the homes of their on-duty colleagues while reporting in for duty. The third part of their plan was for employees to fill out a dependent care program information sheet and the phone number of a third party that lives out of their area to contact. The idea being that local phone lines may be down or overloaded, but calls outside the local area may get through. The fire department dependent care

officer then calls the third party and gets reports on which firefighters families have called in and their status (Albertson).

The Los Angeles Fire Department was working with the Los Angeles Unified School District on establishing a child care facility at their training facility to take care of the fire fighters children so they knew where they were during their shifts and had communication with them in times of disaster (Mathis, 2001).

The Red Cross has information on their web site on disaster preparedness and how to prepare a family disaster kit and a family disaster plan. They recommend a 72 hour supply of food and water. They also offer a calendar to help purchase the needed items over time to lessen the financial burden on putting together a kit all at once (American Red Cross, 1997). The Red Cross also has a hotline that is manned to record family welfare information so that people can call in and get information about family members in disaster areas (R. Bartling, personal communication, June 13, 2006)

In 2003 the Federal Government started a ready.gov web site with disaster preparedness information. They also talk about 72 hours of food and water and a family preparedness plan and basic disaster kit (Department of, 2003). Recently reallyready.org web site has published some information disputing the quality of the information that is available on ready.gov (Federation of, 2006), but the site does not dispute the fact that people should have a disaster kit with a three-day supply of food and water, and a family disaster plan.

The organization that has the most extensive family support system is the United States Military. While each branch of the service has similar plans, each military branch has unique names for their family support offices. The Army has its' Army Community and Family Support Center and the Army Reserves have the Army Reserve Family Program. The Navy has a Fleet

and Family Support Division and the Navy Reserve Ombudsman. The Air Force has the United States Air Force (USAF) Combat Support and Community Services and the Air Force Reserve Family Readiness Office. The Marines has their version titled Marine Corps Community Services and the Marine Corps Reserve Community Services. And finally the Coast Guard has their Coast Guard Ombudsman as their liaison between the families and the Commanding Officer with the Coast Guard Reserve Member, Family and Employer Support offices serving their reserve members (United States, 2006). Each branch of the military, Guard and Reserves has specific offices, personnel and procedures to lend support to families during pre-deployment, deployment, and post-deployment. These large employers have scores of employees dedicated to serving the needs of the family members of those deployed for extended periods of time.

Two conference reports in 1989 and 1990 solicited opinions from participants on what elements they thought were important for preparedness for disasters. In the 1989 conference it was discovered that there was a need to appeal to the parents sense of responsibility to prepare for their families well being and not rely solely on the government to help. Participants also believed that more information was needed on sheltering, like where to go and why, as well as the importance of having emergency supplies such as food, water and first aid (Federal Emergency, 1989).

The 1990 concluded that many people felt that FEMA should provide information on family preparedness kits and planning information as well as a 72-hour emergency preparedness kits that would help them survive after a hurricane or other type of wide-spread disaster (Federal Emergency, 1990)

Metro-Dade Fire Rescue has an Employee Welfare Annex as part of their Hurricane Policy & Procedures book. The plan calls for a locator and personal information roster for all

department personnel and an employee accountability coordinator to maintain these records and account for personnel or send out search and rescue for them if they do not report in. There is also an employee Assistance Coordinator that assists in setting up shelters and works with the firefighters' local union to provide assistance after a hurricane to rebuild the firefighter's homes and make them inhabitable (Metro-Dade Fire, 1994).

The Santa Barbara California Fire Department has had a dependent care program since 1983. Reasoning behind the adoption of the plan was based on the belief that the concern for a firefighter's family will cause the firefighter to possibly lose focus and cause poor performance. This loss of focus could cause an accident or possible abandonment. The better a family is prepared for disasters the less stress there should be on the firefighters. The elements of the dependent care program in Santa Barbara are education for the families, and checking welfare of the families during a disaster. This is accomplished by announcing the existence of the dependent care program, gathering and distributing educational preparedness information, assembling essential family information prior to emergencies and updating the family information sheets (Dickinson, 1985).

Pfefferbaum, North, Bunch, Wilson, Tucker, and Schorr (2002) studied the partners of firefighters involved in the Oklahoma City bombing incident. The study found that while there was no significant change in the rate of psychiatric disorders in the women immediately following the disaster, many developed post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and 15% reported deteriorated health and over one third reported permanent changes in relationships as a result of the bombing. The rates of PTSD was lower for the partners than for the firefighters that responded to the bombing, but was significant since many were exposed to the aftermath and they were one source of support to the firefighters themselves.

A Denver, Colorado firm entitled Family Support Networks Inc. is a non-profit corporation whose mission is to help those who routinely take care of others. They have guidelines on emotional support for emergency responders and their families including chaplains, support groups, crisis teams and peer counseling (Kenly, 1999). Kenly feels that the normal family mechanisms for dealing with stress may fail when they meet unusual circumstances such as the Oklahoma City bombing. The bombing was followed by six suicides committed by emergency responders and a 300% increase in the divorce rate.

Best (2005) found that support of family members helped reduce the stress of emergency responders. Without the support and communication with family members responders were more likely to have trauma symptoms and mental stress.

In summary the literature review provided evidence that family support plans are relevant for fire departments and there are consistent elements of family support plans that could be used to develop plans for the City of Sioux City. Having a family support plan can make the job less stressful and allow emergency workers to perform their duties with less chance of injury or loss of job focus.

### Procedures

A literature review was conducted in order to answer the first research question of: what are the best practices available from other jurisdictions? An extensive search for related materials was conducted at the Learning Resource Center at the National Fire Academy campus while the author was attending the Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management course in February of 2006. Several journal articles and on-line sources were found on the subject of family support. Information gleaned from the research helped to develop two questionnaires to be used. The first questionnaire was used to interview fire departments in

Mississippi and Louisiana (Appendix 2). Since the hurricanes Katrina and Rita had devastated much of both states in September of 2005, contacting these fire departments nine months later was thought to be long enough after the disasters to let the departments have time to identify problems and make operational changes to address them. In order to compare departments of similar characteristics, only paid or combination departments with populations served of over 30,000 were contacted. Phone interviews were done with either the fire chief of the department or other individuals that were identified by the department to answer the questions. Answers were recorded and compared against the other departments.

A questionnaire (Appendix C) was developed to gather information from the employees of the City of Sioux City In order to answer the second research question, “what are the needs of the employees of the City of Sioux City in times of disaster,” The questions were compiled based on needs identified by others such as Smith, (1990) and Potter (2004) in the literature review and problems that were identified by the Mississippi and Louisiana fire departments.

The Emergency Operations Plan for the City calls for members from other departments to work in times of disaster. Members of the Public Works department would be called in to clear streets, fix broken water mains and such. Members of customer service would be tasked with staffing a call center. Police as well as fire fighters would be working extra hours responding to the disaster and other unassociated emergencies. Department heads and their alternates would be filling positions in the Emergency Operations Center. Job descriptions for positions in the organization include a statement requiring personnel to come in and work during a declared emergency (Sioux City Human Resources Department, 2006). Due to these factors, all the employees in the City were asked to fill out the questionnaire.

The family support questionnaire was passed out to public works employees in March of 2006 during four sessions of a required National Incident Management System (NIMS) training and collected after the class. This accounted for a large percentage of those questionnaires being returned. A city-wide e-mail was distributed in March, 2006 with information on the purpose of the questionnaire with a copy of the questionnaire (Appendix C) attached. The city-wide e-mail was repeated thirty days later in May 2006 with the intent of reminding those that had received the first request and possibly catching those that were on vacation when the first e-mail was sent out. The employees were asked to send the completed questionnaire back to the author through interoffice mail. Some chose to make changes to the document and e-mail back the completed questionnaire.

The needs of the Sioux City employees were compared with those identified by others in the literature review and by the problems identified by the Mississippi and Louisiana fire departments in order to answer the third research question: what changes can be incorporated to the City of Sioux City Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)? Plans and forms for addressing the lack of family support in the City of Sioux City EOP were developed. The changes to the plan were discussed and approved by the Sioux City Fire Chief and the City Manager. Changes to the Basic Plan Implementation of the changes started in September of 2006.

#### Assumptions and Limitations

The six month limitation of the project made it difficult to send out the questionnaires and receive back the needed results for this research. The 28 fire departments in Louisiana and Mississippi was not a large sample of fire departments to base all assumptions on.

The 33% return rate on the Family Support System Questionnaire sent out to Sioux City employees did not take into account that several employees do not have e-mail. While the e-mail



that distributed the attachment asked that the questionnaire be printed out and given to employees in that department that did not have access to the questionnaire by e-mail. It is assumed that if printed copies were addressed to each individual employee that a larger return rate may have been possible.

The time constraints at work of the author who is in charge of the city Emergency Operations Plan to meet the deadline for the National Emergency Management System (NIMS) and other large projects affected the time available for the project. The fact that the author was working on Master's degree at the same time further limited time available for research on this project.

### Results

In all 14 departments in Louisiana and 14 departments in Mississippi were contacted. They met the chosen criteria of population of 30,000 or more, and either all paid or combination departments. One department declined to answer any questions because of a policy to not share information about the department, due to security reasons. Another department did not provide information after several different attempts to gather the information by phone. The chief was the only one that was allowed to give out information and he was either out of the office, or did not return the phone call on 12 different occasions. A total of 26 departments provided information for the phone questionnaire. A total of 23 of the 26 departments in Louisiana and Mississippi contacted were affected either directly or indirectly by the hurricanes Katrina or Rita. Of those affected 95.6 % had to adjust the work schedules of the firefighters by having them work extra shifts or extra hours.

Of the 23 departments affected by one or both of the hurricanes, nine, equating to 34.6% had some form of family support plan in place prior to the hurricanes. Some of those plans

involved sheltering families in fire stations, in civic halls, and one department had an agreement with a local hotel. Two of these departments had informal plans such as distributing hurricane preparedness information or encouraging families to go to hurricane shelters or simply evacuate.

Only six departments knew of other departments within the city or county that had any formal family support plans. The other 77% of cities did not have a family support plan or policy for other departments such as public works, utilities, or others that may be called in to work extended shifts during a disaster. Of the six cities or county governments that had any plan, some were as simple as handing out pre-printed materials on family preparedness.

Since the landfall of the hurricanes only six fire departments or 23% have implemented any type of family support plan. Some of these plans were as simple as issuing information from the state and one department was in the process of working on a plan. There were 14 or 53.8% of the departments that did not have a plan prior to the hurricanes and have not implemented a plan since. Six departments had a plan prior, so had no need to implement a plan after the hurricanes. Some departments such as Gulf Port Mississippi are operating five fire stations out of FEMA trailers since the stations were wiped out (Melton, R. Personal communication, August 8, 2006).

Of the departments contacted 65% had some difficulties with firefighters contacting or communicating with their families and knowing if they were alright. Most of the problems centered on communication with phone lines and cellular phones not working during and after the storms. Some of the cities did not have electrical power and phone communications for several days to weeks after the storms. One department that sent firefighters to assist other departments more affected by the storm had difficulty communicating with the firefighters that were 70 to 100 miles away.

Other problems encountered were lack of gasoline, water, food, and the loss of fire stations and firefighter's personal homes. Some of the families were evacuated and did not come back for several days or weeks, leading to more stress on the firefighters not having their families around for support.

For the questionnaire for the City of Sioux City employees was distributed to a total of 742 full time employees working for the City of Sioux City. A total of 251 returned the questionnaire for a total return of 33.8% returned.

Question one revealed that 79 % of the respondents were married, 10.8 % divorced, .7 % were separated and 8.8 % were single. There were a total of 243 dependent children and 122 dependent adults.

Only 25.7 % indicated that working extended shifts would create a hardship for the employee or their family in response to question number two. A total of 74.3 % of the employees responded that child/dependent care would not be an issue for them. Of the 251 respondents, only 33.9 % offered any type of explanation to their response. Responses ranged from, "It depended on how long the extended shifts would be", to listing the reasons such as "children or pets at home". At least three of the no responses probably should have be recorded as yes due to the qualifying comments that indicated that there would be problems or hardships associated with the extended shifts.

In question three 23.5 % said child/dependent care would be a problem for them if they were required to work extended shifts. The majority, 76.5 %, responded that child/dependent care would not be a problem.

Question four found that 14.5 % would have issues with food or shelter. The majority of employees, 84.5 %, felt that that food or shelter would not be an issue. This question also relates to question 12.

A total of 31 % said care of pets would be an issue for them in their response to question five. The majority of employees, 69 %, did not feel that care of pets would be an issue for them if they were required to work extended shifts.

In response to question six that asked if transportation needs would be an issue, only 26 employees or 10.4 % of the employees felt that transportation would be an issue for their family if they were held over for extended shifts in an emergency. A total of 225 or 89.6 % did not believe that transportation for family members would be an issue.

A total of 92.8 % of the employees did not feel that their families would have problems contacting them at work times of emergency/ disaster in response to question seven. The remaining 7.2 % indicated that they would have concerns about their family getting information to them about their welfare during an emergency or disaster.

When asked if the employees would have difficulty performing their jobs during a disaster if they were not sure of their family's situation at home, the responses were equally split. A total of 49.8% indicated that they would have problems performing their job, while 50.2% indicated that they would not have performance problems in question number eight. A total of 38 respondents left comments on the questionnaire indicating that their family came first or was a priority over their job. Many indicated it would cause stress. Other responses indicating that they would have to know about their family's welfare to be productive enough to help others.

In question number nine: Please indicate your opinion on whether or not the City has a responsibility to shelter or care for your family/dependents in times of disaster when you may be called upon to work extended duty cycles, the following results were received.

Options	Responses	Percentage
Strongly agree	77	30.6%
Somewhat agree	72	28.7%
Neither agree or disagree	82	32.7%
Somewhat disagree	15	6%
Strongly disagree	8	3%

When asked if the married employees had spouses that were employed in jobs such as military, police, firefighters, EMT, nursing, or other jobs that would require them to work extended shifts 18% indicated that was the case. Of those responding to this question 77.5% were not married to someone that worked in a profession that would also be impacted by a disaster and have to work extended shifts. Ten employees responded with a Not Applicable response.

When asked if they had a family plan that deals with disaster preparation including contingencies for children/dependents including pets in question 11, only 21% indicated that they had such a plan. A total of 180 employees or 77.5% indicated that they had no such plan. Two employees or about 1% indicated the question did not apply to them.

When asked how many days supply of food and water the employees had at home in question 12, only 14.3% had a 7-10 day supply. A total of 87 employees or 34.7% had a 3-5 day supply and 51% had a 1 day or less supply of food and water to help them protect in place.

When asked if they felt they had access to enough information on disaster preparedness to carry out a family disaster plan in question 13, 66.6% indicated that they felt they did. A total of 33.4% responded that they felt they did not have enough information to help them prepare their home and family.

In response to question 14 as to whether they had any other comments on a family support system, disaster preparedness, or notification plan, 56 employees, or 22.3% of all respondents, left comments on the questionnaire. Comments ranged from one individual, 1.5% that thought the previous information on disaster preparedness that was handed out was helpful, to 14 respondents, or 25% of the comments not directly relating to the intent of the questionnaire. These unrelated comments included: give us a raise so we can buy more food and water, questions about use of sick leave and residency requirements, and no life at home, leave me at work, duct tape and plastic.

A total of 22 comments or 40% of all those who wrote comments to question 14 centered around the fact that not knowing where their family was and how they were doing would cause undue stress and inability to effectively perform their job. Along with these comments were references to the city's responsibility to provide shelter or a mechanism to provide for their families.

Another 25% of the comments related to an adequate communication system to communicate with families in time of disaster. Related to these answers were two individuals, 3.5% that wanted time off during a disaster to go home and check on their family's welfare.

A total of 5% of the comments involved employees that felt they were well prepared for disasters. One individual even had a plan for their extended family to contact members in

different states and they were the central location for other members to call from across the county.

### Discussion

The literature review showed that having a family support plan for fire departments is not universal. Some departments like Santa Barbara, California developed and implemented a plan after a large disaster (Dickinson). Others saw a need like Potter (2004) in Puyallup, Washington to be proactive and develop a plan before disaster struck.

Much of the literature talked about the potential for firefighters to be stressed if they did not know how their families were doing. Dickerson and Best felt that not only was it important to know how the family was doing to perform well, but how much the job itself is stressful on the family not knowing how the firefighters and EMT's were doing. It would seem that some system similar to what Tranchina (1991) spoke of that is utilized by the Scotts Valley Fire Protection district which includes a family locator matrix or listed numbers such as Puyallup (Potter, 2004) where family members would call out of the area to a identified person to acknowledge welfare. The advantage of using a centralized number outside of the affected area would be that multiple personnel could be informed at the same time instead of each family having their own individual to contact and firefighters or a designated person contact several individuals. The Red Cross provides this type of service (R. Bartling, personal communication, June 13, 2006). One central number that all families and employees could call that would track the information would better serve both employees and their families.

Both Potter and the FEMA conferences stressed the importance of a 72-hour emergency preparedness kit. The Homeland Security ready.gov, American Red Cross, and reallyready.org web sites also recommend at least a 3-day supply of food and water as well as a family disaster

plan. Only 21% of the employees answering the questionnaire had a family disaster plan. A majority of 51% of the employees answering the questionnaire responded that they only had one-day or less supply of food and water. The recommendations and lack of planning by most employees would indicate a need for additional information or training on family disaster preparedness.

Every branch of the military has someone appointed to act as a liaison between the family members and the service personnel (Title XVII Military Affairs & Related Matters, 2004). Laguna Beach (Albertson, 1996) and Scotts Valley (Tranchina, 1991), and Santa Barbara (Dickinson, 1985) all have appointed Dependent Care Officers or someone appointed to determine the welfare of firefighters families and relay information from them to the firefighters. If predetermined who will be responsible or if that person is appointed during the emergency, having someone responsible for gathering and disseminating family welfare information to those working at the emergency would seem to be a desirable position to fill in order to alleviate stress and increase efficiency of the crews by letting them know their family is being looked after and is safe.

Only about one-half of the fire departments contacted in Mississippi and Louisiana that were affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita made any kind of family support plan or policy after the hurricanes. It would seem that response would have been greater, but some of the departments are trying to rebuild their fire stations, replace critical infrastructure and rebuild their cities. Gulf Port MS is operating five fire stations out of FEMA trailers 11 months after the storm (Melton, R. Personal communication, August 8, 2006). The research shows that one third of the departments had some sort of plan in place prior to the hurricanes, and a total of less than fifty-percent of the departments contacted in the recently affected states currently have a



plan. These figures do not show a convincing statistical argument for having a family support plan. A further investigation of more departments in Florida and the East and West Coasts may reveal a greater percentage of departments with a family support plan.

Since only 25.7% of the employees indicated that working extended shifts would create hardship on the employee's families, and 49.8% said they would have difficulty performing their jobs during a disaster if they were not sure of their family's situation, there is a need for a plan to get information to the employees, and the focus should be on information. Many of the comments recorded on this question indicated that family was a high, if not paramount consideration. Firefighters more than any other city employee may be used to not communicating with their families for extended periods of time due to their shift work, and this may be the cause of the low percentage of those perceiving a hardship with extended shifts. Some plan for communicating family welfare would satisfy nearly one half of the respondents or more.

Question seven on the family support questionnaire did not specify what communication systems may or may not be working in times of disaster. Since no restrictions were listed on the form, the 92.8 % that felt they would have no problem communicating with their families may be artificially high. The question should have been worded: if all phone and cellular phone communications were down, would your family know how to get a message to you about their welfare while you are at work during an emergency/disaster? With 65% of the fire departments in Louisiana and Mississippi experiencing communication problems after the hurricanes, it is probable that communications problems could be part of other disasters. The mid-west experiences several tornados and ice storms that may cause large power and communication

outages. Alternate means of contacting families would serve as a backup should the normal communications systems fail.

### Recommendations

One consistent theme from the literature review, from the practices of the Military, and some departments in Mississippi and Louisiana, was that employees should be provided with useful information on family preparedness before disaster strikes. The fact that 77% of the city Employees did not have a family disaster plan and 51% of the employees had one day or less supply of food and water indicates that there is a need for more information to the employees on individual and family preparedness. This coupled with the fact that one third of the employees stated that they did not have enough information to help them prepare their home and family for a disaster made it clear more information needed to be provided.

A work order was processed to include a link on the front of the City of Sioux City web page to Emergency Information. From this link an Emergency Information page will display information on how to prepare an emergency kit and prepare a family plan. Categories with information about the city's emergency warning system, sheltering-in-place, and other useful information on disaster preparedness will have separate headings. Also included in the Emergency Information Page will be links to other web sites such as Ready.gov, the American Red Cross, Bereadyiowa.org, and others. Employees will be sent an e-mail when the page is up and running to give them a link to up-to-date information on individual and family preparedness.

Based on the findings in the literature review and the military model, changes in the Basic Plan section of the Sioux City Emergency Operation Plan were made to allow for the appointment of a Dependent Care Officer and additional duties and considerations for the City Manager as the EOC Supervisor and the Emergency Management Coordinator (Appendix E).

The additional duties added for the EOC Supervisor are:

1. Consider appointing a Dependent Care Officer to coordinate information about the welfare of employee families when necessary.

The additional duties added for the Emergency Management Coordinator are:

1. Ensure disaster preparedness information is available on the Sioux City Web Page
2. Ensure that Dependent Family Disposition Logs are available in all City Facilities, and personnel are aware of their location and trained in their use.

The duties of the Dependent Care Officer are laid out as follows:

1. The dependent Care Officer will coordinate with department heads of those departments that have employees working extra shifts to ensure that information about the welfare of their families is made available to them.
2. The Dependent Care Officer will ensure that Sioux City Dependent Family Disposition Logs are set out at all fire stations, CMG, Public Works, Air Port, City Hall and other City facility.
3. The Dependent Care Officer will make contact with these facilities by phone, radio, or personal contact to gather information from the Dependent Family Disposition logs and disseminate this information to the affected employees in the timeliest manner possible.
4. The Dependent Care Officer will consult with the EOC Supervisor and determine if setting up a shelter for employee families during long term events.

As stated in the discussion section, the question posed to the employees of would the family members know how to get information to them in time of emergency/disaster was poorly worded and did not exclude the normal means of telephone and cellular phone communications that usually fail in large scale disasters. The literature review and the research of the fire

departments affected by the hurricanes in Mississippi and Louisiana showed that communication is generally a problem. With the redundancy built into the new radio system all of the fire stations and the public works buildings should have radios that can communicate throughout the city in times of disaster. A Dependent Family Disposition Log (Appendix F) was created to record information on the disposition of employee's family members. These logs will be kept in each fire station and the Field Services headquarters building, the Central Maintenance Garage, and the Field Utilities Office Building. All of these locations have radio base stations as well as mobile radios in vehicles and portable hand-held radios. The procedures adopted by the fire department for use of the form (Appendix E) will be sent to the other three locations for guidance on the form. The goal is to get information to all the employees that the form exists. This will be accomplished by sending a city-wide e-mail and following up with a memo once the forms are printed and distributed to the identified locations. If there is a disaster that compromises normal communications and employees cannot get information from their families about their welfare, the families can go to the nearest fire station or one of the public works buildings and leave information about their welfare and whereabouts on the log. Periodically someone will relay that information to the employees by radio.

The idea of having employee family information to help aid in the locating of family members is a good idea, but with the number of employees and the changes that take place throughout the year, it would be difficult to keep the information updated. If there were funds to hire a full time Family Support Coordinator, or Dependent Care Officer to keep up the records it would be helpful, but given current budget restraints that is very unlikely.

The idea of having a central number for reporting in to in times of disaster would be beneficial if everyone knew the number and would use it. Perhaps when the employees become

more aware of their need to plan and prepare that could be added to the Emergency Operations Plan, the web site, and additional training given in how to access that number. For the time being, the changes undertaken will be difficult enough to implement and stay on top of without any full time people who can dedicate the necessary time to implement further planning.

Fire Departments with more resources or cities with full time emergency management personnel may have more luck in accomplishing more training of their personnel in family preparedness, in implementing a family locator plan, in developing mutual aid agreements with other departments to check on families in times of disaster. With limited budgets and more limited time available to implement additional programs, this is all that the City of Sioux City and the Sioux City Fire Department can implement at this time. As present plans are accomplished, enhancements can be achieved in the future.

## References

- Albertson, C. (1996). Is my family safe? *Fire Chief*, 40, pp.52-54.
- American Red Cross. (1997). *Your Family Disaster Supplies Kit* [Data File]. Available from American Red Cross, <http://www.prepare.org/basic/SuppliesKit.pdf>
- AP. (2005, December 12). President declares disaster due to November ice and snow storms. *The Sioux City Journal*. Retrieved September 1, 2006, from The Sioux City Journal Web site: [http://www.siouxcityjournal.com/artiocles/2005/12/21/news/south\\_dakota/fbc41c8007fbfb](http://www.siouxcityjournal.com/artiocles/2005/12/21/news/south_dakota/fbc41c8007fbfb)
- AP. (2005, December 5). Many Rural Customers still without power a week after storm. *The Sioux City Journal*. Retrieved September 8, 2006, from The Sioux City Journal Web site: [http://siouxcityjournal.com/articles/2005/12/05/news/south\\_dakota/03287283622420e28625](http://siouxcityjournal.com/articles/2005/12/05/news/south_dakota/03287283622420e28625)
- Best, K. (2005). Stress...EMS families need support too. *Canadian Emergency News*, 28, pp. 10-12.
- Cogil, C. (2005). *Iowa Tornado Climatology 1980-2004*. Johnston, Iowa: NOAA National Weather Service. Retrieved June 26, 2005, from <http://www.crh.noaa.gov/?dmx/?events.shtml>
- Department of Homeland Security. (2003). *Make a Plan* [Data File]. Available from Homeland Security, <http://ready.gov/america/makeaplan/index.html>
- Dickinson, C., Dionne, J., Kapler, D.A., Lewis, K., Tomberg, T. J., & Westbrook, H. (1985). Firefighter! Where is your Family When Disaster Strikes? *American Fire Journal*, 37, pp.26-29, 46.

- Federal Emergency Management Agency. (1989). *Conference on Civil Defense Volunteers, Self-Help and Family Protection* (RR-26 5/89, p. p.12). Emmitsburg, MD: Emergency Management Institute.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency. (1990). *Civil Defense Family Protection and Self-Help Conference* (RR-35/November 1990, pp. 30, 31). Emmitsburg, MD: Emergency Management Institute.
- Federation of American Scientists. (2006). *Really Ready America* [Data File]. Available from Federation of American Scientists, <http://fas.org/reallyready/about>
- Kenly, D. (1999). Family Support & The Fire Service, *Firehouse*, 24, pp.56-59.
- Mathis, A. (2001). Taking Care of Our Families. *Women in the Fire Service, Inc*, XVI (1), pp.2-3.
- Metro-Dade Fire Rescue Hurricane Policy & Procedures*. (1994). Dade County, FL: Dade County Fire.
- National Emergency Training Center Emergency Management Institute. (1990, February 7-9). *Civil Defense Family Protection and Self-Help Conference* (Conference Report, pp. 30, 31). Emmitsburg, MD: FEMA.
- Pfefferbaum, B., North, C., Bunch, K., Wilson, T., Tucker, P., & Schoor, J. (2002). The Impact of the 1995 Oklahoma City Bombing on the Partners of Firefighters. *Journal of Urban Health: Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine*, 79, 364-371.
- Potter, D. (2004). *Employee Response to Emergency Evacuation* (Applied Research Project, pp. 25-29). Emmitsburg, MD: United States Fire Administration.
- Sioux City Human Resources Department. (2006). [Job Description of City Engineer] [Electronic version]. Unpublished job Description.

Sioux City Human Resources Department. (2006). [Job Description of City Engineer]

[Electronic version].

Smith, D. (1990). *Support of disaster operations through a dependent care program* (EFO Paper, pp. 6, 9, 25). Emmitsburg, MD: United States Fire Academy.

Tranchina, M. (1991). Locating employees' family members during disasters. *Fire Chief*, 35, p. 56.

United States Military. (2006). *Family Support* [Data File]. Available from Defense Link, [http://deploymentlink.osd.mil/deploy/family/family\\_support](http://deploymentlink.osd.mil/deploy/family/family_support)



## APPENDIX A

## Job Description of City Engineer

**CITY ENGINEER****6490****Date:** May 2006**Department/Division:** City Engineer**FLSA:** Exempt**Reports to:** City Manager**PURPOSE OF POSITION**

Under general direction of the City Manager, performs professional administrative engineering work by directing the Engineering Division of the Environmental Services Department. Furnishes professional engineering services in connection with planning and executing public works, street, bridge, airport, buildings and related planning, construction and maintenance programs. Furnishes professional engineering services in connection with the efficient and economical development and construction of a wide variety of municipal public works projects. Performs design work and construction management on City CIP projects. Supervision is exercised over professional and sub professional engineering personnel engaged in engineering design, construction management, and extensive public works development. Professional engineering advice and assistance is given to municipal department heads as required. Broad policies are prescribed by and general direction is received from the Environmental Services Director, who holds the City Engineer responsible for the effectiveness of the engineering program. Work is reviewed through conferences, observation and review of the effectiveness of the engineering program

**ESSENTIAL DUTIES OF POSITION (with or without accommodation)**

The following duties are normal for this position. These are not to be construed as exclusive or all inclusive. Other duties may be assigned.

- Directs professional, sub professional and other employees in the division in the investigation, development, design and construction of a variety of engineering projects; controls and oversees field work construction and projects through review of memos and conferences.
- Performs engineering services, including preparation of detailed plans and specifications, as required for all other departments of the City and manages contracts with outside consulting engineering and architectural firms doing work for the City.
- Supervises the City's Traffic Engineering section which includes construction signing, sign/signal placement, construction street lights and public safety questions.

- Advises the Environmental Services Director and other departments regarding engineering matters confronting the City, of which the City Manager and/or City Council should be made aware.
- Prepares contracts as required for public works projects; requests and reviews engineering proposals.
- Represents the municipal government in dealing with other governmental jurisdictions on engineering matters; reviews and explains construction projects to the public.
- Chairs various committees and meetings dealing with cooperative construction matters for the City;
- Handles bidding meetings on contracts for the City.
- Prepares budgets for the Engineering Division and assists other departments in the estimates for their budgets;
- Acts as a member of the C.I.P. Committee and advises on engineering matters.
- Reviews and approves needs in the City's economic development including preparation of RISE grants, tax increment public improvements and RR RISE projects.
- Submits grant requests for all types of projects.
- Directs, supervises and approves assessment projects for such projects as paving, sidewalk replacement, sewer and infill sidewalk.
- Prepares design work.
- Establishes and maintain effective working relationships with City Officials, other agencies, fellow employees and the general public.
- Maintains regular and punctual attendance and working hours.
- Regularly lifts up to 10 pounds and occasionally lifts up to 30 pounds.
- Expected to temporarily perform duties outside of normal classification in the event of a declared emergency. In the event that an employee is excused from work other than being sick, they will be required to report to work in a state of declared emergency.

### **MINIMUM TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED TO PERFORM ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS**

Extensive experience in the practice of municipal civil engineering, including responsibility for planning and directing major aspects of a public works engineering program and graduation from an accredited four-year college or university with major course work in civil engineering; or any equivalent combination of experience and training that provides the required knowledge, skill and abilities.

### **MINIMUM ABILITIES REQUIRED TO PERFORM ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS**

#### **Abilities**

Ability to speak clearly so others can understand you, ability to see details at close range (within a few feet of the observer), ability to see details at a distance, ability to identify and understand the speech of another person, ability to listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.

**Job Knowledge**

Comprehensive and broad knowledge of the principles and practices of civil engineering; comprehensive and broad knowledge of construction and maintenance methods, materials and equipment as employed in municipal public works; comprehensive knowledge of the laws and regulations related to departmental activities; comprehensive knowledge of available resources and research techniques applicable to civil engineering; thorough knowledge of public works administration, capital improvement programming and related budgeting; ability to organize and direct extensive engineering programs; ability to provide effective leadership and to establish and maintain effective working relationships with subordinates, officials and the public; ability to express facts and ideas clearly and concisely, orally and in writing; good physical condition.

**Language Skills and Interpersonal Communication**

Requires effective communication skills and the ability to provide assistance to customers (external and internal). Requires the ability to write and speak clearly, distinctly and effectively with fellow employees and patrons; read in English and compare similarities and differences between words and series of numbers; apply common sense understanding to the work process, procedures, programs and services; and to provide and follow verbal and written instructions.

**Work Environment**

Work is normally performed in a normal inside office environment with appropriate heating and cooling and is not subject to significant occupational or environmental hazards other than those normally associated with general public contact, dust or odors.

**Special Requirements**

Registered as a Professional Engineer with the Iowa State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers, and preferably registration as a Land Surveyor with the Iowa State Board of Registration for Land Surveyors.

I have carefully read and understand the contents of this job description and have been given the opportunity to ask my supervisor any questions I have regarding my duties and responsibilities as described therein.

---

Employee Signature	Date	Department Approval	Date
--------------------	------	---------------------	------

The City of Sioux City is an Equal Opportunity Employer. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City will provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities and encourages employees and prospective employees to discuss needed accommodations with the appropriate City representatives.

Approved Resolution: Res# 000382  
 Dated: May 31, 2006

APPENDIX B

Fire Department Phone Questionnaire

**Fire Department Phone Questionnaire**

1. Was your department affected by Hurricane Katrina or Rita?
2. Did your department's response involve adjusting work schedules for your employees?
3. Did you have a family support system or policy in place prior to the hurricanes?
4. Does the City have a family support plan for the other city departments?
5. Have you implemented, or do you plan to implement a family support plan in the near future?
6. Did family members have problems getting family welfare information to or from your employees?
7. What types of problems did your employees encounter related to their families?

Fire Department:

State:

Phone number:

Person contacted for information:

Title:

Date:

APPENDIX C

Family Support Questionnaire

Greetings,

My name is Jim Clark and I work for the Sioux City Fire Department. I am also the Co-Emergency Management Coordinator for the City. I am working on an applied research project through the National Fire Academy. The information gathered in this questionnaire will be used to evaluate the needs of the employees of the City of Sioux City as they pertain to modified work shifts due to an emergency and or disaster. The information will be used for statistical research purposes and anonymity will be protected. Completion of the questionnaire is strictly voluntary.

Please fill out the questionnaire and return to Jim Clark at Fire Headquarters in an interoffice envelope. I would like to thank you in advance for your assistance in this research.

1. For Statistical background purposes only, please complete the following:  
 Marital Status (circle one) Single Married Divorced Separated

Number of dependent Children living at home \_\_\_\_\_

Number of dependent adults living with you \_\_\_\_\_

2. If you were called in, or held you over for extended duty cycles beyond your normal shifts due to a disaster, would it cause you or your family any hardships?

Please circle: Yes No

Can you explain? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Would Child/Dependent care be an issue for you or your family if you were called in or held over for extended shifts during a disaster? Please circle: Yes No

4. Would food or shelter be an issue for you or your family if you were called in or held over for extended shifts during a disaster? Please circle: Yes No

5. Would care of pets be an issue for you or your family if you were called in or held over for extended shifts during a disaster? Please circle: Yes No

6. Would transportation be an issue for you or your family if you were called in or held over for extended shifts during a disaster? Please circle: Yes No

7. Would your family know how to get a message to you about their welfare while you are at work during an emergency/ disaster? Please circle: Yes No

(Please complete other side)

8. Would you be able to perform your job without much difficulty during a citywide disaster if you were not sure of your family's situation at home? Please circle: Yes No  
Can you comment on the previous question and response?

---

---

9. Please indicate your opinion on whether you feel the City has a responsibility to shelter or care for your family/dependents in times of disaster when you may be called upon to work extended duty cycles? Please select:

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

10. If you are married does your spouse have a full-time or part-time job such as military, police, fire, EMT, nurse, etc. that may require them to work extended shifts during a local disaster or be activated to respond outside of the area.? Please circle: Yes No

11. Do you have a family plan that deals with disaster preparedness including contingencies for child/dependent care including pets? Please circle: Yes No

12. I have stores of food and water (1-gal per person per day) stocked at my home that would enable me/us to protect in place for\_\_? Please circle one: 7-10 days 3-5days 1 day or less

13. Do you feel you have access to enough information on disaster preparedness to adequately formulate and carry out a family disaster plan for your home? Please circle: Yes No

14. Do you have any other comments on a family support system, disaster preparedness, or notification plan that could be used to develop or implement such a program?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Thank you for your assistance,

Jim Clark

## APPENDIX D

## Section VI of Sioux City Emergency Operations Plan

VI.	TASK ORGANIZATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES
-----	----------------------------------------

**A. General**

Most departments and agencies of local government have emergency functions in addition to their normal day-to-day duties. During emergency situations, our normal organizational arrangements are modified to facilitate emergency operations. Our governmental organization for emergencies includes an executive group, emergency services, support services and volunteer/other services.

**B. Organization****1. Executive Group**

The Executive Group provides both pre-incident and post incident strategic direction for the emergency management program. Mutual aid liaison at the policy level is established here. The Executive Group includes the:

- (1) City Manager (EOC Supervisor)
- (2) City Emergency Management Coordinator
- (3) Fire Department Information Officer
- (4) Administrative Staff

**2. Emergency Services Group (Operations)**

Emergency Services Group is responsible for city tactical command coordination and incident response assets. This group accomplishes tactical level liaison of mutual aid. The Emergency Services Group includes these department/agency administrators:

- (1) Communications Center
- (2) Fire & Rescue
- (3) Law Enforcement
- (4) Health & Medical Services
  - a) **District Health Department**

**b) City Ambulance Service**

**c) City Hospitals**

**Emergency Support Services Group**

This group includes departments and agencies that support and sustain emergency responders and also coordinate emergency assistance provided by organized volunteer organizations, business and industry, and other sources. The Emergency Support Services Group includes these department/agency administrators:

- |                                            |                                          |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| 1) Public Works                            | 10) Animal Control                       |
| 2) Environmental Services                  | 11) Superintendent of Schools            |
| 3) Finance                                 | 12) WCICC                                |
| 4) City Transit                            | 13) Inspection Services and Engineering  |
| 5) Department of Health and Human Services | 14) Woodbury County Emergency Management |
| 6) CCAT and Red Cross                      | 15) Iowa Dept. of Emergency Management   |
| 7) Woodbury Co. Sheriff Dept.              | 16) Iowa National Guard Units            |
| 8) City Legal Department                   | 17) City/County Assessor Office          |
| 9) Community Development                   |                                          |

**4. Volunteer and Other Services**

This group includes organized volunteer groups and businesses who have agreed to provide certain support for emergency operations. The Volunteer and Business Services Group include these department/agency administrators:

Volunteer

- d) Siouxland Chapter of the Red Cross**
- e) Salvation Army**
- f) VOAD**
- g) RACES**

**5. Mayor and City Council Members**

- a) Mayor is responsible for signing local disaster declarations in order to request assistance from the State and Federal governments**



b) Mayor pro-tem is responsible for fulfilling duties of mayor in absence of mayor.

c) In the absence of the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem, or their ability to act in their official capacity for whatever reason, the remaining members of the city council shall elect from among themselves, a temporary Mayor who shall assume the responsibilities of the Mayor until such time as the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tem returns to the city or they are no longer unable to perform their official duties.

## C. Task Assignments and Responsibilities.

### 1. General

FOR MOST EMERGENCY FUNCTIONS, SUCCESSFUL OPERATIONS REQUIRE A COORDINATED EFFORT FROM A NUMBER OF DEPARTMENTS, AGENCIES, AND GROUPS. TO FACILITATE A COORDINATED EFFORT APPOINTED OFFICIALS, DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCY HEADS, AND OTHER PERSONNEL ARE ASSIGNED PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR PLANNING AND COORDINATING SPECIFIC EMERGENCY FUNCTIONS. GENERALLY, PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR AN EMERGENCY FUNCTION WILL BE ASSIGNED TO AN INDIVIDUAL FROM THE DEPARTMENT OR AGENCY THAT HAS LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THAT FUNCTION OR POSSESSES THE MOST APPROPRIATE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS. OTHER OFFICIALS, DEPARTMENTS, AND AGENCIES MAY BE ASSIGNED SUPPORT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SPECIFIC EMERGENCY FUNCTIONS. **APPENDIX 1 SUMMARIZES THE GENERAL EMERGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES OF LOCAL OFFICIALS, DEPARTMENT AND AGENCY HEADS, AND OTHER PERSONNEL.**

2. The individual having primary responsibility for an emergency function is normally responsible for coordinating preparation of and maintaining that portion of the emergency plan that addresses that function. **Plan and annex assignments are outlined in Appendix 2. Listed below are general planning responsibilities assigned to the four organizational groups listed in Section IV, A of this Basic Plan.** Specific emergency responsibilities can be found the Direction & Control annex and other specific functional annexes to the City's Basic Plan.

### 3. Executive Group Responsibilities

#### a) **The City Manager (EOC Supervisor) will:**

- 1) With the assistance of the Executive Group and the Public Information Officer, keep the public informed during emergency situations.
- 2) With the assistance of the legal staff, declare a local state of disaster, request the Governor declare a state of emergency, or invoke the emergency powers of government when necessary.
- 3) Request assistance from other local governments or the State when necessary
- 4) As the Chief Executive Officer establish strategic objectives and priorities for the emergency management program and provide general policy guidance on the conduct of that program.

- 5) Implement the policies and decisions of the governing body relating to emergency management.
- 6) Organize the emergency management program and identifies personnel, equipment, and facility needs.
- 7) Assign emergency management program tasks to departments and agencies.
- 8) Ensure that departments and agencies participate in emergency planning, training, and exercise activities.
- 9) Direct activation of the EOC.
- 10) Monitor the emergency response during disaster situations and provides direction where appropriate.
- 11) Coordinate the operational response of local emergency services.
- 12) Identifies by title or position the individuals assigned to work in the EOC during emergencies.
- 13) Consider appointing a Dependent Care Officer to coordinate information about the welfare of employee families when necessary.

**b) The Emergency Management Coordinator will:**

- 1) Primary responsibility for this function is assigned to the Fire Dept. Administrative Assistant Chief and the Day Shift Lieutenant in the Police Department.
- 2) Serve as the staff advisor to the City Manager (EOC Supervisor) on emergency management matters.
- 3) Keep the City Manager apprised of our preparedness status and emergency management needs.
- 4) Coordinate local planning and preparedness activities and the maintenance of this plan.
- 5) Coordinates with the various Functional Annex Coordinators, to ensure necessary planning considerations are included in the EOP.
- 6) Prepare and maintain a resource inventory.
- 7) Arrange appropriate training for local emergency management personnel and emergency responders.
- 8) Coordinate periodic emergency exercises to test our plan and training.

- 9) Works with the PIO to develop emergency information packets and emergency instructions for the public.
- 10) Manage the EOC, develop procedures for its operation, and conduct training for those who staff it.
- 11) Activate the EOC when required.
- 12) Perform day-to-day liaison with the state emergency management staff and other local emergency management personnel.
- 13) Ensure disaster preparedness information is available on the Sioux City Web Page
- 14) Ensure that Dependent Family Disposition Logs are available in all City Facilities, and personnel are aware of their location and trained in their use.
- 15) Coordinate with organized volunteer groups and businesses regarding emergency operations.

**c) City Public Information Officer**

- 1) Primary responsibility for this function is assigned to the City Public Affairs Office, who will prepare and maintain Annex D Public Information to this plan and supporting SOPs.
- 2) Advises the City Manager (EOC Supervisor) on matters of emergency public information (EPI).
- 3) Maintain public information operating procedures manual and coordinate with Joint Information Center (JIC) group.
- 4) Conduct on-going hazard awareness and public education programs.
- 5) Pursuant to the Joint Information System (JIS), compile and release information and instructions for the public during emergency situations and respond to questions relating to emergency operations.
- 6) Establishes and maintains a working relationship with local media.
- 7) Prepares a call-down list for disseminating EPI to groups that do not have access to normal media (e.g., schoolchildren).
- 8) Prepares emergency information packets for release; distributes pertinent materials to local media prior to emergencies; and ensures that information needs of visually impaired, hearing impaired, and non-English speaking audiences are met.

- 9) Coordinates with the animal care and control agency to obtain information for dissemination to the public on the appropriate action that should be taken to protect and care for companion and farm animals, and wildlife during disaster situations.

**d) Mayor an City Council Members**

- 1) Report to Joint Information Center to be informed and participate in the release of significant emergency public information.
- 2) Mayor is responsible for signing local disaster declarations in order to request assistance from the State and Federal governments
- 3) Mayor pro-tem is responsible for fulfilling duties of mayor in absence of mayor.
- 4) In the absence of the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem, or their ability to act in their official capacity for whatever reason, the remaining members of the city council shall elect from among themselves, a temporary Mayor who shall assume the responsibilities of the Mayor until such time as the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tem returns to the city or they are no longer unable to perform their official duties.
- 5) The Mayor, or City Council member designated for this purpose, will assist in the release of emergency information to the public.
- 6) Provide reassurance to the public that their welfare and concerns are being addressed in the most efficient means possible.

**e) Dependent Care Officer**

- 1) The dependent Care Officer will coordinate with department heads of those departments that have employees working extra shifts to ensure that information about the welfare of their families is made available to them.
- 2) The Dependent Care Officer will ensure that Sioux City Dependent Family Disposition Logs are set out at all fire stations, CMG, Public Works, Air Port, City Hall and other City facility.
- 3) The Dependent Care Officer will make contact with these facilities by phone, radio, or personal contact to gather information from the Dependent Family Disposition logs and disseminate this information to the affected employees in the timeliest manner possible.
- 4) The Dependent Care Officer will consult with the EOC Supervisor and determine if setting up a shelter for employee families during long term events.

APPENDIX E

SIOUX CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT DEPENDENT FAMILY DISPOSITION LOG PROCEDURES

Effective Date: 09/01/06	Incident Response & Operations	Revised Date: 09/01/06
--------------------------	--------------------------------	------------------------

**Chapter 13 - Section 13.20  
Dependent Family Disposition Log**

**I. Purpose**

**A.** This section establishes a uniform procedure for recording and dispersing information about City employee’s family members during a disaster. The Sioux City Dependent Family Disposition Log will be utilized during a disaster in which large areas of Sioux City may be affected. It is anticipated that during a large scale disaster, many Sioux City employees will be working at the time of the disaster and be held over or work extended shifts without the ability to communicate with their families. During some disasters conventional phone and cellular phone systems may not work or be over loaded. The purpose of the log is to provide a way to record information about employee family members so that information can be provided to the employee when time and methods permit.

**II. Scope & Responsibility**

**A.** This section applies to all fire department personnel, who must be familiar with, understand, and adhere to the contents of these procedures.

**III. Family Disposition Log**

**A.** A copy of the disposition log (see Section 13.20A) is to be kept in each fire station in a location with other forms clearly labeled so that all individuals in that station will be able to find the form.

**B.** The form will be set out next to the alarm phone in the main office of the fire station when a large scale disaster strikes, or when instructed to do so by the Dependent Care Officer, City Manager, or Emergency Management Coordinator.

**C.** The form will updated to include the name of the employee, the department or division they are assigned to, the name of the family member or members that are providing their information, the disposition of the family member(s) such as they are OK, went to hospital, etc. The time of the report will be noted as well as information as to the whereabouts of the family members such as at home, at neighbors, parents, in-laws etc.

**D.** When a Dependent Care Officer or Emergency Management Coordinator or his/her designee calls for information from the log, that information will be passed on and a note made as to time of transfer of information.

APPENDIX F

SIOUX CITY DEPENDENT FAMILY DISPOSITION LOG

**Sioux City Dependent Family Disposition Log.**

This log is to be used when departments or divisions are activated during an emergency and normal means of communications is compromised. This log is to be set out by the phone and when family members call, or stop by, their contact information will be recorded. The Dependent Care Officer will contact this office periodically to ask for updated information from this log to pass on to employees.

Employee Name	Department/ Division	Family Member(s)	Disposition	Time	Location they are staying, contact number, or other information on family welfare
---------------	-------------------------	---------------------	-------------	------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------