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OVERVIEW

The San Luis Obispo County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) provides guidance and policy for preparing for and responding to significant emergencies or disasters requiring coordinated response efforts. It is the County’s “master plan” for the coordination of overall disaster readiness and response efforts.

The EOP does not supersede the well established protocols for coping with day-to-day emergency response involving agencies such as law enforcement, the fire service, medical aid, transportation services, flood control, or other discipline specific emergency response systems. Rather, it places emphasis on those unusual and unique emergency conditions that will require extraordinary response beyond the ability of any one or set of organizations to respond.

The EOP also does not include detailed response level operating instructions (Section 5 of the plan describes the various response level plans which are a sub-set of the EOP and do include specific response guidance).

This EOP describes the roles, responsibilities and relationships of various agencies and departments, critical functions, and administrative practices of the of the County’s emergency organization.

CHANGES OF NOTE

1. Board of Supervisors Standby Officers (Alternates)

The California Government Code allows for the appointment of “standby officers” to be available in the event something happens to a person holding a certain position or office.

In essence, standby officers are alternates who would step in and serve in case something happened to an official who regularly held the position.

In the case of the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors there have been, to date, no standby officers appointed for the Board of Supervisors. Currently, should all members of the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors be unavailable, we would rely on the chairperson of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to appoint temporary members to our Board (The term unavailable, as used in this instance, is described in State law and is referenced in the EOP).

What this revised EOP provides for is a list of standby officers for the Board of Supervisors. The standby officers will be certain other elected County officials: the Assessor, Treasurer-Tax Collector, District Attorney, Clerk-Recorder, and the Auditor-Controller.

Information on this change to the plan can be found in Part 1, Section 7, which is on page 76 (note: should revisions be made to the EOP, page numbers may change slightly).

2. County Administrative Officer Standby Officers (Alternates)

Related to the appointment of standby officers as reference in item 1, above, this revised EOP provides for a list of standby officers for the County Administrative Officer. The Assistant County Administrative Officer can currently serve in the absence of the CAO, however this EOP action formalizes the Assistant as a standby officer and adds additional standbys.

Information on this change can be found in Part 1, Section 7, specifically in 7.2.3, which is on page 80.

3. Changes to the order of succession for the County Emergency Services Director

County Code section 2.80.100 states that the Director of Emergency Services shall designate in writing the order of succession to that office, to take effect in the event the director is not available to attend meetings or otherwise perform his duties during an emergency. 2.80.100 also indicates such order of succession shall be approved by the Board of Supervisors. Approval of this Emergency Operations Plan by the Board of Supervisors also provides for approval of the order of succession of the Director as indicated in the EOP.

For reference purposes, the order of succession in the previous EOP was:

1. Assistant County Administrator(s)
2. County Sheriff
3. County Health Officer
4. County General Services Director
5. On Duty Sheriff's Watch Commander until relieved by a higher ranking Sheriff's Department employee.

Information on this change, including the revised and expanded list, can be found in Part 1, Section 7, specifically in 7.2.4, which is on page 80.

4. Addition of basic concepts for coordination of animal related issues during disasters

A disaster that affects humans will generally also affect animals. When evacuation is imminent many people will not evacuate their homes or other locations if this means leaving without their pets. For this reason alone the care of animals in disasters is important to the care of humans. As a result, development of processes and procedures related to animal care during disasters is under way.

Information on the concepts and processes can be found in Part 3, Section 4.5, which is on page 26.

5. Minor changes throughout the EOP to ensure compliance with the National Incident Management System, primarily format and word changes

In order to effectively manage emergencies and disasters throughout California – and the United States - local and state governments use common emergency management systems. A system used nationwide is the National Incident Management System (NIMS). In addition to and in conjunction with NIMS, with California state and local agencies also use a system called the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS).

In addition, in March 2008 the National Response Plan was replaced with the National Response Framework (NRF).

Information on NIMS, SEMS, and the NRF can be found in various areas throughout the EOP, however overview information can be found Part 1, Section 5, beginning on page 42.

6. Deletion of reference to the State Office of Emergency Services and addition of reference to the California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA)

California Assembly Bill 38 (2007-2008) merges the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) and the Governor's Office of Homeland Security (OHS) into a new, single agency, effective January 1, 2009. This new agency will be called the California Emergency Management Agency, and will be commonly referenced as Cal EMA). As a result of the change, references to State OES and State OHS have been replaced with references to Cal EMA. Any remaining reference found in the EOP to State OES or State OHS is intended as a reference to Cal EMA.

7. Additional, basic information on Continuity of Government

A disaster or other situation could result in the injury or death of key government officials, the partial or complete destruction of established seats of government, and the

destruction of public and private records essential to continued operations of government. As such, it is prudent to have processes in place to ensure the ability of government to continue to function after a disaster that may have not only caused the loss of key officials, but destroyed records, fiscal tracking systems, and general information technology related systems. This can include the loss of vital records society depends on. As a result, a number of alternate systems have been put in place to ensure alternate staffing – some of it described above – as well as storage of back-up records, information technology security and back-up, and other important systems.

This revision of the EOP expands on providing at least a basic overview of such processes and systems. For security reasons, some processes have only a basic overall description in this EOP.

Continuity of Government information can be found in Part 1, Section 7 beginning on page 76.

8. Deletion of the Multi-causality Incident Response Plan

In September 2008, a former stand alone emergency guidance document titled “The Multi-Casualty Incident Operations Plan” – which was commonly referred to as “Annex D” – was removed from service and use. Annex D formerly described the basic concepts and procedures for the management of a multi-casualty incident through coordination of resources from multiple agencies and jurisdictions throughout the San Luis Obispo County Operational Area. However, in order to develop a more efficient response and coordination process, Annex D was replaced with a new policy document incorporated by the San Luis Obispo County Emergency Medical Services Agency, Incorporated, in September 2008. That policy provides for guidance for operational field responders as it relates to an MCI response.

The overall, non-field level coordination at the Operational Area level remains an emergency management function, including at the EOC level, which is explained in supporting nuclear power plant (NPP) Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), such as the EMSA specific NPP SOP. The guidance provided in the NPP SOP can be used for any type of incident response, not just NPP.

Reference to this change, which is the wording as noted above, can be found in Part 5, Section 1.18, which is on page 6.

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