

OperationOC /2010-11 Winter Storms/Orange County 2011 Applicant to CDAA PNP Program for Cost Reimbursement

The Organization

At the time of the 2010-11 winter storms in Orange County, OperationOC maintained a Disaster Preparedness and Recovery Partnership, a network of 40+ Christian congregations and ministries. The purpose of the Partnership was to a) help the churches develop their own disaster programs and b) prepare them to respond in concert with one another and also with the Orange County Operational Area, COAD-OC (Collaborating Organizations Active in Disaster-Orange County) and other response organizations. Because of the network's vast array of resources, OperationOC had the capability to deliver a wide variety of disaster services, including communications, mobile and mass feeding, and sheltering. Prior to the storms, OperationOC had a Plan of Cooperation with the Operational Area.¹

The Situation

Despite a prevailing La Nina weather pattern, Orange County experienced a series of severe winter storms that began on December 17, 2010. Dubbed a "Pineapple Express" event, the storms brought extreme flooding, mudslides and debris flows to a number of areas in the county. On December 21, a local emergency was proclaimed by the county.

The Request

On December 28 the Orange County Sheriff's Department/Emergency Management Bureau (OCSD/EMB) asked COAD-OC for assistance responding to a request from the Inter-Canyon League (ICL). ICL had asked the county for help feeding volunteers who were showing up at a particularly hard-hit canyon area. The original request was for daily lunches for up to 150 volunteers but quickly added were requests for debris removal, plastic sheeting, buckets, shovels and heavy equipment. All requests to COAD-OC were documented; there were many emails, and phone calls were backed up by email confirmation.

The Response

The Leadership Council of COAD-OC forwarded the county's request to each COAD sector. Upon receiving this information, OperationOC shared the request with its Partnership network members, many of which responded positively. Per an agreement with EMB, formalized by phone and email, on December 30 OperationOC began coordinating the supply of daily lunches and debris removal teams to ICL. The daily effort continued through January 12, 2011, then transitioned to primarily Saturdays,

¹ A subsequent version, signed April 22, 2011, recognized OperationOC as a PNP and an intermediary PNP as described in the State PNP Program regulations. It called on OperationOC to be the primary communication link between the EOC and CBOs and the private sector. OperationOC no longer plays this role, which has been substantially assumed by COAD-OC.

lasting until early March. In all, the network coordinated by OperationOC provided 1949 hours of volunteer labor and 1460 meals.

The PNP Process/Application

As an Intermediary PNP, OperationOC claimed reimbursement for its own services. The coordinated PNPs (members of the Partnership) did not wish to be reimbursed, therefore submitted no reimbursement claims on their own nor had their costs bundled with those of OperationOC. After consultation with the State, OperationOC completed and submitted the 11 forms then required (now only 4 required). The MOU OperationOC already had with the county (to provide services during disasters) was worded openly and the State accepted it for the purposes of the PNP application. The *essential service* categories for which OperationOC was reimbursed were feeding and debris removal. The only category submitted by OperationOC for *extraordinary costs* was staff overtime (a part-time position expanded to full-time to cover this role) and the total request for reimbursement was \$7056, all of which was reimbursed.

The PNP Process/Key Dates

- Dec 28 – EMB request to COAD
- Dec 30 – OperationOC commences providing services
- Jan 21 – State Emergency Proclamation

Other Outcomes

- The value of donated manpower and materials for this disaster totaled \$800,000, reflecting primarily the services coordinated by OperationOC but also donated resources from a few other response organizations. Each responding organization tracked the services provided and submitted the data to EMB which compiled it. This amount was used to offset local government's cost share for its application to the federal Public Assistance Program.
- A number of Orange County-specific documents relevant to the PNP process are available on the Santa Barbara VOAD website at <http://www.voadsbc.org/dcr>
 - Plan of Cooperation between OperationOC and the Orange County Operational Area, recognizing OperationOC as a private nonprofit and an intermediary PNP
 - Disaster Response Cooperative Plan between OperationOC and a "cooperative organization"
 - Template MOU for Paratransit Services between County Emergency Services and a paratransit provider
- Today OperationOC no longer plays a response role as it had earlier. For purposes of PNP, COAD-OC is now the Intermediary PNP. OneOC is the COAD's fiscal sponsor. At the time of a disaster, with initial support from local grantmakers, COAD may be able to hire someone to coordinate the response of member organizations.