Executing Development

A Disaster Recovery Plan for the Dothan Fire Department

Peter C. Webb

Dothan Fire Department, Dothan, Alabama

March 2007
Abstract

Disaster can strike anytime and anywhere and fire departments are not exempt from them. The Dothan Fire Department does not have a plan for recovering should a disaster occur. The purpose of this research project is to develop a disaster recovery plan for the Department to allow the continuation of emergency operations should a disaster strike. This study utilized an action research methodology.

Research questions focused on contents of a plan; how other departments developed and associated costs with a plan; identifying stakeholders; and how plans are exercised.

The procedures used to complete this study consisted of a literature review, class participation, standard operating guideline development, and a disaster plan survey.

The results of the research included recommendations for plan contents, identification of key stakeholders, development cost of a plan, and the required training and exercise amounts.

The recommendation of this research project included building a planning team from within the department, external feedback from other agencies, an identified training timeframe, and to provide project information to the public.
Table of Contents

Abstract ........................................................................................................ page 2

Table of Contents..................................................................................... page 3

Introduction ............................................................................................. page 4

Background and Significance ................................................................. page 5

Literature Review .................................................................................... page 8

Procedures ............................................................................................... page 14

Results ...................................................................................................... page 18

Discussion ............................................................................................... page 21

Recommendations .................................................................................. page 26

Reference List ......................................................................................... page 29

Appendices

Appendix A: General Action Plan......................................................... page 32

Appendix B: Example Cover Letter and Survey............................... page 33

Appendix C: Survey Results................................................................. page 38

Appendix D: Disaster Recovery Plan SOG-Draft............................... page 41
A Disaster Recovery Plan for the Dothan Fire Department

Introduction

With the recent events such as Hurricane Katrina and 9/11, the United States is facing the devastating effect of disasters. Disasters can cause a huge disruption to the economy and impede day-to-day operations. The fire service is not exempt from being affected by a disaster. The fire service normally focuses its attention to serving the public and mitigating incidents that occur during and after the disaster. In order to provide these emergency services, fire departments need to ensure they have a disaster recovery plan. This plan will assist department leaders in maintaining basic emergency services if the disaster strikes the fire department.

Unfortunately, the Dothan Fire Department (DFD) does not have a Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP). In the event of a natural or technological disaster to the DFD, there is no plan for continuing operations while DFD recovers. The purpose of this research is to develop and write a DRP that can be used in the event of a natural or technological disaster which will help guide the department through the recovery and transition.

Using an action research method, the following questions will be asked and answered: (a) What are the elements of a comprehensive DRP?; (b) How have other fire departments developed their DRP?; (c) Who are the external and internal stakeholders in the development of a DRP?; (d) What are the costs associated with the development of a DRP?; and (e) How can a DRP be exercised on a regular basis?
Background and Significance

The Dothan Fire Department is located in the southeastern corner of the state of Alabama. The Dothan Fire Department is a full-time career fire department with 172 employees and 169 sworn firefighters. DFD has eight advanced life support (ALS) engine companies housed in eight stations throughout the city. There are two truck companies, a heavy rescue, and a hazardous materials unit. The Dothan Fire Department consists of eight front line stations, two reserve stations, and one administrative office building. The training division classroom and drill field are attached to Station 3, Westgate, located on the west side of town. Each station houses one Paramedic Engine company; certain stations house other types of apparatus. The Administrative Building (Admin) houses the Fire Chief, Administrative Battalion Chief, Administrative Assistant, Accounting Clerk, Secretary, Fire Marshall’s office (Battalion Chief and three fire prevention captains), all operational BC offices, the Training & Safety Battalion Chief, EMS Supervisor, Special Operations, and the City of Dothan’s Emergency Operating Facility. The Operational Battalion Chief’s headquarters are located at Station 1 (located next to the Admin Facility) and Station 3, Westgate fire station. (DFD, 2005) The reserve stations include old Central Fire station and old Southside fire station.

The Dothan Fire Department is in a unique area when it comes to being prone to natural and man-made disasters. The City of Dothan sits at a key crossroad between Alabama, Georgia, and Florida. Known as the hub of the Wiregrass Region, Dothan has a population of approximately 58,000 and a total area of 87 square miles (City of Dothan, 2006). Dothan is a large evacuation center for the Gulf Region during hurricane season and is a channeling point to the areas north, east, and west of the Florida Panhandle in case
of a hurricane making landfall. Highway 431 north can channel vehicular traffic to the north up the Alabama/Georgia border. Highway 231 north will channel traffic to central Alabama connecting with two Interstates: I-65 and I-85 in the state capital Montgomery. Highway 84 runs east and west moving traffic between Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia. During the Spring Break season, a fire engine from the south side of the city, station 4, can travel to station 5 on the east side of the city on the Ross Clark Circle (Highway 431 & 231) and not see an Alabama license plate! Dothan is a large transportation hub for the beaches of Florida during the summer season.

Fort Rucker, Alabama is the home of Army Aviation and is located approximately 20 miles to the west of Dothan. Several key Air Force bases are within a two hour drive to the north, southwest and south of Dothan: Maxwell AFB, Alabama; Eglin AFB, Hurlburt Field, and Tyndall AFB, Florida. These only include the active duty bases. There are several National Guard Armories and Reserve centers found within the City and within a 30-mile radius. The Farley Nuclear Plant is located 20 miles to the east of Dothan. These are some of the potential terrorist and technological (man-made) hazards found within the area.

Dothan also sits just 321 feet above sea level and is prone to flash flooding. Severe thunderstorms are a norm for the area no matter what season, and tornados have touched down several times within the area. Dothan is only 70 miles from the coast of the Gulf of Mexico (National Geographic, 2006). A category 4 hurricane striking the Panama City or Destin, Florida area could cause a lot of storm damage, including tornados spun off of a storm, with wind, rain, and flash flooding.
The expectation of the public is for fire departments to be available to provide emergency services to help them solve their problem. A fire department that provides emergency medical services, fire prevention and suppression activities, hazardous materials response, and technical rescue provides a large amount of services to its community. A fire department that is decapitated due to a disaster and loses pieces of front line apparatus is going to have its services cut dramatically until they are restored. A disaster recovery plan/guideline will assist the department to maintain providing services to the public and restoring services to the pre-disaster level. It cannot be understated that the recovery process is not an overnight fix—recovery can last years!

The events such as Hurricane Charlie that struck central Florida in 2004, Hurricane Katrina in 2005 that struck Mississippi and Louisianna, and September 11, 2001 at the World Trade Center and Pentagon reiterate the need for planning. Each of these events not only overwhelmed the response of all the departments present, they also had a large disaster impact to the fire department itself. There are natural and manmade disasters that can have an impact in all regions of the United States and the Dothan Fire Department is no exception.

Disaster preparedness and mitigation are considered a local event, i.e. being prepared is an individual responsibility. Businesses, families, and local governments should be prepared to deal with a disaster that strikes their community. The Dothan Fire Department is a leader when it comes to reducing community risk through its smoke detector program and public education programs. In order to be available to meet the needs of the City and surrounding communities with emergency response and reducing community risk, the Dothan Fire Department should establish a disaster recovery plan.
This plan will allow the department to meet the needs of the community by setting the example in disaster preparedness and allowing an emergency response when faced with a disaster.

Literature Review

Disaster recovery plan elements

Wallace & Webber define a disaster recovery plan (DRP) as a business continuity plan. Their definition of a Business Continuity Plan (BCP) is a plan that handles any disruption to the normal operations of a business (Wallace & Webber, pg xii, 2004). The International Fire Service Training Association (IFSTA) defines recovery as a situation where the victim is most probably dead, and the goal of the operation is to recover the body (IFSTA, 1998). The National Fire Protection Agency’s (NFPA) consensus standard 1600, Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs defines a Business Continuity Program as “…an ongoing process …that ensures the necessary steps are taken to identify the impact of potential losses, maintain viable recovery strategies and plans; and ensure continuity of services…” (NFPA 1600, 2004).

The Nonprofit Coordinating Commission of New York’s Disaster Planning, Emergency, Preparedness, & Business Continuity guidebook has the disaster recovery plan as the user’s guide to how to preserve the organization and continue to provide services (NPCCNY, 2004). Emergency services are essential before, during, and after an attack. If there is no plan developed before a disaster, there will be more chaos.

According to a lecture about emergency management terminology, Dr. Fred May of the Jacksonville State University stated the field of emergency management has not settled
on standardized terminology. He emphasizes that this is an indication “of the youthfulness of the art and science of emergency management…” (May, 2006). Another key to the success of a plan is to identify key terminology. This terminology should be identified to ensure understanding from all who will use the DRP. Planning for a disaster recovery plan takes several key players from a business to ensure it is successful and there is buy-in from all within (NPCCY, 2004).

Before a plan is established, the business, in this case a fire department, must have support in developing a DRP. Support must come from the highest level within the department. Erbschloe believes that gaining and maintaining support for this is a large frustration for planners (Pg 22, 2003). Steps in creating a disaster plan include getting approval from upper management (Jones, 2000). Hager and other experts in the field state one of many pitfalls is failing to gain support from senior-level managers (Berinato, 2006).

Hnatko communicates that an emergency response plan needs good people to make a plan work; a plan should provide a basic structure for people to make decisions (p. 80, 2006). Although he is discussing an emergency response plan in his article, people are the key to any organization no matter what stage of a disaster. Recovery operations can begin at the same time response operations are occurring (Pelfrey, p. 11, 2005). Tritsch and Kuhn, in their series on Business Continuity Planning, Where Do You Start?, state businesses need to know what roles people do in their normal function, what they do in a disaster function, who knows about what, and who uses what services for what purposes (n.d., pg.8). They stress that disasters necessitate thinking in teams of people.

Support within a fire department also relies on external stakeholders too. FEMA stresses that plant managers and CEOs should meet with outside agencies (FEMA, 1993).
External agencies for a fire department include city managers, city commissioners, city finance officer, information technology, and others within the local government. Other outside sources of information include higher levels of government (county, state, and federal), utility companies, local businesses, and the Red Cross.

Customers and the workers are also stakeholders within a DRP. Customers for a public entity are the taxpayers. “Successful businesses are built on the basics: supplying your customers with the products and services that they want, when they want them…a disaster plan that considers the customer is important!” (Wallace & Webber, p. 251). Firefighters are also stakeholders—they will respond to the disaster. Their second home, the fire station, may have been destroyed. A DRP should address concerns of the firefighters who may be affected by the disaster (p. 295).

Once key personnel and common terminology are identified, understanding what the hazards are, the risk of these hazards and the vulnerability to these hazards needs to be understood. May defines hazards as a function as a name of things that happen in a disaster (e.g. flood hazard, tornado hazard, etc). Risk can be used in two ways: what is “at risk” and what is “the risk.” Finally, vulnerability is the susceptibility of life, property, or the environment to damage if a hazard occurs (May, 2006). Leaders at all levels of the emergency management spectrum should understand the natural and manmade hazards that they face within their regions. This understanding should not only be through experience but academically (Woodbury, p. 72, 2005).

A plan must be developed to ensure the project meets a timetable and is kept on track. The Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Emergency Management Guide for Business and Industry states the four step planning process for developing a
plan. This four step process can be used to develop a DRP. The four steps include:
establish a planning team; analyze capabilities and hazards (i.e. SWOT); develop the plan;
and implement the plan (FEMA, 1993). Sikich states the responsibility for emergency
management planning should be at the “appropriate level” of management and the goal
should be to develop a “system that allows for flexibility, standardization, and mutual
support from all elements” (p. 12, 1995).

The NFPA states a recovery plan should develop strategies based on short- and
long-term priorities, vital resources, and acceptable time frames for the “restoration of
services, facilities, programs, and infrastructure” (NFPA, 2004). A word of caution when
it comes to time frames in recovery. Petterson’s working paper, sponsored by the Public
Risk Entity Institute (PERI), describes a common research finding that there has been a
shift from disaster recovery being static and following an exact time line. There is now an
understanding that recovery is a dynamic and an interactive process (Petterson, pg 1,
1999).

Understanding the critical functions for the operation of a fire department is
important to its disaster recovery program. The DFD operations are based on the L.I.P.
principle: Life safety, Incident stabilization, and Property conservation (Williams, L.H.,
personal conversation, December 6, 2006). The health and safety of DFD members is
paramount. Mentioned above, recovery operations can begin during the response phase.
Critical functions/operations for a fire department include: fire suppression, water supplies,
rescue, emergency medical services, hazardous materials and technical rescue response
(FEBV, p. 544, 2003). Other services offered by fire departments today include: smoke
detector installation, fire prevention and education activities, and other community
services. These functions although important are not the primary activities a department should perform while they recover from a disaster.

Wallace and Webber describe a disaster recovery emergency operation center (EOC) as a war-room, control center, or a command center (p. 87-90). This EOC should provide three essential things: a command and control center; operational control, and recovery planning. They also stress that an EOC should be as close to the problem as possible, but this is rarely practical (p. 92). The Emergency Operations Center for the Office of Emergency Management for New York City was located on the 26th floor of 7 World Trade Center (WTC) on the morning of September 11, 2001. This EOC was relocated twice after the attacks on the WTC (NYC.gov, 2002). FEMA’s *EOC’s Role in Community Preparedness, Response, & Recovery Activities* states an EOC should be located where the risk is minimized. It should be placed in a location determined once you study the threat to your community—manmade and natural.

Records are vital to all businesses public and private. Fire Department records include but are not limited to: personnel records, fire prevention and investigation records, emergency medical reports, and incident reports. A record management plan is sound advice to assist in a fire department’s strategic planning effort (Lopes, p. 25, 2003). Vital records to a business include but are not limited to: financial and insurance information, customer and supplier databases, and personnel files (Gustin, p 278-279, 2004). Established protocols for the storage and back-up of vital records should be completed (p. 279). The Palm Beach County Fire Rescue/Emergency Medical Services Continuity Operations Plan recommends that vital records are currently copied and stored in a secure off-site location (Palm Beach, p16-17, 2004). These records include: orders of succession,
delegations of authority, staffing assignments, and emergency plans and directives. (Annex G).

*Exercises and training*

According to NFPA 1600, training and exercises for disaster recovery will be implemented by the entity and the frequency and scope shall also be identified (NFPA, 5.12-5.13, 2004). Perry and Lindel conclude that an integral part of any disaster planning process is training. Training should lead to higher effectiveness (p.346, 2003). They continue by stating the planning process is not static; change should be incorporated and accommodate the changes in the threat (natural or manmade) and with an introduction of new technology, procedures, and experiences (p.346).

*Literature Review Summary*

The literature reviewed provided a large amount of information on the development, design, and exercising of disaster recovery plans. The key elements of a comprehensive disaster program were found to be in several textbooks and articles. These resources identified key terminology and personnel, planning processes for development, identification of hazards and vulnerabilities, and critical functions of a fire department.

Topics from articles covered the techniques and procedures businesses other than fire departments use to develop their business continuity plans, exercise their plans, and how often and where back-up records should be copied and stored.
Proceedures

Research Methodology

The problem statement was rechecked for clarity and comprehensiveness and found to be acceptable for this research. This research project employed an action research methodology to discover (a) What are the elements of a comprehensive DRP?; (b) How have other fire departments developed their DRP?; (c) Who are the external and internal stakeholders in the development of a DRP?; (d) What are the costs associated with the development of a DRP?; and (e) How can a DRP be exercised on a regular basis?

The main objective for conducting this research is to determine the information required to develop a disaster recovery plan which the DFD will use in case of a disaster striking. An action plan was developed to answer the questions and address the problem statement of this research. The goal of the action plan was to prioritize all information and to determine what an effective disaster recovery plan needed to include.

The procedures used to complete this research included literature review, survey from fire departments throughout the country, participation master degree program classes in Emergency Management, and development of a draft standard operating guideline for the department.

Literature Review

The literature review began in January 2006, while taking a course in disaster recovery through Jacksonville State University (JSU), Jacksonville, Alabama. The course was taken as part of the masters degree program for Emergency Management. It is here where the realization that the DFD had no disaster recovery plan was discovered. While attending class at the National Fire Academy, the review was continued utilizing the
resources at the National Fire Academy’s Learning Resource Center (LRC) during May 2006. The literature review continued upon return to Dothan, Alabama utilizing the DFD Training Facility, the Dothan-Houston County Memorial Library, and the researcher’s personal library between May 2006 and December 2006. Also literature was reviewed while participating in the masters degree program through JSU and JSU’s Houston-Cole Library.

The researcher reviewed over 30 different articles. All pertinent information within the articles was highlighted and indexed either in a three-ring binder or textbook. Primary resources reviewed included books, professional journals, online resources, personal interviews, and surveys. Resources utilized for this research were summarized and included in the literature review of this applied research project. *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.) was utilized to document resources within this applied research project.

**Survey**

A disaster recovery plan survey was developed to gather information in regards to disaster recovery plans. The survey was used to determine if other fire departments across the United States had a DRP and how they developed them. A cover letter was included with the survey explaining the purpose of the research (see Appendix B). The survey was either emailed or sent via the US Post Office to the Fire Chief or a known representative of 46 different departments across the United States. The survey was sent on July 30, 2006. Respondents were asked to have their reply postmarked by August 30, 2006. The total number of departments that responded to the survey was 26 or 57 percent.
The survey contained three parts: department information, disaster recovery plan information, and training information. The first section identified brief background information which included the type of department and how many firefighting personnel the department had. The second part of the survey concentrated on whether the department had a DRP, stakeholders in the development of the DRP, and what hazards (natural and man-made) the departments were vulnerable to. The third part of the survey concentrated on training: exercising the DRP and National Incident Management System (NIMS) training completed by department members.

The survey responses were summarized and included in the Results section of this applied research project and Appendix C. At the beginning of this applied research project, it was believed by the researcher that information on NIMS training was going to be needed. This information was found not to be needed for this applied research project.

Emergency management classes

The researcher was accepted to the Masters Program for Emergency Management through Jacksonville State University in November 2005. Classes began in January 2006. One of two classes in the first semester was Disaster Recovery, EM 525. During this class, it was discovered there was no disaster recovery plan for the fire department. Through research, discussion boards, and informal conversations with other students via email and the internet, it was discovered there was no continuity of operations plan for the Department either.

Through this class, initial research was conducted on developing a recovery plan for the department and was enhanced through the completion of other courses which included: Crisis Management, Disaster Preparedness, and Hazard Mitigation. These
courses allowed the researcher to gain a more in depth knowledge of emergency management and how to apply this to the DFD. Higher education provided additional opportunities to network and to learn more knowledge when it comes to emergency management.

**Standard operating guideline development**

A standard operating guideline in draft format was developed for the fire chief and the senior staff to review. Since the beginning of this research, the department has received a new fire chief and is adjusting to the new administration. The researcher utilized NFPA 1600, *Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs* (2004 ed.) for terminology used in the SOG. The draft SOG will not be submitted to the fire chief and senior staff until after submission of this applied research project.

The new procedure for guideline development is for the document to be written and then submitted through the chain of command. The senior staff reviews the document and then discusses it during a weekly staff meeting. Once staff comments are completed, the document is placed on the department’s intranet server. This allows all members within the department to provide feedback for the document. The comment period is open for two weeks. Once all comments are received, documented, and reviewed, the senior staff will review the final draft. The final draft will be made available to the department membership for review prior to the monthly captain’s meetings. Once the SOG is reviewed by the Fire Chief with the department captains, it is then implemented as a DFD SOG. This is the process the DRP will follow once submitted.
Results

1. What are the elements of a comprehensive DRP? The comprehensive elements of a DRP include critical functions of a fire department which generally include life safety, incident stabilization, and property conservation. The citizens of Dothan expect to have emergency services at all times. When they dial 911 they expect to have an ALS pumper. During a disaster this is especially true. The events of Hurricane Katrina have demonstrated the need for local government to be better prepared for disasters. The Dothan Fire Department is no exception. There is a need for a comprehensive disaster recovery plan so that emergency services can and will be provided to the City.

Critical functions of the DFD are providing for the safety and health of department members in their working environment. This includes the fire stations. Apparatus to respond on is a critical element for the DRP to address. Communications and records are vital to returning to normal operations. Not having the capability to dispatch units and to communicate with responding apparatus cripples the department. Communication is also critical to other city departments and political figures and even more so to the citizens of Dothan. All of these people need to know what is going on and should be kept up to date on a regular basis.

Having terminology that is understood is a requirement in a disaster recovery plan. The term ‘recovery’ is used differently within the fire service versus the emergency management profession. When members of the department are executing the recovery plan, they must understand they are not in a response phase and they are recovering the remains of victims; they are attempting to get the department back to levels of operation that is acceptable for emergency and day-to-day operations.
Plans are only as good as the people who use them. A DRP needs to identify the key personnel who will operate the plan. Key personnel include all members within the department. When a disaster strikes, a person not normally a supervisor may find themselves in charge of an incident or situation. Other key personnel is the plan development team. Assigning one person to write a comprehensive plan is a daunting task. Several of the resources cited and not-cited indicated that emergency operations and disaster recovery planning should be a team effort.

Finally, a plan of succession or a continuity of operations plan (COOP) is necessary if the department senior staff members are seriously injured or killed. A COOP will allow the department to be able to operate with personnel who are identified before a disaster occurs.

2. How have other fire departments developed their DRP? Although ‘how’ was not requested on a survey, some respondents stated they either hired a contractor or developed the plan in-house. The Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station (ARS) Readiness Flight hired a contractor to review their plan at a cost of $10,000. Through the literature review, the researcher learned that you can hire contractors to develop your entire plan or you can build your plan from within. A planning team needs to be established in order for this work with support from senior management of the department and most likely from the City/County government.

3. Who are the external and internal stakeholders in the development of a DRP? From the survey results, the respondents indicated the majority of the internal stakeholders were chief officers. The external stakeholders listed were military commanders (based on the department type), elected officials (mayors, city council, etc), outside agencies
The internal stakeholders within the DFD are the firefighters and fire officers within the department. Firefighters will strive to protect and help their brother and sister firefighters. Although a DRP is a written plan, the planning process provides the best tool for responding and recovering from a disaster. During the development of the DRP, there should be the opportunity for input from all levels of the department members. Department members, at all levels, are the internal stakeholders.

The primary external stakeholders are the citizens of Dothan. The purpose of a fire department is for the department to provide emergency services to its citizens. Without them there is no need for a fire department to exist. Returning a fire department to a level where they are operationally sound is critical to the need of the citizens. Disaster recovery operations will use large amounts of funds to return to near normal operations. The DFD owes it to the taxpayers to return to near regular operations as soon as possible.

Other external stakeholders include the City of Dothan and the Houston County EMA. As with any disaster, it is not going to affect just one small area all the time. There could be other emergency incidents occurring throughout the City and County. Through state level mutual aid agreements, other resources can be sent to Dothan to assist. Relieving these services as quick as possible, allows other departments who have sent aid to get back to normal operations too. Non-Governmental Offices, such as the American Red Cross (ARC) and the Salvation Army, will provide disaster services to the members of the department. The ARC and Salvation Army will also provide disaster services to other people across the city. The sooner they are relieved, the sooner they can assist others.
4. What are the costs associated with the development of a DRP? The survey results from other fire departments did not indicate an exact cost for the development of the program. Only two departments indicated an actual dollar amount for cost: Fire Department of New York (FDNY) - approximately $2 million and Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station (ARS) - $10,000. Several departments listed expenses for the exercises, staffing for the exercises, and staffing-hours for the development of the plan but did not give a dollar amount. Some departments stated they were able to use grant monies (federal and state) to establish their DRPs.

5. How can a DRP be exercised on a regular basis? Through the literature review and the survey a DRP needs to be exercised on a regular basis. The respondents from the survey either exercised their DRP annually or bi-annually. Several methods were used such as tabletop, small problem, full scale exercise and combination of all types. Most respondents used the combination of tabletop and full scale exercises.

Emphasis through the literature review stated that the effectiveness of a plan is tested in training and exercises. Procedures and guidelines that do not work can be removed and replaced with ones that do work.

Discussion

A fire department provides services much like any other department. As with other businesses, any interruption of normal operations can have a severe affect on customers. This is more critical to a fire department. Wallace and Webber ask the question in their introduction to the chapter on Customers: “What would they [customers] do if you could not supply them with what they needed…?” (p. 251, 2004). Emergency services must
Businesses are encouraged to have a business continuity plan or a disaster recovery plan to get their products or services back online and out to the customers. The difference between the fire service and a company that offers a product is that production (providing emergency services) cannot just stop. Emergency services will be needed during the recovery process. Having a DRP will assist the return to these operations. “Businesses and industry can…return more quickly to normal operations if they plan ahead” (FEMA, p.5, 1993).

To be effective though a DRP needs certain parts within its plan. The research indicates there must be clear and understood terminology to ensure clear communication. Traditionally the term “recovery” within the fire and EMS circles has meant the recovery of victim remains who have perished. Recovery within emergency management is the actions of returning a business to pre-disaster conditions. In certain conditions, they are still providing the services needed by the customers such as fire suppression and emergency medical services. NFPA 1600 provides some terminology for disaster planners to use, but since it is a consensus standard all fire departments are not required to use this terminology (2004). Yet May, in classroom lectures, argues since the field of emergency management is a relatively new career field (as opposed to geology), definitions of key terms are based on authors who prefer certain definitions versus others (May, 2006). The NIMS encourages departments to use clear text in its communications. Sikich supports this through standardizing terminology and making sure everyone uses it (p. 68-69, 1996).

Critical functions of a fire department include providing for the health and safety of its members and providing emergency services to its customers. Identifying critical functions allows recovering from a disaster a focus or benchmarks to reach the completion
of the recovery phase. Guston states the disaster planning team must identify functions to maintain operations during the operation and functions that will resume normal operations. (p22-23, 2004). Erbschloe argues there is no set definition for critical functions; planners should focus on the nature and mission and goals of the mission (p. 108, 2003). Although fire inspections of businesses is a critical need during the day-to-day operations of the DFD, officers within the Fire Marshal division may be needed to supervise certain aspects of the recovery operation or staff an engine company. The response and recovery phase of a disaster can overlap. The need for additional staffing to meet the needs of emergency response could mean staff officers could be reassigned temporarily. Flexibility is a key.

A DRP needs to have key personnel identified as well as their responsibilities. Use caution in identifying “key personnel” though; use key positions versus key personnel. Individuals can become casualties of the disaster, out of town, or otherwise unavailable. At the staff officer level of the Department there are less resources to draw from, whereas at the company level there are more. For example, if a company officer is unavailable there is a larger pool of other company officers available to draw from. In the DFD there are only 10 chief officers (nine battalion chiefs and one fire chief) limiting the resource at the chief level. Each of these chiefs operates in certain positions within the department. These positions are critical. If a lower ranking officer understands the key positions and responsibilities of the position, it will ease the transition, should the need for acting in the position is necessary.

Although sometimes a separate document, the researcher believes a continuity of operations plan (COOP) should be included with a disaster recovery plan. A COOP provides a succession plan for positions that are vacated due to the disaster. Succession to
the Presidency is based on the Article II, Executive Power in the U.S. Constitution and the XXV Amendment. The DFD does not have a clear succession in case the fire chief is incapacitated during a disaster. The current organization of the DFD is one fire chief and then nine battalion chiefs. Including a COOP within the DRP allows for a clearer transition during the disaster. The final approving authority of this portion within the DRP should be from the City Manager. The City Manager runs the daily operation of the City of Dothan and makes recommendations for hiring to the City Commission. As a disaster unfolds there will not be time to meet with the City Manager and Commission to make a recommendation for an acting Fire Chief. “…the entity might have the appropriate authority to conduct disaster/emergency operations, but lack authority to take action prior to mitigate the occurrence of a disaster” (NFPA 1600, A.5.2.2, 2004). With no deputy fire chief position within the organization structure at this time, it is imperative to identify a successor before the disaster occurs to limit confusion.

Developing a DRP plan will take more than just one person within a jurisdiction. Erbschloe, Jones, and FEMA agree that a disaster recovery plan needs to be written by a team. It is a large task that that entails many aspects and contacting several different agencies. Eisenhower once stated that “plans are useless, but planning is essential.” Feedback should be provided from all levels within the department. Following an implementation process that allows for feedback will ensure a comprehensive program.

Hiring a contractor to develop a plan has its benefits, such as ensuring all elements are included that meet all guidelines, lessens the amount of department personnel involved, and, based on the contract, gives a firm deadline for completion. Using contractors though takes away better opportunities for feedback and ownership within the department.
Drawbacks from developing the program from within include: hours spent in the researching and developing the plan, emergency operations pulling the team away from their development task, and utilizing members who are not familiar with emergency management as a whole. The benefits of having a plan developed from within ensure it is a plan for that department developed by members of the department. There are resources that DFD members can utilize to ensure their plan is a comprehensive plan. The Houston County EMA can provide support, networking with other departments across the state through the Alabama Fire Chief’s Association and nationally through courses such as the Executive Fire Officer program through the National Fire Program. Ownership in a plan will ensure a better level of acceptance and use.

Stakeholders of a DRP are necessary to ensure the success of a plan. As identified in the results of this paper, the number one external stakeholders are the citizens of Dothan. They will suffer if we are not able to take care of ourselves during and after a disaster. Our emergency services are expected 24/7, 365 days a year. Internal stakeholders include the firefighters and officers within the Department. “Involving a group of people is particularly effective because it: Encourages participation…enhances visibility to the planning process, and provides a broad perspective on issues…” (Gustin, p. 248, 2004).

Senior management both internally and externally are stakeholders too. Receiving support from the City of Dothan City manager and Commission is paramount to survival. The Commission can appoint emergency funding for extended operations, provide locations for alternative fire stations, and request disaster assistance from higher levels of government. Critical throughout any planning process is the commitment and active participation of the senior managers (Sikich, p. 19, 1996).
The cost of development can be as large as a department chooses, which includes hiring a contractor to develop and write the DRP. As mentioned above though, the benefits of writing the plan internally encourages members to buy into the planning process and has an added benefit—it reduces the cost of development.

A disaster recovery plan needs to be exercised on a regular basis and should include a regular training program for members of the department. Testing the plan makes sure it works. This testing, or exercising, can be completed in one of three ways: tabletop, small problem, or full-scale. Tabletops allow the department to test the DRP under different scenarios; small problem exercises test components without disrupting normal operations as a full scale exercise would do (Wallace & Webber, p. 129-130).

Recommendations

Utilizing references such as NFPA 1600, the Dothan Fire Department should develop a comprehensive disaster recovery plan. A cross section of department members which includes chief officers, staff and line officers, and other members deemed necessary by the fire chief should be placed on a committee to develop a disaster recovery plan. This committee should work on the development of a comprehensive disaster recovery plan covering manmade and natural hazards.

An example of a draft standard operating guideline for the DRP is included in Appendix D of this paper. Once the draft is formatted and written by the committee, it should be submitted to the Senior Staff of the department for review, recommendations, and comments. Once the review is completed, comments are noted and changes are completed, the draft SOG should be presented to other members of the department, the
City Manager, and Houston County EMA for their input. This will provide an opportunity for stakeholder feedback, ownership of the program by members, and an external review prior to implementation.

Outside comments, concerns, and recommendations should be considered and added as necessary. The next step of implementation will be the introduction of the plan to the captains, by the fire chief, at a regular captain’s meeting. Once introduced to the captains, the department should offer training opportunities for the plan before implementation. Introductory training provided by the Training Division to ensure understanding of the operation of the guideline.

It is also recommended that the training for disaster recovery will be included with the annual hurricane exercise held prior to hurricane season which begins June 1 of each year. Tabletop and small problem exercises should be conducted each year with a full scale exercise every three years. Training should be included on the comprehensive disaster cycle which includes: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

Once a disaster recovery plan is implemented it should be reviewed on a regular basis annually, if there is a change in state or federal guidelines to emergency management, and/or a problem is discovered during an after action review after a disaster.

Finally, the Dothan Fire Department should educate the public on what it has accomplished and the impact of having a disaster recovery plan will have on them. Building the trust of the public and taking advantage of opportunities to show them the capability of their Department is critical in gaining support for future endeavors.

For those in the fire service who wish to learn more about the development of disaster recovery plans and more knowledge about other emergency management
programs, several recommendations are given. First seek out emergency management programs at local colleges and universities. Emergency management is a growing profession that has an impact on all types of businesses—both private industry and public services. Second, utilize the internet to seek out federal and state level emergency management agencies such as FEMA and the Alabama Emergency Management Agency (AEMA). Third, develop partnerships and network with other agencies that could provide support to your department if disaster strikes a fire department. Through partnerships, education, and building networks, fire departments can better prepare themselves to survive and respond to a disaster.
Reference List


Appendix A

General Action Plan for the Dothan Fire Department

I. Identify and develop a team to research, develop, and write a recovery plan
   a. Use a cross-section of members within the department
   b. Consider having members outside the department who have experience in emergency management a part of the committee

II. Provide opportunities for feedback about the disaster recovery plan
   a. Internally from all members
   b. Externally from outside agencies
      i. City manager
      ii. Houston County EMA

III. Provide Training to all department members on the disaster recovery plan
    a. Training is provided by the Training Division and/or facilitated by the Division to members
    b. Training is provided to outside agencies who will assist during recovery

IV. Exercise the plan on a regular basis
    a. Drills and exercises of the disaster recovery plan are in conjunction with the Hurricane Plan
    b. Tabletop and small problems are exercises on an annual basis
    c. Every third year conduct a full scale exercise

V. Implement the plan

VI. Advertise the plan to outside agencies and the public
    a. Contact County and State EMA offices
    b. Through the media, inform the public what the department has done
    c. Network with other fire departments

VII. Monitor plan effectiveness
July 30, 2006

Captain Pete Webb  
Dothan Fire Department  
600 Columbia Highway  
Dothan, AL 363301  
Phone: (334) 615-4532  
Email: pwebb@dothan.org

Fire Chief  
Anytown Fire Department  
Anytown, AL

Chief,

I am researching and developing a disaster recovery plan (DRP) for the Dothan Fire Department (DFD). I am currently enrolled as a student in the National Fire Academy’s Executive Fire Officer Program and the research and development of a DRP is a requirement for the completion of my course. This plan would be used in case of a natural or technological disaster striking our department. Dothan, Alabama is susceptible to flash flooding, severe thunderstorms, tornados, and can feel the effects of a hurricane and/or tropical storm when one approaches the Florida panhandle. These natural hazards can have a severe affect within our city and the surrounding communities. Dothan is considered the transportation hub of the Wiregrass area with a large amount of vehicle and rail traffic moving through the city on a daily basis.

With the recent events such as 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina, I am interested to know how many departments have a working DRP. Your participation in the survey will involve: (1) completing the enclosed questionnaire and returning it in the stamped, self-addressed envelope by **August 30, 2006**, and (2) if possible, including a copy of your department’s DRP or standard operating procedure/guideline that pertain to disaster recovery.

For the purpose of this survey, a DRP refers to the actions you would take to recover from a disaster while functioning at a reduced level during and immediately after the disaster strikes. It is also known as a business continuity plan.

Confidentiality will be maintained at all times for the information provided. The person’s name provided on the survey form will only be used as a contact if necessary. The person will not be identified in the research paper in any way. The only way your department will be identified in the research paper will be as a letter designation (i.e. DFD, HFD, HVFD, etc). Results of the research will be made available to you upon request.
DRP Survey

Your help with providing information for this project will ensure the health and safety of the firefighters in Dothan and continued service to the Citizens of Dothan. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thank you in advance for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

Pete Webb  
Captain – Special Operations  
Dothan Fire Department
Response Survey: Disaster Recovery Plan

Department Name & Location: __________________________________________________________

Contact Name: _________________________________________________________________
(Your name will be for contact purposes and will not be used in the research paper)

Phone Number: ________________________  E-mail: ___________________________

Department Information:

1. Which of the following most accurately describes your fire department?
   _____ Career   _____ Military
   _____ Volunteer   _____ Other   ______________________________
   _____ Combination

2. How many personnel (paid and/or volunteer) engage in fire fighting activities for your department?
   _____ < 30   _____ 151-200
   _____ 31-50   _____ 201-250
   _____ 51-100   _____ 251-300
   _____ 101-150   _____ >301

Disaster Recovery Plan

3. Does your department have a disaster recovery plan to initiate in the case of a severe disruption of emergency operations? (i.e. loss of a fire station, etc)
   _____ Yes   _____ No   _____ Unknown

4. If your department has a DRP who were the external (Commissioners, Mayor, City Manager, Finance officer, etc) and internal stakeholders (Fire Chief, Battalion Chiefs, etc) in the development of your plan?

   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

5. How often is your disaster recovery plan exercised and revised?
   _____ < 1 year   _____ Tri-annually
   _____ Annually   _____ > 3 years
   _____ Bi-annually   _____ Not Applicable
6. What, if there were any, were the costs in the development of your DRP?

7. How is your disaster recovery plan exercised?

- Tabletop exercise
- Small problem testing (individual portions)
- Combination of methods
- Full scale exercise
- Not applicable

8. Have your department members completed the National Incident Management System (NIMS) training? (Please check all that apply)

- IS-100 Introduction to Incident Command System
- IS-200 ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents
- IS-700 National Incident Management System (NIMS), an Introduction
- IS-800 National Response Plan
- None of the Above

9. Does your department have a continuity of operations plan (COOP) for the replacement of personnel in key positions (i.e. Fire Chief, Deputy Chief of Operations, etc)? (succession for key positions within the fire department, until governing body can make nominations for filling positions)

- Yes
- No

10. What natural disasters is your community susceptible to?

- Tropical Storms
- Tornados
- Earthquakes
- Sinkholes
- Hurricanes
- Flooding
- Winter Storms
- Landslides
- Severe Storms (Thunderstorms)
- Tsunami
- Other
11. What specific technological (man-made) hazards within your community could hamper or cause massive damage to your fire department/emergency agency?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Please return survey in the self-addressed, stamped envelop by August 30, 2006

Thank you for completing this survey. If you would like to receive a draft copy of our DRP and the results of this survey please check here: _____
Appendix C

Survey Results

Figure B1. Type of Department

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department Type</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure B3. Number of departments that had a disaster recovery plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure B5. DRP exercised

Figure B7. DRP exercise type
Figure B9. Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)
Appendix D

Dothan Fire Department

Standard Operating Guideline

Administrative Guideline # XXX—DRAFT

SUBJECT: Disaster Recovery for Fire Department Operations

DATE: November 1, 2006

PURPOSE: Disaster can occur at anytime and can have a profound effect on communities, homes, and families. Fire Departments are also susceptible to disasters both natural and manmade. Recent events such as Hurricanes Katrina and Charlie and the events surrounding 9/11 should have fire department managers and firefighters developing a way to handle the disaster while still offering emergency services to their citizens and visitors of their community. This guideline is to be used as a tool to incorporate a disaster recovery plan for the Dothan Fire Department in the case of a disaster occurring to the Fire Administration Facility and Station 1. This guideline also encompasses other stations across the department; a disaster to Station 1 and Admin is a worse case scenario. Steps included here can be used at the station level.

A. GENERAL
   a. Key Terms
      i. Mitigation—activities taken to eliminate or reduce the probability of the event, or reduce its severity or consequences, either prior to or following a disaster/emergency\(^1\)
      ii. Preparedness—activities, programs, and systems developed and implemented prior to a disaster/emergency that are used to support and enhance mitigation of, response to, and recovery from disasters/emergencies\(^2\)
      iii. Response—in disaster/emergency management applications, activities designed to address the immediate and short-term effects of the disaster/emergency\(^2\)
      iv. Recovery—activities and programs designed to return conditions to a level that is acceptable to the entity\(^2\)
      v. NIMS (National Incident Management System)—a comprehensive, national approach to incident management, used at all jurisdictional levels and across all response disciplines. It provides a holistic systems approach integrating best existing processes and methods.

\(^1\) NFPA 1600—Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs, 2004 Edition

\(^2\) NFPA 1600—Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs, 2004 Edition
NIMS consists of six parts: Command and Management; Preparedness; Resource Management; Communications and Information Management; Supporting Technologies; and Ongoing Management and Maintenance

vi. Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP)—an ongoing process and plan that is designed to get a business or department back in service. Also known as a Business Continuity Plan. Will involve many departments and agencies within the City; most likely County, State, and Federal agencies will also be needed in the response and recovery

b. NIMS Compliant
   i. In order to be compliant with Homeland Security Directive Five the Dothan Fire Department will ensure compliance with the National Incident Management Systems (NIMS).

c. Key agencies/personnel
   i. Fire Department
      1. Firefighters—responsible for completing the task objectives of an incident action plan. Firefighters may act in the position of sergeant/engineer where directed
      2. Sergeants—are responsible for the driving and operation of their assigned apparatus to and from the scene of an incident in a safe, efficient, and effective manner. May act in the position of captain at the discretion of the Operation Battalion Chief
      3. Captains
         a. Line—are responsible for the front line supervision of their company, apparatus, and station. They may respond and be the initial incident commander to a DFD disaster scenario
         b. Staff—are responsible for operation of their specific programs on a day-to-day basis. During major incidents company level staff officers can be utilized in a number of ways: safety officers, staffing the DOC, liaison with the press, etc
      4. Operations Battalion Chiefs—supervise a battalion within the DFD which includes the minimum of 4 engine companies, 1 truck company and various special apparatus and vehicles
      5. Fire Marshal—responsible for the fire prevention and public education program for the DFD; at the discretion of the Fire Chief may fill the ESF function at the Houston County EOC during large scale disasters/incidents
6. Administrative Battalion Chief—responsible for the administration of the department in regards to finance and record keeping

7. Training/Safety Battalion Chief—responsible for the training of DFD members; can be assigned to various staff positions within the ICS which includes but is not limited to the DOC, EOC, etc

8. Administrative Staff—includes the Administrative Assistant to the Fire Chief; the Accounting Clerk, and Secretary. Any of these positions may be used to assist the DOC with the implementation of a large scale/major incident within the City of Dothan. Administrative Staff should receive minimal training within NIMS and first aid.

9. Fire Chief—department head for the Fire Department

ii. City of Dothan

1. Information Technology—responsible for providing information services which include but is not limited to computers, pagers, cell phones, and phone service.

2. Personnel Director

3. City Nurse—provides employee health care during regular business hours.

4. City Manager—Chief executive officer for the City reports to the City Commission and the Mayor.

5. General Services—provides maintenance and support for stations, apparatus, and grounds.

6. Police Department—provides for security at emergency incidents; lead agency for terrorist, hostage, bomb threat/scare, and crime scene.

7. Communications—provides emergency incident communications for the City, specifically police and fire department. Under the supervision of the DPD.

iii. Houston County EMA—provides support for large scale incidents in and around the City of Dothan and Houston County. Provides contact to the State of Alabama EMA office.

iv. State of Alabama—provides a wide variety of resources in case of a large scale/major incident. Must be contacted through EMA and the City Commission

v. Federal—resources can come in a large variety. Federal resources must be coordinated through the State EMA office. Federal agencies such as the FBI shall be notified in incidents involving WMD agents and/or terrorist events

vi. Other Outside Agencies

1. Red Cross—provides assistance to victims of disaster; provide rehab for incident workers

2. Salvation Army—provides assistance to victims of disaster; provides rehab for emergency incident workers
3. Other NGOs—all non-government offices that provide assistance, resources, and any other disaster related services to DFD

B. Hazard Identification and Vulnerability
   a. Hazard identification for this document has been provided by the Houston County Emergency Operation Plan. The most common hazards that the City of Dothan and the Dothan Fire Department are vulnerable to are included in Annex A.

C. Critical Functions
   a. Disaster recovery is one phase of the four-part disaster cycle. While it would be nice to have a smooth line on where the response phase ends and the recovery phase begins (or between any of the phases), this is hardly the case. Recovery operations can and may begin during the response phase. The Dothan Fire Department will still have to provide EMS, fire suppression, hazardous materials, and technical rescue response while it goes through the recovery process that can take months and even years. It is assumed for this recovery operation plan that there has been a full accountability of all personnel (Dothan firefighters, personnel working in the EOF, etc), all victims/patients have received appropriate medical treatment and/or been transported to medical facilities, and all hazards have been controlled (i.e. electricity, natural gas, fires extinguished, etc).
   b. In the wake of a sudden disaster (tornado, railcar incident, winds from a hurricane or severe thunderstorm, bombing, etc) damaging/destroying a fire station, fire department operations will be limited, but will continue.
      i. The captain in charge of the fire station shall verify whether the apparatus is operable or not
         1. In the case the captain is incapacitated, the acting captain shall complete this
      ii. Status of the apparatus will be up-channeled to the DOC through the appropriate Battalion Chief
         1. If the disaster has impacted station 1, realize that the Administration Facility may have been affected and the DOC may have to move
      iii. Depending on which station has been damaged (or how many), the DOC will take the following steps:
         1. First option is to get a reserve apparatus to the affected station(s) if available
         2. An engine company may be relocated to the affected station based on run volume at the time and station affected
         3. DOC may also consider requesting mutual aid
      iv. Crews of the affected station(s) will determine what equipment and appliances are serviceable
         1. Appliances and equipment that can be fixed on locations in a safe manner will be put into use as best as possible. This applies to apparatus also
2. Equipment, apparatus, and appliances that cannot be repaired or placed back in service on location should be up-channeled to the DOC.

3. The DOC should have one person appointed as a Recovery Unit Leader to track all reported damaged and destroyed equipment.

v. The Recovery Unit Leader will coordinate with General Services to get these resources returned to service as quickly as possible. This could also mean emergency purchases. Emergency purchases will follow department and City of Dothan guidelines.

vi. The Recovery Unit Leader will also work with the appropriate section chief to develop a priority listing of resources for replacements (which may include purchasing).

vii. Any missing emergency resources will also be communicated to the DOC.

viii. Next priority is to ensure the station facility is safe to operate from:

1. Any question of building stability shall be determined by a City engineer or their designee.
   a. If the building stability poses any risk, then the structure will not be used.

2. The relocation of a station’s operations can be accomplished in several ways:
   a. Relocation to a reserve station
      i. Old Central
      ii. Old Southside
   b. Relocation to another station
   c. Relocated to another city building within territory
      i. Station 1 could operate out of the Civic Center for example
   d. Relocation of a station is temporary and every location should be made to keep the company(s) as close to their assigned territory as possible
   e. Stations that house multiple companies and/or apparatus may have to have the resources split
   f. During long term recovery, other options will have to be considered and discussed
      i. Trailers, Tents, etc.

ix. Hygiene is an important consideration when it comes to a disaster setting:

1. Running water is necessary for proper hygiene and should be the next priority
   a. If current locations or relocated companies have running water this need is met
   b. If these locations do not have running water; considerations for porta-potties and other hygiene products should be brought to these locations.
i. Bottled water, liquid soap, hand sanitizer, and baby wipes are good resources to have on hand for a disaster.

2. Water supply for fire operations should also be identified as soon as possible.

x. Communications is a critical component to emergency operations. If the station’s or apparatus’s radios are destroyed, companies can still operate using portable radios, if the City Communications system is still operable.

1. Each Captain in the fire department is issued a SouthernLinc® radio/phone which can be used as a back-up communication system.

2. Once relocation has been determined, a ringdown line should be established if the relocation area does not have one.

3. At least one telephone line should also be established if there is not one at the relocation.

   a. All new telephone numbers should be up-channeled to the DOC.

   b. The DOC should ensure the Communications Center receives all updated locations and contact numbers.

   c. The Communications Center will relay this information to all other departments within the City.

4. Communication recovery may also include using the Dothan/Houston County EMA, region Communication Van.

xi. Electricity will also be needed to continue operations. If the relocation area does not have electricity then the DOC should ensure a generator is provided.

xii. Food should also be considered as a priority during initial stages of recovery, especially if stations are damaged/destroyed.

1. NGOs such as the Red Cross and Salvation Army should be contacted to provide this service.

c. Administrative Operations may also need to be recovered after a disaster strikes.

   i. The same steps should be used in case the Administrative Facility is damaged/destroyed with additions and changes listed below.

1. If the DOC is damaged, then it will need to be moved to the alternate location. See Section E.

2. DOC may also be relocated per guidance from the Fire Chief.

3. CV-1, if available, can provide a multi-radio system to the alternate location.

4. The DOC Manager should appoint a Relocation Manager to handle the relocation.

   a. Relocation manager will coordinate with COD Information Technology department for support.
b. Computers, Local Area Networking (LAN) support and extra phone lines will be needed to assist with the recovery operation

c. General Services may also be required to assistance with items such as tables, chairs, desks, and vehicle support

5. Records should be recovered as soon as possible. See Section D of this SOG

d. Mutual Aid/Regional Response should be considered to assist the department through response and recovery phases if needed.

D. Records

a. Paper-based
   i. All paper-based records should be secured as soon as possible and include the following
      1. Station level records
         a. Log books
         b. Records in the lock-box
         c. Station level Personal Records
      2. Department level records held at the Administrative Facility
         a. Personnel Jackets
         b. Training Records
         c. Fire Investigation Reports
         d. EMS Emergency Medical Reports
         e. Other pertinent records
      3. Records that are damaged and/or missing should be reported to the Administrative Assistant, Personnel Department and the affected member as soon as possible

b. Electronic
   i. All electronic records are backed-up every evening by the COD IT department. These records are not only backed-up locally, but they are backed-up in Atlanta, Georgia
   ii. Any files that are kept on the desktop of assigned laptop and desktop computers should be backed up to disc by the individual using the computer. These files are not backed-up daily.

c. Disaster Recovery Log
   i. A disaster recovery log shall be established at the EOF or alternate EOF
   ii. The Disaster Recovery Manager or their appointee shall ensure a log is kept at the DOC/alternate DOC.

E. EOF/DOC

a. The Emergency Operating Facility is the facility the Dothan Fire Department and the City of Dothan utilize to run operations within the City during large scale incidents. To be NIMS compliant, the EOF will be renamed the Department Operations Center (DOC)
b. The DOC shall be opened and staffed per DFD Operation SOG # XX.
c. The Fire Chief will appoint an Operations Section Chief (OSC) for the duration of the incident
   i. During planned incidents such as hurricanes, there will be a sufficient amount of time to identify the OSC
      1. During hurricane operations the DOC will handle the operations of the incidents occurring within the City
   ii. During an immediate emergency activation of the DOC, the first Battalion Chief level officer shall assume the responsibilities of OSC until there is time to appoint one
      1. During an immediate emergency operation, operations will be handled by the field until an appropriate transfer of responsibilities can be accomplished
      2. Support to the field incident commanders should be a priority
d. In case of damage to the Administrative Facility due to a natural or man-made disaster, the Westgate Training Facility classroom will be used as a back-up DOC
   i. The Fire Chief or Acting Fire Chief may identify another location based on other information
e. The DOC OSC will work closely with the Houston County EOC to ensure the safety of all DFD members, City of Dothan employees and citizens
   i. Resources from the City may be needed to supplement the County based on the Houston County Emergency Operation Plan

F. Public Information
   a. The DOC manager will keep the fire chief updated of the recovery process on a regular basis. This will be based on the operational period established by the Operations and Planning staff for the recovery
   b. Regular reports to the City Manager, City Commission, and members (and their families) should also be completed on a regular basis.
   c. The DFD PIO should also provide regular updates to the media and the general public
      i. Updates should occur around approximately the same time(s) daily
         1. This provides the media with a set time to make press conferences; there may be other “items of interest” occurring around the City and other areas
      ii. All avenues should be considered for the dissemination of information:
         1. Print media
         2. Television and radio media
         3. City of Dothan website
         4. Houston County EMA website
G. COOP Policy
   a. COOP stands for Continuation Of Operations. Normally the Fire Chief appoints, through department memorandum, who will be the acting fire chief in his/her absence. COOP is for the catastrophic loss of the fire chief and battalion chiefs within the department. The following will determine a temporary fire chief until the City Manager, with guidance from the City Commissioners and Personnel Department, can appoint one:
      i. If the fire chief is incapacitated due to injury or death, the senior (date of rank) staff (Administration, Fire Marshal, or Training/Safety) battalion chief will assume the duties of fire chief
      ii. If none of the staff battalion chiefs are available (injured or out of town), then the senior (date of rank) operations battalion chief will assume the duties of the fire chief
      iii. If all battalion chiefs are not available (injured or out of town), the senior (date of rank) captain will assume the duties of fire chief
      iv. In case of an Acting Fire Chief, appointed by memorandum where the Fire Chief is out of town, is incapacitated, steps i-iii should be followed with communication to the fire chief as soon as possible
   b. The City manager shall be notified immediately of what happened and who has taken charge of the department. All pertinent information about the incident should be relayed to the City Manager.
   c. The goal of this COOP is to protect the lives and safety of the men and women of the DFD; continue to provide for emergency services within the city and to the citizens of Dothan; and return to as near level of normalcy as possible, as quick as possible.
   d. Captains, Sergeants, Firefighter, and Medic positions due to injuries/deaths by the disaster shall be filled by the appropriate Battalion Chief as soon as possible
   
H. Plan Training, Exercises, & Testing
   a. This SOG should be reviewed during May of each year along with the DFD Tropical Cyclone Preparedness Plan
   b. The Fire Chief should conduct at least one table-top exercise yearly, with one functional exercise every three years
      i. Tabletop exercises should include senior staff members, administration members, and other members that will be key in a disaster recovery
      ii. Functional exercises should include a minimum of senior and administrative staff, line companies, and other external organizations
         1. City of Dothan Information Technology members
         2. Personnel Department
         3. Police Department
         4. Houston County EMA
c. Updates and changes to this SOG will follow department guidelines and policies. Any changes should be trained and exercised during the training period in May.

DRAFT
Larry H. Williams, Jr.
Fire Chief
Annex A
Houston County Hazard Analysis

The following information was provided by the Houston County Emergency Operation Plan dated: February 15, 2004. Hazard Analysis: Hazards and probabilities were identified based on a historical analysis of the past 20 years. Numbers and types of incidents were considered as well as the severity of the event.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROBABILITY RANKING</th>
<th>NATURAL HAZARDS</th>
<th>IMPACT LEVELS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ranking</td>
<td>Hazards</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tornado</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Floods</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Droughts</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Hurricanes</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Landslides</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Subsidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Earthquakes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Winter Storms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROBABILITY RANKING</th>
<th>MAN-MADE HAZARDS</th>
<th>IMPACT LEVELS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ranking</td>
<td></td>
<td>HIGH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Radiological Incident – Fixed Facility</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>HazMat - Transportation</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Energy Crisis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Radiological Incident - Transportation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>HazMat – Fixed Facility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Cyber-Terrorism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Wildfire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Dam Failure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Civil Disturbance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Transportation Incident (air/sea/land)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Attack</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Urban Fire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>