

**TAMPA FIRE RESCUE  
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & PLANNING  
AUDIT 07-07  
AUGUST 17, 2007**



# CITY OF TAMPA

Pam Iorio, Mayor

Internal Audit Department

Roger Strout, Internal Audit Director

August 17, 2007

Honorable Pam Iorio  
Mayor, City of Tampa  
1 City Hall Plaza  
Tampa, Florida

RE: Emergency Management & Planning, Audit 07-07

Dear Mayor Iorio:

Attached is the Internal Audit Department's report on Tampa Fire Rescue's Office of Emergency Management, Emergency Management & Planning. Before we completed our audit, Tampa Fire Rescue and the Office of Emergency Management began to implement some of the Internal Audit Department's recommendations.

We thank the management and staff of Tampa Fire Rescue, the Office of Emergency Management, and all City departments for their cooperation and assistance during this audit.

Sincerely,

Roger Strout  
Internal Audit Director

cc: Darrell Smith, Chief of Staff  
Bonnie Wise, Revenue & Finance Director  
Steve Daignault, Administrator of Public Works and Utility Services  
Dennis Jones, Fire Chief  
Steve Hogue, Chief of Police

**TAMPA FIRE RESCUE  
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & PLANNING  
AUDIT 07-07  
AUGUST 17, 2007**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Auditor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Audit Supervisor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Audit Director

**TAMPA FIRE RESCUE  
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & PLANNING  
AUDIT 07-07**

**INTRODUCTION**

The City of Tampa's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) program is organized within the framework contained in the National Response Plan (NRP). The NRP establishes a comprehensive all-hazards approach, which incorporates best practices and procedures from incident management disciplines and integrates them into a unified structure. It forms the basis of how the federal government coordinates with state, local, and tribal governments and the private sector during incidents.

The OEM is managed by the City's Emergency Management Coordinator, who reports to the Emergency Management Director (Fire Chief). The mission of this operation is to protect the life and preserve the property of Tampa's citizens, businesses, and visitors through effective prevention, preparation, response, and recovery activities before, during, and after disasters and emergencies.

The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is a centralized management center for emergency operations. The EOC is organized on the guidelines of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security as outlined in the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Because NIMS is a nationally standardized approach to emergencies, it ensures maximum operational effectiveness between all levels of government. The EOC supports field response operations using the principles and components applied from the Incident Command System. It uses nineteen Emergency Support Functions to consolidate multiple agencies that perform similar or like functions into single, cohesive units that allow for the better management of disasters.

**STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES**

This audit was conducted in accordance with the Internal Audit Department's FY07 Audit Agenda. The objectives of this audit were to ensure:

1. The City complied with the provisions of the National Incident Management System that affect the City's ability to receive federal funding.
2. City departments were familiar and concurred with their roles, duties, and responsibilities documented in the City's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and Emergency Operations Center's Standard Operating Guidelines.
3. Emergency Support Functions were prepared for Emergency Operations Center activation.

## **STATEMENT OF SCOPE**

The audit period covered emergency operation activity that occurred from February 1, 2007, to June 30, 2007. Source documentation was obtained from various City departments. Original records as well as copies were used as evidence and verified through physical examination.

## **STATEMENT OF METHODOLOGY**

When appropriate, judgmental sampling was used to improve the overall efficiency of the audit. Reliance was not placed on computer-processed data; therefore, no assessment of data reliability was warranted.

## **STATEMENT OF AUDITING STANDARDS**

We conducted our audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to afford a reasonable basis for our judgments and conclusions regarding the organization, program, activity, or function under audit. An audit also includes assessments of applicable internal controls and compliance with requirements of laws and regulations when necessary to satisfy the audit objectives. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our conclusions.

## **AUDIT CONCLUSIONS**

Based upon the test work performed and the audit findings noted below, we conclude that:

1. The City complied, in all material respects, with the provisions of the National Incident Management System that affect the City's ability to receive federal funding.
2. City departments were familiar and concurred with their roles, duties, and responsibilities documented in the City's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and Emergency Operations Center's Standard Operating Guidelines; however, both documents require revisions and formal approval and acceptance.
3. Emergency Support Functions were generally prepared for Emergency Operations Center activation.

While the findings discussed below may not, individually or in the aggregate, significantly impair the operations of the Office of Emergency Management, they do present risks that can be more effectively controlled. Before we completed our audit, Tampa Fire Rescue and the Office of Emergency Management began to implement some of the Internal Audit Department's recommendations.

## **STAFFING – EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE**

The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is currently staffed with one Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC). All of the audit findings disclosed in this report could be attributed to the shortage of personnel resources available for emergency management planning and coordination. There are many tasks assigned to the Office of Emergency Management (this is not an all-inclusive list):

- Ensure Citywide compliance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS)
- Develop and implement a Citywide exercise and training program, provide emergency management recovery training to City staff, and provide executive staff training
- Update and maintain the City's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan
- Update and maintain the Emergency Operation Center's Standard Operating Guidelines
- Update and maintain the City's Continuity of Operations Plans and assist City departments with development of their plans
- Develop Disaster Mitigation, Communications, Recovery, Fueling, Feeding, Shelter, Public Housing, and Re-entry Plans (each of these is a major undertaking)
- Emergency Operations Center coordination and training, including E-Team training
- Monitor and ensure NIMS training requirements are met
- Register Persons with Special Needs
- Represent the City at local, regional, and national emergency management functions
- Coordinate Emergency Management Steering Committee Meetings
- Develop a Public Education Campaign
- Monitor Mutual Aid Agreements
- Coordinate Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and Metropolitan Medic Response System (MMRS)
- Maintain the Office of Emergency Management website
- Assist with the Annual Hurricane Expo and Awareness Week

Because of limited resources, the EMC needs to constantly re-prioritize the workload to keep up with the ever-changing demands of the position. While the City is well prepared to respond to major natural disasters, there is a considerable amount of work that must be accomplished to address all of the issues faced with a catastrophic or Katrina-like event. To help ensure the City can prepare for, respond to, and recover from an extraordinary event, additional resources are needed.

A poll was taken of other jurisdictions to determine the level of emergency management staffing given the population of the jurisdiction. Fourteen jurisdictions with populations from 71,000 to 1,800,000 with staffs of 1 to 19 responded to the poll. The results were that the jurisdictions averaged 1.23 staff per 100,000 of population with a range of 0.39 to 2.82 per 100,000. Tampa's staffing is 0.31 per 100,000 – lower than all respondents.

**RECOMMENDATION 1**

Tampa Fire Rescue should reevaluate the staffing level of the Office of Emergency Management.

**AUDITEE RESPONSE**

TFR, as well as the City Administration, agrees with this recommendation. A new position was authorized for FY 07. Interviews have been conducted, background has been completed and this new employee will begin prior to 1 September 2007.

## **USE OF PLAIN LANGUAGE**

The use of standardized and consistent terminology, including the establishment of plain language communications standards across the public safety sector, is required for NIMS compliance. Ten-codes were created when radio communications were the only method that emergency responders in the field could communicate with each other.

In Washington, DC, if a police officer says 10-50, he or she is talking about a car accident. Across the line in Montgomery County, Maryland, 10-50 means an officer needs help. And that's the way it is across much of the country, 10-codes used in one jurisdiction are not the same as those used in another. That's why it is important that responders and incident managers use common terminology. There simply is no room for misunderstanding in an emergency situation.

The use of plain language in emergency response is matter of public safety, especially the safety of first responders and those affected by the incident. It is critical that all local responders, as well as those coming into the impacted area from other jurisdictions and other states as well as the federal government, know and utilize commonly established operational structures, terminology, policies and procedures. This is what NIMS and the Incident Command System (ICS) are all about - achieving interoperability across agencies, jurisdictions, and disciplines.<sup>1</sup>

It is important to note that the Office of Emergency Management has implemented the use of plain language and the use of standardized terminology in response operations and in publications during multi-jurisdictional and/or multi-agency events. However, the requirement for plain language communications standards is not documented in either the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan or the Emergency Operation Center's Standard Operating Guidelines. Federal preparedness grant funding is dependent on the use of plain English in incidents requiring assistance from responders from other agencies, jurisdictions, and functional disciplines.

## **RECOMMENDATION 2**

The Office of Emergency Management should document the requirement of plain language communications standards in the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan or the Emergency Operation Center's Standard Operating Guidelines.

## **AUDITEE RESPONSE**

The comprehensive emergency management plan does state the requirement to operate under the NIMS guidelines; however, additional clarification will be added to address individual department's radio procedures at multi-jurisdictional and multi-agency events. Further, the

---

<sup>1</sup> *NIMS Alert-More About 10 Codes and Plain English*, The NIMS Integration Center, NA 002-06, February 8, 2006

emergency management center already practices plain language, but will provide that specific comment in the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) and Standard Operating Guideline (SOG).

## **NIMS TRAINING**

Since the City's formal adoption (Resolution 2005-1044) of the National Incident Management System (NIMS), all City personnel should have received basic NIMS training (FEMA IS-700: *NIMS, An Introduction*, ICS-100: *Introduction to ICS*, and ICS-200: *Basic ICS*). In addition to the basic training, emergency responders in middle management, general, and command staff positions should have completed one advanced class (IS-800: *National Response Plan-An Introduction*). A new NIMS requirement for FY2007 indicates these groups should attend two additional advanced classes (ICS-300: *Intermediate ICS* and ICS-400: *Advanced ICS*).

All departments assert that they are current with the basic training with the exception of new hires. Tests were planned to determine whether appropriate personnel received NIMS advanced training; however, preparations for the advanced training requirements were just getting underway.

Tampa Fire Rescue took the initiative to schedule an ICS-300 class; however, the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) was not involved with its coordination. The OEM delegated the responsibility for NIMS training to the City's departments; however, OEM must remain involved to ensure the departments are fulfilling their duties.

To ensure eligibility for Federal preparedness grant funding, all City personnel must receive the basic training and response personnel in middle management and in command and general staff must complete all three advanced courses. The Office of Emergency Management is responsible for ensuring NIMS compliance; therefore, departments' compliance with training requirements needs to be monitored and verified.

## **RECOMMENDATION 3**

The Office of Emergency Management should develop procedures to periodically verify compliance with basic NIMS training courses and ensure all appropriate personnel receive advanced NIMS training.

## **AUDITEE RESPONSE**

The OEM has provided NIMS training matrices. Individual department directors verify satisfactory completion and percentages of completion of their employees. Additionally, the HR Director is in the process of developing a data base to track this vital information. The OEM will continue to explore other avenues to verify compliance.

## **COOP, CEMP, & SOGs**

The City's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) and City departments' COOPs are out-of-date. Per review of the City's 26 COOPs, four were revised during the last year and two within the last two years. The remaining plans have not been revised since initial development (2003 and 2004). The City's recovery from an incident or disaster may be more difficult due to the lack of a functioning COOP.

The City's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) remains in draft form and has not been formally adopted by any authoritative body within the City. Without formal adoption, the emergency management program may not accurately communicate management's directives. In addition, the draft CEMP is out-of-date and requires revision as it is not consistent with the latest version of Hillsborough County's CEMP. The Florida Administrative Code requires the City's CEMP be consistent with Hillsborough County's CEMP. Inconsistencies between the City's and County's plans could lead to miscommunications and errors during emergencies.

The Emergency Operation Center's (EOC) Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs) establish standard procedures for the activation and operation of the EOC. The SOGs were not current and one Emergency Support Function needed to be reassigned.

Eighteen preparedness procedures were judgmentally selected from the SOGs to determine whether the Emergency Support Functions (ESF) were prepared for EOC activation. The following deficiencies were noted:

- A procedure referenced a Communication Plan (ESF #2) that had not been developed.
- A procedure referenced a Search & Rescue Plan (ESF #9), which turned out to be a Tampa Fire Rescue SOG on how to respond to natural disasters.
- Three procedures were determined to be the responsibility of other jurisdictions and needed to be deleted (ESF #5 and ESF #6).
- The Business & Industry support function (ESF #18) was assigned to someone without his knowledge or agreement.

Overall, Emergency Support Function personnel were prepared for EOC activation. However, inaccurate guidelines and support assignments could adversely affect the City's ability to adequately coordinate a unified response during EOC activation and operation.

## **RECOMMENDATION 4**

All departments should review and update their Continuity of Operation Plans on an annual basis. The Office of Emergency Management should monitor compliance.

### **AUDITEE RESPONSE**

The OEM agrees with this recommendation. A workshop was held on June 22, 2007. A Continuity of Operations seminar is scheduled for November 2007. A COOP Task Force has been established to monitor city-wide compliance to provide oversight throughout this process. OEM will conduct an annual workshop with department heads to review and update COOP plans.

### **RECOMMENDATION 5**

The Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan should be revised to maintain consistency with Hillsborough County's CEMP. Once updated, the formal adoption by the City's administration should be obtained.

### **AUDITEE RESPONSE**

The CEMP is a draft document. Completion is expected by 1 February 2008, then adoption by City Administration will be recommended. Following adoption, the CEMP will be shared with Hillsborough County EOC for their recognition.

### **RECOMMENDATION 6**

The Office of Emergency Management should periodically review and update the Emergency Operation Center's Standard Operation Guidelines. Individuals or entities responsible for Emergency Support Function operations should formally document their acceptance of any roles assigned to them on an annual basis.

### **AUDITEE RESPONSE**

The OEM agrees with the recommendation to annually review and update the EOC/SOG and continues to follow that practice. The OEM uses training, notification, and assignment rosters to verify appropriate ESF responsibility.

## **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT**

Resolution 2005-1004 approved the adoption of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) by the City of Tampa. This was done to comply with federal requirements and because failure to do so “may preclude reimbursement to the state, local or tribal entity for costs expended during and after a declared emergency or disaster or for training and preparation for such disasters and emergencies.”

The resolution required that the City assess its compliance with NIMS using NIMCAST, which stands for National Incident Management System Capability Assessment Support Tool. It is web-based and designed to assist state and local jurisdictions determine their compliance with NIMS.

Besides the resolution, NIMS requires communities to establish a baseline against the FY05 and FY06 implementation requirements. Lack of compliance with this requirement could affect federal preparedness funding. This requirement is met by performing a self-assessment using NIMCAST. While Tampa Fire Rescue conducted an assessment of its own operations, a city-wide assessment was never performed.

## **RECOMMENDATION 7**

The Office of Emergency Management should arrange for a NIMCAST self-assessment and develop an implementation plan for any deficiencies identified.

## **AUDITEE RESPONSE**

Tampa Fire Rescue has completed a NIMSCAST self-assessment. OEM sees the value of following TFR’s lead in completing this guidance package city-wide. The Emergency Manager has directed the Assistant Fire Chief Ops to implement this self-assessment tool on a city-wide basis. This information will be used for future planning purposes.