EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER
STAFF DEVELOPMENT
FOR CITY ADMINISTRATORS

EXECUTIVE ANALYSIS OF FIRE SERVICE
OPERATIONS IN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

BY:

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ABSTRACT

This research project analyzed types of training procedures, continuing education and staff development for city administrators, in order to design and implement an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Staff Development Education Program. The problem identified for this research project was that there was not a standard training system employed for those who had the responsibility to serve and assist in the EOC during large-scale emergencies. The purpose of this research was to develop a standardized procedure in order to provide a systematic, verifiable, and reliable delivery and documentation system pertaining to EOC training for all department heads.

This research employed historical and action research to determine: (a) Why is there a need for EOC staff development? (b) What are the goals of an EOC staff development program? (c) What methodology should be used to develop the course content? and (d) How would program implementation be accomplished?

The principal procedure employed was the review of instructional materials, existing EOC guidelines from the California State Training Institute (CSTI), Office of Emergency Service (OES) California, Emergency Planning Guide 1999, FIRESCOPE Incident Command System (ICS), and inter-departmental and intra-departmental surveys. Data was compiled to facilitate comparison on the optimum choice of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP’s) or Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG’s) and instructional and simulation methods for non-fire service personnel.

The majority finding of this research was that specific types of standardized training and simulations could be used to provide a systematic approach to EOC staff development for city department heads that have operational responsibilities during large-scale emergencies.
The recommendations resulting from this research include the use of pre-existing, easily obtainable and disseminated topic specific curriculum as the primary source of information pertaining to EOC and ICS training for city administrators.
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INTRODUCTION

Monterey Park is located 10 miles east of downtown Los Angeles. Three major freeways border the City on three sides (north, west and south); the Pomona Freeway, (Interstate 60) on the south, the San Bernardino Freeway (Interstate 10) on the north, and the Long Beach Freeway (710) on the western boarder. Monterey Park is primarily an Asian community with a population of 63,000; 80% Asian, 15 % Hispanic, 1% African American, and the remaining 4% Caucasian, residing in a very densely and congested 7.1 square miles. Fire and EMS requests for service represent an average of 3,800 alarms annually delivered through three stations strategically located throughout the community. The Department is staffed on a traditional 56-hour, 3-platoon schedule, each consisting of one ladder truck, three engine companies, two paramedic transport units, and a battalion chief. A fire marshal, two fire safety specialists, and a billing clerk staff the Fire Prevention Bureau. The fire chief provides the overall leadership with clerical support of one administrative assistant and one senior clerk typist.

The City is made up of 11 departments; Police, Public Works, Building, Water, Parks and Recreation, Fleet Maintenance, Management Services, Engineering, Library, Fire, and City Management. Monterey Park is a full service city with 350 full-time personnel and over 200 volunteer and part-time workers.

The problem identified for this research project was that there was not a standard training system employed for those department heads that would be responsible for filling staff positions in the EOC. Furthermore, it was learned through background interviews and surveys of departments heads, past and present (1989 to 2000), that they had only been exposed to one training session (presented by the author, 1998) and had never participated in a fully developed
disaster preparedness simulation. The purpose of this research was to develop standardized EOC procedures in order to provide systematic, verifiable and reliable training, and a simulation system for department heads pertaining to emergency management. The focus was to develop a comprehensive city administrator/department head EOC staff development program that would comply with state (California Government Code 19995.4 Fire Management Training, Initial One Time Training, New Officer, California Emergency Service Act, and Standardize Emergency Management System) and federal standards, (Federal Civil Defense Act of 1950 and the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act of 1988). Historical research methodology was used that consisted of literature review, a survey of other Los Angeles County and Orange County Fire Departments (Appendix E), and an internal study (Appendix F) to answer the following questions:

1. Why is there a need for EOC staff development?
2. What are the goals of an EOC staff development program?
3. What methodology should be used to develop course content?
4. How would program implementation be accomplished?

It was found that there were national standards, as well as federal and state-mandated training requirements for EOC operations and corresponding training. As outlined, it was discovered that this training could be a part of an orientation process once an individual is appointed as a department head, and as part of an ongoing executive development program. Optimally, this would include FIRESCOPE Incident Command System as the primary learning foundation and a thorough review of the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS). Most public agencies [in California], however, use California State Training Institute (CSTI) disaster preparedness courses as proof that the new department head with EOC responsibilities
has been exposed to the body of knowledge in order to function in the EOC. In California, Senate Bill 27, the Firescope Act, further delineates the training required for staff positions in the area of the Incident Command System.

Because the Monterey Park Fire Department has traditionally been responsible for EOC set-up in time of disaster (Policy Manager) and operations, it was logical that our fire agency respond to this issue using a proactive plan to reduce the effect of inadequately trained city department heads and staff members who would be placed into staff positions within the E.O.C. (Appendix F).

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The Monterey Park Fire Department is typical of most paid agencies located within the State of California. The majority of the emergency alarms are EMS related (77%). Another 17% are identified as miscellaneous alarms and the remaining 6% are fire emergencies. The City of Monterey Park did not have a comprehensive EOC roles and responsibilities training program for department heads. Although the Monterey Park Fire Department has long subscribed to a traditionalist approach in the development of command officers, it has not developed substantial civilian training in EOC operations and policy groups. The disaster preparedness and ICS training that did occur was in the form of inservice officer training for incumbent company officers and the senior staff.

Traditionally, most fire departments take on the role of advising the City Manager of potential threats to the community and set-up a command and communication structure when large-scale events occurred. During the 1989 Loma Preita earthquake, an EOC was not
activated. Police and fire had two separate command structures, each with its own individual priorities.

When the author assumed the position of battalion chief in 1996, he inherited an organization that did not have a formalized, City-wide emergency management program or SEMS Complaint City Disaster Plan. Staff development in the area of emergency preparedness was virtually non-existent. Few department heads and/or their subordinates had been exposed to the technical aspects of the Incident Command System. Of those few who had participated in EOC operations, any experience gained by the senior management staff was from prior employers, before they went to work for Monterey Park. During this period of time, the police department was responsible for disaster preparedness. The communication officers were assigned this responsibility, including the primary function of supervising the dispatchers. This position, though absolutely necessary for successful outcomes in both disaster preparation and recovery, was considered by many police officers as a less than desirable assignment and was typically given to newly promoted sergeants who rotated every year. There was little or no continuity in program management, nor were there any expectations of the department (police) and/or City to establish desired outcomes in regards to disaster preparedness. Prior to the author assuming the role of training and disaster preparation, the Police Department conducted monthly disaster preparedness meetings that included selected staff members from each department (typically clerical staff). These meetings had been held for over 11 years and had not produced any action items, plans, or significant preparation steps.

Once hired (1996), the author conducted a training needs assessment specifically for the Fire Department along with disaster preparedness for the City. From these results, an emphasis was placed on Incident Command training for the fire department and department heads, along
with awareness level training sessions to achieve adherence to citywide SEMS requirements. At this same time, the Fire Department took over the responsibility for City-wide disaster preparedness. This included a budget and basic program expectations. The previous disaster preparedness meetings were discontinued in favor of more meaningful staff training sessions.

Awareness level training was provided to all city employees, including a basic simulation. This enabled mid-management to enhance their understanding of their roles and responsibilities regarding this comprehensive training, position specific assignment when, and if, a disaster should occur.

The City is vulnerable to a wide range of threats. There are three broad categories of hazards. They are: natural, technological or man-made, and national security. Examples are as follows:

Earthquakes

In 1933, 1971, 1987, and 1994, the City experienced magnitude 6.4, 6.6, 5.9, 5.8, and 6.7 earthquakes, respectively. The 1933 quake was centered to the south of Monterey Park in Long Beach. Wide scale damage occurred within the entire Los Angeles basin, including Monterey Park. Throughout the years, the faults in San Fernando, Whittier, Sierra Madre, and Northridge have shaken and caused extensive damage to the City and its infrastructure. During these earthquakes, landslides occurred around the hillsides, foundations of homes were damaged, and citizens were injured due to these violent shaking events.

For example, after the Whittier quake, over 40 magnitude 5 or larger aftershocks occurred to these areas. The California Division of Mines and Geology estimated the probability of a 7.0 or larger earthquake at over 50% within the next 30 years.
Winter Storms

In 1974, 1980, and 1997 severe winter storms caused extensive damage to local hillsides and homes. The condition, known as El Nina caused greater than normal rainfall to occur which lead to hillside failure and mudslides. One person was killed inside a home when rain drenched hillsides gave way and buried the victim inside her home while asleep.

Dam Failures

The City of Monterey Park has within its borders a Metropolitan Water District reservoir that has the potential to affect thousands of people. After the 1987 Whittier quake, the reservoir sustained a crack inside the inner walls. Numerous homes sustained damages from saturated soils as the water slowly leaked from the reservoir into the ground water table. Due to the reservoir’s cut and fill construction, failure of the walls will always be a hazard.

Fires

In 1998, a wildfire fire burned 50 acres of land, destroyed 3 homes, and damaged 5 others. Due to heavy residential construction on the hillsides of the City the potential exists for a catastrophic firestorm to occur during Santa Ana wind conditions.

Hazardous Materials

In the past several years, the threat from hazardous materials has increased. The threat to the City is further complicated by the increased use, storage, and transportation of numerous hazardous materials. The City is surrounded by three of the heaviest traveled freeways in southern California. In 1999, a truck carrying 15,000 gallons of gasoline caught fire causing the 60 freeway to be closed down for 6 hours. Monterey Park also has within its borders an Operating Industry Dump. This site is currently under federal control and is one of the top fire federal super fund cleanup sites in the country.
LITERATURE REVIEW

To perform a complete literature review, 12 separate libraries, trade institutes, universities and colleges, governmental entities, and private companies were queried for information. The literature review began by focusing on the history of educational standards for Incident Command, Disaster Preparedness and the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS).

The primary documents reviewed were NFPA 1021, Standards for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications, level 3 & 4, CSFM Fire Officer 1 Certification curriculum (the instructor lesson guides for the five disciplines taught), CSFM Command 2-D, (Disaster Preparedness), ICS 100 to 400, the CSFM Career Development Guide, and job specifications and task analysis for Disaster Preparedness Supervisors/Emergency Operations Managers provided by Personnel Departments from surveyed cities. Other sources included a review of disaster preparedness articles in fire service and professional magazines such as Fire Chief, American Fire Journal, Fire Rescue, and The League of California Cities publication, Western City, as well as additional leadership and disaster-orientated business books. The review then became more focused on examining the body of knowledge, skills, and abilities required of a city administrator/department head and the methods of delivery (instruction techniques) for that knowledge. Finally, the literature review was used to determine the usefulness of various types of education models/delivery systems that could be adapted and applied easily to an administrator’s work schedule. To this end, existing training programs, i.e., written, computer and video-based, were studied to determine which would form the educational foundation for the program.
Research also involved a review of literature from the National Fire Academy’s Learning Resource Center, the libraries of California State University at Long Beach and California State University at Los Angeles, the California State Fire Marshal and California Department of Forestry (CSFM/CDF) Reference Centers, The Office of Emergency Service (OES) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Books and educational materials (in the form of lesson plans) professional articles, manuals, and appropriate web pages were also reviewed. The author assembled and processed these documents. Duplication of information was deleted and all non-relevant materials discarded.

**National and Federal Regulations**


**State Regulations**

A review of related State of California regulations included the following, California Occupational Safety and Health Standards (Cal-OSHA), Senate Bill 409 (Fire Management Training) requires a minimum of 80-hours of supervisor training, Pretias Bill mandating SEMS compliance” (Appendix A), California Government Code 19995.4 Fire Management Training, Initial One Time Training, New Officer, California Emergency Service Act, and Standardize Emergency Management System (SEMS).
PROCEDURES

This research project employed historical and action research methodologies to explore the benefits of establishing an EOC training program for department heads. The procedures used to complete this research included a literature review and surveys from Monterey Park fire personnel, city administrators and chief officers from Los Angeles County and Orange County (California) Fire Departments.

Fire Department Surveys

An opinion survey was developed to assess the importance that Monterey Park department heads placed on EOC training and education. In order to gain a full and complete understanding of their perceptions regarding disaster preparation, all personnel were requested to complete the survey. Surveys were sent through interdepartmental mail during the months of June/July, 2000, and/or sent to individual homes (those individuals on extended sick leave or vacation status). The author was excluded from the survey. The return rate for the survey was 100 percent, including one individual on long-term leave. A copy can be found in Appendix F (Monterey Park EOC Training and Staff Development for Department Heads Questionnaire/Survey). Furthermore, all past administrators who retired between 1986 and 1999 were either sent a written survey or contacted by the author, to complete the survey orally. Twenty written surveys were sent with a return rate of 70%. Seven follow-up calls were made to ask questions in order to gain clarification of some of the survey responses.

Assumption and Limitation

The procedures used to complete this research project were based on the following three assumptions:

1. It was assumed that all surveys were answered honestly.
2. It was assumed that all Monterey Park administrators were objective in making their selections.

3. It was assumed that all facts, statistics and literature review statements and comments were objective and without bias.

The limitations affecting this project included time, size and population of the departments and members surveyed, conflicting and competing training programs and performance claims, and the lack of a database regarding emergency preparedness training for department heads. Furthermore, the opinions of the survey addressed a very narrow segment of city administrators representing communities (41 in all) within the greater Los Angeles and Orange County areas.

During the literature review, several inconsistencies were noted involving the statistics of EOC training requirements and limitations. These statistics were reported differently in several documents. It is assumed that the criteria for gathering this data may have been different, reflecting the focus of the writer.

The author of this paper has 23 years of experience in the field and a specific background (11 years) in fire service training and education, organization development and curriculum development. During the literature review, it became apparent that there were three primary training requirements that needed to be addressed:

1. Overview of the Incident Command System
2. Specific Roles and Responsibilities
3. Simulated Training
Definition of Terms

Calendar of Events. A document contained in an instructor guide that provides a recommended instructional order for the lesson plans.

Course Objectives. A specific identification of the planned results of a course of instruction.

Emergency Operational Center (EOC). A centralized location for decision making about the jurisdiction’s emergency response. The EOC is where emergency response actions can be managed and resource allocations and response can be tracked and coordinated with the field.

Professionalism. An occupation requiring specialized knowledge that can only be gained after intensive preparation. Professional occupations tend to possess three features: 1) a body of erudite knowledge that is applied to the service of societies; 2) a standard of success measured by accomplishment in serving the needs of society rather than purely servicing personal gain; and 3) a system of control over the professional practice which regulates the education of its new members and maintains both a code of ethics and appropriate sanctions. The primary characteristic that differentiates a profession from a vocation is its theoretical commitment to rendering a public service.

Standardize Emergency Management System (SEMS). Documentation in the area of planning, training, exercise and performance. In order to be compliant the following five functions need to be addressed: management, operations, logistic, planning/intelligence, and finance/administration.

Subject Material Expert (SME). An individual who has specific expertise and/or knowledge in a certain area and can be relied upon to share this expertise within an organization.
**Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).** A systematic procedure or guideline to follow during emergencies, assembly, maintenance, etc. Sometimes referred to as a Standard Operating Guideline (SOG) or check sheet.

**RESULTS**

**Answers to Research Questions**

**Research Question 1**  Why is there a need for EOC training for department heads?

While examining if there was a need, the author quickly learned that most everyone agreed with the concept of an EOC training program for department heads/city administrators. It was generally considered important. It was also interesting to note that many department heads shared this opinion even though they were not sure what it was they were a proponent of. Numerous comments were recorded such as “I agree whole heartedly that we need to do more, but I do not know what this looks like.”, or “I’m all for it, however I do not know what we should be doing.” However, individual philosophies and/or opinions on how and who was responsible for training and educating city administrators differed. This was particularly true in regards to fire personnel that were surveyed.

This opinion could be due, in part, from a bias developed from the department and city tradition and culture that one may have been exposed to. However, even with the support of doing more there were comments such as “Fire [the fire department] can handle all the emergency activities.”, or “It’s not a high priority within my department, nor do I have the time or expertise.”, etc were recorded. The best explanation is that there are two prevailing philosophies regarding the need for, and the development of administrator to function within the EOC: 1) Departments heads should, on their own, be required through self-study, and/or obtain
the necessary knowledge to enhance their skills, in order to function during an activation of the
EOC; 2) The organization [the city] should design a prescribed course of study in order to
standardize course content and provide continuity for all current departments and their
representatives. The former is a traditionalist viewpoint. The latter is progressive and requires a
good deal of work on the organization’s part in developing and establishing educational
standards, behavioral objectives and, most important, instructional oversight for staff
development.

The traditionalist would say [fire department members mainly] that the fire service is
stepping out of its role. The progressive thinker would say that the fire service is responsible
for training & developing current and future EOC members, i.e., it is analogous to creating one’s
own future, we need to design our future, prepare those responsible and not let it happen by
chance.

William J. Hewitt states in the section entitled “Educating the Modern Officer” of his
book, Recreating the Fire Service, “ Often, fire departments either do not prepare, or
inadequately prepare, their staff for the challenge of leadership. Staff must be trained in
leadership skills much as they are trained in fire fighting. This is of paramount importance.”
Considering Hewitt’s statement and the role of the fire department in disaster preparedness and
mitigation for the city, it would stand to reason that the department should prepare all members
who have roles and responsibilities in large-scale emergencies.

Considering the scope and spirit of this document, the author believes that there are
certain controllable factors over which the fire agency has considerable influence. It is further
believed that you can enhance/improve and/or influence community preparedness along with
positive pre-described outcomes. It starts with a personal commitment to life-long education
including emergency preparedness and creating an environment where that is achievable. The author also believes that the organization is responsible to see that competence is demonstrated in these decision-making positions. In our particular case, this is the EOC member.

Another factor that quickly surfaced regarding this question of whether there is a need, was the lack of standards or organizational expectations that can put the agency and/or individual at risk in regards to liability and emergency operations. Although there may be several right ways to accomplish a task or objective, a fire department should identify pre-designated outcomes/exceptions with standard approaches on how to successfully bring about desired results. As identified by California State Training Institute (C.S.T.I.) an organizational approach will establish continuity throughout the City and reinforce correct, or optimum procedures while eliminating trial and error.

When striving to answer the question, “Is there a need?” it was clear to the author that within the complex world of city administrators during an disaster, considering the comprehensive KSAs he/she must have, the local fire agency has a responsibility to ensure and maintain organizational competency. The agency can rely on a traditional approach, or they can train the department heads first, then maintain prescribed training standards with continuing education (C.E.). However, the agency having authority, whether it be fire or a civil agency, is ultimately responsible for ensuring that competency is met and maintained at the desired standard. In Monterey Park’s particular case, the City is therefore responsible for disaster preparedness and the fire department is responsible for EOC, thus a connection could be made that the fire department is responsible for staff development.

The chapter entitled “Resource Management” in Management in the Fire Service, NFPA, Second Edition, defines the quality of effective supervision as “a key issue in developing
employee performance and potential.” It further states that, “Several key checkpoints can be
used to monitor supervisory competence. The checkpoints pertain to areas in which supervisors
need some training or have room for growth: 1) Competency in performance of subordinates; 2)
organizational leadership framework; 3) Indicators of climate, attitude, and response to
leadership; and 4) Comparison with comparable work units.” It is interesting to note that the
first three points directly relate to succession planing for the Monterey Park disaster plan along
with CSTI literature. Furthermore point four “comparison with comparable work units”
provided invaluable insight and accelerating the all so necessary acceptance in the pursuit to
establishing and elevating core competencies

It should be remembered that an acquired skill such as Emergency Management is based
upon training and experience. Experience is typically gained on the job, under the supervision of
a senior official, or through simulation. However, there are numerous administrative and
command skills required that a department head would have little knowledge of, or exposure to,
i.e., skills such as emergency planning, prioritizing, logistics, emergency resource allocation, and
incident command, etc. It was learned that within our city culture, a department head’s world,
other than Police and Fire, consists of task-level decisions, or sequential tasking, and some
strategic thinking. On the other hand, an EOC staff officer’s environment requires knowledge of
multi-tasking, including forecasting, and often times, a strategic approach in order to be
successful.

If one were to believe that emergency preparedness strategies are universal to all fire
agencies, then some of the above items would be considered agency specific knowledge.
Furthermore, this agency specific information needs to be disseminated, learned, demonstrated,
and documented.
The National Governors’ Association has identified more than 100 federal laws containing provisions directly relating to natural, technological, peacetime, or attack related emergencies. In 1979, President Carter created FEMA and was able to provide for better coordination of disaster programs and enhance disaster relief efforts. It was considered then, as now, that disaster preparedness starts at the local level (FEMA Objectives of State and Local Emergency Operations Plan).

When considering the question why training and preparing department heads to function in the EOC is necessary, two fundamental issues or concerns must be addressed. First, is it our moral and legal obligation? Second, is it negligence if we don’t? Both could be addressed in courts of law if nothing is done, an event happens, and it is determined we were negligent in our duty to prepare. Negligence in the eyes of the law has four elements. They are: 1) duty, 2) breach of a standard of care, 3) causation, and 4) damages.

Duty has to deal with the legal relationship that obligates one party to be careful of another’s safety and rights. Standard of care, or breach of it, means that an individual has not done what he/she had been expected to and has, therefore, breached the standard of care that a reasonable person with the same training and experience would have used in the same situation. Causation, on the other hand, is the legally required connection between failure to meet the standard of care and the injury. Finally, damages are necessary for the plaintiff to prove that the damages flowed, or were caused, directly from the negligence.

Linda A. Hill wrote in her article “Developing the Star Performer”, published in Leader to Leader, “Evidence suggests that the first managerial assignment is a pivotal development experience for future executives. It is a time that profoundly shapes their basic leadership style and philosophy. Furthermore, it is generally during transition between roles that individuals are
most receptive to learning new skills and behaviors. To take advantage of this unique opportunity, organizations must help people make sense of and master these earliest managerial experiences.” Hill goes on to explain that “task learning assists the conceptual competence necessary for personal learning, including attitudes, mind-set, and values. The first step in developing the managerial talent an organization needs is understanding what people have to learn, the transformational tasks of management and how they learn them through experience and their interactions with others.”

When looking and reviewing NFPA 1500 mandates, in Chapter 3, Training and Education Section 3-1.3 “The fire department shall provide training and education for all fire department members commensurate with the duties and functions that they are expected to perform. Members shall be provided with training and education appropriate for their duties and responsibilities before being permitted to engage in emergency operations. It is important to note that this standard pertains to the fire department and not that of the civilian city administrators, or their subordinates. However, the author believes that a nexus existed regarding the intent and spirit of the standard regarding the responsibility of the department in the preparation of EOC staff members who are civilian department heads with emergency management responsibilities.

A summary of the key points on why there is a need for city administrator training and development prior to functioning in the EOC is:

1. Provides for organizational expectation during a time of a disaster.
2. Aligns the citywide disaster preparedness with state regulations and national standards.
3. Provides for standardized training criteria for city administrators.
4. Prepares departments heads in advance of being placed in an EOC staff position.

5. Outlines the necessary and essential steps in emergency operations for those not normally involved.

Finally, department heads working within the EOC must be able to effectively deal with a wide range of complex command procedures and the complexity of the stressful, and often confusing and chaotic environment. To do this he/she must have an understanding of how to use appropriate command and staff procedures, for mitigation and recovery techniques, possess interpersonal and managerial leadership techniques, and have a general understanding of their own limitations in dealing with all of the above. Failure of leadership and management and disaster/crisis intervention is often due to a lack of its understanding (Appendix D, Responsibility of Emergency Program Manager). Fundamental elements of the management process are the understanding of each component, its functions, its limitations and how they interface with other interpersonal components. Inappropriate or lack of knowledge, both in the emergency arena where the incident is actually taking place, and in the EOC can lead to personal and/or organizational failure. Often, information that is based on leadership and emergency management instruction is overlooked in the educational process.

**Research Question 2.** What is the goal of the EOC Staff Development Program?

The following are the broad goals of the EOC ICS training program for city administrators:

1. Identify the roles and responsibilities of city administrators as leaders and managers of department resources in emergency situations.
2. Increase the participant’s effectiveness as an EOC member by providing the most current ICS and disaster preparations methods available.

3. Present participants with the most current department policies and procedures in emergency situations.

4. Increase the participant’s effectiveness as a disaster preparedness manager by presenting current ICS theories and how to apply them within their area of responsibility.

5. Demonstrate how effective communication can increase the effectiveness of a city administrator.

6. Provide supervised, individual and group activities for the participant to practice and apply their skills.

**Research Question 3.** What methodology should be used to develop the course content?

The methodology for the curriculum development consisted of a multi-prong approach that included student manuals, self-paced video program, and independent study of departmental manuals and topic specific information concluding with disaster specific simulations. This approach took into consideration four components. They are: a) Identifying all required material; b) Sequential approach or instructional order of all material; c) Identifying established student manuals or text books; and d) Emphasizing the information that is essential to the department head is necessary in order to be successful working within the dynamic and often chaotic environment of the EOC. This would lead into the second year sequence (simple to complex) simulations. Once all participants demonstrate competency bi-annual simulations would occur with one being an EOC drill.
For the purpose of this research paper and implementing this program, the author examined both the CFSM Course Development Process (Table 1) and the Program Planning Process as outlined in Managing the Fire Service 1988 (Appendix G). It was believed that the course development process lends itself better for the development of this training program.

The course content consists of selected leadership videos entitled “Making a Difference”, one fire operational videos entitled “Fire Attack”, and two selected hazardous material videos (Scene Management and Understanding Hazardous Materials) from the series entitled “Surviving the Hazardous Material Incident.” The course also requires the understanding of the body of knowledge of the content in the following manuals. Incident Command System (ICS) or Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), Structural Attack, Field Operations Guide, Department of Transportation (DOT) Emergency Response Guide, City of Monterey Park Administrative Policy and Procedures, selected Monterey Park Fire Department Standard Operating Procedures and components of the Monterey Park Disaster Plan along with FEMA guidelines and regulations.

The Course Development Process proposed outline is as follows:

**Course Development Process**

**Table 1**

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Step Ten  Creating a Bibliography
Step Eleven  Creation of Glossaries
Step Twelve  Review of Course Description and Prerequisites
Step Thirteen  Course Classification
Step Fourteen  Course Adoption

**Research Question 4.** How would the program implementation be accomplished?

The purpose of the EOC/ICS training program for department heads is to provide our city administrators with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to effectively and safely perform specific functions within the EOC. This training program is designed to provide a structured format and to allow participants to develop, initially, at their own pace. After all participants will be expected to perform as a functional team. The foundation is based on six separate but interrelated standards education guidelines, which require the understanding of the body of knowledge of the content in the following manuals. *Incident Command System* (ICS) or *Standardized Emergency Management System* (SEMS), *Structural Attack, Field Operations Guide*, *Department of Transportation (DOT) Emergency Response Guide*, *City of Monterey Park Administrative Policy and Procedures*, and *Monterey Park Fire Department Standard Operating Procedures*. The Course Development Process proposed outline is as follows:

The first is an interactive, self-paced program on emergency management theory. The second is classroom training sessions, along with tabletop exercises, which are designed to
provide both an understanding of incident management and how to assist as a contributing member within the EOC.

The third is participation as a role player in the EOC. These simulations are designed to provide both an understanding on how to mitigate specific disaster scenarios as well as multiple, complex incidents occurring simultaneously.

The program is presented in three sequential phases over a two-year period. There are five major steps in the overall process. The first phase focuses on acquisition of a thorough understanding of the information contained in the self-paced workbooks and/or videos. The second phase is spent reviewing all the aforementioned manuals and books. During the third and final phase, beginning in year two, the individual is acquiring a thorough understanding of the terms and procedures used with an EOC.

**Instructional Order**

**Table 2**

1. Read and review the following self-paced instructional manual, reference material and video presentations:

   - ICS 100 or SEMS 100
   - Field Operations Guide, ICS 420
   - DOT Emergency Response Guide 1996
   - City of Monterey Park’s Administrative Policy and Procedures
   - Monterey Park Fire Departments Standard Operative Procedures
   - Monterey Park Disaster Plan

2. Attend the following classes:

   - ICS Disaster Management Overview
   - Field Operations Guidelines
EOC Roles and Responsibilities

Mass Causality

3. Participate in the following simulations:

- Earthquake
- Transportation Emergency
- Conflagration
- Terrorism
- Sinkhole
- Weather Related, i.e., Storms/Floods

The calendar of events would be as follows, starting in the year 2001, for the first two video-based education programs:

**Calendar of Events**  
*Table 3*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Overview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Self-paced ICS 100 Workbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>Review of workbook questions and answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Overview of the FOG guide ICS 420 with take home exercise/assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Overview individual specific EOC role and responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>Basic tabletop exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>Establishing the EOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Disaster Simulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Mass Causality Overview</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The second year’s calendar of events (2002) is exclusively dedicated to simulations and reinforcement of the previous year’s training. Five separate simulations have been projected in order to utilize the full range of possible disaster occurrences. Each would have an EMS component, however the specific exercises are designed to assess the knowledge and critical thinking of the emergency manager in his/her specific field of expertise, i.e., the Public Works Director would be required to focus on the public works element of the exercises. Simulation sessions are staggered two months apart.

### Calendar of Events
#### Second Year Simulations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Earthquake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Fire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>Terrorism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Sinkhole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Weather/Storm/Floods</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DISCUSSION**

The finding of this research project showed a correlation between the literature and the surveys (both internal and countywide) that were conducted. The literature review combined with the countywide survey, clearly showed that EOC training and state and federal mandates are not universally met. However, all survey respondents felt EOC/ICS training standards are very
important. Even though respondents felt standards were important, some questioned whose responsibility it was, the fire department, the police department, the City Manager, or his office. Survey comments included “The fire department should deal in just the operational issues and not the training of the administrators”, or “I believe it would have been better for the department to have designed a course of study, but not implement it.” When follow-up questions were asked regarding these types of comments, it was clear they were made on the basis of the individual’s background, i.e., when he/she started their careers and the type of culture that was in place at that time. When pressed, all agreed that EOC/ICS training requirements were important, but usually continued with negative comments such as “When the big one hits [earthquake], we do not have enough time to hold everyone’s hands [in the EOC].”, or “If we had more staff and training funds we could do it all.” When asked about the meaning of these statements, many felt that their needs were being ignored and they were excepted to handle all the emergencies regardless of size and complex.” When furthered questioned on what they perceived, it was clear each and every one was more than willing to take on whatever emergency was thrown at them, however they were not particularly interested in training civilians to assist in that endeavor.

The survey also indicated the importance of being compliant, both in regard to moral responsibilities (to protect their/our community and disaster service workers) and liability concerns (fear of fines/citation and possible litigation) in light of the SEMS legislation. No one stated that establishing standardized training should not be done. Both the surveys and literature review indicated the need to ensure that an emphasis on incident management was necessary to guarantee this was achieved. It was generally agreed that the city administrators were the key to an overall community response in times of disasters. This statement correlated with all
individuals who responded to the County survey. All agreed EOC/ICS training was essential and, if done, required close oversight along with verifiable documentation. Furthermore, it was agreed that the fire department should be responsible for administering this program.

One of the more surprising survey comments (follow-up questions), once the interviewee learned of mandated training requirements was “That is just another example of unfunded government regulations. Financial support (training reimbursement) for such a mandate needs to be in place at the State or Federal level.” Though most all agreed with the necessity of EOC/ICS, only 39% of departments surveyed considered themselves to be in total compliance with what they believed were State requirements. The author believes this perception is due to the lack of understanding regarding SEMS standards and FEMA requirements.

A survey of Monterey Park Fire and City personnel revealed that all battalion chiefs, 75% of company officers and 87% of the department heads were supportive of ongoing EOC/ICS training. All (100% that responded) felt it was extremely to moderately important. It was interesting to note that many city administrators revealed their own weaknesses regarding their understanding of tactics and strategy of incident management practices, and expressed concerns regarding ensuring safety and administrative liability. During follow-up discussions, eight of ten department heads stated that safety of their personnel was their primary concern and all believed that they, or the fire department, could do more to help prepare future city administrators. It should be noted that in the initial survey 89% thought this was important. This turned out to be a general statement. It was hard for each of them to site a specific example of what more could be done other than suggesting more responsibility be placed on the fire department. The author interpreted this to mean that without an educational standard to follow there was no starting point
or focus to heightened needs. Most agreed we needed something, however they did not know what it should look like.

There was a perception that the fire department was not doing enough and in some way lagged behind other fire agencies in this specific area. The Countywide surveys indicated that we were at the same level of compliance with 41 other departments. Most employees surveyed stated that more training was necessary, however, it was not clear that a training program with oversight provided by an assigned individual(s) needed to be established. Once again, follow-up questions raised the concern that this would be just another program that would take more of their time. It was clear, however, that members assumed it was the City’s responsibility. This was evidenced by comments such as “If they want me to be better in disaster preparedness they [the City] should train me” or “How do I know and prepare for what I do not know?”

In closing, the final outcome will move the fire department into establishing a standard for department heads initial training in EOC operations. This, in the long run, can only be measured by comparing and contrasting past city administrators, and by surveying incumbents, and comparing that information with future data. The author found it interesting that since the establishment of the SEMS in 1996, not much has changed.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations for this educational program are directed toward the City of Monterey Park Fire Department and meet the spirit and intent of California SEMS and the City of Monterey Park’s Disaster Plan. As a curriculum, the author believes there may be considerable value to any department that wants to review and possibly adapt this information for its own use. Information pertaining to staff development for the EOC operations program has
been disseminated to the Los Angeles Area Fire Chiefs Association for review. The Los Angeles Area Fire Chiefs’ Association will be placing some of this material on their web site in order to disseminate the course objectives and outline of the self-paced program.

Four major recommendations surfaced from this research:

1. **Development of a User Group/Networking System**

   In order to remain current on emergency management issues and to maintain involvement, a communications system needs to be developed and monitored by those responsible. Unlike the emergency preparedness meetings that were established in the past, attended by low-level subordinates who reported back to the department head on complex issues, this system would be just for the senior leadership. This could be facilitated through existing e-mail or the intra-department mail routing system and would be outside of the normal meeting/training sessions.

2. **Development of a Centralized Disaster Preparedness Library**

   Each department has its own resource library containing department-specific service manuals, magazines and books, department and internal procedures, and City Administrative Policies. In order to elevate the caliber of training and education, and to keep costs to a minimum, a centralized disaster preparedness library could be established within the City Manager’s reference library. This library would be available to all with checkout procedures similar to the public library.

3. **Succession Planning.**

   It was found that some department heads endeavor to develop junior members for advancement or other areas of responsibility. Furthermore, it was learned through direct
questioning that the issues of succession planning, disaster preparation, and/or ensuring that the individuals participating in the EOC were competent, had been an issue for several decades.

4. Establish a Secondary/Backup EOC

Currently the EOC is located within City Hall in a secure area outside the Dispatch and the Police Watch Commander’s office. If communications should fail, or the site is unusable due to damage, the City of Alhambra provides back-up for our dispatch. There is not a secondary dedicated EOC site.

5. Development of Inservice Subordinate Development

In order to support the program and ensure continuous subordinate development, the final recommendation is to target all assistants to review the EOC/ICS program. Access and participation to this program by incumbents would provide the following:

- Meet annual subordinate continuing education requirements.
- Promote consistency throughout the organization.
- Provide for open discussion/dialogue on the “how to’s” and procedures.
- Assist in the continuing development of department specific disaster preparedness.
- Prepare department heads to support subordinates.
- Establish buy in and program awareness.
REFERENCE LIST


Brugegman, Callan, Currance, Noll, Sprenger 1990 *Surviving the Hazardous Materials Incident*

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Brunacini, Alan V. *Fire Command*, 1985 Quincy MA. National Fire Protection Association


Instruction Guide and Lesson Plans, SFM/CDF State Fire Training

California State Fire Marshals 1998 *Fire Command 1-A & 1-B*

Instruction Guide and Lesson Plans SFM/CDF State Fire Training

California State Fire Marshals 1991 *Fire Command 2-D*

Instruction Guide and Lesson Plans SFM/CDF State Fire Training

California State Fire Marshals 1999 *Career Development Guide* SFM/CDF State Fire Training


The Disaster Relief Act of 1974

Federal Civil Defense Act of 1950

FEMA CPG 1-8 Guide for the Development of State and Local Emergency Operations Plan

FEMA CPG 1-8 Guide for Reviewing of State and Local Emergency Operations Plan

FEMA CPG 1-8 Objectives of State and local Emergency Operations Plan

FEMA CPG 1-8 Hazard Identification Capability Assessment and Multi-Year Plan

Fire Department Management 1972 *Scope and Method*, Glencoe Press
Hill, Linda A. *Developing the Star Performer*, published in *Leader to Leader*, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company


Stillwater, OK: Fire Protection Publications

National Fire Protection Association Standard 1992 *Fire Department Occupations Safety and Health Programs* (NFPA 1500) Quincy, MA: Author

National Fire Protection Association Standard 1987 *Standards for Fire Officer Professional Qualification* (NFPA 1021) Quincy, MA: Author

Management in the Fire Service, NFPA, Second Edition

Robert. P. Stafford Disaster Relief and Assistance Act, Public Law 93-288


*America Burning*
APPENDIX A
Information Sheet

FEDERAL-STATE –LOCAL TRAINING MANDATES

American National Standards Institute, Inc. (ANSI)
California Code of Regulations (CCR)
California Penal Code (PC)
California Health and Safety Codes (H&S)
California Labor Codes (LC)
California Government Code (GC)
California Welfare and Institutions Codes (W&I)
California Business and Profession Codes (B&P)
Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)
Firescope Act
Local Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMS)
Sara Title III
APPENDIX B
Information Sheet

Disaster Relief and Recovery Act of 1974

This act involves the following steps:

1. If a disaster is beyond the scope of a local community, the State’s Governor will respond
2. If the State discovers that its resources cannot handle the disaster damage, the Governor
   then requests, through FEMA, that the President declare a major disaster.
3. If the President declares a disaster, a Disaster Declaration is signed. Such a declaration
   implements the Disaster Act and enables FEMA to give both financial and technical help
   to the victims of that disaster. These efforts support and supplement state and local
   efforts.
4. When the disaster is declared, FEMA employees and Disaster Assistance Employees
   ((DAEs) are sent to the site to help.
5. Disaster application centers are opened.
FEMA’s Civil Defense Program provides for financial assistance, technical advice, or a combination of both in the following areas:

1. Emergency management assistance
2. Family protection
3. Population protection planning
4. Public information
5. Business and industry preparedness
6. Facility survey
7. Radiological defense
8. State and local direction, control and warning
9. State and local exercise assistance
10. Emergency management training
11. Military support of civil defense
Responsibilities of the Emergency Program Manager

1. Advise and inform the chief elected official on emergency management activities,
2. Identifies resource deficiencies and works with appropriate officials on measures to correct them,
3. Develops and carries out public awareness and education programs,
4. Establishes a system to alert officials and the public in an emergency,
5. Establish and maintain networks of expert advisors and damage assessors for all hazards,
6. Coordinate a review of all local emergency-related authorities and recommend improvements,
7. Involve all appropriate local public and private agencies in developing and exercising, emergency plans, prepares and administer a program of activities that is supported by the chief local elected official and State Emergency Director.
8. Identifies and analyzes the effects of hazard that threaten the jurisdiction
9. Inventories human and material rescues from private sector source that would be available in a emergency
10. Coordinate the planning process, working cooperatively with organization and government departments
June 1, 2000

Chief Jim Ballard
Alhambra Fire Department
315 W. Ivy
Alhambra, California 91753

Dear Chief Ballard,

Enclosed, please find a survey asking for your opinion regarding EOC training provided by the fire department for City Administrators. The results of the survey will be used to determine which Los Angeles County and the Orange County Fire Departments has verifiable training standards for their city administrators that have operational responsibility in the EOC. This survey is necessary and valuable for our department and is part of a National Fire Academy applied research project. Your opinions are important in order for the survey to reveal accurate results. If you would like to receive the results of this survey, or a copy of the project, please include your business card. A self-addressed envelope is attached to the survey for your convenience.

Please take the time to fill this out and return it by July 10, 2000.

Thank you in advance.

Sincerely

Marc A. Revere
Fire Chief
1. Do you feel that your city has a program in place that adequately trains city administrators in EOC Operations?
   
   Yes      No

2. If no, do you feel a training program for city administrator in EOC operations should be developed?
   
   Yes      No

3. If yes to number 2, whom would you expect to design and/or establish this program within your city?
   
   Fire Department
   Safety Officer
   A designated Subject Material Expert
   Risk Manager
   Other ___________

4. In your opinion, how often should EOC training/simulation be done?
   
   Skills/Simulations (Objective)  
   Quarterly  Biannually  Annual  Not at all
   Technical Training (Objective)  
   Quarterly  Biannually  Annual  Not at all

5. How important do you feel it is to test your cities readiness (simulated) for a large-scale emergency?
   
   Extremely important
   Important/not a priority
   Somewhat important
   Not important
5. In your opinion, do you believe you have the necessary skills to assist as an EOC member during a large-scale emergency?

   Very Competent
   Some what competent
   Not comfortable

7. Please list any comments that you believe would help in developing a program to assist city administrators in gaining the knowledge skills and abilities for EOC operations.

   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

8. How long have you been employed with your City?

9. Who within your department do you consider a secondary point of contact to fill in for you in the event you are not immediately available in the event of a disaster?

   Name____________________
   __________________________
APPENDIX F
Information Sheet

Monterey Park Fire Department
EOC Training and Staff Development for Department Heads Questionnaire/Survey

1. Do you feel that the City has a program in place that adequately trains potential city administrators in EOC operations?
   Yes  No

2. If no, do you feel a training program for city administrator in EOC operations should be developed?
   Yes  No

3. If yes to number 2, whom would you expect to design and/or establish this program?
   Fire Department
   Safety Officer
   A designated Subject Material Expert
   Risk Manager
   Other ___________

6. In your opinion, how often should EOC training/simulation be done?
   Skills/Simulations (Objective)  Quarterly  Biannually  Annual  Not at all
   Technical Training (Objective)  Quarterly  Biannually  Annual  Not at all  Not at all

5. How important do you feel it is to test our readiness (simulate) for a large-scale emergency?
   Extremely important
   Important/not a priority
   Somewhat important
   Not important
   ________________________________
6. In your opinion, do you believe you have the necessary skills to assist as an EOC member during a large-scale emergency?

   - Very Competent
   - Somewhat competent
   - Not comfortable

7. Please list any comments you believe would help in delivering a program to assist city administrators in gaining the knowledge skills and abilities for EOC operations.

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

8. How long have you been with the City?

9. Who, within your department do you consider a secondary point of contact to fill in for you in the event you are not available during a disaster?

   Name____________________________
APPENDIX G
Information Sheet

The Program Planning Process
As Outlined in Managing the Fire Service 1988

1. Needs Assessment
   - Organizational Needs
   - Learner Needs
   - Environmental Needs

2. Formulation of Objectives
   - Determine specific behaviors or evidence of learned skills
   - Determine conditions that performance will be exhibited
   - Determine the measure of performance

3. Program Selection/Development
   - Task Analysis
   - Performance Objectives
   - Evaluation Methods
   - Instructional sequence

4. Program Delivery
   - Lectures
   - Demonstrations
   - Simulations

5. Evaluation
### APPENDIX H
Information Sheet

Monterey Park City Administration Roles and Responsibility Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>EOC Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ron Merry</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>Logistics-Utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aldofo Reta</td>
<td>Building</td>
<td>Logistics-Situation Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Dong</td>
<td>Management Service</td>
<td>Finances-Procurement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan Cross</td>
<td>Police</td>
<td>Command-Communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marc Revere</td>
<td>Fire</td>
<td>Command-Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Blackwood</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>Logistics-Documentation-Volunteer Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelvin Tainatongo</td>
<td>Economic Development</td>
<td>Plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry Panagiotes</td>
<td>Parks and Recreation</td>
<td>Shelter Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda Wilson</td>
<td>Library</td>
<td>Documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Jeffers</td>
<td>City Manager</td>
<td>Incident Commander-Policy-PIO</td>
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</table>