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Summary Report on Disaster Preparedness in SamTrans, Environmental Services, and Public Works

Issue

Do the San Mateo County Public Works Department, the Environmental Services Agency, and SamTrans have emergency preparedness plans that adequately address the critical elements necessary to protect the County's residents and property in the event of a disaster?

Summary

This report assesses the emergency preparedness plans of SamTrans and those divisions of the Environmental Services Agency and the Public Works Department for which emergency preparedness plans were deemed appropriate by their department heads, Libraries, Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Facilities and Airports. (The Public Works Department plan is currently in draft form but will be finalized and adopted later this year.)

The San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury (Grand Jury) studied the plans submitted by these groups and developed a list of criteria by which the plans could be measured. These criteria are identified and discussed in the main report. Evaluation of the various preparedness plans led the Grand Jury to conclude the following:

- The plans submitted varied widely in content and quality.
- The SamTrans and Libraries plans and the draft Public Works plan were the most comprehensive and complete.
- The plans submitted by Parks and Recreation and the Airports need to be improved or rewritten.
- It is vital that all department heads ensure that there are highest quality emergency preparedness plans for all divisions under their supervision for which a plan is deemed appropriate.

This investigation resulted in several recommendations, including:

- That the Board of Supervisors ensure that all deficient Emergency Preparedness Plans are improved, and that all plans include personnel training programs, provide for periodic field exercises, and that all comply with the California Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS).
- That the SamTrans Board of Directors ensure that the SamTrans Emergency Preparedness Plan includes an adequate personnel training program and provides for periodic field exercises of the plan.



Disaster Preparedness in SamTrans, Environmental Services, and Public Works

Issue

Do the San Mateo County Public Works Department, the Environmental Services Agency, and the San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans) have emergency preparedness plans that adequately address the critical elements necessary to protect the County's residents and property in the event of a disaster?

Background

This report focuses on the emergency preparedness plans of the Environmental Services Agency, the Public Works Department, and SamTrans. There are eight divisions in the Environmental Services Department and four in Public Works. This report considers the plans from SamTrans and from those divisions for which plans were deemed appropriate by their department heads, i.e., Libraries, Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Facilities and Airports. At the time of the writing of this report, the Public Works Department plan was being rewritten. It is expected that this new plan will be adopted later this year.

Investigation

The Grand Jury spent several weeks evaluating the plans listed above. These plans varied greatly in format, length, and content. The Jury also reviewed the San Mateo County SEMS/EOP plan. The Jury then compiled the following list of elements required in a comprehensive plan. This list of critical elements was reviewed by the professional emergency planners in the Office of Emergency Services (OES), who agreed that the list was reasonable and complete. These critical elements are:

- **Purpose and Scope** Describes what the plan is designed to accomplish and who is responsible.
- **SEMS Compliance** Complies with SEMS requirements as

outlined in the State Emergency Planning Guide for Local Government.

- **Staff Roles and Responsibilities** Describes the roles and responsibilities of each staff member.
- **Emergency Contacts and Phone Numbers** Describes the emergency staff chain of command and whom to call under what circumstances.
- **Guidelines for Decision Makers** Provides clear steps to follow in making decisions during an emergency.
- **Specific Emergency Procedures** Contains instructions covering a list of potential emergencies.
- **Evacuation and Shelter Plans** Contains instructions for evacuation and shelter during an emergency.
- **Personnel Training Plan** Defines plans for training personnel with specific topics and types of training.
- **Exercise and Update Plan** Describes the frequency of training exercises and how the results of those exercises are used to improve the plan.
- **Plans for Coordinating with other Agencies and Departments** Describes procedures for coordinating with other agencies during an emergency.
- **Post-Emergency Plans** Defines plans to deal with post-emergency issues and the return to normal operations.

The Grand Jury used the list of critical elements together with the rating system described below to independently evaluate each of the emergency preparedness plans submitted.

A score of 0 indicates that an element is not included in the plan.

A score of 1 indicates that the treatment of an element is incomplete or unclear.

A score of 2 is given if the treatment of an element is complete and clear.

At the time of the writing of this report, the Public Works Department Plan was being re-written. The Grand Jury evaluated a draft of this new Public Works Plan for this report. The revised Public Works Plan, which will be adopted later this year, is expected to include a revised Facilities Plan and a new Airport Plan.

Findings

The chart below shows the results of the Grand Jury's evaluation of the various preparedness plans.

With a maximum possible score of 22, the three highest scores were attributed to the plans submitted by SamTrans (21), Libraries (17), and the Public Works Draft Plan (16). The scores earned by Parks and Recreation (3), Facilities (5), and Airports (6) leave room for substantial improvement

Plan Element	SamTrans	Environ Services		Public Works		
		Library	Parks&Rec	Draft Plan	Facilities	Airport
					(Note A)	(Note B)
Purpose & Scope	2	2	0	2	0	0
SEMS/ICS Compliant	2	0	0	2	0	0
Staff Roles & Responsibilities	2	2	1	2	1	1
Emergency Contacts & Phone Numbers	2	1	0	2	2	2
Guidelines for Decision Making	2	2	0	1	0	0
Specific Emergency Procedures	2	2	0	1	0	2
Evacuation Procedures	2	2	0	2	2	0
Personnel Training Plan	2	2	1	1	0	0
Exercise & Update Plan	1	2	0	0	0	0
Plans for Coordinating with other Agencies	2	0	1	2	0	1
Post-Emergency Plans	2	2	0	1	0	0
Total	21	17	3	16	5	6

Notes:

- A. Will be superseded by draft Public Works Plan currently being prepared.
- B. Will be updated and re-issued as addendum to Public Works Plan.

Conclusions

- The plans submitted by SamTrans and Libraries and the draft of the new Public Works plan all address the majority of the critical elements needed to protect the County’s residents and property in case of a disaster.
- The Parks and Recreation and the Airport plans need to be improved or rewritten.
- The Library, Parks and Recreation, and Airport plans are not SEMS compliant.
- The Parks and Recreation plan, the Public Works draft, and the Airport plan need improvement in the areas of training and field exercises.
- It is vital that all department heads ensure that the highest quality emergency preparedness plans exist or are written for all agencies or groups under their supervision for which a plan is deemed appropriate.

Recommendations

1. The Grand Jury recommends that the Board of Supervisors ensure the following:
 - 1.1 The Parks and Recreation plan is rewritten or improved so that the plan is SEMS compliant, includes personnel training programs, and provides for periodic field exercises to test and improve the Plan.
 - 1.2 The Airport Plan is rewritten or improved, and that the Public Works and Airport Plans are SEMS compliant, include personnel training programs, and provide for periodic field exercises to test and improve the Plans.
 - 1.3 The Libraries Plan is SEMS compliant.
 - 1.4 The new Public Works and Airport Plans are completed and disseminated.
2. The Grand Jury recommends that the Board of Directors of the San Mateo County Transit District ensure that the personnel training section of the SamTrans Emergency Preparedness Plan is upgraded and that periodic field exercises are conducted to test and improve its plan.

samTrans

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 GENERAL MANAGER/CEO

August 22, 2006

The Honorable Stephen M. Hall
 Judge of the Superior Court
 Hall of Justice
 400 County Center, 2nd Floor
 Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Dear Judge Hall:

On behalf of the San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans) Board of Directors, I have been designated to respond to the 2006 Grand Jury report titled: Disaster Preparedness in SamTrans, Environmental Services and Public Works. This letter shall serve as SamTrans' formal response.

In accordance with the instructions contained in the transmittal letter of July 19, 2006, we agree with the findings of the Grand Jury. Further, we appreciate the recognition directed to SamTrans' outstanding emergency preparedness program, which the report characterized as "the most comprehensive and complete" among the agencies evaluated.

The Grand Jury, in awarding SamTrans 21 out of a possible 22 points in evaluating agency emergency preparedness, made two recommendations to the Board of Directors:

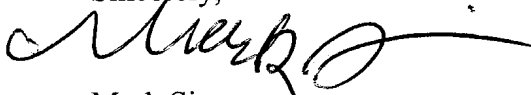
- That the Board ensure the agency Emergency Preparedness Plan include "an adequate personnel training program"; and
- That the Board ensure the agency Emergency Preparedness Plan provide for "periodic field exercises of the plan."

Pursuant to the first recommendation, Emergency Preparedness staff has been directed to prepare and complete a personnel training program by the end of calendar year 2007.

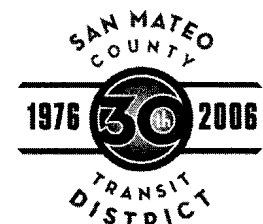
Pursuant to the second recommendation, in February, SamTrans and contract bus service provider MV Transportation participated in a emergency response drill directed toward San Mateo County residents in need of special transit requirements, in accordance with the requirements of the Emergency Preparedness Plan; in March, SamTrans conducted an earthquake disaster drill in coordination with Caltrain and all other major Bay Area transit agencies; and on November 15, SamTrans is scheduled to participate in the state-sponsored "Golden Guardian" earthquake-preparedness-and-response drill. SamTrans will regularly participate in multi-agency and intra-agency drills to maintain a state of emergency readiness.

By these actions, we are implementing the recommendations of the Grand Jury.

Sincerely,



Mark Simon
 Special Assistant to the CEO



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COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
Inter-Departmental Correspondence

County Manager's Office

DATE: October 6, 2006
BOARD MEETING DATE: October 17, 2006
SPECIAL NOTICE: None
VOTE REQUIRED: None

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors
FROM: John L. Maltbie, County Manager
SUBJECT: 2005-06 Grand Jury Response

Recommendation

Accept this report containing the County's responses to five 2005-06 Grand Jury reports: (1) Disaster Preparedness Training for the Residents of Cities in San Mateo County; (2) Disaster Preparedness at San Francisco International Airport; (3) Preparing for FCC-Mandated Changes in County Law Enforcement Radio Networks; (4) Disaster Preparedness in SamTrans, Environmental Services and Public Works; and (5) San Mateo County Detention Facilities.

VISION ALIGNMENT:

Commitment: Ensure Basic Health and Safety for all; and Responsive, Effective and Collaborative Government.

Goals 7 and 20: Maintain and enhance the public safety of all residents and visitors; and Government decisions are based on careful consideration of future impact, rather than temporary relief or immediate gain.

This activity contributes to these commitments and goals by ensuring that all Grand Jury findings and recommendations are thoroughly reviewed by the appropriate County departments and that, when appropriate, process improvements are made to ensure the public safety of County residents and visitors and to improve the quality and efficiency of services provided to the public and other agencies.

Discussion

The County is mandated to respond to the Grand Jury within 90 days from the date that reports are filed with the County Clerk and Elected Officials are mandated to respond within 60 days. It is also the County's policy to provide periodic updates to the Board and the Grand Jury on the progress of past Grand Jury recommendations requiring ongoing or further action. To that end, attached are the County's responses to the four above-mentioned Grand Jury reports on disaster preparedness issued July 19, 2006 and the Grand Jury report on detention facilities issued July 5, 2006.

(4) Disaster Preparedness in SamTrans, Environmental Services, and Public Works

Findings:

Staff from the Public Works Department, Parks and Recreation, and the County Library agree with the Grand Jury findings.

Recommendations:

1.0 The Board of Supervisors should ensure the following:

- 1.1 The Parks and Recreation Plan is rewritten or improved so that the plan is SEMS compliant, includes personnel training programs, and provides for periodic field exercises to test and improve the Plan.**

Response: Concur. Parks and Recreation is currently working with the Sheriff's Office to ensure that their Disaster Preparedness Plan is SEMS compliant, includes personnel training programs, and provides for periodic field exercises to test and improve the Plan.

- 1.2. The Airport Plan is rewritten or improved, and that the Public Works and Airport Plans are SEMS compliant, include personnel training programs, and provide for periodic field exercises to test and improve the Plans.**

Response: Concur. The Airport Plan has been rewritten and is now SEMS compliant. The Public Works Department is in the process of improving the areas of training and exercises. The Department plans to participate in all OES exercises during FY 2006-07, and training on the emergency plan is scheduled for October 18 and 25, 2006.

- 1.3. The Libraries Plan is SEMS compliant.**

Response: Concur. The County Library will work to update its Disaster Preparedness Plan to be SEMS compliant.

- 1.4. The new Public Works and Airport Plans are completed and disseminated.**

Response: Concur. The new Public Works and Airport Plans are in the process of being disseminated, with a deadline of December 15, 2006.

An update on departmental responses to this Grand Jury recommendation and the status of SEMS compliance will be included in the next quarterly report to the Board of Supervisors.

CC: San Mateo County Transit District Board of Directors
Michael J. Scanlon
George Cameron
Gigi Harrington
Chuck Harvey
Rita Haskin
Ian McAvoy
Martha Martinez
David Miller