

Continuity of Operations (COOP) For EMS Agencies



When the disaster hits home...

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"There are risks and costs to a program of action. But they are far less than the long-range risks and costs of comfortable inaction".

John F. Kennedy



Today's Objectives:

- Define Continuity of Operations (COOP)
- Explain why COOP is important to EMS
- Identify the elements of a viable Continuity of Operations capability.
- Identify the processes, resources, and tasks necessary to implement a successful COOP program.



Question: Why a COOP Plan?

“We already have an SOP/EOP”

“We have a mutual aid plan”

“The Captain has it covered”

“And besides, we’re EMS,

*“DUH ! WE **ARE** THE PLAN!”*





Answer:
Why? *“Because everyone has a plan until they get punched in the face”... Mike Tyson*

Then you have to recover.....



What if....

- HQ ,contents & vehicles are inaccessible?
- 30%+ of responders are unavailable?
- Key suppliers couldn't fulfill obligations?
- Communications/I.T. systems unavailable?
- Key officers with key info & responsibilities have been impacted or are away?



No way, this can't happen to us...

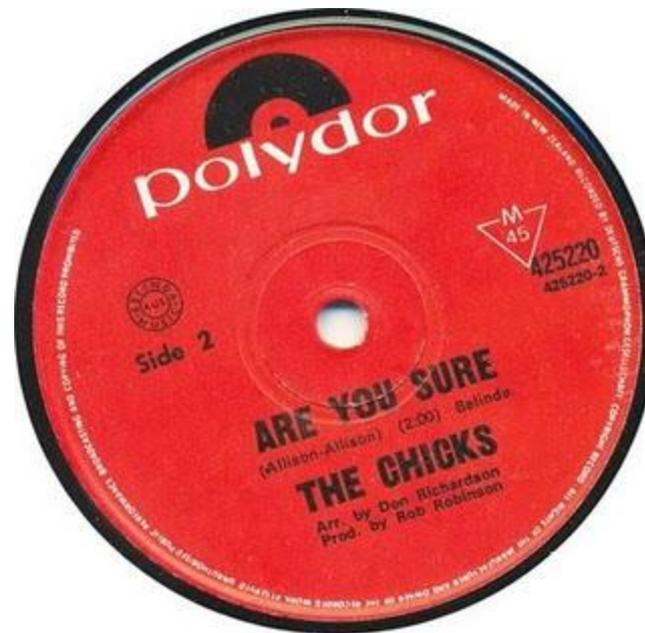


Really?





It can't? Are you sure?







You still don't believe me?



New York Hurricane Irene Major Disaster Declared August 31, 2011 (DR-40200)

Albany Co., Bronx Co., Clinton Co., Columbia Co., Delaware Co., Dutchess Co., Essex Co., Greene Co., Kings Co., Montgomery Co., Nassau Co., New York Co., Orange Co., Otsego Co., Putnam Co., Queens Co., Rensselaer Co., Richmond Co., Rockland Co., Saratoga Co., Schenectady Co., Schoharie Co., Suffolk Co., Sullivan Co., Ulster Co., Warren Co., Washington Co., Westchester Co.



So....you are in the right session if...

- You *don't* have a plan
- You *do* have a plan but the President, Chief or Captain is about to retire and they *ARE* the plan
- You *sort of have* a plan.. you think....
- You *don't think you need* a plan but need CME
- You haven't seen me in a long time and just want to say hi



What would your community do without you?

Are your members impacted too?

What happens if call volume dramatically increases and is prolonged?

Will limited service & mutual aid *really* be enough if the entire region is impacted?

Are you relying on federal resources for *timely* & *prolonged* assistance?



**Did someone say
federal assistance?**



What would your community do without you?

- Does your agency have resources for resiliency & sustainability for a prolonged period?
- Are there key members always relied upon?
- Other EMS resources? Do they have a COOP?
- Is the hospital or other infrastructure damaged?
 - Will transport time be prolonged? Patient evacuations?
 - Will you provide service for other communities?



And if *you sort of* have a plan...

- Is it written down, executable and *accessible*?
- Do members know about it or where to find it?
- Are plan strategies valid or unverified assumptions?
- Do elements rely on a member who knows a guy?



And if you *sort of* have a plan...

- Do resources *know* they're in your plan?
- Do they *know* your expectations for them?
- Will a true disaster change their ability to help?
 - Will they *really* lend you a building, radios, \$\$, etc.?
 - Will a vendor or other agency *really* lend you rigs?
 - What are you really insured for? Is it enough?
 - Will the Captains cousin quickly fix the roof for free?



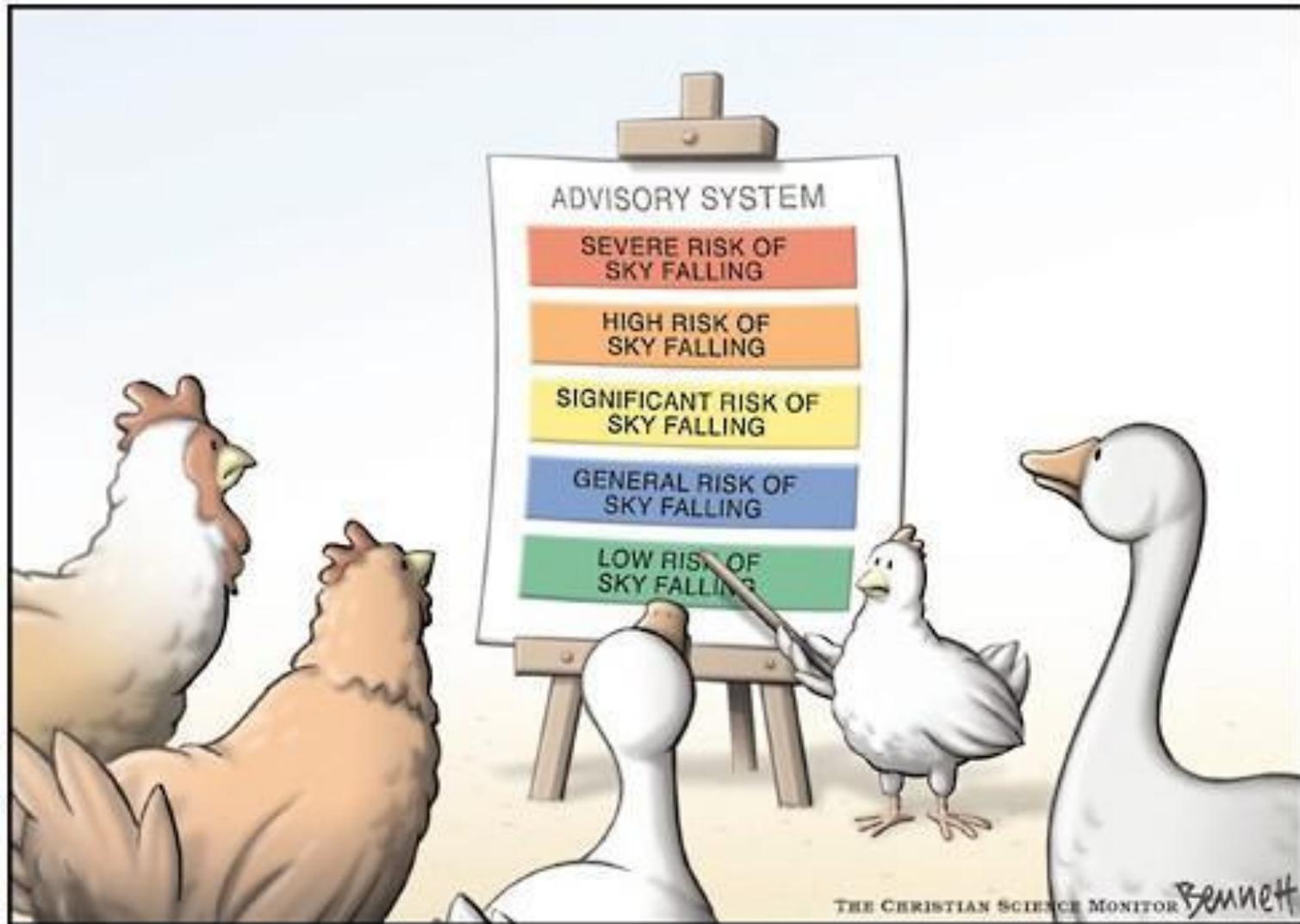
A new era in preparedness



Assistant Secretary for
Preparedness and Response



And if things aren't hard enough..



“COOP” (Business Continuity) Plan

- Details how essential functions are managed during disruption of operations; staffing, and/or, if facilities, vehicles, & supplies are damaged or inaccessible.
- Uncovers functional dependencies and priorities for recovery
- Promotes a culture of personal preparedness

EOPs/SOPs do not = COOP !!!!



Why COOP?

- Reduces potential loss of life for responders and the community
- Minimizes damage and losses
- Protects critical facilities, equipment, records, (PCRs/HIPAA) and other assets
- Fosters integrated planning
- *It's the right thing to do. Why? Because...*





Objectives of COOP Planning

- Ensuring continuous performance of an agency's essential functions/operations
- Organized planning approach - CODIFY
- Achieving a timely and orderly recovery
- Assure succession of key leadership
- Resumption of full service to the community as soon as possible



The COOP Commitment



- Appoint COOP Planning Coordinator (CPC)
- Agency leadership must support the CPC
- Departments must cooperate with CPC
- Develop, approve and maintain a COOP
- Conduct tests, training & exercises
- Coordinate & share COOP with stakeholders





COOP 101: The 5 S's

COOP is not “Event Specific” it is “Class Specific”

The *functional dependences* or *5 S's* of COOP are:

1. ***Space***
2. ***Stuff***
3. ***Staff***
4. ***Systems***
5. ***Services & Products***





COOP 101: The 5 S's

- *If the 5 S's or functional dependences fail, the function it serves to support EMS response can fail*
 - *If you lose your building (space)*
 - *If you lose your rigs (stuff)*
 - *If members cannot respond (staff)*
 - *If you lose your I.T. or communication (systems)*
 - *If you lose your electricity, water (services)*



COOP 101: COOP Activation



Can be the result of:

- Flood, fire, other damages
- Major damage to local infrastructure
- IT / Communications malfunction
- Hurricane / Severe weather
- Pandemic
- Other reasons (rig(s) out of service?)



COOP 101: Essential Elements



- Plans & Procedures
- Essential Functions
- Delegations of Authority
- Orders of Succession
- Alternate Facilities
- Interoperable Comm.
- Vital Records/Databases
- Logistics & Admin.
- Staff Support/Coord.
- Security
- Test, Training & Exercise
- Program Management



COOP 101: The Process



- Identify mission critical services & functions
- Gauge disruption impacts
- Identify dependencies/interdependencies
- Develop/codify/validate recovery strategies & tasks
- Contact information (staff, vendors, etc.)
- Identify needed recovery resources

IDENTIFY, VALIDATE, CODIFY, REVIEW, REPEAT



COOP 101: The Variables



- Continuity will be driven by the availability of:
 - Trained personnel (human capital)
 - Decision-makers or their designees
 - Vital records and databases
 - Space & Supplies
 - Equipment and systems
 - Keep these “drivers” in mind when planning for continuity & full recovery of essential functions



Identify/Prioritize Essential Functions

- What must be continued in all circumstances?
- Essential functions include those that:
 - Cannot be interrupted for an extended period
 - Need to be recovered before other key functions can come back online



Gauge the Impact:



- Is the function a single point of failure?
- Will any other systems or processes fail as a result?
 - Internal or external
- Is there a threat to life or health of responders?
- Does it need to be fully or partially recovered?
- Do we have the resources to recover the function?



Gauge the Impact:



- What are local expectations for your agency?
- To what extent will the community be affected?
- Will there be any financial or legal impacts?
 - loss of income, fines, or compensation claims?
- Will your agency's reputation be at risk?



Develop Strategies



- Prevent failure or mitigate to minimize impact
- Develop viable alternatives for failure
- Identify/confirm resources to support alternative
- Document, test and validate strategy, reassess
- May be permanent or implemented when faced with a potential threat



Strategy Examples



- Generator, sandbags, alternate HQ, MOU/MAA battery lighting, bedding, relocate equip., etc.
- Store PCR's offsite. Scan important documents
- Rotary phone, air card: Comm. redundancies
- Duties for supplemental volunteers/groups
 - Phones, cooking, clean up, wellness calls
- Cross train staff and develop leadership depth



Strategy Examples



- Store water, non-perishables, supplies, cash
- Automatic online backup or use of online server
- Online emergency notification service or equiv.
- *Accessible* list of vendors, insurance co., etc
- *Accessible* member contact list – *Accountability*
- Member/family personal preparedness



COOP Resources



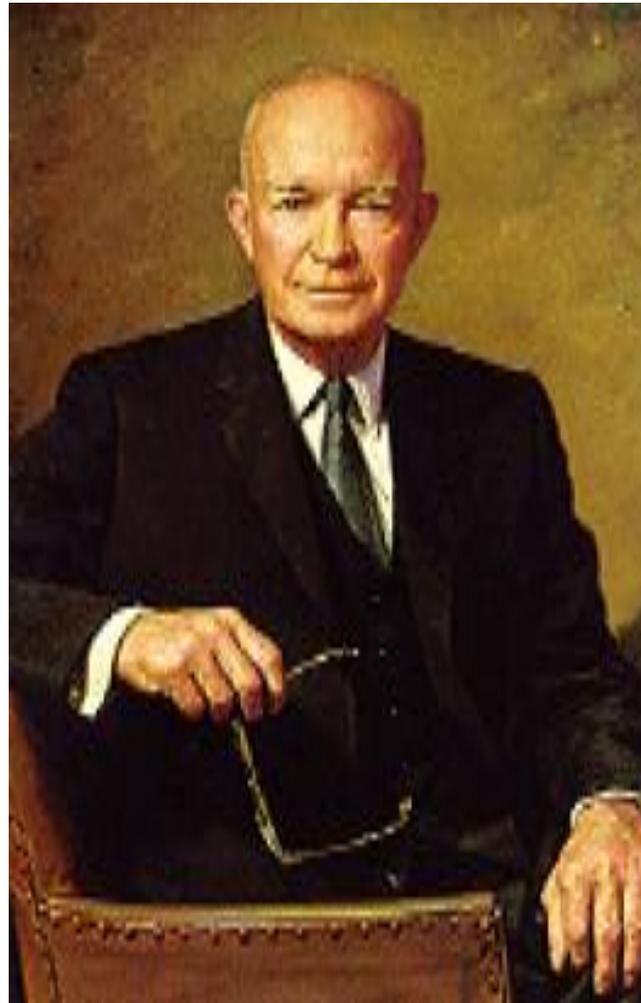
Templates:

- FEMA Continuity Plan Template
http://www.fema.gov/txt/about/org/ncp/coop/continuity_plan_non_federal.txt
- **dPlan™** The Online Disaster-Planning Tool for Cultural and Civic Institutions: <http://www.dplan.org/>
- **BCMM™** The Business Continuity Maturity Model:
<http://www.virtual-corp.net/html/bcmm.html> (**free with registration*)



**“Plans are
nothing ...
...planning is
everything.”**

Dwight D. Eisenhower



Engage your EMS agency in understanding their dependencies and vulnerabilities.

Develop practical, prudent strategies and plans to maintain EMS operations.

Maintain your plans so they remain relevant over time.



***And besides....
WWJRD?***



What would John & Roy do?

