

A Report of the 2002-2003 Civil Grand Jury  
For the City and County of San Francisco

**It's A Catastrophe:  
The State of Emergency Planning in San Francisco**

Released June 19, 2003

Reports of the Civil Grand Jury do not identify the individuals interviewed, pursuant to California Penal Code sec. 929. The California Legislature intended this provision to encourage full candor and cooperation by City and County personnel.

Parties identified in the report must respond to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court within the number of days specified, with a copy sent to the Board of Supervisors. As to each finding of the Grand Jury, the response must either (1) agree with the finding, or (2) disagree with it, wholly or partially, and explain why. Further, as to each recommendation made by the Grand Jury, the responding party must report either (1) that the recommendation has been implemented, with a summary explanation of how it was; (2) the recommendation has not been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, with a timeframe for implementation; (3) the recommendation requires further analysis, with an explanation of the scope of that analysis and a timeframe for the officer or agency head to be prepared to discuss it (less than six months from the release of this Report); or (4) the recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable, with an explanation of why that is. (Cal. Penal Code, secs. 933, 933.05.)

# **It's A Catastrophe: The State of Emergency Planning in San Francisco**

## Summary of Recommendations

1. The Mayor and the Director of Emergency Services should create an integrated and comprehensive structure for emergency planning, assure inter-agency communications, and provide emergency training on an ongoing basis. The Mayor should participate in the planning and communications of Emergency Services, and communicate to all city departments the high priority it holds in his or her administration.
2. The Mayor should reconvene the Disaster Council, which has not met since October 2001, and it should review and approve departmental emergency plans.
3. All City departments involved in emergency response should adopt the Incident Command System.
4. City departments should conduct annual multi-agency disaster response simulations.
5. The Director of Emergency Services should annually test recall process that is intended to enable employees of first responder departments to successfully return to San Francisco in an emergency.
6. The Mayor's Office should improve the security of City facilities and assets, and institute proper evacuation plans for all City facilities.
7. As detailed in this report, the City should address the inadequacy of its emergency resources in the following specific areas: communications and technology; shelter, blankets, cots, and food; hazardous materials suits; and helicopters.
8. The City should improve its methods of budgeting for emergency response.

## **GLOSSARY**

MOES – Mayor's Office of Emergency Services

SFFD – San Francisco Fire Department

SFPD – San Francisco Police Department

DTIS – Department of Technology and Information Services

## **OVERVIEW**

The Civil Grand Jury investigated the ability of the City and County of San Francisco to prepare for and respond to either a man-made or a natural disaster. This investigation focused on three key areas.

First, the Grand Jury investigated whether the City has an emergency plan in place that meets current California and Federal standards; addresses prevention, mitigation and recovery; fully integrates key first responder department plans; and is current and reflective of the lessons learned from the events that occurred on September 11, 2001, and during the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake.

The second focus was the key first responder departments, each of which has responsibility for planning, coordination, and integration of personnel from other city departments and agencies into their services for emergency operations. The investigation included whether these departments have

plans consistent with local, state and federal requirements and regularly test those plans in a coordinated and joint fashion under the leadership of the Director of Emergency Services.<sup>1</sup>

Third, the Grand Jury investigated whether San Francisco has sufficient resources available to respond to and recover from a catastrophic emergency.

The Grand Jury found that the City and County is not prepared in any of these areas. It does not have an adequate and current emergency plan. There is minimal coordination of services among the departments that must first respond to catastrophic emergencies in the City. The Disaster Council, the entity responsible for approving departmental emergency plans and coordinating emergency services does not do so and has not met since October 2001. The Mayor, who has overall responsibility for ensuring that the City's emergency planning is adequate, has not made emergency planning a high priority. The Director of Emergency Services and the Mayor's Office of Emergency Services have not fulfilled their obligation to develop and maintain an integrated emergency plan, to update that plan continuously, or to train key City leaders on their duties during an emergency. Further, the Grand Jury found that leading members of the Board of Supervisors are not aware of their emergency response duties.

Coordinated emergency response training is inadequate and, contrary to state requirements, some key first responder departments do not follow the Incident Command System. Failure of all key departments to use the Incident Command System and comply with other procedures established by the state Standardized Emergency Management System compromises the City's eligibility for mutual aid and for state reimbursement of disaster related costs. Plans for the recall of key personnel to the City in an emergency have not been regularly tested. Communication systems – and how they are situated – are inadequate and lack of adequate security leaves them vulnerable. Departments and agencies that are first responders have not been provided with adequate communications equipment and lack adequate equipment needed for special operations involving radiological, chemical, or biological agents. The City has not established a process to evaluate the need for mutual aid. There is inadequate provision for shelter, blankets, cots, and food for the numbers of persons who may need them in a catastrophic emergency.

The Grand Jury recommends that all of these findings be addressed immediately. In particular:

1. The Mayor, the Director of Emergency Services, and the Mayor's Office of Emergency services, who together are obligated to provide leadership in emergency planning, should immediately update the City's emergency plan, assuring that it: (a) meets all state and federal standards, (b) encompasses prevention, mitigation, and recovery, (c) integrates fully all first responder department plans; and (d) reflects lessons learned from the events of September 11, 2001.
2. The Mayor should convene the Disaster Council, which should then serve as the primary emergency policy and strategy body.

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<sup>1</sup> First responder departments are: the San Francisco Fire Department, the San Francisco Police Department, The Department of Public Health, the Department of Human Services, the Department of Public Works, the Sheriff, and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission.

3. The Director of Emergency Services and, under his direction, the Mayor's Office of Emergency Services should: (a) fulfill its regulatory duty of enforcing first responder department compliance with the Standardized Emergency Management System; (b) improve inter-agency communications; and (c) provide timely and thorough emergency training to leadership involved in first response.
4. The Emergency Communications Department should improve security and backup plans for the 800 MHz radio system, identify a backup site for the 800 MHz system, and provide 800 MHz radios that will be needed in an emergency to all City officials who have disaster related responsibilities and to as many departmental first responders as feasible, and provide necessary repeater sites in areas where geographic and topographic characteristics necessitate them.
5. The Department of Human Services must acquire adequate shelter capacity and emergency supplies.

## **BACKGROUND**

Although the federal Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002 (42 U.S.C. 300f et seq.) mandates that the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission prepare both a security plan and an emergency response plan for the Hetch Hetchy water delivery system,<sup>2</sup> San Francisco is not otherwise subject to federal mandates governing emergency preparedness and response. The Federal Emergency Management Agency does not oversee nor evaluate the City's emergency planning. That agency is available to assist technically and financially through the Governor's Office of Emergency services if requested.

San Francisco is subject to the state Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) (Gov. Code, sec. 8607(a)), which establishes responsibility for managing and coordinating emergency response. The purpose of SEMS is to provide a framework for responding to and managing emergencies and disasters involving multiple jurisdictions or multiple agency response. SEMS requires emergency response agencies to use basic principles and components of emergency management including an Incident Command System, multi-agency or inter-agency coordination, the operational area concept, and established mutual aid systems. State funding is available to assist local governments that adopted SEMS by December 1, 1996, with some costs. San Francisco has adopted SEMS. (Administrative Code, sec. 7.6-1.) To be eligible to receive mutual aid and reimbursement from the state and through it from the federal government for disaster response related costs, a county must agree to follow SEMS regulations. (Calif. Code of Regulations, title 19, chap. 1.) The SEMS Master Mutual Aid Agreement specifies the steps that must be followed to be eligible for state reimbursement.

The California Emergency Services Act (Gov. Code, secs. 8550-8668)<sup>3</sup> governs and authorizes the conduct of emergency operations following proclamations of emergency by the Governor and/or appropriate City authority. City emergency ordinances implement that authority. Only the Board of Supervisors or an official designated by ordinance may proclaim an emergency (sec. 8630). The San

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<sup>2</sup> A Civil Grand Jury report specifically addressing the adequacy of water system emergency preparedness and response accompanies this report.

<sup>3</sup> Unless otherwise specified, all statutory references in this report are to the Government Code.

Francisco City Charter empowers the Mayor to proclaim a local emergency, to terminate the local emergency, to ask the Governor to proclaim a state of emergency; control and direct the efforts of the City and County Emergency Services organization; direct cooperation between and coordination of services and officers in charge of the Emergency Services organization of the City and County, resolve questions of authority and responsibility that arise among them, and represent the City and County in all dealings with public or private agencies on matters related to emergencies. The Charter also provides that the Mayor may act only with the concurrence of the Board of Supervisors or a majority of the members immediately available if the emergency causes any member to be absent and must seek the concurrence of the Board as soon as reasonably possible both in declaring an emergency and in the action taken to meet the emergency. (San Francisco Charter, sec. 3.100.)

State law also mandates that the Board of Supervisors review the need for continuing a local emergency at least every 14 days until the local emergency is terminated. The Board must proclaim termination of the local emergency at the earliest possible date that conditions warrant. (Sec. 8630.)

The succession of leadership adopted by San Francisco empowers the Mayor to designate a member of the Board of Supervisors to act as Mayor in the absence of the Mayor from the state or during a period of temporary disability. (San Francisco Charter, sec.3.100.12.) Failing such designation, the order of succession is: (1) President of the Board of Supervisors, (2) Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Board of Supervisors, and (3) the senior member of the Board of Supervisors. (San Francisco Charter, sec. 2A.10.)

The Board of Supervisors has, by resolution, approved and agreed to abide by the California Disaster and Civil Defense Master Mutual Aid Agreement. That agreement permits coordination of mutual aid and other emergency operations between and among counties when a county's own resources are overwhelmed and unable to handle a local emergency.

The Mayor of San Francisco is the Chair of the Disaster Council and the Commander of Emergency Services. Responsibility for disaster planning and coordination of response to disaster in San Francisco is vested in the Director of Emergency Services, a mayoral appointee, and the Disaster Council. The Director of Emergency Services heads the Mayor's Office of Emergency Services (MOES), which has been established to assist the Director in carrying out his responsibilities. The Director is charged by law with responsibility to: (1) develop and manage a City emergency plan, (2) coordinate all protective and relief services, (3) train all personnel connected with those services, and (4) oversee the operation and implementation of emergency plans and activities. (San Francisco Admin. Code, sec. 7.7.) The director is subordinate only to the Mayor and is to work "in close cooperation" with the Disaster Council and heads of the departments and officers in charge of emergency services. The Director's training responsibility includes educating the members of the Board of Supervisors about emergency plans and activities.

The Disaster Council serves as a high-level policy body. It meets at the call of the chair, which is the Mayor. The Disaster Council's duties include (1) development of a plan for meeting any emergency that provides for effective mobilization of public and private resources of the City, and (2) preparation of and recommendation to the Board of Supervisors any ordinance, resolutions, rules, and regulations needed to implement that emergency plan. (Admin. Code sec. 7.4.)

The Disaster Council includes: (a) the Mayor, (b) a vice chair, appointed by the Mayor, who is currently the Director of Emergency Services; (c) the officers in charge of emergency services provided for in the City's emergency plan; (d) mayoral appointees who are representatives of civic, business, labor, veterans, professional, or other organizations having official emergency responsibilities; (e) three members of the Board of Supervisors appointed by the President of the Board; (f) the Controller; and (g) the Director of Emergency Services, who acts as the executive secretary. The Director of the American Red Cross, the Superintendent of the San Francisco Unified School District, the General Manager of PUC, the City Attorney, the Chief Administrative Officer serve on the Disaster Council. The Disaster Council also recommends mutual-aid plans and agreements and the necessary implementing legislation.

MOES staff and line managers from the City departments involved in emergency response provide the experience and technical expertise necessary to develop the Emergency Operations Plan for the City. The Disaster Council, in turn, must evaluate the technical sufficiency of the Plan and determine whether any policy choices implicit in the structure or content of the Plan are consistent with overall City policies and priorities.

### **INVESTIGATIVE SCOPE AND PROCESS**

Members of the CGJ conducted interviews with representatives of the following:

#### **City and County of San Francisco:**

- Board of Supervisors
- Past and Current Presidents of the Board of Supervisors
- Department of Administrative Services
- Department of Human Services
- Department of Public Health
- Department of Public Works
- Department of Telecommunications and Information Services
- Emergency Communications Department
- Mayor's Office of Emergency Services
- Office of the City Attorney
- Office of the Controller
- San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
- San Francisco Fire Department
- San Francisco Police Department
- San Francisco Sheriff's Department
- San Francisco Fire Commission
- San Francisco Police Commission

#### **Other Agencies and organizations:**

- American Red Cross Bay Area
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Public Policy Institute of California
- Governor's Office of Emergency Services
- The Salvation Army

**Documents examined for this report include:**

Government Code Sections 8550-8668: California Emergency Services Act  
Government Code: Title 19: Division 2. Office of Emergency Services  
'Coping with Homeland Security: Perceptions of City Officials in California: Surveys of City Officials and State Residents,' prepared by the Public Policy Institute of California  
18 San Francisco Departmental Emergency Plans (See list in Plan Section)  
McKinsey Report- Increasing FDNY's Preparedness (9/12/02)  
Memo provided to newly elected Supervisors in their Orientation packets from MOES entitled "Emergency Duties and Authorities"; not dated  
MOES Emergency Operations Plan  
San Francisco Administrative Code  
San Francisco Charter  
San Francisco Fire Department Neighborhood Emergency Response Team Training Student Manual, January 2003  
Tips on Preparing for Terrorism – Mayor's Office of Emergency Services 10/8/02  
"What to Do When Disaster Strikes," MOES 03/02

**FACTS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**I. LEADERSHIP AND COMMAND**

The effectiveness of any emergency response is derived ultimately from those in charge. It is the City leaders who must require and oversee planning for emergency response, who must allocate sufficient resources and adequately prepare personnel, who must give high priority to training, and who must assure that all departments and agencies within the City responsible for emergency planning, response, mitigation and recovery are coordinated. Not insignificantly, the leaders must know their own roles in an emergency.

**FACTS**

- The Mayor has not convened the Disaster Council since October 2001. As a result, no changes to the Emergency Operations Plan have been considered or approved by the Council. Those functional emergency plans prepared pursuant to Administrative Code, Section 7.9 for annexation to the City Emergency Operation Plan have not been approved by the Disaster Council and are not officially incorporated into the Emergency Operations Plan. The Council has not recommended any rules, regulations, ordinances or resolutions for implementation of emergency services to the Board of Supervisors since January 15, 1998.
- Some key emergency services personnel are not represented on the Disaster Council. These include the Executive Director of the Department of Telecommunications & Information Services and the head of the Salvation Army.
- The Director of Emergency Services has not ensured that all City departments with first response duties prepare and file emergency plans with MOES for approval by the Disaster Council or that those departmental emergency plans that have been approved are continuously reviewed and updated.

- Since shortly after September 11, 2001, the Kawa-Harrington group has undertaken responsibility for emergency planning and advising the Mayor on emergency planning. Comprised of selected departmental representatives who participated in the first mass scale emergency activation of the City Emergency Operations Center on September 11, 2001, this group has no official status, but now meets approximately every quarter. It usually includes department heads, assistant or deputy department directors or their delegates, and representatives of the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD), the San Francisco Fire Department (SFFD), the Municipal Railway, the Airport, the Sheriff, the Controller, and the Department of Administrative Services.
- To fulfill his obligation to educate members of the Board of Supervisors about emergency response and their roles in a disaster, the Director of Emergency Services distributes a two-page memorandum to new members of the Board in an orientation packet. The memorandum briefly describes the Disaster Council, emergency ordinances, the Emergency Reserve Fund, and Support to Volunteer Programs. It indicates that, in an emergency, the Mayor convenes a Command Policy Group, which includes the President of the Board of Supervisors, and advises that “other members of the Board will be briefed periodically by the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison.” The memo suggests that, because of limited space at the Emergency Operations Center, Board members should focus their activities on their Districts and work through the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison rather than reporting to the Emergency Operations Center in an emergency.
- The Director of Emergency Services has not provided formal training for members of the Board of Supervisor to ensure that they are aware of their specific roles and understand their responsibilities in an emergency.
- Some members of the Board of Supervisors interviewed for this report evidenced ignorance and inconsistent understanding of their roles and functions in a catastrophic emergency. Of those Board members interviewed by the CGJ, some reported they learned something in a meeting about emergency services as part of a larger agenda or were given material. Some did not know what their responsibilities were and where they were supposed to go in an emergency, nor the chain of command or succession.
- Some members of the Board of Supervisors have limited knowledge of evacuation protocols in City Hall, and when asked where they would go in an emergency, either stated they would go to the Emergency Operations Center, go home, or remain in their offices.

### **FINDINGS**

1. In his capacity as Commander of Emergency Services, the Mayor is responsible for overseeing the Director of Emergency Services and MOES to ensure that the City has adequately planned for emergencies. This Civil Grand Jury has found, however, that the Mayor has not established emergency planning as a high priority.
2. Coordinated and comprehensive emergency planning has not occurred on a continuing basis. An unofficial group of department heads, the Kawa-Harrington group, has come into existence to fill the resulting void.

3. Involvement of department heads and elected officers in emergency planning through the Disaster Council is necessary if City departments are to assume responsibility and devote the departmental time, resources, and personnel necessary to train for and carry out the response activities called for in the integrated City emergency plan. Their involvement is also essential if they are to recognize the need to prepare and maintain their own departmental response plans on an ongoing basis. This goal cannot be achieved if the Disaster Council does not meet regularly, if the members of the Council do not represent all key personnel involved emergency response, or if neither the City emergency plan nor department plans are reviewed and updated continuously.
4. Members of the Board of Supervisors may be required to perform significant executive as well as legislative functions in an emergency including serving as Mayor/Commander in Chief; concurring in the declaration of emergency and the actions taken to meet it; amending a declaration of emergency as long as the emergency exists; taking away emergency powers; reviewing the Emergency Declaration every 14 days, and, finally terminating the Emergency Declaration. The Director of Emergency Services has not ensured that members of the Board understand these emergency responsibilities.
5. The Director of Emergency Services has failed to meet the regulatory responsibilities imposed by Sections 7.6.1 and 7.9 of the San Francisco Administrative Code to develop and maintain an integrated emergency plan that is continuously reviewed.
6. All city officials who may assume leadership in a major emergency must be informed of and understand the emergency procedures. Without proper preparation, members of the Board of Supervisors could inadvertently communicate erroneous information to residents or to providers of emergency resources. The failure to ensure that members of the Board receive training and are fully knowledgeable about emergency response plans could have serious negative consequences leading to chaos and disorganization rather than the effective leadership needed most during a major disaster. If the leaders in a city emergency are not knowledgeable about and comply with State mutual aid requirements, the City may not be eligible to receive mutual aid or reimbursement from State and Federal governments for response-related costs under disaster assistance programs.
7. The Mayor through the Director of Emergency Services and the Mayor's Office of Emergency Services is responsible for ensuring that members of the Board of Supervisors and all City officials with emergency response duties receive adequate training for and understand those duties. The Mayor has not fulfilled this responsibility.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1a. The Mayor and the Director of Emergency Services should create an integrated and comprehensive structure for emergency planning, assure inter-agency communications, and provide emergency training on an ongoing basis. The Mayor should participate in the planning and communications of Emergency Services, and communicate to all city departments the high priority it holds in his or her administration.

- 1b. The Director of Emergency Services should educate all current Supervisors immediately and new Supervisors upon election to office about the Emergency Operation Plan and their disaster related responsibilities. The training should include instructions for action in the case of a major emergency. This training should ensure that Board members understand the possibility or necessity of assuming executive functions and authority during a major emergency.
- 1c. Members of the Board of Supervisors should keep themselves continuously informed about the City's emergency response structure and status and their emergency responsibilities. Members should inform their staffs that this is a top priority.

### **REQUIRED RESPONSES**

Office of the Mayor – 60 days

Director of Emergency Services – 60 days

Board of Supervisors – 90 days

## **II. SAN FRANCISCO EMERGENCY PLANNING**

Following the September 11, 2001 disaster, the New York City Fire Department commissioned McKinsey & Company, a management consulting firm, to evaluate and recommend improvements in its ability to respond to catastrophic emergency. Although commissioned by the New York City Fire Department, the report, Increasing FDNY's Preparedness ("McKinsey Report"), published in September 2002, was specifically written as a guide that would be applicable to communities throughout the United States.<sup>4</sup> The San Francisco Fire Department, San Francisco Police Department, and MOES have found it to be an important planning and preparedness resource.

The McKinsey Report emphasizes that a city's leadership "must establish a much broader, detailed and more formalized inter-agency planning and coordination process, including: (1) Common command and control structures and terminology, and agreement on the roles and responsibilities of each agency for managing the response to any incident; (2) Deployment of interoperable communications infrastructures and protocols to improve response coordination and exchange of information; and (3) Implementation of joint training exercises to ensure that agencies can and will cooperate effectively during incidents, e.g., by operating under a unified command and control structure."<sup>5</sup>

### **FACTS**

- "Emergency Plans" are those official and approved documents which describe the principles and methods to be applied in carrying out emergency operations or rendering mutual aid during emergencies. These plans include such elements as continuity of government, the emergency services of governmental agencies, mobilization of resources, mutual aid, and public information. (Section 8560(a).)

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<sup>4</sup>The report contains lessons and suggestions that will not only help New York but will help "the country be better prepared should we ever be forced to face such a crisis again." McKinsey Report, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup> McKinsey Report, p. 21.

- In San Francisco, “the emergency functions of the Emergency Services organization shall be set forth in the Emergency Operations Plan of the City. (S.F. Admin. Code, sec. 7.9.) Department heads responsible for planning, coordination, and integration of personnel from other city departments and agencies into their services for emergency operations shall be designated in the plan. These designated department heads shall formulate functional emergency plans which, when approved by the Disaster Council, shall become an annex to the Emergency Operations Plan.”
- The City Emergency Operations Plan developed by MOES was officially adopted in 1996 and has not been updated since then.
- The City Emergency Operations Plan does not designate the department heads who, pursuant to Administrative Code Section 7.9, must formulate functional emergency plans.
- MOES asserts in its website: “San Francisco is exposed to a wide variety of hazards such as earthquakes, tsunamis, fires, power outages, severe storms, and acts of terrorism. In order to respond effectively to these and other events, the San Francisco Mayor's Office of Emergency Services has developed a comprehensive and integrated emergency plan that is updated continuously.”
- An Emergency Operations Planning Task Force, made up of senior planners and managers from departments that have key emergency response roles, organized under the auspices of MOES, meets every month. This group serves in an advisory capacity to the Mayor, but does not set policy for the City or its departments. The Emergency Operations Planning Task Force recommends changes and revisions to the Emergency Operations Plan, assuming the role assigned by law to the Disaster Council. Unlike the Disaster Council, it does not have the authority to approve the plan and any changes to it.
- The Command Policy Group makes decisions at the City’s Emergency Operations Center during emergencies. The members include some of the department representatives who are part of the Kawa-Harrington group and some who are also on the Disaster Council: the Chief of Police, the Fire Chief, the Director of Emergency Services, the General Manager of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, the Executive Director of the Department of Human Services, the Superintendent of Schools, the Director of the Department of Public Works, the Director of the Department of Public Health, the City Attorney, and the President of the Board of Supervisors. Members act as key advisors to the Mayor at the time of an emergency. This group’s last official meeting was on September 11, 2001.
- Most department heads and staff responsible for emergency planning do not know when the Disaster Council last met and do not think it serves a valuable function. Some are unsure how it differs from the Command Policy group, the Emergency Operations Planning Task force, and the Kawa-Harrington group.
- The Director of Emergency Services does not schedule regular emergency response drills with all of the members of these advisory groups.

- A MOES memorandum dated October 5, 2001, states: “Departments with responsibilities under the Emergency Operations Plan are reminded that Administrative Code, Chapter 7, Section 7.9, requires that your department develop a separate functional emergency plan that serves as an annex to the Emergency Plan. A copy of your functional emergency plan should be on file with the Mayor’s Office of Emergency Services.” The memo also states: “The Mayor has directed that departments review and update department emergency plans as necessary.”
- The McKinsey Report recommends that responding departments assess risks and threats city-wide, so that departments are able to create and facilitate specific response plans for key locations and prioritize training and investments across agencies and in new resources. Other than a federally mandated Vulnerability Assessment prepared for the Hetch Hetchy water delivery system, no other risk and threat assessment has been completed.
- Although the official City Emergency Operations Plan does not specify the departments that must prepare functional emergency plans, it is generally understood that the following departments, at least, are expected to submit functional emergency plans to be annexed to the Emergency Operations Plan: SFPD, Water Department, SFFD, Department of Human Services, Department of Public Health, Department of Parking and Traffic, Department of Public Works, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, and San Francisco Unified School District.
- The October 5, 2001, memo from MOES includes among Guidelines for Emergency Plans: “...each department is required to maintain a department emergency plan that provides for the protection of staff, continuity of critical department functions, and support to the overall City response under the City’s *Emergency Operations Plan*.”
- The department plans now on file in MOES and their dates of preparation are:
  1. Energy Shortage Response Plan, September 1995
  2. SFFD, May 1997
  3. Port of San Francisco, October 1997.
  4. San Francisco General Hospital, March 1998<sup>6</sup>
  5. Metropolitan Medical Task Force, 1998 (Interagency Department of Public Health and SFFD)
  6. San Francisco Oil Spill Plan, November 1998 (Department of Public Health)
  7. Weapons of Mass Destruction, November 1999 (SFPD)
  8. Department of Parking and Traffic, March 2000
  9. Hetch Hetchy, August 2000 (San Francisco Public Utilities Commission)
  10. Emergency Street Use and Utilities Team, January 2001
  11. Metropolitan Medical Response System, June 2001
  12. Department of Public Works, July 2001
  13. Metropolitan Medical Bioterrorism Threat Response Plan, September, 2001
  14. San Francisco Department of Recreation and Parks, November, 2001
  15. San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, February 2002
  16. Medical Examiner's Mass Fatality Incident Response and Management Plan, February 2003

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<sup>6</sup> Responsibility for assuring adequate disaster preparedness at San Francisco General Hospital has been delegated to the Community Health Network Administrator for Emergency Services in collaboration with the Health and Safety Program and Director of Facilities Management.

17. Department of Public Health, March 2003

18. San Francisco Airport, 2003

- Because the San Francisco Emergency Operations Plan does not specify the department heads who are specifically responsible for planning, coordination, and integration of personnel from other city departments and agencies into their services for emergency operations, the Grand Jury is unable to determine which, if any, of the above plans might satisfy Administrative Code, Section 7.9.
- Twelve of the 18 plans on file have not been updated since September 11, 2001.
- The Department of Public Health, the Medical Examiner, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, and the San Francisco Airport have submitted plans to the Mayor's Office of Emergency Services since September 11, 2001. The Disaster Council has not approved these plans as required by Administrative Code Section 7.9 and therefore none has officially become annexed to the city plan.
- There are no plans on file at present from the Department of Telecommunications and Information Services, Department of Human Services, or the Building Inspection Department.<sup>7</sup>
- The McKinsey Report states that to prepare effectively for incidents of all sizes, emergency services organizations need well-defined systems and procedures that are flexible and can be quickly expanded.
- Department personnel are not regularly informed of emergency plan changes. Some departments do not maintain updated emergency plans because of the burden of a cumbersome approval procedure that includes review and approval by oversight commissions. Some express concern about potential exposure to liability if emergency procedures are formally documented and codified and then are not complied with thereafter.

### **FINDINGS**

1. The current City Emergency Operations Plan contains outdated and incorrect information and is not complete. Contrary to the assertion made by MOES on its web site that the office "has developed a comprehensive and integrated emergency plan that is updated continuously," emergency plans for a number of city departments including fire and police are either out of date, incomplete, or missing altogether. Those that are complete do not include updates and changes made since their original publication, including any changes to the lists of emergency numbers, evacuation procedures, and specific actions as outlined in the October 5, 2001, memo from MOES.
2. The City Emergency Operation Plan is not in compliance with the requirement of Administrative Code Section 7.9 that designated department heads formulate functional emergency plans which, when approved by the Disaster Council, become an annex to the Emergency Operations Plan. In order to provide for effective mobilization of all resources of the community in an emergency, those plans must be prepared, be up-to-date, and be integrated into the City Emergency Operations

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<sup>7</sup> The Building Inspection Department is responsible for assessing structural damage following an earthquake or other event that threatens the structural integrity of bridges, overpasses, and buildings throughout the City.

Plan. Because a number of key departments have not prepared functional plans and others have not updated their plans, the city plan is not up to date.

3. Department personnel are not adequately informed of Emergency Plan changes.
4. Reliance by the Mayor and the Director of Emergency Services on unofficial emergency planning groups for planning advice is inconsistent with the Administrative Code, which vests the Disaster Council with responsibility for development of emergency plans and recommending means of implementing them.
5. The functions of the Kawa-Harrington group, the Emergency Operations Planning Force, and the Disaster Council are overlapping and confusing. Key department heads are frustrated with multiple emergency planning groups that do not have a clear definition, and, as a result these department heads do not have a clear understanding of the role and authority of the Disaster Council. The existence of these multiple planning bodies may result in confusion and the failure to implement successful emergency responses.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2a. The Mayor should convene the Disaster Council immediately to review and approve departmental functional emergency plans and thereafter should convene the Disaster Council on a regular basis.
- 2b. The Disaster Council, with the assistance of the Director of Emergency Services, should review and update as necessary the Emergency Operations Plan and should bring it into compliance with Administrative Code Section 7.9 by September 30, 2003. The new plan should include a comprehensive recovery plan that outlines the steps that City Departments, including, but not limited to the Department of Public Works, the Department of Public Health, and the Department of Human Services should take to bring the City back to a non-emergency state.
- 2c. The emergency planning functions undertaken by the Emergency Operations Planning Task Force and the Kawa-Harrington group should be assumed by the Disaster Council.
- 2d. The Director of Emergency Services should obtain and present to the Disaster Council for approval finalized and current functional emergency plans from all departments designated by the Disaster Council in the Emergency Operations plan by December 31, 2003.
- 2e. The Director of Emergency Services should require that every City department required to have a functional emergency plan provide summary copies of that plan to all employees on an annual basis and conduct emergency training and drills for its employees at least twice a year. MOES should monitor, track and report annually to the Mayor, the Disaster Council, and the Board of Supervisors departmental progress towards meeting these goals. Annual performance evaluations of department managers and key personnel should include references to their knowledge and understanding of the emergency plan, and evidence of participation in drills.
- 2f. The Director of Emergency Services should distribute the updated Emergency Operations Plan, including updated annexes for all key departments, to all departments.

- 2g. The Director of Emergency Services should coordinate a comprehensive risk and threat assessment program across the city so that it can create and facilitate specific response plans for key locations and prioritize training and investments across agencies and in new resources.
- 2h. The Mayor should appoint the department heads represented on the Command Policy Group to serve on the Disaster Council, including the Executive Director of the Department of Telecommunications and Information Services.<sup>8</sup>

### **REQUIRED RESPONSES**

Mayor – 60 days

Director of Emergency Services – 60 days

### **III. IMPLEMENTATION OF A STANDARDIZED EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEMS /ENSURING MUTUAL AID**

#### **FACTS**

- The San Francisco Administrative Code requires that “The Emergency Services of San Francisco shall use the Standardized Emergency Management System as specified in the California Code of Regulations, Title 19, Chapter 1, in responding to, managing, and coordinating multiple agency or multiple jurisdiction incidents, emergencies, and disaster operations, whether single or multiple discipline.” (S.F. Admin. Code, sec. 7.6-1.)
- The Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) regulations establish an emergency management system that is based upon the Incident Command System. SEMS is intended to standardize response to emergencies involving multiple jurisdictions or multiple agencies. SEMS is intended to be flexible and adaptable to the needs of all emergency responders in California. SEMS requires emergency response agencies use basic principles and components of emergency management including the Incident Command System, multi-agency or inter-agency coordination, the operational area concept, and established mutual aid systems. State agencies must use SEMS. Local government must have implemented SEMS by December 1, 1996, in order to be eligible for state reimbursement of response-related personnel costs for activities identified in the California Code of Regulations.
- Emergency response agencies operating at the field response level of an incident (such as SFFD and SFPD) must utilize the Incident Command System, incorporating its functions, principles, and components. Those functions are command, operations, planning, logistics and finance. (Cal. Code of Regulations, Title 19, sec. 2405.)
- SEMS shall be utilized: (1) when the local government emergency operations center is activated or (2) when a local emergency is declared or proclaimed. (Cal. Code of Regulations, Title 19, sec. 2407.)

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<sup>8</sup> The Department of Telecommunications and Information Services is the city department responsible for the maintenance of the City’s 800 MHz communications system and the management of SFGTV and the sfgov website, all of which are elements of the City’s emergency response capability.

- City eligibility for mutual aid and reimbursement from the state and from the federal government through the state, for response-related costs under disaster-assistance programs, depends on compliance with state SEMS regulations. Some City departments do not use the Incident Command System during local emergencies.
- The State of California “Master Mutual Aid Agreement” allows the coordination of mutual aid and other emergency operations between and among counties within the State when a county’s own resources become overwhelmed and unable to handle a local emergency.
- The McKinsey report recommends that major departments such as fire and police departments establish a process to evaluate the need for mutual aid.
- San Francisco has not established a process by which to assess the need for mutual aid in an emergency.

### **FINDINGS**

1. Successful emergency response requires an integrated system.
2. Failure to utilize the Incident Command System may compromise the City’s ability to obtain mutual aid and state reimbursement for emergency response costs.
3. San Francisco may need assistance from surrounding communities to respond to and recover from a catastrophic event.
4. If implemented, recommendations made in the McKinsey Report related to mutual aid, recall procedures, and the need to assess risks and threats across the City a could save lives.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3a. The Director of Emergency Services should direct all City departments to adopt the Incident Command System immediately for all emergency responses. The Office should ensure that all responding departments are complying and should report their results to the Mayor, the Disaster Council and the Board of Supervisors within 90 days of this report.
- 3b. The Director of Emergency Services should direct all major departments whose operations are essential in an emergency to establish a formal process to evaluate the need for mutual aid and incorporate that plan in the departmental emergency plan. This process should include criteria for requesting mutual aid.

### **REQUIRED RESPONSE**

The Director of Emergency Services – 60 days

#### **IV. EMERGENCY TRAINING AND FUNCTIONAL EXERCISES**

##### **FACTS**

- Under a federally funded Emergency Management Performance Grant to San Francisco, the State Office of Emergency Services expects grantees to conduct one or more (depending on federal requirements or suggestions) tabletop, functional, or full scale exercise per year.
- Since 2001, San Francisco has conducted at least five tabletop or functional exercises. Interdepartmental functional exercises are planned at least two times a year, in April and October. In addition, departments report that they have conducted functional and tabletop exercises on a regular basis.
- Key members of the Command Policy Group, whose presence would be essential during an actual emergency, often do not participate at the Emergency Operations Center in the semi-annual functional exercises.
- Individual departments including first responders conduct a variety of emergency exercises. These exercises vary significantly in:
  - Number of exercises conducted
  - Scope of exercises conducted
  - Interdepartmental/Intradepartmental entities involved
  - Comprehensiveness
  - Efficiency
- A mass casualty incident exercise involving multiple departments was conducted in November 2002 involving the San Francisco Police Department, the San Francisco Fire Department, the Daly City Fire Department, the California Highway Patrol, San Francisco Department of Recreation and Parks, Emergency Medical Services (911), San Francisco General Hospital, and San Francisco Department of Parking and Transportation. The exercise included five helicopters. The drill simulated an intentional plane crash into Candlestick Park filled with spectators. Though first responder departments valued the opportunity to plan, train, and practice, the Candlestick Park drill was initiated by the San Francisco 49ers organization.
- Participants in the Candlestick exercise state that the Joint Incident Command process experienced significant difficulty and that SFPD and SFFD did not fully and properly implement the Joint Incident Command process.
- No large-scale cyber-terrorism exercises have been conducted and bio-terrorism and chemical functional exercises are conducted infrequently. While there are some debriefing meetings afterwards, written evaluations of lessons learned and corrective actions are not consistently prepared and distributed to all participating departments.

## **FINDINGS**

1. The emergency response exercises conducted by City departments are not adequate to prepare a response to a catastrophic disaster involving multiple incidents at different locations, or to incidents involving use of varied agents – chemical, biological, and radiological.
2. The Director of Emergency Services and MOES do not coordinate enough functional exercises including large-scale interagency drills throughout the City to ensure that first responder departments are prepared for a major disaster.
3. The failure to include key department leaders in functional emergency response exercises along with department planners limits their understanding of the City’s emergency response system, thus limiting their ability to recognize and solve problems in their departmental emergency plans.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4a. The Director of Emergency Services should annually conduct several, large scale multi-departmental functional exercises that simulate a variety of complex disaster scenarios, such as the combination of explosions and biological agents.
- 4b. Each functional and tabletop exercise should be followed by departmental written evaluations by each participating department, using SEMS forms, and a debriefing of results. These evaluations should include lessons learned and corrective actions to be taken. Copies should be submitted to MOES and distributed to all participants. MOES should conduct annual audits to ensure compliance.
- 4c. The Director of Emergency Services should require members of the Command Policy Group to participate in semi-annual joint multi-agency functional exercises with the Emergency Operations Planning Task Force.

## **REQUIRED RESPONSES**

The Director of Emergency Services – 60 days

## **V. “OPERATION RETURN”: RECOVERING FROM DISASTER**

### **FACTS**

- A substantial number of city employees live outside San Francisco city limits. Sample departments report the following proportions of their staffs living outside the City:
  - Department of Public Health: 45%
  - Department of Public Works: 48%
  - Department of Human Services: 42%
  - San Francisco Fire Department: 61%
  - San Francisco Police Department: 45%
- In a catastrophic disaster, an “island scenario” might occur in which bridges are closed and roads leading into the City rendered inaccessible for several days. There are limited numbers of first responder city employees and, if damage is extensive, they might not be able to respond to all

affected areas. San Francisco first responder employees who are out of the City might not be able to return because of destruction of highway access or because they are responding to the disaster in their home locales.

- Operation Return has been established to return city employees who are in nearby counties to the City via surface watercraft to perform disaster recovery services. Operation Return is to be utilized when a disaster causes closure of the Golden Gate Bridge and the Bay Bridge resulting in the virtual isolation of the city from the North and East. Priority in a maximum severity scenario is to be given to employees of responder departments whose roles include saving lives and protecting property.
- The McKinsey Report recommends that responding departments have a flexible recall procedure to mobilize off-duty personnel and that departments adhere to the recall procedures during training and actual recalls.
- Operation Return was last tested in 1997.
- Several key staff in first responder departments expressed doubts about the potential for success of Operation Return. They report a concern that both first responders and ferry captains may fail to return to San Francisco for several reasons, such as inability to get to the ferries, need for disaster response in the area in which they are at the time, and concerns for their own and their families' personal safety.
- The Neighborhood Emergency Response Team (NERT) program, developed by SFFD in 1990, assists residents of San Francisco to be self-sufficient in a major disaster by training volunteers in basic emergency skills. Trained NERT volunteers are key elements in the City's emergency response. They assist City responders within their neighborhoods. NERT volunteers may be first on the scene to conduct initial search, rescue and first aid.
- A recovery plan, like a business resumption plan, sets forth and prioritizes the steps City departments must take to enable the departments to resume operations, first making the department operational and then extending service to the public.
- San Francisco does not have a comprehensive recovery plan that outlines the steps that City Departments, including, but not limited to the Department of Public Health, the Department of Public Works, and the Department of Human Services should take to bring the City back to a non-emergency state.

### **FINDINGS**

1. Operation Return has not been adequately tested and may not result in a successful recall of responders.
2. The City's failure to have a comprehensive recovery plan could result in loss of lives and property that could be avoided through planning and inter-agency coordination.

3. NERT is essential to immediate post-disaster recovery.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5a. The Director of Emergency Services should ensure that San Francisco first responder departments test Operation Return at least once annually and that all departments adhere to the recall procedures during training and actual recalls. All members of first responding departments should be held accountable for failure to participate in training and actual recalls.

5b. SFFD should maintain the NERT program at least at current levels of funding and staffing.

5c. MOES should work with all City departments to create a comprehensive recovery plan.

### **REQUIRED RESPONSES**

The Director of Emergency Services – 60 days

SFFD – 60 days

SFPD – 60 days

Director of Department of Public Health – 60 days

Director of Public Utilities Commission – 60 days

Director of Department of Public Works – 60 days

Sheriff – 60 days

Director of Department of Human Services – 60 days

## **VI. BUILDING SECURITY AND EVACUATION**

### **FACTS**

- A substantial number of City employees interviewed did not know what their building evacuation plans and procedures were, and could not recall the last time there had been an evacuation drill.
- Several City departments have responsibility for the security of physical assets of those departments. The Sheriff and the San Francisco Police Department are responsible for securing other City-owned buildings. San Francisco has no one department or agency with overall responsibility for protecting City assets against intrusion or destruction.
- Although security assessments have been conducted on some San Francisco properties, including three assessments completed by the Sheriff in 2002, a comprehensive assessment of all city facilities and related funding requirements to ameliorate serious inadequacies has not been conducted.
- Security inadequacies revealed in the most recent assessments by the Sheriff have not been addressed.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Inasmuch as the Sheriff's security assessment is confidential and contains sensitive information about the vulnerability of City assets, the Grand Jury has not detailed the findings or the recommendation of the Sheriff.

## **FINDINGS**

1. Building evacuations plans have not been included as an integral part of emergency exercises and are sporadic. Often they consist of a simple map tacked on a wall, and are only minimally helpful in informing personnel.
2. Buildings housing City operations and other assets of the City that are essential in an emergency are vulnerable to damage from terrorist or other criminal acts because of security inadequacies.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6a. The Mayor should designate one City department to manage the security of City buildings and assets.
- 6b. The City should immediately implement the corrective actions identified in the Sheriff's Physical Security classified audits of 2002.
- 6c. MOES or the agency given overall security responsibility should conduct a vulnerability assessment of all City properties and identify any additional security measures that are necessary.
- 6d. MOES should ensure that all buildings in which City employees are located conduct evacuation drills at least once a quarter. In addition, all employees should be reminded via email at least twice yearly of basic evacuation procedures including:
  - Which exits to use and where staging areas are located
  - Who is responsible for directing and coordinating the process for each floor
  - Who assures that the building has been totally evacuated
  - How employees are informed of when it is safe to return

## **REQUIRED RESPONSES**

Mayor – 60 days

The Director of Emergency Services – 60 days

Board of Supervisors – 90 days

## **VII. ADEQUACY OF EMERGENCY RESOURCES**

### **A. Communications and Technology**

#### **FACTS**

- The 800 MHz radio system, the Citywide Emergency Radio System, is the primary communications vehicle used by public safety departments (SFFD and SFPD). It is a 23-channel, fully simulcast radio system with one Prime Controller site on Twin Peaks and seven repeater sites connected by microwave. The Prime Controller site is connected to the Combined Emergency Communications Center (1011 Turk Street) by a fiber link owned and operated by the City. The 800 MHz system is a trunked system which receives as well as transmits. No location away from Twin Peaks serves as a back-up site for the equipment that supports the 800 MHz system. There

are multiple back up systems to support failure of the 800 MHz system, but these, too, are located on Twin Peaks.

- The Department of Public Works operates an older trunked system of five channels that receives, but does not transmit. The Police Department operates a low-band system as a back-up to the 800 MHz system. The City maintains 10 mutual aid channels for coordination with other agencies and jurisdictions.
- On Twin Peaks, one tower holds the Citywide Emergency Radio System and the mutual aid channels. A second tower carries the Department of Public Works system and the two police low-band channels. Communication to six fire stations is also wired from Twin Peaks.
- Both the transmitter and the mechanical equipment for the 800 MHz System are located on Twin Peaks. A television camera monitors the security of the equipment. A chain link fence with barbed wire affixed to the top surrounds the facility. Access is alarmed and the building can be opened only with a key card. When the federal Department of Homeland Security raises the alert level, increased patrol car passes are ordered on a “best effort” basis. This does not ensure a scheduled, regular presence at the site.
- The California Department of Transportation is installing a microwave repeater, also at the Twin Peaks site, for the purposes of monitoring security at the Golden Gate and Bay Bridges.
- The 800 MHz system was reported by MOES and most public officials as the most reliable; yet significant concerns are reported, including that it has not been tested to failure. Multiple “dead” areas exist within the 800 MHz system, including, but not limited to, high rise buildings, locations within 850 Bryant Street, Treasure and Yerba Buena Islands, at Hunters Point, and in some areas of BART. Transmission problems regularly occur in the use of the 800 MHz system, associated with the topographic characteristics of the City and its perimeter. For example, 800 MHz radio communication is not possible between the Airport and the City, and 800 MHz radios do not transmit from Pacifica and Half Moon Bay where some key responders live.
- The Mayor’s Emergency Telephone System is on unsupervised circuits.<sup>10</sup>
- Police call boxes, which are part of the Mayor’s Emergency Telephone System, are on unsupervised circuits. The switchboard is located at the Emergency Operations Center at 1011 Turk Street.
- The cablehead of the public safety network is located underneath the plaza next to the 1011 Turk Street Emergency Operations Center building.
- MOES maintains the City’s Emergency Operations Center at 1011 Turk Street. Under certain emergency conditions, City agencies are organized under SEMS guidelines as required by the Government Code and the Emergency Operations Center is activated. Representatives of key

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<sup>10</sup> An unsupervised circuit is a circuit in which no audible or visual signal appears when the circuit is not functioning.

departments and agencies report to the Emergency Operations Center to coordinate emergency response operations.

- The President of the Board of Supervisors, Supervisors listed in the City's line of succession, the Municipal Railway, the Department of Human Services and the Housing Authority do not possess 800 MHz radios.
- The City relies on the American Red Cross Bay Area Chapter for disaster assistance. American Red Cross Bay Area Chapter staff members do not have 800 MHz radios. They communicate at the disaster scene via landlines and Nextel. To mobilize resources, they relay information through the San Diego chapter of the American Red Cross.
- Multiple interviewees reported that the 800 MHz system is difficult to use without adequate training; additionally, no training has occurred in Police Department operations specifically focused on communication in the event of 800 MHz inoperability.
- The Department of Public Works has an inadequate supply of 800 MHz radios for its first responders to do their jobs in a catastrophic emergency.
- Equipment that supports the DPW older, trunked system and the Police Department low-band system, both of which are back-up for the 800 MHz system, is also located at Twin Peaks. There is no back-up prime controller site for those back-up systems intended to mitigate the failure of the 800 MHz system, which is also located at the Twin Peaks location.
- If the Twin Peaks location is damaged significantly or destroyed, 800 MHz system, the 10-channel mutual aid network and the wireline that connects the SFPD low-band system will fail; police radio-to-radio communication would experience significant loss of power, interference, and system overload. The wire connection at the Twin Peaks site that supports six fire stations, which depend on the Twin Peaks site, and the older DPW trunked system would also fail.
- The Motorola Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition system monitors the functioning of the 800MHz system. It is approximately four years old.
- At this time, no plan has been developed and distributed for the use of back-up communications systems in the event of the failure of the 800 MHz system.
- Computer technology at SFPD is antiquated.
- Northern Police Station, located at Turk and Fillmore Streets, within a half-mile of the Emergency Operations Center, is designated as the back-up center for Emergency Communications (911). The station's computer technology is widely reported to be "woefully inadequate."
- Police officers do not regularly utilize e-mail communication. Unless officers are physically present for the "morning line up briefing" in district stations, the most current information about changes in emergency plans and procedures is not received.

- The Department of Telecommunications and Information Services data center is located in a building in downtown San Francisco that is used for multiple other commercial purposes. If the data center were destroyed or significantly damaged, all computer systems would run from an IBM site at Boulder, Colorado. A team of department employees would be dispatched to Boulder and San Jose, if accessible, to attempt to bring up the systems and networks. A storage facility in Iron Mountain would be contacted to transport all of the City's back-up tapes to Boulder. The response time to have the City system up and running would depend on the ability of department personnel and equipment to reach Boulder.
- Senior managers in several City departments report that communications within the 850 Bryant St. structure are unreliable because of communications dead spots.
- The Auxiliary Communications Service, formed eight years ago, consists of 180 FCC-licensed volunteer HAM operators. Its mandate is to provide back-up communications for all government agencies in the City. It is a member of the Emergency Operations Planning Task Force. It conducts twelve drills annually, including some joint exercises with SFFD, SFPD, and NERT. HAM radios are located in all 10 SFFD Battalion Headquarters Stations. They are in good working order and are inspected by the Auxiliary Communications Service annually. In an emergency HAM operators will be deployed to those stations to operate the radios to communicate with NERT volunteers and with a radio room in the Emergency Operations Center. If HAM operators are not available, hand-held radios and couriers must be used. The service has been activated, but has never been relied on as other communication systems have functioned. The organization has provided back-up assistance on occasion. When the 9-1-1 system went down and those calls were routed to 850 Bryant Street, operators were deployed to district police stations. The Salvation Army, a major mass food provider for the City, relies on landline, cell phones, and HAM operators to communicate among its personnel and with MOES.
- The Motorcycle Emergency Response Corpus is a volunteer organization of motorcyclists in the City prepared to move personnel and supplies around the City in a disaster. Coordinating with MOES and SFFD, its volunteers can move through congested and damaged streets, facilitate communications, ferry supplies and rescuers, make damage assessments, provide some first aid, and work with NERT. The Courier Disaster Response Team is a volunteer organization of bicyclists with a similar mission.

### **FINDINGS**

1. Present arrangements to ensure the safety and security of the communications systems sited on Twin Peaks, including the 800 MHz system, are inadequate generally and are even more so during times of raised Department of Homeland Security alerts.
2. If the Twin Peaks site is damaged significantly or destroyed, the 800 MHz system, the 10-channel mutual aid network, and the wire line that connects the police low-band system likely will fail. The resulting police radio-to-radio communication will experience significant loss of power, much interference, and system overload. The wire connection that supports six fire stations that depends on the Twin Peaks site and the Department of Public Works trunked system would also fail.

3. Failure to have a back-up site away from Twin Peaks for the 800 MHz system compromises the City's ability to rely on that system, and therefore the use of the 800 MHz system is at risk.
4. Many individuals and departments, critical to successful disaster management, do not possess 800 MHz instruments and, therefore, have no access to the system.
5. Because Northern Station, the back-up emergency communication facility, is so close to the Emergency Operations Center site and because of the weaknesses of information technology in the Police Department, Northern Police Station is inappropriate for use as a back-up communications center.
6. Inadequate information technology in use throughout the SFPD poses increased risk to the residents of the City and County of San Francisco during emergencies.
7. Serious technical and security risks are associated with the physical location of the Department of Technology and Information Services data center. Its location in a downtown commercial area is inappropriate for its requirements.
8. If radio and telephone communications fail in a disaster, HAM radios may be the only mode of communication available.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7a. MOES and SFPD should immediately determine how to better satisfy the safety and security concerns related to the present location of the 800 MHz system. Improved security and a back-up plan for the 800 MHz system must be implemented immediately.
- 7b. 800 MHz radios must be secured for as many first responders as possible.
- 7c. MOES and DTIS should immediately locate back-up locations for the 800 MHz system facilities.
- 7d. MOES in collaboration with the DTIS should immediately create a plan that establishes *by priority* how back-up or redundant communications systems should be utilized if the 800 MHz system fails. Integral to that plan should be measures by which critical leadership required for emergency services could be immediately recalled.
- 7e. MOES should ensure that the Department of Telecommunications and Information Services tests the 800 MHz system to failure, and investigate how to best mitigate problems with the multiple "dead" zones in the system.
- 7f. MOES should work with departments and public officials to ensure that those charged with primary responsibility in an emergency have 800 MHz radios, are trained in the use of the 800 MHz system, are conversant with a prioritized back-up system communications plan, and are properly trained in back-up communications systems.

- 7g. MOES, DTIS and SFPD should investigate the adequacy of their information systems, and immediately address improvements that may be necessary for Northern (or any other) Station to function as a back-up emergency communications center in a catastrophic emergency.
- 7h. DTIS should be authorized to identify and secure a more suitable and/or back-up location(s) for the City's server.
- 7i. MOES and SFPD should establish the back-up Emergency Communications Center at a site more distant from the Emergency Operations Center than is Northern Station.
- 7j. MOES should develop a plan to provide staff of American Red Cross Bay Area Chapter 800 MHz radios for use in an emergency and train them in their use.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES**

The Director of Emergency Services – 60 days

San Francisco Police Department – 60 days

San Francisco Fire Department – 60 days

Department of Technology and Information Services – 60 days

Board of Supervisors – 90 days

**B. The Basic Necessities – Shelter, Blankets, Cots, and Food**

**FACTS**

- The current population of the City and County of San Francisco is over 750,000 residents. Commuters and tourists increase the number to well over 1,000,000 people during an average business day.
- According to “Disaster Care and Shelter Planning in San Francisco,” a 2001 report presented by MOES to the Emergency Operations Planning Task Force, in the worst case scenario, as in a major earthquake, as many as 40,000 people could be directly displaced and in need of emergency shelter. Others displaced could be workers unable to leave the city, tourists, conventioners, visitors, and residents with no electricity, water or sewer. People affected by secondary disaster, such as fires, would increase the numbers of people needing shelter. In the case of larger and more complex disasters, the numbers might be much greater. The report identified a need for more large shelter sites and shelter supplies distributed throughout the city.
- In all natural disasters and other emergencies of catastrophic proportions, the American Red Cross provides relief assistance such as shelter, food, clothing and temporary housing, in accordance with its established corporate policies, procedures and guidelines. All American Red Cross assistance to victims of disaster or emergency is an outright gift. The American Red Cross Bay Area Chapter, the local unit of the American Red Cross, is responsible for all local Red Cross activities within its jurisdiction. Its direct jurisdiction includes the counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo and Solano.
- The American Red Cross national office establishes criteria by which to determine what constitutes an acceptable shelter, including space, particular utilities (toilets and sinks), and

accessibility standards. The City and County of San Francisco unofficially has decided that all city emergency shelters must meet more stringent criteria established by the Mayor's Office of Disability to meet the needs of the disabled.

- The Red Cross has identified many sites in the City that meet Red Cross standards for use as major disaster shelters. The City has agreed to use only six because they alone meet the City's standards for the disabled: Washington High School, Mission High School, Marina Middle School, Giannini Middle School, Moscone Convention Center, and Bill Graham Civic Auditorium.
- Total officially-approved shelter capacity has been inconsistently reported by the Department of Human Services, the Red Cross, and MOES. The figures range from 5,500 for the six official shelter sites to 13,500 for the combined shelter capacity for the Moscone Convention Center and Bill Graham Civic Auditorium.
- The Department of Human Services is the lead department for emergency care and shelter in the City. Responsibilities of this department include the provision of food, clothing, shelter and other basic necessities on a large scale following a major disaster. The department keeps only 430 mats and 1,300 blankets in its possession. It relies on the Red Cross to provide the bulk of cots and blankets needed in an emergency.
- The Red Cross stores emergency supplies in three sites in the City. These three sites store a total of 1,400 blankets and 700 cots. The cots and blankets in these sites are resources for and could be provided to any or all of the six counties under local Red Cross jurisdiction (San Mateo, Alameda, Contra Costa, Solano, and Marin in addition to San Francisco). The Red Cross Bay Area Chapter can augment these resources to several thousand from supplies stored in the other five counties.
- In a worst-case scenario in which both bridges are down or closed, it could take three to eight days to bring supplies into the City. Currently, the closest Red Cross Disaster Field Supply Center is in San Pedro, California. These centers have the capacity to store 10,000 cots and blankets. The Red Cross is currently planning to establish another site in the Bay Area. A minimum of at least 10,000 square feet is needed for that facility. It would be too costly for the Red Cross to rent a warehouse of that size in the City.
- The Department of Human Services estimates that it would cost the City \$25,000 to purchase shelter startup supplies for 250 people (cots, two blankets per person, towels, basic toiletry items, first aid supplies, paper goods).
- The Red Cross Bay Area Chapter has established Mass Care caches of basic food kits, beverage and sanitation supplies at its San Francisco and Oakland branch offices. Each cache is designed to serve 1,500 people for 24 hours. The purpose of the caches is to support *initial* feeding requirements in shelters, until a direct food drop shipment can be arranged, and to act as a reserve for large mobile canteen operations.
- San Francisco relies on the Red Cross and the Salvation Army to provide food in the event of a disaster. The Red Cross does not store large food stockpiles. In fact, as its food items reach their expiration date, they are being destroyed and not being replenished. The Red Cross plans to use

vendors (churches, restaurants, volunteer organizations, and large catering services) to provide food during future emergencies.

- The Salvation Army regularly feeds seniors and people with low incomes. In an emergency, it has available in San Francisco two mobile canteens holding 500 meals each. Four additional mobile canteens are available in surrounding counties and could arrive within two hours to the City if access is unimpeded. The Salvation Army Central Kitchen, located in San Francisco, when pressed into service and fully stocked, could provide 30,000 meals in a day. Currently, it is not fully stocked and has the capacity to provide only 15,000 meals. The Salvation Army does not currently have a contract with the City to provide food. This means when the City asks them for food, the Salvation Army must first consider where to get it and how much it will cost them. It does use local vendors when possible, in addition to its own stock. The Salvation Army and MOES have discussed developing a Memorandum of Understanding under which the Salvation Army would build up its supply of food stocks to full capacity in its Central Kitchen. The Salvation Army has three warehouse locations in the City and several additional sites that have capacity to provide food and shelter during an emergency. The total number that these could shelter and feed is 1,330.

### **FINDINGS**

1. The actual numbers of officially approved shelter beds for emergency use in San Francisco is uncertain. Adding the Salvation Army bed capacity does not bring it to the level established as appropriate. Using the highest estimate, the City's current mass shelter plan is not adequate to house 40,000 people, the number of people estimated by the Mayor's Office of Emergency Services to be left homeless as a result of a major earthquake. The needs for shelter in the city in a larger, more complex disaster are unknown.
2. In its effort to ensure accommodation of residents with special needs, the Mayor's Office of Disability has created a barrier to effective shelter planning for the larger population of the City.
3. Because storage of cots and blankets is not dispersed throughout the City, many residents are at risk of not having access to them if those locations with resources are damaged or become inaccessible.
4. The total of 2,700 blankets and 1,130 cots that are stored in San Francisco, a major metropolitan city which it is predicted will suffer a major earthquake, is inadequate.
5. The City and County of San Francisco does not have any food supplies of its own in stock for an emergency. San Francisco is completely dependent on private organizations for food in the event of an emergency. The Salvation Army is the primary food provider.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7k. The City should adopt the national American Red Cross shelter criteria and approve additional shelter sites to accommodate at least 40,000 people.

- 7l. The City should provide a 10,000 square foot facility, either rent-free or at cost, to the Red Cross Bay Area Chapter for use as a Disaster Field Supply Center.
- 7m. The City should enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Salvation Army to enable the Salvation Army to build up its supply of food stocks to full capacity in its Central Kitchen.
- 7n. The City should obtain shelter start up supplies and store them in each District.

### **REQUIRED RESPONSES**

The Director of Emergency Services – 60 days

Board of Supervisors – 90 days

### **C. Hazardous Materials Suits**

#### **FACTS**

- According to the McKinsey Report, “special operations units such as hazmat units are likely to play crucial roles in the city’s response to large and complex incidents, particularly those that result from terrorist acts. Such attacks could involve radiological, chemical, and biological agents, and/or multiple, simultaneous incidents, either on land or over water. Preparing for and responding to such attacks could require special operations capabilities.”<sup>11</sup>
- SFPD has eight Level “A” suits; these offer the highest level of protection. They are designated for use by the SWAT teams and Bomb Squad. SFPD has approximately 30 Level “B” suits (with self-contained breathing equipment). Most officers do not have Level “C” suits though some will be purchased using funding expected through grants. However, this funding will not pay for protective gear for all front line police officers.
- Level A provides the highest level of protection with a self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) where the officer is totally encapsulated. A Level A suit consists of a shell that goes over the SCBA; the wearer looks through a clear plastic shield with no breaks including masks, gloves, and boots. The wearer is totally self-contained where additional gloves, boots go over the suit. These are considered “Hot zone suits” to be used closest to the scene.
- Level B is similar to Level A, but not totally encapsulated. A Level B suit also has a SCBA, but the wearer puts on a suit of clothes, then boots, then gloves, then SCBA on top of that. Portions of the body can be exposed. This is considered a definitive one notch down from a Level A suit.
- Level C suits have an air-purifying respirator which filters air from outside the suit. In a chemical release, users would need filters specific for those chemicals. Level C only protects at the outer reaches of an incident.
- Hazmat suits remain durable for one year, with certain maintenance costs associated with them. Training is required for their use.

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<sup>11</sup> McKinsey Report, p. 74.

- SFFD has one decontamination unit.
- Emergency Medical Services (9-1-1) has no hazmat suits. In a bioterror event, Emergency Medical Services has been instructed to remain three to four blocks away until notified differently.
- SFPD and SFFD representatives express concern about the inadequate supply of hazmat suits, the lack of regular training in their use, and the lack of funding for their maintenance. Multiple interviewees expressed concerns that the police will be expected to perform their duties in disasters of any kind and will enter an area contaminated with biohazards wearing inadequate or no protective gear.

### **FINDINGS**

1. The City is not adequately prepared to respond to a chemical or bioterrorist incident.
2. Additional hazmat suits and equipment are needed including an additional decontamination unit.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7o. SFPD and SFFD should expand current hazmat inventories.
- 7p. In collaboration with MOES, the departments should analyze the costs and benefits of different hazmat expansion alternatives and develop a specific proposal, including funding alternatives that cover technical training.
- 7q. SFFD should develop a decontamination plan that includes the purchase of additional units.

### **REQUIRED RESPONSES**

SFFD – 60 days

SFPD – 60 days

The Director of Emergency Services – 60 days

### **D. Helicopters**

#### **FACTS**

- San Francisco is the only major metropolitan city nationwide that lacks a helicopter capability.
- San Francisco must currently rely on California Highway Patrol for use of its helicopters in an emergency.
- The City and County of San Francisco previously had the use of one helicopter. Its instrumentation is being dismantled to prepare the helicopter for sale at auction.
- The SFFD emergency plan contemplates the use of three SFPD helicopters in its emergency response.

- According to the Fire Department Manual, helicopters can play a vital role in an emergency response by providing:
  - Aerial reconnaissance and support for the Fire Department, such as locating the “hot”spots and providing damage assessment
  - Night vision capabilities thus enlarging aerial reconnaissance capacities
  - Downlink live video viewing of the disaster area(s)
  - Videotaping of operations on the ground and making these tapes available for training purposes
  - Capability to deliver fire fighting personnel to the tops of high-rise buildings during fires and other emergencies
  - Transportation of personnel and equipment to locations throughout the city.
  - Relay of radio reports.<sup>12</sup>
  
- When not being used for emergency purposes, helicopters have the potential to generate revenue through patient evacuation services. San Francisco has no heliport capacity assigned at this time, despite the fact that San Francisco General Hospital is the exclusive trauma center for the City.
  
- Other California cities and counties regularly use helicopters to support public safety departments during large public demonstrations, traffic circulation challenges, and to aid in both crime prevention and the apprehension of criminals. SFPD reports that \$3.4 million in one year had been expended in disability and liability costs associated with police pursuits in squad cars; \$500K is required annually for the operation of one helicopter.
  
- The McKinsey Report makes repeated references to the critical support and efficient distribution of information that helicopters can and should provide in a catastrophic emergency.

**FINDING**

1. Helicopters are essential to adequate disaster response.

**RECOMMENDATION**

- 7r. San Francisco should analyze the costs and benefits of securing one or more helicopters and develop a specific proposal for helicopter services, including funding alternatives.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES**

The Director of Emergency Services – 60 days

SFFD – 60 days

SFPD – 60 days

Department of Public Health – 60 days

Board of Supervisors – 90 days

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<sup>12</sup> Fire Department manual, August 1999, p. 29.

## **VIII. BUDGETS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

### **FACTS**

- The City budget does not have an “emergency funds” line item, nor do the budgets of the individual departments involved in emergency services. San Francisco currently does not collect data about nor monitor overall emergency planning expenditures.
- The current budget emergency has the potential of curtailing funding for emergency services.

### **FINDINGS**

1. San Francisco is unable to determine the adequacy of financial resources being allocated or whether redundant expenditures are occurring because departments are not required to provide line item budgets for emergency services expenditures.
2. At this time of fiscal crisis in the City, funding for emergency services is at serious risk of being cut.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8a. Every department involved in emergency services should allocate funding for emergency services, and this funding should be a separate line item in their budgets.
- 8b. The City budget should include a line item for provision of emergency services that is a roll up of the department emergency services budgets.

### **REQUIRED RESPONSES**

Board of Supervisors – 90 days

The Director of Emergency Services – 60 days

Controller – 60 days

The Members of the 2002-2003 Civil Grand Jury  
For the City and County of San Francisco

Jane R. Brady

William J. Bush

Jess Centeno

Henry Cohen

Clement D. DeAmicis

Rosemary DeGregorio

Patricia Glynn

Susan Hirsch

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