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*OpsCenter November 2018*

After-Action Report

January 2019



The After-Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) aligns exercise objectives with preparedness doctrine to include the National Preparedness Goal and related framework and guidance. Exercise information required for preparedness reporting and trend analysis is included; users are encouraged to add additional sections as needed to support their own organizational needs.

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## EXERCISE OVERVIEW

<b>Exercise Name</b>	<i>OpsCenter November 2018</i>
<b>Exercise Dates</b>	November 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2018
<b>Exercise Location</b>	Donald E. Long Juvenile Justice Center 4800 NE 68 <sup>th</sup> Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97213
<b>Scope</b>	Severe Winter Weather
<b>Mission Area(s)</b>	Response
<b>Core Capabilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operational Coordination</li> <li>Logistics &amp; Supply Chain Management</li> </ul>
<b>Objectives</b>	See page 2 <i>Exercise Objectives and Core Capabilities</i> for a list
<b>Scenario</b>	<p>The coldest air of the winter season will be settling in over southwest Washington and northwest Oregon later this week, bringing very cold temperatures to the region and snow levels possibly near the valley floor.</p> <p>The initial surge of cold air will spread into southwest Washington and northwest Oregon Tuesday (Nov 6) as a strong cold front moves through. While air ahead of this front will be relatively mild...very cold air behind this front has the potential to drop snow levels quite low, likely to the valley floor.</p> <p>It appears a reinforcing shot of arctic air will then spread through the Gorge and into northwest Oregon and southwest Washington Wednesday (Nov 7) and bring the coldest air to the region in quite some time. At that point...minimum temperatures could fall into the teens with daytime temperatures struggling to reach freezing.</p> <p>A strong weather disturbance will move into the region from the Pacific early Wednesday morning (Nov 7). Any precipitation that falls from this weather system will be snow right down to the valley floor. As the cold air over the area erodes, the precipitation will likely turn to freezing rain late Wednesday night through Thursday. This event could be similar to the snow and ice event that occurred in early January of 2006 which dropped several inches of snow and ice in the Willamette Valley. There are widespread power outages throughout the state due to heavy icing on trees and power lines.</p>
<b>Participating Organizations</b>	See <b>Appendix A: Exercise Participants</b>
<b>Point of Contact</b>	<p><i>Robert Quinn</i> Training &amp; Exercise Coordinator Multnomah County Office of Emergency Management (503) 307-4129 <a href="mailto:robert.quinn@multco.us">robert.quinn@multco.us</a></p>

## EXERCISE OBJECTIVES AND CORE CAPABILITIES

The following exercise objectives in *Table 1* describe the expected exercise outcomes. Objectives are linked to core capabilities, which are distinct critical elements necessary to achieve specific mission area(s). The objectives and aligned core capabilities are guided by organization priorities and previous exercise lessons learned.

*Note: Bolded Core Capabilities are identified in the Multnomah County Emergency Management Training & Exercise Plan.*

<i>Exercise Objectives</i>	<i>Core Capability</i>	<i>Rating</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete the process of submitting a resource request to the Oregon Office of Emergency Management to align with the County Resource Request Form</li> </ul>	<p><b>Operational Coordination, Logistics &amp; Supply Chain Management</b></p>	<p><i>S – Performed with Some Challenges</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the logistical responsibilities of resources requested through the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Operational Coordination, Logistics &amp; Supply Chain Management</b></p>	<p><i>S – Performed with Some Challenges</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the financial responsibilities of resources requested through the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Operational Coordination, Logistics &amp; Supply Chain Management</b></p>	<p><i>P – Performed without Challenges</i></p>

*Table 1. Exercise Objectives and Associated Core Capabilities*

## EXERCISE BACKGROUND & SUMMARY

This exercise was developed parallel to an Oregon Office of Emergency Management’s (OEM) Quarterly drill of their *OpsCenter* system. This exercise was identified in the Multnomah County Office of Emergency Management (MCEM) *Training & Exercise Plan* for Fiscal Year 2019. The MCEM anticipates regular involvement in future quarterly *OpsCenter* drills to test County resource request processes.

For this quarter’s participation, the MCEM held a two component exercise. The first component was a drill to test the recently updated County *Resource Request Form* and the process of transferring information from that form, to the OEM *OpsCenter* system when local resources do not meet the request needs.

The second component was a tabletop exercise with county-wide partners to address two common issues identified in past response operations: the logistical and financial responsibilities of resources requested through the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

The MCEM invited community partners who are expected to request resources through the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to actively participate. Not only was this time used to clarify the expected process, but this exercise offered all partners an opportunity to gain awareness of this process, and the agreed-upon decision. This tabletop saw participants come to full agreement on a number of key processes while observing areas for improvement for improved future operations. Key decisions included:

- *Responsibility of Logistical Requirements:* Resources requested by local jurisdictions through the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) are the responsibility of the County EOC from initial request to arrival at the identified delivery location. Upon arrival at the designated delivery location, the resource then becomes the responsibility of the jurisdiction requesting the resource (*city, town, special districts, etc.*) until demobilization. During demobilization the responsibility then transitions back to the County EOC.

*Note: Additional content available under Objective 2 explanation on page 6.*

- *Responsibility of Financial Requirements:* Financial responsibility will always initially be the responsibility of the requesting organization (*city, town, special district, etc.*). If a requesting organization is unable to pay for a requested resource, the County EOC will make a reasonable judgement on taking financial responsibility. This judgement will be based on incident and EOC priorities set by the County EOC Manager & Operations Section Chief.

*Note: Additional content available under Objective 3 explanation on page 7.*

## **ANALYSIS OF OBJECTIVE & CORE CAPABILITIES**

Aligning exercise objectives and core capabilities provides a consistent taxonomy for evaluation that transcends individual exercises to support preparedness reporting and trend analysis. This section pertains to the exercise objectives, aligned core capabilities, and performance ratings for each core capability as observed during the exercise and determined by the evaluation team. The following sections provide an overview of the performance related to each exercise objective and associated core capability, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement.

The National Preparedness Goal of September 2015 has steered the focus of homeland security toward a capabilities-based planning approach using 32 identified Core Capabilities. Capabilities-based planning focuses on planning under uncertainty because the next disaster can never be forecast with complete accuracy. Therefore, capabilities-based planning takes an all-hazards approach to planning and preparation that builds capabilities, which can be applied to a wide variety of incidents. States and urban areas use capabilities-based planning to identify a baseline assessment of their homeland security efforts by comparing their current capabilities against the Core Capabilities. This approach identifies gaps in current capabilities.

The Core Capabilities are essential for the execution of each of the five mission areas: Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery. These capabilities provide the foundation for development of the exercise design objectives and scenario. This exercise focuses on core capabilities associated with the Response mission area:

- *Response Mission Area:* “the capabilities necessary to save lives, protect property and the environment, and meet basic human needs after an incident has occurred.”

## OBJECTIVE 1

Complete the process of submitting a resource request to the Oregon Office of Emergency Management to align with the County Resource Request Form

**Core Capability:** Operational Coordination, Logistics & Supply Chain Management

### Strengths

Exercise evaluators observed the following strengths:

- *Strength 1:* The County Resource Request Form had all the necessary content boxes to transfer information into the *OpsCenter* system.
- *Strength 2:* County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) staff were able to successfully submit and track the progress of the resource request through the *OpsCenter* system.

### Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to reach full capability level:

- *Area for Improvement 1:* There was no guidance for County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) staff for *OpsCenter* content inclusion.
  - Analysis: There is currently no guidance for submitting resource requests through the *OpsCenter* system. County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) staff requesting resources through *OpsCenter* were notified they had not selected the “Release Form” button when submitting the request. The need to select this button was not known to the staff.

Staff went to click the “submit” button and were provided an “invalid time format” message. There was no indication which time had been input wrong and took some time for staff to identify the issue (*staff had input “ASAP” as a time that was not accepted*).
- *Area for Improvement 2:* Adjustments to the *OpsCenter* request were not clearly visible to the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) staff making it difficult to know what actions were being taken by the State.
  - Analysis: The “Request Status” box was adjusted by State Emergency Coordinating Center (ECC) staff, however there was no specific language identifying what actions were being taken to address the resource request.

The resource request did have a point of contact, however it was not clear who (*organization/Emergency Support Function*) was responsible for addressing the resource request.
- *Area for Improvement 3:* It is unclear how resource requests that cannot be fulfilled will be handled.
  - Analysis: If an organization submits a resource request with a desired delivery time, but that resource is not available until beyond the desired delivery time, how will that resource request be handled? Will it be discarded? Does the resource request need some sort of expiration date where the organization fulfilling a request contacts a requestor if the request can’t be filled before the asked for delivery time?

## OBJECTIVE 2

Identify the logistical responsibilities of resources requested through the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

**Core Capability:** Operational Coordination, Logistics & Supply Chain Management

### Strengths

Exercise evaluators observed the following strengths:

- *Strength 1:* Requests coming from a known trusted title/organization (e.g. Gresham Emergency Management or Portland Emergency Coordination Logistics Section) are currently understood as authorized.
- *Strength 2:* All participating organizations agreed upon the logistical responsibilities of resources from initial request to demobilization and return.
  - Analysis: If the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is involved in directly filling a resource request, the understanding is that the County EOC is responsible for coordination between the requestor and the provider of the resource through arrival at the identified delivery location.

The original requesting agency/organization is responsible for tracking the resource after arrival at a designated delivery site until demobilization begin. City Operation Centers would be the point of contact for the County EOC to acquire resource status and tracking for city-requested resources. Non-municipal entities requesting resources should also be coordinating with the County EOC for tracking purposes.

During demobilization the responsibility transitions back to the County EOC.

- *Strength 3:* The Regional Disaster Preparedness Organization (RDPO) regional resource request handbook and training has assisted with county-wide understand of the resource request and tracking process.

### Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to reach full capability level:

- *Area for Improvement 1:* Identifying authorized resource requests from individuals or organizations that are not familiar to the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC).
  - Analysis: Sometimes, current/regular partners are not the individuals making requests and the County EOC may not be clear on the approved authorization to make a request. In that case, there is a need for a process to identify “approved” requesters. Not every organization uses dedicated email addresses in their Emergency Operations/Coordination Center(s), even if they have them. Resource requests are submitted through a number of methods, including: phone call, text, or an individual’s work email. Identifying an “authorized” requestor will ultimately be the responsibility of the County EOC Operations Section Chief.

The group also discussed identifying if there is there an authorization recommendation guidance in the Regional Resource Guidebook.

- **Area for Improvement 2:** It was discovered that a system is needed to notify County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) that a resource has arrived on scene.
  - **Analysis:** With the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) holding the responsibility of tracking a resource until it arrives on scene, it is important for the County EOC to be notified when that resource arrives. This process will improve accountability and notify the County of any issues with a requested resource.  
  
This process is necessary for notifying both the responsible party receiving a requested resource and the initial requestor (*the initial requestor may not be the party responsible with receiving the requested resource*).
- **Area for Improvement 3:** The County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) would benefit from gathering requested critical resource information from responding entities.
  - **Analysis:** This process would improve the County EOC awareness of requested resources and improve the prioritization and availability of competing resources. That way, the County EOC can help meet the life safety needs of the incident first.
- **Area for Improvement 4:** Resources are being tracked in multiple systems which creates information/situational awareness gaps.
  - **Analysis:** With the State Office of Emergency Management (OEM) utilizing the OpsCenter system, some counties and cities utilizing WebEOC, and others using separate systems, this creates an opportunity for resource information to be missed.
- **Area for Improvement 5:** The process for re-allocating a mobilized resource is not formalized and/or documented.
  - **Analysis:** At times, resource may be re-assigned during operations from the initial requesting organization. At this time, there is no formalized process for re-allocating a resource from one task to another. This process needs to include components such as a close-out of the original resource with the original requesting organization (*including all necessary notifications*), and a new resource request process initiated.

## OBJECTIVE 3

*Identify the financial responsibilities of resources requested through the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC).*

**Core Capability:** Operational Coordination, Logistics & Supply Chain Management

### Strengths

- **Strength 1:** All participating organizations agreed upon the financial responsibilities of resources from initial request to demobilization and return.
  - **Analysis:** The requestor holds financial responsibility for the resource, unless no cost is associated, such as outlined in a mutual aid agreement. If a requestor is unable to pay for a resource, they can request financial assistance from the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The EOC Manager and Operations Section Chief hold the responsibility to determine if the County EOC will take on the financial responsibility (*the County Chair may become involved in this decision, when necessary*). It is critical for the County EOC staff receiving resource requests (*likely*

Operations Section) to find out if the requestor is paying, and if they have exhausted all means necessary, before moving to deciding upon County financial assistance. If a requested resource does not need to be returned, it is the responsibility of the requestor (*or the County if they paid for it*) to either keep or otherwise find use for/dispose of the resource.

Payment for organization/EOC staff in a Unified Command remains with the individual organizations.

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- *Area for Improvement 1:* The process for Special Districts to request resources is still unclear between County and City Operations Centers.
  - Analysis: Portland Bureau of Emergency Management and County Emergency Management have been discussing who will take Special District requests. The current understanding is that Multnomah County Emergency Management/County EOC will take them.
- *Area for Improvement 2:* Many of the processes identified in these discussion were agreed upon, but are not written down.
  - Analysis: The participating organizations agreed upon the logistical and financial responsibilities of partners when requesting resources. Although this is progress, these processes are not written down and only remain knowledge of those in attendance at the exercise. These processes should be formalized.

There was additional conversation about the importance of identifying response processes that are currently not written down internal to each organization. The current staff may be aware of the processes, however if they are not available the processes need to be available.
- *Area for Improvement 3:* The County Office of Emergency Management team are the only individuals with unaccompanied access the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at the current Juvenile Justice Center location.
  - Analysis: Participating County staff did not have access to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The Office of Emergency Management should be identifying who has access to this site so operations can more easily be accessible.
- *Area for Improvement 4:* County partner organizations need more information and awareness regarding the process and documentation for submitting resource requests to the county Emergency Operations Center (EOC).
  - Analysis: Organizations who submit resource requests through the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) would benefit from a resource request submission training. Content such as detailing the form instructions and going through a good example would be beneficial. A subsequent exercise to test this process would also be helpful.

- *Area for Improvement 5:* If the county provides and pays for resources to a partner organization without a formal agreement in place, the county cannot be reimbursed by the Federal government in a declared disaster.
  - Analysis: It was identified that without formal agreements in place regarding resource payment, it would be difficult for the county, and its partners, to receive reimbursement from the Federal government following a disaster declaration. County partners will need to determine what type of agreements are necessary/feasible.

The regional *Omnibus Agreement* was discussed as a current agreement that could meet this need.

## APPENDIX A: EXERCISE SCHEDULE

<i>Time</i>	<i>Exercise Component</i>
0900 – 0940	County OpsCenter Submission Drill
0930	Non-County Staff Arrival Time
0940 – 0945	Exercise Introduction
0945 – 1115	Tabletop Exercise
1115 – 1130	Hot Wash

*Table 2. Exercise Schedule*

## APPENDIX B: EXERCISE PARTICIPANTS

<i>County</i>
Multnomah County Office of Emergency Management (MCEM)
Multnomah County Sheriff’s Office (MCSO)
Multnomah County Department of Community Services (DCS)
County Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operations Section</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Logistics Section</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance/Administrative Section</li> </ul>
<i>County-Wide Partners</i>
Portland Bureau of Emergency Management (PBEM)
City of Gresham Emergency Management
Multnomah County Drainage District (MCDD)
Multnomah University
Portland Community College (PCC)

*Table 3. Exercise Participant*

## APPENDIX C: IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Objective	Issue/Area for Improvement	Corrective action	Capability Element	Primary Responsible Organization
Complete the process of submitting a resource request to the Oregon Emergency Management to align with the County Resource Request Form	There was no guidance for County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) staff for <i>OpsCenter</i> content inclusion.		Planning	MCEM – Operations
	Adjustments to the <i>OpsCenter</i> request were not clearly visible to the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) staff making it difficult to know what actions were being taken by the State		Planning	MCEM, Logistics Section
	It is unclear how resource requests that cannot be fulfilled will be handled.		Planning	MCEM, Logistics Section
Identify the logistical responsibilities of resources requested through the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC).	Identifying authorized resource requests from individuals or organizations that are not familiar to the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC).		Planning	MCEM, Cities/Unincorporated Areas & Special Districts
	It was discovered that a system is needed to notify County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) that an asset has arrived on scene		Planning	MCEM & Logistics Section
	The County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) would benefit from gathering requested critical resource information from responding entities.		Planning	Emergency Support Functions (ESFs)

	Resources are being tracked in multiple systems that can create information/situational awareness gaps.		Planning	RDPO REMTEC Resource Management Committee
Additional Comments	The process for Special Districts to request resources is still unclear between County and City Operations Centers.		Planning	MCEM
	Many of the processes identified in these discussion were agreed upon, but are not written down. These processes should be written down.		Planning	MCEM – Operations
	The County Office of Emergency Management team are the only individuals with access the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at the current Juvenile Justice Center.		Planning	MCEM & DCA IT
	County partner organizations need more information and awareness regarding the process and documentation for submitting resource requests to the county Emergency Operations Center (EOC).	<i>[Advise, perhaps not train] Ensure this is written to separate it from the OEM guidance written above.</i>	Training	MCEM – Operations
	If the county provides and pays for resources to a partner organization without a formal agreement in place, the county cannot be reimbursed by the Federal government in a declared disaster.	Identify which organizations are currently listed on the Omnibus Agreement. Encourage or require partner organizations participate in the Omnibus Agreement	Planning	MCEM

**Table 4. Improvement Plan**