

St. Augustine Emergency Shelter Planning Team Meeting
Wednesday, May 13, 2009 7:00-8:45 PM

Attendees: Vincent Pacelli, Giovanna Pedicini, John Callear, Jay Brumbaugh, Dell Dodson, Susan Ruppel, Laura Oliva, Carol and David Gibson, Kathryn O'Meara, Debra Williams, Katharine Anderson and Paul Bedard.

Please welcome two new members: Vincent Pacelli and Giovanna Pedicini. They attended the Red Cross training and simulation exercise in March.

Agenda

- 6:30-7:00 Early setup of classrooms 10/11 and 18/19
- 7:00: 7:10 PM Start meeting in classroom 18/19
 - Welcome and meeting overview
 - Opening prayer: Katharine
 - Time keeper: Paul
- 7:10-7:30 Review shelter simulation exercise after exercise report
 - Review lessons learned with the idea of making the fixes at this meeting
- 7:30-8:00 Setup classroom 18/19 and 10/11 for new operating plan
 - Set up 18/19 as operations center
 - Set up 10/11 as health/mental health center
- 8:00-8:30 Discuss plans for fall team training (see outline on following page)
 - Bi-lingual shelter operations training and simulation exercise
 - Shelter team members cross-train in other shelter areas
- 8:30 Cleanup; return tables to parish storage

1. Review of the shelter simulation exercise for lessons learned.

Information:

- Dave Gibson donated a clock to the shelter kit. There were no clocks in the Beulah shelter. This will add the capability if we deploy our shelter team to a different facility. There are clocks in most of the rooms in the St. Augustine facility.
- Shelter set up: Information was not included in the advanced party for reconnoitering the new shelter site. Makeshift signs were used to mark the shelter areas but were not replaced by our bi-lingual signs due to a mix-up in guidance from the Red Cross. Paul believes that the Red Cross observers did not realize we had our own signs and were trying to keep things simple. Lesson learned: include sign placement as a task for shelter setup. Make temporary signs, but always plan to use our signs as time permits.

Food service:

- Jay Brumbaugh and Dell Dodson reported that food service went well. The Red Cross delivered it early in sufficient quantity to support the shelter population (50 meals: 40 participants from St. Augustine plus 10 from Beulah Methodist and the Red Cross observers). There was plenty of help from the shelter team and participants for off-loading and serving the meal. Paul reported a comment from

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the Red Cross observer: keep alert to sanitation standards (the same as required by restaurants); he observed food pallets stacked on tables in the kitchen. The tables were not cleaned before being used. Always use plastic gloves when handling food and serving food.

- Lesson learned: Keep in mind the need to supervise the multiple volunteers off-loading food supplies to enforce sanitation rules.

Logistics:

- John Callear said that it was a challenge to participate in the set up of the new shelter site on short notice. They basically figured it out on arrival. They needed the checklists for opening the shelter. They did a walk-thru of the building and then allocated space to the shelter areas.
 - Lesson learned: Use our checklists for opening a new shelter facility. Take our shelter operations manuals and checklists with the advance party.
- The biggest challenge was segregating the news media room from the shelter residents in a two-story building.
 - Lesson learned: add marking tape to the shelter kit so that there will be material to mark-off areas to restrict access.
- In organizing the space the shelter team had to move tables, chairs and other items to different locations in the building.
 - Lesson learned: To restore the building to its original condition, the shelter team needs a way to identify the original location of building furniture and equipment. Add marking labels to the shelter kit. Use them to mark the items moved to a different location. Add this task to the checklist.
- Communications worked well. The exercise rules prohibited use of telephones (cell and land line). The Red Cross provided a HAM radio operator who was present at Beulah at the start of the exercise. John used him to contact the Red Cross to request food and cots. Later the team used the radio operator to send shelter status reports. The shelter team also used their hand held radios and hand held radios furnished by the Red Cross.
- Cross-training: John recommends that we do cross-training in other shelter areas. We have a good handle on our current areas, as evidenced by our team's performance during the Red Cross exercise. The information we have received from the Red Cross and what has been happening in the news is that we may be called out on short notice to help set up and run another shelter. We will probably have to perform or be ready for any of the shelter areas. Therefore, we need to practice these tasks.
- St. Augustine shelter team reputation: as a side note, John related his experience while attending a Red Cross training event in Richmond. When John was introduced and told them he was from St. Augustine, the Red Cross members took special note. They have a high regard for our team.

Disaster health and mental health services:

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- Carol Gibson and Debra Williams reported that the new forms were used without any problems.
 - Lesson learned: they need an accordion file to maintain and protect the personal health forms of residents. We need to add this to the medical shelter kit.
 - We also need to translate the medical form to Spanish/get copies from the Red Cross in Spanish.
 - Health services need a hand held radio for quick communications with the shelter operations center and access to a telephone for requesting medications.
- Paul reported on an exercise result from Grace Marino: disaster health and mental health were co-located in the Beulah shelter. This provided at least two benefits: Grace assisted health service in treating their patients and performing their tasks. She realized that the co-location provided support to mental health services, as well, and she was not isolated as she is in the St. Augustine facility.
 - Lesson learned: co-locate health and mental health services in the St. Augustine shelter plan in classroom 10/11. Provide phone and hand held radio communications. Retain the nurse station next to the nursery. Provide a separate room (classroom 8) for mental health counseling, as needed.

Hispanic community participation:

- Laura Oliva reported that she did not see any members of our Hispanic community participating in the simulation exercise. Paul offered the observation that the preceding Red Cross Shelter Operations class, which was well-attended by the Hispanic members, was not bi-lingual. There were no shelter operations manuals in Spanish and the instructors were not bi-lingual. Bi-lingual participants tried to assist other students, but there were not enough. It must have been a frustrating class.
- Paul recommended that we have a bi-lingual training event in the fall to encourage Hispanic community involvement. Paul outlined the plan at the end of the meeting.

Shelter Manager:

- Katharine reported on her experience during the exercise. She led the advance party that set up the shelter at Beulah. In doing this she was constantly busy throughout the shelter overseeing details. The Red Cross observer advised her that she should have spent more time in the shelter operations center, as they expected to be able to get in immediate contact with her when necessary. Paul commented from his experience during the previous exercise when he spent too much time in the operations center and not enough time checking on the other shelter areas of the shelter. The shelter manager must maintain a clear sense of situational awareness of the whole shelter operation. To do this, the shelter manager has to see and be seen in the shelter. It is an art to maintain the balance

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between the shelter operations center (for decision-making) and the shelter proper to maintain an understanding of the situation and link to the team and residents. Communications can enable both: the shelter manager should have a hand held radio linked to shelter operations.

- Lesson learned: we need more practice on using and maintaining our hand held radios.

2. Set up shelter operations center in classroom 18/19 and shelter health center in classroom 10/11:

- Classroom 10/11 has a number of advantages in combining health and mental health services:
 - It is a one-stop center for all resident health needs.
 - It enables joint operations to address workload peaks.
 - It helps overcome the stigma of seeking mental health aid.
 - It has phone and computer links.
 - It has a partition to separate the health areas, as needed.
- Health services have concerns about no water/sink in 10/11. They will continue to use the nurse station next to the nursery. They were concerned about privacy issues for mental health services. The shelter plan will allocate classroom 8 for mental health, as needed.
- Classroom 18/19 has adequate space and phone communications.

3. Discuss plans for fall team training:

- Bi-lingual shelter operations training and simulation exercise
- Shelter team members cross-train in other shelter areas
- Details on the following page

4. Next meeting: Mid-September to plan for a shelter team training event in October.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Bedard

May 16, 2009

Objective 1: gain Hispanic community involved in the shelter team through a bi-lingual training event.

- Focus on training Hispanic volunteers plus others who are interested: those who could not attend training in March and other new volunteers
- Get Red Cross support for trainers and logistics.
- Shelter team and prior-trained volunteers assist the Red Cross trainers with the class.

Objective 2: Shelter team cross-training. Shelter team members operate another shelter area during the shelter simulation exercise to gain cross-training experience.

- Identify shelter area for cross-training.
- Contact the shelter area lead to review how this area operates (shelter setup, day 1-3 operations, reporting, forms, close shelter) and checklist.
- Plan to operate this shelter area during the fall shelter simulation exercise. Be prepared to brief exercise participants on the operation of this shelter area.
- Shelter area leads review your area checklists. Provide updates to Paul or Dan or contact them for assistance.
- Paul and Katharine, coordinate with Claudia and parish staff to translate checklists into Spanish and print them English/Spanish front to back.

Training events

- **(#1) Weeknight class on Intro to Disaster Services** (Note: there are manuals in Spanish)
 - Match bi-lingual students/shelter team members with non-English speakers (1:2 ratio)
 - This introduction prepares the volunteer for the Shelter Operations class.
- **(#2) Saturday shelter operations class** (9-12 PM) followed by lunch (12-12:30 PM).
 - Match bi-lingual students/shelter team members with non-English speakers (1:2 ratio)
 - During lunch: Assign students to groups; rotate through shelter areas; try to maintain ratio of bi-lingual speakers with non-English speakers
- **(#3) Shelter simulation exercise** (12:30-3:30 PM)
 - Shelter team sets up shelter for simulation
 - 3 rotations: cover tasks to open shelter (12:30-1:30 PM), operate shelter/reporting (1:30-2:30 PM), close shelter (2:30-3:30 PM)
 - 3:30-4:00 PM Wrap up/lessons learned
 - Simulation: Use a canned sequence of events to support the training that addresses all the shelter areas
 - Take the time in each area to review the tasks for the applicable rotation
 - Shelter team members signup ahead of time for a different shelter area. Operate that shelter area during the shelter simulation exercise.