

Final Essay for Submission

Proposed Tinytown Emergency Management Program

Tinytown is a small city led by an elected mayor with its own small police force and fire department. The first responders completed all NIMS training requirements and Tinytown has a plan to train new hires. Responders are well trained and regularly conduct drills. However, the command structure is not strong because of poor plans and conflicts between the police and fire chief regarding who is in charge. As such, the city hasn't conducted a functional or full-scale exercise in years. The mitigation plan is out of date and staff never heard of the National Disaster Recovery Framework. Following the recent flooding disaster, the after action report indicated the existing emergency management program was ineffective. Therefore, I have been given the responsibility to design and implement a disaster/emergency management program for Tinytown.

The Problem

Research shows Tinytown has an emergency management program, and single resource response is strong. However, recent events demonstrated the overall program is ineffective. The emergency management plan is out of date, the mitigation plan needs updating, and the command and control structure does not work well for large or expanding events.

The Objective

This is an ambitious undertaking requiring multiple objectives. The first objective is to update the current emergency management plan ensuring it includes all four phases of emergency

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management, incorporates an all-hazards approach, and includes all stakeholders involved in our emergency management program. The second objective is to develop a mitigation action plan FEMA will approve. The third objective is to conduct additional training on and evaluating procedures for managing large and expanding events culminating in an HSEEP-compliant full-scale exercise for the city.

Necessary Actions

Preparedness activities are my first priority. To update the emergency plan we will follow the process described in CPC 101 and create a new comprehensive emergency management plan (CEMP). It is a six-step process – form a planning team, understand the situation, determine goals and objectives, develop the plan; prepare, review, and approve the plan; and implement and maintain the plan. The team needs to incorporate the standards in NFPA 1600, version 2013, and provisions of the revised Stafford Act, National Disaster Response Framework, and National Disaster Recovery Framework. It will review state and local rules, ordinances, and plans to ensure our procedures are compliant and interoperable. The team will also recommend changes to existing ordinances and recommend new ordinances for consideration and adoption by the City Council to clarify the authority to properly manage the emergency management program through all four phases. Finally, the processes and procedures will be NIMS compliant and the city will officially adopt NIMS and ICS.

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Response and recovery procedures will mimic the FEMA response and recovery frameworks as much as Tinytown's organizational culture and ordinances allow. There probably will be some modifications because the frameworks are only guides and not regulatory requirements.

Our **response** activities will follow the incident command system and NIMS. SOP's/SOG's will be revised to reflect how Tinytown implements ICS/NIMS in everyday response. They will also describe how incident command works between the police and fire departments as well as during incidents employing unified command and with the multi-agency coordination center.

The CEMP will reflect that **short-term recovery** begins during the response phase with damage assessments, ensuring public safety, assessing and fulfilling unmet needs, establishing short-term sheltering, and restoring essential public facilities and services. **Long-term recovery** efforts will focus on community redevelopment and restoring the economic and social viability involving Public Assistance, Individual Assistance, and Mitigation activities based on city needs and priorities following a disaster. These activities will be detailed in the various annexes of the comprehensive emergency management plan.

Mitigation is the effort to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters by taking action now, before a disaster occurs. The first step is to develop a mitigation action plan engaging a different planning team than the CEMP used, as it involves different stakeholders. The team will follow the four-step process described in FEMA 386-3, *How to develop the Mitigation Plan* — develop goals and objectives; identify and prioritize actions;

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prepare an implementation strategy; and document the mitigation planning process. Following this process should ensure state and FEMA acceptance of the plan, which is the second step. The mitigation plan's Threat Hazard Identification Risk Assessment (THIRA) becomes the basis for the CEMP's all-hazards analysis. The third step is project implementation. Working with the state, we will apply for Pre-Disaster Mitigation and other grants to help implement some of the approved mitigation projects. We will develop standard language for approved projects that could qualify for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program should Tinytown receive a Presidential disaster declaration. Finally, we will work with local businesses and NGOs to identify champions and funding sources for other approved community mitigation projects not funded under existing operating funds and bonds.

The plans are only part of the emergency management program and the preparedness phase. Training and exercising are important too. We will develop a building block approach according to HSEEP standards, which will culminate in a full-scale exercise of our plans. An after action review/report and improvement plan will follow each training event and exercise so we can maintain constant improvement. NIMS and ICS training along with some decisions by the policy group regarding incident command and unified command will go a long way to improving Tinytown's ability to manage large and expanding events effectively.

For an effective and efficient response we still need improvements in our EOC procedures. We need detailed procedures to integrate Unified Command and the multi-agency coordination

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center with the EOC. These will become part of the CEMP and will be a priority for training and exercising.

Prevention activities are good in Tinytown. Our police are connected to the state fusion center and the FBI counterterrorism group. The police chief developed an effective intelligence-gathering unit and intelligence sharing is ongoing, so I don't see a need to make any changes at this time. Some changes I will make, however, are to increase our emergency management safety awareness program regarding all-hazards for both Tinytown's staff and local residents; plan and conduct joint/integrated training and awareness programs with our partners; plan and participate in joint exercises with a terrorist component; and ensure we have up-to-date MOUs and policies to enable cooperation between various entities. Finally, we will implement Community-policing initiatives, strategies, and tactics as a basis to identify suspicious activities.

Intended Outcome

My analysis indicated Tinytown needed an *updated emergency plan* and a *new mitigation action plan*. Staff also needs a plan for managing multi-resource events. Finally, staff must be trained on the new program and the plans evaluated through a progressive exercise program. Therefore, our emergency management program will build upon existing plans and structure, meet state and federal standards, and fix the command and control structure. We will declare success when the city is responding to emergencies and disasters in a timely and controlled manner, particularly when managing multi-resource events.

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Human Resources

I cannot accomplish these objectives alone. They require knowledge and expertise I do not have, but others do. So I will put together multi-functional planning teams consisting of selected stakeholders such as emergency management, police, fire, EMS, hospital, public health, public works, various critical infrastructure owners, utility operators, education, agriculture, animal control, social services, childcare, child welfare, juvenile justice facilities, National Guard, and civic, social, faith-based, educational, professional, and advocacy organizations. We will engage immigrant and limited English constituencies, voluntary organizations, private service providers, and local and regional corporations. The public will be invited to various meetings too.

Our senior department heads and elected officials are key members of the policy group. They will be engaged at appropriate times with status briefings and decision briefs. I will need access to them throughout the process.

Various subject matter experts and selected trusted agents will form the exercise planning teams as well as exercise controllers, evaluators, and simulators. Over time, we will engage different staff for these positions so all get to participate as players in the exercises.

Much of the required training will be done internally, though some will be conducted by the state and by FEMA. Specialized training will have to come from selected contractors. Our local university may be able to assist with some training too.

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Material and Financial Resources

The planning teams will need admin support. Since I don't have any admin staff in the emergency management office, I will have to borrow them from various departments. The department heads' need to support this as well as allow selected members of their staff to participate in the planning meetings.

The emergency management office has a small operating budget under current funding sources. With your permission, I will work with the regional planning group and the state to obtain available grant monies such as EMPG, HMGP, pre-disaster mitigation, Homeland Security, Department of Justice, grants to firefighters, and any other grant sources as may be available to support our needs. In the meantime, I will need funding support from the various department heads to fund these activities until you can increase my budget in the next fiscal year. This will pay for admin support, supplies, mailings, reproduction of documents, meeting rooms, some travel, and food/refreshments during the meetings.

Industry leaders in Tinytown and our mutual aid partners may provide some monetary and other support. To reduce the cost of our exercise program while enhancing the training value, I will seek opportunities to integrate our staff and exercise requirements into exercises conducted by other entities. Doing this will improve our abilities and enhance our interoperability at the least cost.

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Following this proposed course of action should result in Tinytown responding to emergencies and disasters in a timely and controlled manner according to our new emergency management program incorporating the tenets of NIMS and ICS.

“I verify that I have independently completed this essay.”

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(Your Name)

(Your Signature)