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Volunteer and Donations Management: Establishing a “Hotline” and Maintaining a Donations Database

SUMMARY

Emergency responders may be overwhelmed by offers from private citizens and organizations to volunteer services and donate goods after an emergency incident. These offers can be managed more efficiently by establishing a hotline and a donations database.

DESCRIPTION

After the September 11, 2001 attack on the Pentagon, Arlington County officials were unprepared for the influx of offers to donate goods and volunteer services from local citizens, companies, and charitable organizations. The County's information telephone hotline was quickly swamped by offers to donate goods and services. Further, Arlington County did not have a plan for managing a sudden surge of such offers after an emergency incident. Consequently, many citizens donated goods at their local fire station because they did not know where else to take them. These donations flooded many stations and forced the emergency responders to serve as donations managers and supply agents.

Emergency managers should establish a hotline to coordinate the surge in offers for donated goods and services from local citizens and companies after an emergency incident. This information should be entered into a donations database that allows managers to assign volunteers and assess donations needs efficiently and effectively.

CITATION

Titan Systems Corporation. *Arlington County After-Action Report on the Response to the September 11 Terrorist Attack on the Pentagon*. May 30, 2002.

(http://www.co.arlington.va.us/Departments/fire/edu/about/docs/after_report.pdf)

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