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Vital Preparations:

Investigating the need for an Incident Action Plan at the Circleville Pumpkin Festival

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Certification Statement

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

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Abstract

The City of Circleville is a small rural community of 13,485 residents in south central Ohio. On the third Wednesday of every October the community goes through a transformation from its everyday activities to the largest festival in the state attracting up to 400,000 visitors over a four day period. The event lines the downtown streets with craft booths, food vendors, merchant tents, carnival rides, multiple stages, an assortment of pumpkin displays and various activities of all shapes and sizes. Each day in the afternoon and evening a parade commences that can last up to two hours making the area extremely difficult to navigate by foot not to mention impossible for any motorized apparatus to gain access.

The problem is the CFD has no formal response plan to deal with emergency incidents at the Circleville Pumpkin Festival. The purpose of this research was to investigate the need for an incident action plan (IAP) for the CFD to address emergencies at the Circleville Pumpkin Festival. The descriptive method of research was used to assess and answer the following questions: (a) What potential emergency incidents need to be addressed and what methodology should be used for managing an incident at the festival? (b) What steps are taken by other organizations to plan and prepare for large scale events? and (c) What motivation(s) determines the need for an IAP?

The procedures used to seek out a solution to the stated questions consisted of a literature review, three separate surveys and an interview. The results clearly demonstrated the advantages of having a clear and concise plan specific to the festival. The IAP should be designed as a tool to be used by all agencies that have a stake in providing a productive festival and the safety of the community and those visiting. The research identified the need for a more extensive hazard

risk analysis to be conducted with the intention of generating an IAP for the Circleville Pumpkin Festival.

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Introduction

The City of Circleville is a small rural community in the heart of Ohio with a population of 13,485 residents (United States Census, 2000). The community is the county seat and is best known for its four day event, the Circleville Pumpkin Show, which occurs in mid October annually. The festival attracts on average 100,000 individuals each day during the event which accounts for a 740 percent increase to the existing population (Pumpkin Show Fun Facts, 2010). The increase in population during this short period of time creates an exponential hazard risk to the citizens and the transient population as well as the strain placed upon community resources.

In previous years prior to the festival, meetings among managers and supervisors of various agencies took place with Pumpkin Show officials to discuss each department's role and concerns that required attention in order to devise a strategy. The preparations had never been formalized or reduced to a plan to deal with the increased risks. This oversight has placed all parties involved at a serious disadvantage when an incident has occurred. Joyner-Kersee (1962) aptly stated "It's better to look ahead and prepare than to look back and regret" (p. 1).

The Circleville Fire Department (CFD) is committed to providing the people of Circleville with the highest quality emergency services. The department depends upon dedicated, well trained and versatile individuals acquainted with the many different services that the citizens of the community have come to expect. The problem is the CFD has no formal response plan to address emergency incidents at the Circleville Pumpkin Festival.

The purpose of this research was to investigate the need for an incident action plan (IAP) for the CFD to address emergency incidents at the Circleville Pumpkin Festival. The descriptive method of research was used to analyze and answer the following questions: (a) What potential emergency incidents need to be addressed and what methodology should be used for managing

an incident at the festival? (b) What steps are taken by other organizations to plan and prepare for large scale events? and (c) What motivation(s) determines the need for an IAP?

Background and Significance

The City of Circleville, which encompasses 6.2 square miles, is the largest city in Pickaway County, Ohio. The community is located in south central Ohio with a population of 13,485 residents (United States Census, 2000). The city is considered small by many standards and has limited resources. Standard emergencies that require a reaction from emergency services have received the customary limited assets from the local fire and police departments due to staffing and the necessity to have personnel available for other potential emergencies. History has indicated, emergency personnel by and large are able to control those calls considered as routine. The flip side, is those same resources are stretched thin and pushed to their limits during large scale events. The City of Circleville is incapable of mounting any type of defense against a large scale incident based upon available resources.

The CFD consists of 15 uniformed employees and one administrator. The department is responsible for providing professional fire suppression services, rescue, emergency medical services, hazardous materials enforcement and mitigation and other life saving tasks. The organization also offers fire prevention, community risk reduction education and code enforcement. In addition to these local services the City of Circleville has entered into mutual agreements with all of the surrounding communities and municipalities.

The increased use of safety forces during special events has placed greater importance on the preparation process and the subsequent responsibilities mandated by local, state and the federal government. There also has been a certain expectation by the general public for a professional level of service for these occasions. Therefore, it has become apparent that the CFD

must place greater emphasis on response planning for the pumpkin festival and other similar events.

Shemanski (1984) gave a brief history lesson of the origination and continued operation of the festival. Originally the Circleville Pumpkin Show was not as well known or publicized as “The Greatest Free Show on Earth” that attracted folks numbering in the hundreds of thousands. It was intended as a community endeavor for farmers to promote and sell their finished crops. In 1903, Mayor George Haswell set aside a day to recognize local farmers and growers by displaying and marketing their completed products because the county fair was always held in the middle of June. At the first festival a large table was utilized for pumpkins and corn fodder as a centerpiece to exhibit the local enthusiast’s culmination of a successful growing season. The inaugural event was held in front of the water works facility located in the downtown area and to this day has remained in the city center with the exception of expanding to incorporate a twelve block area.

The first two events were held for only one day. In 1905 the show lasted more than a day and eight years later it expanded to the existing four day format. The continued growth of the Pumpkin Show has made it one of the premier festivals in the state of Ohio and the country vying for records such as the largest pumpkin, largest pumpkin pie, as well as many other activities related to agriculture and the community.

October of 2006 marked the 100 year milestone of the Pumpkin Show and was surrounded by much fanfare and larger than expected crowds. There were three editions of the century plus festival cancelled in 1918, 1942 and 1943 because the United States was at war (Circleville Herald, 2010, pp. 38-39).

The CFD had made preparations in the past with the addition of six firefighters on duty to address any potential emergencies both in and outside of the festival. Three firefighters were used at a location downtown and the other three on station to staff apparatus. These individuals were utilized only during the set times of the Pumpkin Show although much of transient population remained after operating hours. With the recent downturn in the economy, Pumpkin Show Inc. has refused to fund the previous staffing resulting in only four additional personnel that are staged within the confines of the festival.

Planning for these reductions resulted in the incorporation of Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members who were ill prepared for the task. Many of the CERT members had no formal training or certifications to deal with the emergencies that transpired in the course of a day. Several adjustments were required to partner CERT individuals with firefighter / emergency medical technicians (EMT's) to accommodate potential emergencies. The lack of trained personnel has seriously hindered rendering of care to ill or injured patients and placed the CFD at a potential liability risk.

The CFD has relied heavily upon mutual aid to support and provide back-up while the festival is actively operating. In the past ten years the volume of calls managed by CFD neighbors has increased approximately 57 percent. This dependence upon mutual aid companies leaves their respective districts with limited or no protection.

The location of the Pumpkin Show has also presented major challenges. The downtown area is closed to all traffic starting at midnight on the second or third Saturday of October so vendors can set up their tents and booths. The closure of the city center remains intact for seven nights before the merchants have cleared the area and that locale is restored to normalcy. The temporary structures are placed on the street in front of class three ordinary construction style

buildings. In previous emergency situations, the position of the booths and tents has hindered access for emergency service apparatus and needed resources to respond in a timely and efficient manner. After setup is complete the CFD has inspected the area to ensure it is capable of allowing large fire trucks the capacity to pass through and maneuver the downtown area. Although this in itself has been difficult for the firefighters to operate in and around, the major conflict arises during setup and teardown of the festival. During these periods of time it has been extraordinarily challenging and at times impractical for the needed access to the area in a truly well-organized method and has delayed responses on numerous occasions.

The size of the crowds continues to expand as well as the geographical area the Pumpkin Show has operated within. Other factors that have hindered the process of rendering aid to those in need include the multitude of people that visit, the parades in the afternoon and evening of each day, the traffic outside the confines of the festival and the automobiles and campers parked throughout the city. That has created problems for emergency services to successfully navigate inside and outside the festival.

The CFD continues to adapt with the changes but the challenge continues to expand annually. Research is imperative to gain insight into how a fire department can make preparations for large events and festivals. Many within the department have an assorted variation of opinions how to best deal with the situation. Without a proper and precise examination into the subject the whole truth will not be discovered. To accurately appreciate the complexity of the problem the author will undertake an extensive look at incident action plans, their development and benefits. A thorough analysis of other agencies will be embarked upon to discover any tendencies and possible solutions.

This research directly supports the National Fire Academy's Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management Course by gathering and analyzing data and taking a comprehensive look at how the obtained information affects emergency management during large scale incidents. It also relates to the aspect of community risk and capability assessment (National Fire Academy [NFA], 2009, p. v). The study will investigate the need for the potential development and implementation of an incident action plan. The topic is pertinent in scope to the objectives of the United States Fire Administration (USFA) because it is directly related to transforming fire and emergency services organizations from being reactive to proactive and responding appropriately in a timely manner to emerging issues.

Literature Review

A detailed examination of literature in related textbooks, periodicals, and official documents was performed to answer the questions posed for the research. Additionally, the theme for the research progressed as a result of scrutinizing the existing Pickaway County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and our readiness for an instant disaster, with particular attention to a large scale event and finding there was no definitive plan established for the pumpkin festival. A comprehensive review of the materials was required to create a starting point to steer the research process and institute a vision for the future. A patterned approach was utilized to conduct and explain the literature review. Each of the research questions established was analyzed in the order it was presented.

Through the course of the study a frequent theme among the materials recognized was the interchangeable use of the terms: Incident Action Plan (IAP) and Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). It was recognized, although not defined, that an EOP was designed to be broad in nature and an IAP is more focused and specific.

The first question that the literature review sought to answer was: *What potential emergency incidents need to be addressed and what methodology should be used for managing an incident at the festival?*

Coleman (2009) indicated the present economy has made it virtually impossible and implausible to prepare for those incidents that are considered unusual events that could happen in any community. It is a struggle to even maintain necessary staffing to support normal protective services, not to mention taking on technical specialties that involve an immense amount of resources. One thing that is an absolute, no matter the size of the organization, in a large scale disaster or incident we will be on our own for a period of time.

Public safety has progressed and evolved since its inception in modern day America. New technologies, the need for efficient service and catastrophic events in the past has shaped and changed the very fabric of emergency services. The terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 had far-reaching effects on public safety and brought to light the need for vast preparations. An infinite number of formulas for coordinating and managing emergency scenes had been in effect for decades, leaving the choice up to organizations or their leadership to enact and adhere to these practices. The FIRESCOPE (Fire Resources of California Organized for Potential Emergencies) was such a program that was instituted in the 1970's to manage extensive wildfires in southern California. The program was designed to create interoperability among various agencies and thus the Incident Command System (ICS) was born. ICS established an organized method for managing and controlling large scale situations (Fundamentals of Fire Fighter Skills, 2004).

Soon after ICS began to gain momentum with federal and state wildland firefighters, a new system was introduced Fireground Command (FGC). This system was designed to aid in

routine fire department emergencies. In 1990 NFPA 1561, *Standard on Fire Department Incident Management System*, was established. This standard focused on the significant parts within a system that could be employed at any emergency scene (Fundamentals of Fire Fighter Skills, 2004).

Today the structure that is widely practiced and recognized as the model is the National Incident Management System (NIMS). NFPA 1561, *Standard on Fire Department Incident Management System*, provided no guidance on which of the two previous systems were to be utilized and thus left each organization the option to follow the one that best suited their individual needs. This lack of standardization was apparent following the 2001 terrorist attacks, and the result led to the creation and development of NIMS. NIMS, was required to be used by public safety organizations throughout the United States and came about due to Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) – 5 *Management of Domestic Incidents* (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2004).

The second question inquired: *What steps are taken by other organizations to plan and prepare for large scale events?*

Sylves (1996) revealed in order for organizations to be equipped to continue operations during and after an incident, it is highly beneficial for them to have practical and current plans, meeting the needs of their agencies, including both the possibility and probability of a significant event at any time.

Auf der Heide goes further by asserting the overall plan should include: a contingency plan for unpredicted events, a means of addressing disrupted infrastructure, adequate flexibility to permit decentralized decision making and the provision for preparation efforts of employees.

Paton's and Johnston's (2006) own research was driven by studying the effects of natural disasters on communities, but much of the information provided in the book about preparation for such a disaster presented an undeniable correlation to any event. They made reference to the strategies involved in preparing or mitigating for a potential situation. Those tactics involved guidelines and executive measures that diminish the likelihood of damage, actions that reduce the vulnerability of the community and finally the issues of preparedness, response and recovery planning to deal with the consequences of the event.

Perry and Lindell (2007) highlight the need for a vulnerability analysis to be conducted by emergency management personnel. The program should contain an element for hazard identification and a risk assessment must focus on a varied range of hazards. The examination should concentrate upon the health and safety of the public, responder safety, infrastructure, and the continuity of operations. Once the risk assessment has been conducted a mitigation strategy should be organized and reduced to writing.

To underscore the vital nature of training for large scale events Kataoka (2007) indicated that scenario based exercises that rival actual perceived emergencies are imperative to preparations and planning. He continued by declaring it essential to gain inter-agency cooperation and find out what each individual organization had to offer as well as identify any glaring deficiencies. It is a tool that can be exploited to bridge the gap by providing a common operating picture. His book was geared for Homeland Security issues but provided fundamental information that has numerous applications. Kataoka also stated; "Exercises help shape the preparedness program for actual events with such routine safeguards as accounting for hazardous materials and explosive substances, and identifying sites for potential evacuation centers, incident command posts and staging areas" (p. 58).

The final question asked: *What motivation(s) determines the need for an IAP?*

Kramer (2009) discussed the essential need for a plan to protect the public. He further stated local elected officials are legally bound to ensure a plan is in place and that action is taken when an incident occurs. He also attested that many organizations, especially in those communities that do not have the resources, never have a plan in place until a devastating emergency occurs thus making them reactive and driven by the necessity of organizing the chaos.

To understand the forces which influenced the need for a plan Waugh and Hy (1990) indicated federal, state and local authorities need to assume the lead role. Unfortunately those officials are unwilling to furnish local entities sufficient resources to implement and maintain an effective plan. They also indicated that a singular explanation for the development of a plan is the increase in expanding populations during special events which multiply the risk of creating mass destruction and mass casualty situations.

Based upon the literature review, it would appear that for organizations to be prepared for major events they must have a plan that is current, concise, evaluated and constantly scrutinized for its effectiveness. It must take into account previous and suspected situations that have and can occur. The plan must also adopt a scenario based training regiment to prepare all agencies involved and establish a management system recognized by all involved.

Procedures

The research was designed to investigate the need for an incident action plan (IAP) for the Circleville Pumpkin Festival. Numerous sources were reviewed and evaluated to obtain answers and a potential solution, if it exists, to the problem. To facilitate the research, a literature review was conducted; three separate questionnaires were disseminated to local

political figures within the City of Circleville and Pumpkin Show committee members, fire organizations in the immediate Ohio valley region, and throughout the country. These surveys were designed to, first of all, investigate the immediate need for an IAP and evaluate if other agencies make additional preparations for large scale events and what motivated those organizations to develop an IAP. Finally, an interview was conducted with the CFD Fire Chief, Timothy Tener.

An extensive review was conducted using a broad spectrum of literature from various locations. The initial appraisal was initiated at the Learning Resource Center located on the campus of the National Fire Academy. Much of the information provided there consisted of fire service magazine articles and existing Applied Research Papers (ARP) that addressed diverse aspects of this issue. The Pickaway County Public Library located in Circleville, Ohio was used to recover countless professional publications focused primarily on disaster preparedness and emergency management. The inter-library loan practice was regularly employed to aid in the evolution of the research. The CFD library was used extensively to locate many professional periodicals and fire service oriented publications to gain greater insight into the subject. Lastly, the internet was utilized with the aid of the search engine provided by Google. The internet sources examined focused on subject matter specialists and their recommendations relevant to the study. The literature review exposed much of the rationale for the development of an IAP. Many of those conditions were exploited to fashion the surveys utilized in the research.

A detailed survey (Appendix A) was drafted and distributed to several political figure heads in the City of Circleville. The same survey was also circulated to a number of committee members who represent the Circleville Pumpkin Festival. The survey consisted of nine questions and was designed to gain an understanding of how they viewed the Pumpkin Show,

their safety concerns and the factors that influence safety forces staffing levels during the festival.

The next questionnaire (Appendix B) was used to ascertain how other organizations plan for special events in their community and gain insight into how the CFD can become better equipped to manage the festival. The eight questions were created to be directly associated with the same information obtained from the literature review. Ten questionnaires were dispersed to fire departments in the state of Ohio, identified with community festivals and events that shared similarities in size and geographical location to the Circleville Pumpkin Show. Six of ten respondents replied to the questionnaire.

The last survey (Appendix C) was prepared and disseminated to obtain an understanding of how and when to implement an incident action plan for a mixture of events and gain an understanding from those agencies how their plans came about. They were sent out and analyzed to establish their usefulness to the research. The survey first established if the department had an event within their jurisdiction and then if a written plan was employed. Six respondents were used from various areas throughout the country based upon their utilization of an IAP.

All three questionnaires were administered through a web-based service called SurveyMonkey.com. The software allowed the author to fabricate, distribute, and monitor the surveys on line. The three questionnaires were developed and distributed with the goal of obtaining a large enough set to ensure accuracy and recognize potential trends. After the draft copy of each survey was completed, they were sent to three randomly picked individuals currently employed with the CFD. Instructions were specified to evaluate the clarity of the questions, search for grammatical errors, and verify the validity of the questions.

The nine question survey (Appendix A) dispersed to the political and pumpkin show members had detailed instructions and indicated it was designed as a feedback instrument to gain information on their experiences and views pertaining to the Pumpkin Show. The participants were instructed to freely express their ideas and provide feedback and were assured all information provided would be confidential. The individuals that responded from the city included: four city council members, the mayor and city safety director. Those that participated from the pumpkin show committee included: vice president of the committee, the committee chair of parades and the secretary treasurer.

The questionnaire (Appendix B) distributed to the ten organizations in the state of Ohio, consisted of gathering data related to Ohio festivals. Several methods were employed to obtain this information, including an examination of the web site, ofea.org (Ohio Festivals and Events Association official web site), personal contacts by phone, communications with officers of other departments familiar to the author, and email addresses circulated by the Ohio Fire Chiefs Association. The questionnaire was then emailed via the identified website (SurveyMonkey.com) to the departments.

The seven question instrument (Appendix C) disseminated to numerous other organizations, was focused primarily on the use of an actual IAP in order to obtain a diverse database. A total of 15 questionnaires were returned and six selected based upon their application of an IAP that had been developed for a large scale event. The web based yahoo groups associated with National Fire Academy (NFA), Executive Fire Officer (EFO) program students was used to gain insight into their organizations IAP. The selection process was primarily based upon the similarities of the particular events or festivals and the complexity of the IAP.

The interview with CFD Fire Chief, Timothy Tener was conducted on December 1, 2010. The interview was conducted after the results of all other surveys were completed and tabulated in order to steer the progression of the meeting. All of the questions (Appendix D) posed during the interview were designed based upon the responses generated from the three surveys and information gathered from the literature review.

Limitations

Much of the material created for the subject matter was difficult to locate and restricted for the specific nature of the research selected. The availability of material regarding previous staffing levels at the Pumpkin Show was difficult at best to obtain due to the records retention program put into place by the city office of human resources and the process required for retrieving that information. In fact, in an attempt to pull together data limited to outside agency participation and the volume of emergencies responded to by those organizations, the documentation and collection procedures were somewhat antiquated. Because the use of email to submit the surveys was employed to gather information, it was assumed that they would be completed and returned promptly. On several occasions the identifiable participants had to be contacted personally, by phone, additional emails or in person and asked to complete the questionnaire. In a few instances individuals were unable to access the survey and had to be instructed and assisted to retrieve the information.

Results

A diverse group of research methods were drawn upon to address the three research questions. They consisted of a comprehensive review of literature, three separate but related surveys and an interview with a major stakeholder in the study.

The survey distributed to local elected officials and committee members of the festival (Appendix A) revealed assorted theories and concepts. Question one solicited information regarding the amount of time each person had served in their respective position. Two individuals were elected between one to three years; four had been members three to five years and the last three reported being on the job more than ten years. This question was used to establish their knowledge base of the research. Question two explored the safety factors considered to be of vital importance during the festival. The following three safety factors were documented as the leading responses; medical / injuries, security and fires. Medical issues and injuries was the leading answer chosen first by more respondents than any of the others with security and fire rounding out the top three. Table 1 exhibits this particular question in greater detail.

Table 1

Elected Official / Committee Member Survey: Safety Factors

Factor / Respondent	Fire	Medical/ Injuries	Security	Terrorism	Natural Disasters	Crowd Control	Festival Access	Sanitation
1	4	1	2	7	8	3	6	5
2	3	2	1	8	7	4	5	6
3	3	1	2	8	7	6	5	4
4	2	3	1	7	8	4	5	6
5	2	1	3	7	8	5	4	6
6	3	1	2	7	8	6	5	4
7	1	2	3	7	8	5	4	6
8	3	1	2	8	7	4	6	5
9	4	1	2	8	7	6	5	3

Questions three and four focused on the level of satisfaction among the nine figure heads that participated. They were polled on their approval of current operations regarding staffing and participation among multi-agencies operating at the event. Table 2 breaks each question down into understandable facts.

Table 2

Elected Official / Committee Member Survey: Festival Staffing / Agency Cooperation

Questions 3 & 4 Level of Satisfaction (9 responses)	How satisfied are you with the current safety forces staffing levels during the festival?	What is your level of satisfaction with cooperation levels of the safety force organizations that participate from the city and county?
Dissatisfied		
Somewhat Dissatisfied	1	
Neutral	6	1
Satisfied	2	6
Very Satisfied		2

Questions five, six, and seven explored the topics of the current county EOP, the development of a focused IAP and how the workload placed upon safety forces personnel is viewed at the festival. Table 3 demonstrates the respondents reply to each question.

Table 3

Elected Official / Committee Member Survey: EOP / IAP / Personnel Workload

Questions 5, 6 & 7 Personal Reaction (9 responses)	I feel that the current county emergency operations plan is sufficient in dealing with any potential situations should they arise.	A more narrow and specific incident action plan should be developed and used during the festival.	The current workload, during the Pumpkin Show, placed on safety forces personnel is fair and realistic.
Strongly Disagree			
Disagree	4	5	2
Agree	5	2	7
Strongly Agree		2	

Question eight explored if the members would be willing to relocate the location of the festival. All nine officials strongly disagreed with removing the event from the downtown area. Question nine investigated each individual’s top two explanations for not moving the event to a safer location. Table 4 is a detailed guide to the results of question nine.

Table 4

Elected Official / Committee Member Survey: Moving the Festival

Respondents

Motivation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Tradition	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Economical	x	x		x			x		x
Backdrop			x			x		x	
Community					x				
Visitor									
Vendors									

The findings of the survey completed by the other fire departments in the state of Ohio (Appendix B) revealed varied sizes and types of events that each organization safeguards. Of the ten questionnaires distributed, six replied. The six that answered were also associated with large festivals. They included: The Feast of the Flowering Moon, Deercreek Dam Days Festival, Troy Strawberry Festival, Dennison Railroad Festival, Ohio Tobacco Festival and Portsmouth River Days.

The Feast of the Flowering Moon is conducted in Chillicothe three days during the month of May. It is located at a downtown park drawing approximately 85,000 visitors each year.

Williamsport plays host to the Deercreek Dam Days Festival in June and lasts four days. This festival can see as many as 20,000 to 25,000 folks during the course of the event.

The Troy Strawberry Festival occurs on the levee along the Great Miami River in the City with the same name, Troy. It takes place the first weekend in June and has been reported to bring in as many as 150,000 people for the weekend.

The Dennison Railroad Festival is held in the restored center downtown district. It occurs in mid June of each year and lasts five days. It was reported to have brought in 65,000 patrons if the weather cooperates.

The Ohio Tobacco Festival takes place along the banks of the Ohio River near Ripley. It is scheduled in late August and lasts four days. Each day can have as many as 15,000 people show up.

The last event, Portsmouth River Days runs four days in early September each season. It also takes place along the Ohio River adjacent to downtown Portsmouth, Ohio. The event has been known to have between 100,000 to 150,000 people visit.

The first question solicited the population each organization served. This sought to determine if each department was a viable candidate for comparing and contrasting to the CFD.

Table 5 is a detailed guide of the results obtained.

Table 5

Ohio Festival Survey: Population

Ohio Location	Festival	Population Served
Chillicothe	Feast of the Flowering Moon	(d) Greater than 25,000
Williamsport	Deercreek Dam Days	(a) Less than 10,000
Troy	Troy Strawberry Festival	(d) Greater than 25,000
Dennison	Dennison Railroad Festival	(a) Less than 10,000
Ripley	Ohio Tobacco Festival	(a) Less than 10,000
Portsmouth	Portsmouth River Days	(c) 15,001 – 25,000

The second question posed in the questionnaire established the position held by the individual completing the survey. This indicated the knowledge base of the person performing the survey.

The third question simply asked what type of department served the community for comparative purposes. Table 6 breaks down the answers provided by the six respondents.

Table 6

Ohio Festival Survey: Position and Status of Department

Location	What is your current rank within the department?	What is the current status of your department?
Chillicothe	Executive Officer	Fulltime / Professional
Williamsport	Firefighter	Volunteer
Troy	Company Officer	Fulltime / Professional
Dennison	Company Officer	Volunteer
Ripley	Chief Officer	Volunteer
Portsmouth	Executive Officer	Fulltime / Professional

Question four inquired about the additional preparations each organization undergoes for their festival. Table seven gives a rundown of what kind of groundwork is done to increase safety at the event.

Table 7

Ohio Festival Survey: Festival Preparations

Location	Increase Staffing	Additional Resources	Implement EOP / IAP	Strategically Locate Resources	Perform Inspections	Scenario Based Training / Exercises
Chillicothe	x			x	x	
Williamsport	x					
Troy	x	x	x		x	x
Dennison						
Ripley	x					
Portsmouth	x	x	x		x	

Question five inquired how the different departments were compensated for the additional resources required for the event. Three of the six indicated they are volunteer organizations and receive no supplementary compensation. Chillicothe and Portsmouth specified the funds generated through the festival were paid to their respective cities and then it was distributed to each department for disbursement. Troy suggested that the festival committee

allocated funds to reimburse the department for resources. Questions six, seven and eight queried information regarding the timeline the preparations took place, if planning is even a consideration and the burden placed on the agency. Table eight exhibits these particular questions in greater detail.

Table 8

Ohio Festival Survey: Level of Agreement

Questions 6,7 & 8 Level of Satisfaction (6 responses)	Planning for the event is done well in advance to prepare for any potential changes that have been implemented or for situations that might arise.	My agency makes little to no additional preparations for the festival.	The festival places great strain upon my organization and other community resources to accommodate its existence.
Strongly Disagree	1		
Disagree	2	3	1
Agree	3	2	4
Strongly Agree		1	1

Review of the last survey (Appendix C) disclosed a great deal of information regarding the use and basis for an IAP. Six respondents were selected and used to gain insight into their organizations successes and failures with planning ahead. The first question sought information regarding the respondent’s position within their department. Two were chief officers, one was an assistant chief, two had attained the rank of battalion and the final individual was a captain. Question two revealed that all were professional fulltime agencies. Questions three and four were the determining factor for the final six departments selected based upon an affirmative answer to each question. A negative response to one or both of the two questions eliminated nine respondents. Question five investigated the purpose of each departments plan. Table nine lists the answers selected.

Table 9

Organizational IAP Purpose

Why did your organization develop an IAP / EOP? (choose all that apply)	6 Respondents
The event grew to large for customary resources	4
Organizational requirement for any event	2
Location of event	6
Time event takes place	1
Duration of event	6
Nature of event	6
Significant populace attending event	5

Question six solicited each respondent to indicate their level of agreement regarding the IAP. It specifically asked about its inclusion at the event to produce a safe and productive environment. Five of the six stated they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. Only one acknowledged disagreement to the statement. The final statement inquires as to the timeline the IAP is put into action. Overwhelmingly all replies specified that their organization started utilizing the IAP in advance of the event.

The interview with CFD Fire Chief Timothy Tener (Appendix D) was intentionally performed after the three questionnaires were returned, reviewed and tabulated (personal communication, December 1, 2010). This was premeditated in order to generate reaction and discussion from the Chief when the information was provided. Chief Tener was well aware that preparations in the past for the Pumpkin Show were treated as business as usual. Much of the planning was based upon what had occurred or been learned from the previous year. He felt that all issues ultimately cannot be addressed but more emphasis should be placed on a major event, such as the festival, due to the shear numbers of people who come. He further commented that the Pickaway County EOP is an excellent resource that rarely gets used. Much of the information placed in an IAP should focus on what past history has indicated can and will happen during the

event. Lastly, the staffing as it stands now is insufficient but the economy and committee members representing the festival dictate the level of protection provided.

Discussion

The purpose of this research was to examine the need for an incident action plan (IAP) for the CFD to address emergency incidents at the Circleville Pumpkin Festival. The CFD must continue to gather information and devise a plan to assist the organization in becoming more proactive for any event large or small. The information assembled during the literature review was restated on numerous occasions in the data collected from the three surveys and the interview conducted. After completing the study, the following discoveries are worth noting. Many organizations have no plan for dealing with special events or festivals in their communities. The agencies that do have a plan in place stressed the critical nature of evaluating the plan and being vigilant about keeping it current.

It would be negligent to suggest that the CFD has not made preparations in the past for the festival but the thrust of the research was to offer answers to the fundamental questions posed and seek a consistent way of dealing with emergencies. Many great ideas have already been implemented to assist personnel in their everyday tasks of providing a safer more efficient process at the festival. The inclusion of a medical bicycle patrol has provided a faster and less intrusive response to patients that needed aid. The fire inspection of all vendors at the Pumpkin Show has significantly reduced reported fire incidents since its inception. These types of programs included in and along with a formalized IAP can greatly enhance current operations.

Much of the material related to the subject suggests that a plan can be as specific or general as the author dictates. The county already had a broad based contingency plan developed to mitigate disasters, such as weather related incidents, but did take into account adequate

warning that in turn allowed for personnel and the community ample time to prepare. The plan failed to recognize emergencies or disasters of an immediate nature. The plan is clearly inadequate based upon the fact that it does not provide specific response information. It does not recommend a number, or the types of units, that should react. The plan should address the size of the force initially available to combat the situation until additional resources become available. In the case of the Circleville Pumpkin Festival an overwhelming incident, such as a fire in the downtown area, could instantaneously surpass existing staffing and resources. Any plan developed must address this issue and have a scaled response based upon those resources that are on hand and the ones that become accessible over a period of time.

The elected officials and the members of the pumpkin show indicated the top three safety factors that were most concerning during the event included medical incidents first, security issues second and fires third. Based upon these responses any plan should embrace these three topics. The plan should also adopt other potential emergencies from a more general perspective or defer to the county EOP (emergency operations plan).

The first question also posed the need to analyze the type of systems approach that should be utilized to aid in the mitigation of a significant incident. The literature review concluded that any plan should include the use of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) based upon the consensus that it is recognized as the national standard. All agencies should be familiar with its application and the necessity to apply NIMS at major incidents.

The surveys returned by other agencies, in the state of Ohio, that deal with large scale events indicated that most boost staffing to attend to the increase of the transient population. Circleville already increases staffing but minimally and those numbers can change as has been indicated by past practice due to the economic status of the community.

Two organizations, which responded to the survey, bring in additional resources from other departments that share mutual aid agreements. Currently, the CFD does not have other departments physically come and stage at the festival but they have been called upon and used regularly when the call volume became uncontrollable.

The same two departments implemented an IAP that was specifically developed for the event. One individual commented that their IAP adopted organizational scenario based training, for personnel and outside agencies to establish operational cooperation, prior to the event. One respondent replied that their department places apparatus and personnel strategically during periods of increased traffic and parades. That respondent further suggested their already existing communications center receives supplementary personnel to handle the increase in call volume. Circleville, in the past, placed apparatus, firefighters and medical personnel within areas that became difficult to access during periods of time when the crowds and traffic flooded the streets. This practice has since been discontinued based upon the reduction of staffing for economic reasons.

The information collected and assembled from outside agencies indicated that all had an IAP in place for their major event. All indicated that the duration, nature, and location of the event was the key emphasis for developing the IAP. This would more than solidify the need for a plan at the Circleville Pumpkin Show. The festival lasts a total of four days not to mention the setup and tear down time involved that includes another three days. The Pumpkin Show is conducted in a high traffic and hazardous location in the center of the downtown area. Finally, the nature of the event would suggest a high degree of potential threat to all that attend due to the variation of activities that accompany the festival.

All but one of the other organizations revealed the IAP was an essential tool for the purpose of managing the large numbers of the general public that was drawn to the event. Although many of the festivals in the State of Ohio have a substantial populace attend, very few can attest to the number present at Circleville's festival. The sheer numbers alone, approximately 100,000 per day, should imply the need for a substantial plan, utilized annually and evaluated continuously.

The majority of the departments, in the final questionnaire, also attested to the capacity of the IAP to provide direction for preparing and operating during the event. These testimonies can only further the cause of preparing, implementing and evaluating an IAP for the Circleville Pumpkin Show.

The elected officials and festival committee members commented on their unwillingness to move the event to a more appropriate venue. This is another indication for the need to prepare and gain a better perspective on what has and can occur for future reference. A common theme that resonated from these individuals was one of complacency and reluctance to provide the citizens and visitors a greater sense of safety and security. Much of that apprehension stems from the community never suffering the misfortune of a major incident during the festival.

Recommendations

Recommendations relate directly to the stated problem and purpose. An analysis revealed the city does not have a plan that can adequately deal with a major incident of an immediate nature at the Circleville Pumpkin Festival. The recommendations resulting from this research should focus on those issues that are within the control of the CFD and the city administration.

Based upon information gathered an IAP should be developed to address past and prospective conditions at the Circleville Pumpkin Festival. The plan must focus on those identified topics related to emergency management. The CFD should continue to examine and revise the plan on a regular basis, with a full appraisal after activation of its processes.

The plan must explore the conditions as they presently exist and not make suggestions that are outside the realm of possibilities. To propose immediate increases in staffing and augment present equipment to allow the CFD to create a safe and effective environment at the event would be ineffectual. Those requests would not be honored or taken genuinely due to the present economic status. The plan must place emphasis on scaled responses and be tailored to present resources.

Current and future leaders in the community should be educated on the need of such a plan and the preparation required of emergency services for large scale festivals in the community. The event committee should be intimately involved in the development and activation of an IAP to give input on what assets can be afforded. Prior to implementing such a recommendation, it is suggested that additional research and a detailed hazard risk analysis be conducted to further explore any other potential non-emergency related incidents for inclusion in the plan.

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Appendix "A"

You are invited to participate in a survey that will be distributed to several other elected officials and Pumpkin Show committee members. The nine question survey is designed to generate responses in order to gain a broad understanding of how you view current safety at the event. It also explores any other factors or concerns that you may feel need addressed. Your participation in this research is completely voluntary and will remain confidential. All data generated from this survey will be reported only in the aggregate. At no time will any individuals name be seen or singled out by the researcher. It is vital to learn your opinion and outlook concerning safety at the festival. If any questions should arise or problems occur please contact Kirk Edgington at (740) 474-3333 or by email at the address listed on the link below. Thank you for your contribution, time and support to this study. You may now begin the survey by clicking on the continue button.

1. How long have you served in your current capacity as an elected official or committee member?
 - a. 1 to 3 years
 - b. 3 to 5 years
 - c. 5 to 10 years
 - d. more than 10 years

2. What safety factors do you consider to be of vital importance during the festival?(please rate them in the order of importance 1 being the greatest and 8 being the least)
 - a. ____ Fire
 - b. ____ Medical / Injuries
 - c. ____ Security
 - d. ____ Terrorism
 - e. ____ Natural Disasters
 - f. ____ Crowd Control
 - g. ____ Festival Access
 - h. ____ Sanitation

3. How satisfied are you with the current safety forces staffing levels during the festival?
 - a. Dissatisfied
 - b. Somewhat Dissatisfied
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Satisfied
 - e. Very Satisfied

4. What is your level of satisfaction with cooperation levels of the safety force organizations that participate from the city and county?
 - a. Dissatisfied
 - b. Somewhat Dissatisfied
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Satisfied
 - e. Very Satisfied

5. I feel the current county emergency operations plan (EOP) is sufficient in dealing with any potential situations, should they arise.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly Agree

6. A more narrow and specific incident action plan (IAP) should be developed and used during the festival.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly Agree

7. The current workload, during the Pumpkin Show, placed on safety forces personnel is fair and realistic.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly Agree

8. The location of the festival should be relocated to a more appropriate and less vulnerable venue.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly Agree

9. If your answer to the previous question was one of disagreement please select your top two motives for not choosing to relocate the festival.
- a. Tradition
 - b. Economical
 - c. Downtown area provides an enhanced backdrop for the event
 - d. Community relations
 - e. Visitor relations
 - f. Vendor Relations

Comments: _____

Appendix "B"

You are invited to participate in a survey that will be distributed to other fire departments in the State of Ohio who have festivals similar to the Circleville Pumpkin Show. The eight question survey is designed to generate responses based upon your experiences with your local festival and the precautions, planning and safety measures you undertake for the event. Your participation in this research is completely voluntary and will remain confidential. All data generated from this survey will be reported only in the aggregate. At no time will any individuals name be seen or singled out by the researcher in the report. It is vital to learn your opinion and outlook concerning this issue. If any questions should arise or problems occur please contact Kirk Edgington at (740) 474-3333 or by email at the address listed on the link below. Thank you for your contribution, time and support to this study. You may now begin the survey by clicking on the continue button.

1. What is the population your organization serves?
 - a. Less than 10,000
 - b. 10,001 to 15,000
 - c. 15,001 to 25,000
 - d. Greater than 25,000

2. What is your current rank within the department?
 - a. Chief officer
 - b. Executive Officer
 - c. Company Officer
 - d. Firefighter

3. What is the current status of your department?
 - a. Volunteer
 - b. Combination
 - c. Fulltime / Professional
 - d. Other (please explain)_____

4. What additional preparations does your agency undertake for the festival? (please mark all that apply)
 - a. Increase Staffing
 - b. Additional Resources (equipment)
 - c. Implement Emergency Operations Plan / Incident Action Plan?
 - d. Strategically Locate Additional Resources
 - e. Perform Inspections of Vendors
 - f. Scenario Based Training / Exercises

5. How does your organization receive compensation for any services or additional resources you provide for the festival?
 - a. We receive no compensation
 - b. Funds generated through the festival
 - c. The festival committee allocates the funds
 - d. Our organization is responsible

6. Planning for the event is done well in advance to prepare for any potential changes that have been implemented or for situations that might arise.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly Agree

7. My agency makes little to no additional preparations for the festival.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly Agree

8. The festival places great strain upon my organization and other community resources to accommodate its existence.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly Agree

Comments: _____

Appendix "C"

You are invited to participate in a Circleville Fire Department survey in relation to large scale events that require an Incident Action Plan (IAP). The seven question survey is designed to generate responses based upon your experiences utilizing and preparing the IAP for your department. Also, it is vital to learn your understanding of how this issue has affected your organization directly. Your participation in this research is completely voluntary and will remain confidential. All data generated from this survey will be reported only in the aggregate. At no time will any organization name be seen or singled out by the researcher in the report. If any questions should arise or problems occur please contact Kirk Edgington at (740) 474-3333 or by email at the address listed on the link below. Thank you for your contribution, time and support to this study. You may now begin the survey by clicking on the continue button.

1. What is your current rank within the department?
 - a. Fire Chief
 - b. Assistant / Deputy Chief
 - c. Battalion Chief
 - d. Captain

2. What is the current status of your department?
 - a. Volunteer
 - b. Combination
 - c. Fulltime / Professional
 - d. Other (please explain)_____

3. Does your community have a festival or large scale event that your organization supports?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

If you answered yes to the previous question please continue the survey. If you answered no, thank you for your time and participation.

- 4. Does your organization use an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) / Incident Action Plan (IAP) for the event?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

If you answered yes to the previous question please continue the survey. If you answered no, thank you for your time and participation.

- 5. Why did your organization develop an IAP / EOP? (please choose all that apply)
 - a. ___ The event grew to large for customary resources
 - b. ___ Organizational requirement for any event
 - c. ___ Location of event
 - d. ___ Time event takes place
 - e. ___ Duration of event
 - f. ___ Nature of event
 - g. ___ Significant populace attending event
- 6. The inclusion of the IAP / EOP for the event has created a safer and more productive environment.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly Agree
- 7. When does you department set the IAP / EOP into action?
 - a. Prior to the event
 - b. Opening day of the event
 - c. Only if a situation arises that requires guidance from the plan

Comments: _____

Appendix “D”

1. How have preparations for the Circleville Pumpkin Show been made in the previous years and do you believe these preparations are sufficient to deal with problems that have occurred or might occur in the future?
2. What is your major apprehension and chief concern regarding the festival and how does it relate to the responses given by the elected and Pumpkin Show officials.
3. Do you feel the current Pickaway County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is sufficient to deal with an event of this magnitude? Please elaborate on your answer.
4. If an Incident Action Plan (IAP) is developed what types of situations need to be addressed?