Transit Emergency Planning Policy and Procedure

I. Introduction.

Safety has always been a top priority at the Authority. This document provides an outline of best guidance. However, it may not include information for every conceivable catastrophic loss event. The goal is to reduce risk, provide an outline of responding to natural disasters, mobile assistance to first responders, security threats, and loss of infrastructure and serious accidents involving the Authority. The ability to respond to emergency events requires an ongoing commitment to emergency planning and a commitment to revisit this policy on an ongoing basis.

Providing safe, reliable transportation has long been a priority at all levels of the transit industry including Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and individual transit providers.

Due to varying roles in our community, transit’s traditional focus on safety has been expanded to include system security, even in rural communities. Further, unrest in the world, including large scale threats and homeland security issues, has caused transit agencies to plan for any level of threat. Further, crime and violence impacting the employees of the Authority also causes pause in transit planning and development.

Transit is now tasked with working on various third party agencies to consider threats to the community, threats to the agency, severe incidents/injuries and loss to transportation infrastructure. The following represent only a snap-shot of who the Authority may call upon in the event of an emergency:

* First Preventer – recognizing hazards and threats before they become major incidents
* First Responder – supporting evacuations, transport of first responders, providing mobile shelter, and otherwise supporting emergency response activities. This may include law enforcement, medical personnel, emergency management staff, county communications entities and third party hazard investigators.
* Risk prevention personnel – staff from insurance companies, risk perfection groups, attorneys and other personnel to assist in investigation of an incident.
* Media liaisons – personnel trained in communicating with the public to respond to significant loss that has an impact on the community as well as the Transit Agency.
* First on Scene – responding appropriately to accidents and incidents, acts of nature, loss of organizational infrastructure, hazmat spills, criminal activity and even acts of domestic or international terrorism. Regardless of the cause, critical incidents require swift decisive action to protect life and property.

This Transit Emergency Planning Guidance document details industry best practices, using the cornerstones of emergency planning doctrine:

* Prepare - Identify assets essential to your mission - Assess hazards and threats facing your agency and your community –
* Train staff on how to prevent, respond to and recover from prime risks –
* Coordinate with other emergency response stakeholders
* Prevent - Take steps to eliminate threats where possible
* Institute policies and procedures that reduce the likelihood of incidents occurring - Take steps that reduce the impact when incidents do occur
* Respond React quickly and decisively to critical incidents focusing on: - Life Safety - Property Protection - Stabilization of Incident
* Recover - Resume service delivery based on availability of resources - Repair and replace critical assets - Assess incident response and make changes based on lessons learned

1. PREPARATION.

Safety has always been a top priority for the Authority. Based upon events in our region, our country and within other transit authorities, safety now is not merely an issue of training for drivers and mechanics. Safety for the Authority now involves the entire community and the family members of our employees. Critical Incidents could include accidents, natural disasters, sabotage, civil unrest, hazardous materials spills, criminal activity, or acts of terrorism. Regardless of the cause, critical incidents require swift, decisive action to protect life and property. Critical incidents must be stabilized prior to the resumption of regular service or activities.

Successful resolution of critical incidents typically requires cooperative efforts by a variety of responding agencies. The Authority strives to:

* Ensure that system safety, security and emergency preparedness are addressed during all phases of operations including hiring and training of safety and supervisory personnel; procurement and maintenance of equipment; development of policies and procedures; delivery of service; and coordination with local emergency management and first responder agencies.
* Ensure that appropriate disability expertise and experience is integrated into all aspects of emergency preparedness; development of policies and procedures; and coordination with local emergency management and first responder agencies.

1. Definitions.

* System Safety – The application of operating policies and procedures to reduce vulnerability to safety-related hazards.
* System Security – The application of operating policies and procedures to reduce vulnerability to security threats. Policies within this category are often not included on System websites and accessible to the public.
* Emergency Preparedness – The system of policies and procedures that assure rapid, controlled, and predictable response to a wide variety of safety and/or security incidents.

1. Goals.

• Create a culture that supports employee safety and security through the appropriate use and operation of equipment and resources.

• Promote methodologies that identify changing threat conditions and bolster agency response capabilities.

• Ensure that the Authority achieves a level of security performance and emergency readiness that meets or exceeds the operating experience of similarly-sized agencies.

• Identify and pursue funding opportunities at the state and federal level to support safety, security and emergency preparedness efforts.

• Make every effort to ensure that, if confronted with a safety or security event or major emergency, personnel will respond effectively, using good judgment and building on best practices identified in policies and procedures and exercised through drills and training.

* Employ training through the use of existing personnel, community resources and industry assistance to promote safety.

1. Hazard and Threat Assessment.

Most transit systems define their mission in terms of mobility: providing safe, reliable transportation to those who do not have other mobility options, and/or those who choose transit. Defining your mission helps determine what assets are most critical.

Assets include people, information, and property, each of which are designed to help fulfill the mission. Assets are critical when their loss either endangers human life or impacts your ability to meet your mission. Those assets whose loss would have the greatest impact on your ability to meet your mission may require special protection. By analyzing the threats and hazards faced by the Authority and community, we can better prioritize emergency preparedness activities. Hazard and risk assessment is a comprehensive study of a system to identify those components most vulnerable to disruption or destruction and to assess the likely impact that such disruption or destruction would have on passengers, employees, and the transit system. It considers the likelihood of hazards and threats damaging critical assets based upon historical data, known risks and evaluation.

Transit assets can be broadly defined as People, Information, and Property:

• People – Passengers, employees, visitors, contractors, vendors, community members, and others who come into contact with the system

• Information – Employee and customer information, computer network configurations and passwords, ridership, revenue and service statistics, operating and maintenance procedures, vehicle identification systems

• Property – Revenue vehicles, non-revenue vehicles, storage facilities, passenger facilities, maintenance facilities and equipment, administrative offices, computer systems and communications equipment

1. Communication.

The goal of emergency preparedness is to reduce the Authority’s risk experience. As risk is endemic to public transportation, a communication system will be established to communicate when risk is low and when it is high. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) utilizes the [National Terrorism Advisory System](https://www.dhs.gov/national-terrorism-advisory-system) (NTAS). The system has various forms of alert levels to warn the public and includes bulletins as necessary to communicate with the public. An "Elevated Alert" is intended to warn of a credible terrorist threat against the United States and its territories that is general in both timing and potential location such that is reasonable to recommend implementation of protective measures to thwart or mitigate against an attack.  An "Imminent Alert" is intended to warn of a credible, specific, and impending terrorist threat or on-going attack.  DHS has continuously evaluated intelligence threat streams through the NTAS process since the system's creation, but it has never issued an Alert because neither the circumstances nor threat streams have risen to the required level or purpose of the system.

1. Planning.

It is vital that the Authority be able to mobilize quickly in case of an emergency. That requires planning and organization. Some of the planning elements most essential to effective incident response include identification of your internal emergency response team, contact information for all staff and partner agencies, and drills and exercises by which to evaluate preparedness and identify vulnerabilities. Other planning challenges, some of which are of particular concern to the Authority’s Community, include:

• Overcoming language and cultural barriers

• Coordinating evacuation of special needs populations (e.g. people with disabilities and elderly)

* Coordination in rural areas and small cities
* Coordination with County Emergency Response Departments and communication centers

Contact lists should include work number, home number, cell phone number, email address and home address. It is particularly important to have this information for key staff such as Emergency Response Team personnel, board members, insurance carriers, legal counsel, claims/risk management staff, executive staff and other third parties the Authority has identified in its Plan. You should advise 3rd parties and employees that they are included within your plan.

1. External Contact Information

It is important to maintain accurate and up-to-date contact information for community emergency management personnel, first responders and partner organizations for notification in the case of safety and security emergencies.

The following list that is attached to this policy includes work number, home number, cell phone number, email address and home address for the following:

* Police Chief
* Fire Chief/deputy
* Emergency Medical Services
* Local and State Emergency Operations Centers
* County Commissioners
* Municipal Traffic Public Works Departments
* Local hospital emergency room(s)
* Gallagher Basset Emergency Hotline
* Solicitor/SAFTI Counsel
* Media Liaison
* Board Chairman

Also attached to this Plan is a Phone Tree which identifies all persons who should be contacted in the event of a significant emergency. Employees should have this available. If you cannot contact the person you are required to call, you should contact the next person in line in order to keep the phone tree operational.

In the event that a disaster occurs, that does not include solely a loss to the Authority, additional measures may be required. For instance, loss of communication can be a major issue during a crisis, and cellular communications are particularly vulnerable. \*\* Each Authority should evaluate whether you are a part of the County’s emergency response team and the protocol for communication in the event that a disaster occurs and telecommunications are impacted.

1. Coordination with Third Parties.

Coordination with Emergency Management

It is vitally important that the identification of stakeholders take place at the beginning of the planning process. Effective emergency response does not happen by accident. It is the result of planning, training, exercising, and intra/interagency cooperation. It is recommended that transit representatives regularly participate on their Local Emergency Planning Meetings. At a minimum, the Authority’s safety personnel will meet annually with city and/or county emergency management coordinator to discuss:

• Transit’s role as a first-responder resource on community disaster incidents

• The need to familiarize your local police, fire and emergency medical services (EMS) personnel with your facilities and your equipment

• Opportunities for training of transit staff in the National Incident Management System (NIMS), and local disaster preparedness issues

• Strategies to identify individuals with specialized needs, their locations, and their requirements for transportation assistance

• Regular and after-hours contact information for your agency

• Opportunities to integrate transit into local disaster drills and exercises

Coordination with First Responders

In addition to fostering relationships with the local emergency management coordinator, it is recommended that transit build relationships directly with local law enforcement, fire and EMS leadership to ensure transit issues are understood.

At a minimum, the Authority will also meet annually with local first responders to discuss:

• Critical information that your dispatcher(s) must obtain from your bus/train operator to ensure that first responders receive the most useful information possible if/when something occurs requiring their help

• Regular and after-hours contact information for transit incident response point people

• Transit-specific issues (e.g., evacuation of transit vehicles, considerations for people with disabilities) that first responder agencies need to understand

• Familiarization with equipment, buildings, facilities, and evacuation procedures including:

- Vehicle and facility entry

- Recommended facility escape routes and safety zones

- Hazardous materials in facilities and on vehicles

- Fuel shut-off valves

- Equipment shutdown

- Emergency dump valves

- Battery cut-off switches

- Lift equipment operations

- Communications compatibility

• Any special tools/equipment first responders might need to address transit emergencies, particularly items that they would not normally possess

• Opportunities for transit staff to be trained by law enforcement on responding to violent perpetrators and vehicle accidents and maintenance accidents on-site

• Opportunities for transit staff to be trained by fire personnel on responding to vehicle and facility fire situations

• Opportunities for transit staff to be trained by organizations providing services to people with disabilities on evacuating and transporting to shelters

• Opportunities for law enforcement to be trained on how to safely fire their weapons on a CNG or Diesel vehicle

• Appropriate first responder unit jurisdictions

• Transfer of Command at any transit disaster

• Expectations for who your staff should expect to interface with on a local disaster incident

1. Drills and Exercises

It is essential that transit managers test emergency preparedness plans through disaster drills and exercises that are increasingly challenging over time. Implementation of such a program allows your staff to achieve and maintain competency in the skills necessary to effectively respond to the risks you face. Agencies should review and communicate with TSA their system who will assist, through the use of the TSA EXIS system, a design, facilitation and evaluation of drills and protocols for emergency preparedness.

I. Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP)

* To establish the importance of safety, security, and emergency preparedness in all aspects of the Authority, a formal Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP) should be developed and adopted by management and/or the Board of Directors. This plan should outline the processes by which your agency prepares for, prevents, responds to and recovers from critical incidents. The activities documented in your EPP should clearly identify your methodology for documenting and analyzing potential safety hazards and security threats and clearly assign responsibility for addressing these threats. The Authority will utilize such resources as: OSHA Guidance and Regulations
* NTSB Guidance

Manufacturer information and guidance for large equipment

* Homeland Security Bulletins

1. **PREVENTION**

Risk is inherent in public transportation for many reasons: weather conditions, unmarked obstacles/road hazards, vehicle fires, drivers of other vehicles, and societal ills, violence and terroristic threats, to name a few. When faced with hazards or threats, an agency must eliminate, control/mitigate, or transfer the risk.

Risk elimination implies changes to equipment, facilities, training or operational implementation in order to limit or no longer be exposed to the hazard (e.g. moving the bus maintenance facility out of the floodplain).

Risk control/mitigation implies changes in policies, procedures or training that reduce the likelihood of an event, or reduce its impact on critical assets (e.g. defensive driving training). Prevention protocol should be updated as your Authority obtains new equipment and as guidance becomes available.

Risk transference implies that the risk exposure is borne by someone else (e.g. hazard and liability insurance or contractual hold harmless clauses).

1. Reducing Risk:

Strategies to reduce vulnerability include:

• Involve staff and employees at all levels in the identification of hazards and threats

• Involve staff in creating strategies that prevent or mitigate unwanted incidents

• Provide training that raises staff awareness, across all departments, about agency-specific hazards and threats

• Conduct drills that raise staff proficiency in reacting to unwanted incidents, including proper use of emergency equipment and communication technologies

• Participate in exercises that improve coordination across departments and between responding agencies for any sort of critical incident

The goal is to protect critical assets – people, information and property – by recognizing environmental changes and operational trends that increase vulnerability. Following is a summation of industry best practices for vulnerability reduction.

* Transit Facility Safety and Security Review – the concept is to design of safer public facilities, such as transit stations and bus stop, are transferable to endeavors to secure and harden elements of an agency’s infrastructure from hazards and threats. Major elements of this concept are defensible space, territoriality, surveillance, lighting, landscaping, and physical security planning. These facilities include transit stops, transit stations and vehicle storage yards.
* Access Management Control - who (or what) may access restricted areas within your facilities plays an important role in protecting transit infrastructure from all of the major threats identified in this section. A core principle of access management is that valuable assets are protected behind multiple “layers” of secure spaces, with security measures becoming more stringent for deeper layers. Access control may focus on discerning between employees and visitors, on maintaining locks, on screening for weapons, or on barring unauthorized vehicle entry to a transit property.

Access management techniques may include procedures and policies, physical barriers, identification and credentialing technology, security personnel, communications systems, surveillance, and intrusion-detection systems.

* Surveillance - Can include closed-circuit televisions, security personnel, or vigilant Bus Operators/Drivers or station clerks, who are often the first line in security defense. Such video surveillance will be utilized both on vehicles and at the Authority’s facilities. The presence of agency staff can deter an attack. The presence of surveillance equipment acts as a deterrent because activities are recorded and intruders are aware of the possibility of detection and capture. Surveillance is also useful in warding off attacks upon remote, unmanned infrastructure, such as communications towers and power substations. Transit agencies should consider what combination of equipment and personnel are needed to achieve optimal security coverage. Placement should be based on the volume of human and vehicular traffic, the layout of the watched or guarded asset, as well as the location of any blind spots resulting from overlapping or peripheral areas. Transit agencies should be clear to the public whether they should rely upon such security for their own personal safety or whether such security is for later risk management efforts. Who should or may rely upon any surveillance on your property should be clearly identified.

The Authority will be clear to third parties and employees surveillance measures are not protection but deterrence. Also, patrons will be notified that the Authority does not have a full security team, so security cameras are not intended for instant protection in order to avoid third parties failing to be diligent in hopes for Authority reaction.

The Authority will also be clear regarding how long such surveillance videos are maintained, the circumstances of long term maintenance of security and who owns security footage. Also, the Authority will adopt camera maintenance policies to ensure operation of camera and security systems should be included in your policies.

Dummy security systems should not permitted by the Authority.

* Facility Inspection Safety and security reviews should also include inspection of all facilities with special attention directed to:

- Hazardous material storage, securement and record-keeping

- Fuel storage and servicing

- Personnel safety equipment (e.g. automatic defibrillators, eye wash stations, first aid and blood borne pathogen kits)

- Fire prevention (e.g., fire extinguishers, alarms, sprinklers)

- Maintenance infrastructure (e.g., pits, lifts, electrical feeds, no-walk areas, parts storage)

- Lighting

- Entrances, exits, intrusion detection, CCTV

- Communication equipment

- Sensitive employee and customer information

- High-risk facilities and activities near transit facilities and operations

- Emergency supply cabinet or shed (food, water, medical, generator)

- Perimeter fencing, physical barriers, barricades

- Utility mains/shutoffs

- Traffic calming in parking facilities and on property

1. Inspections:

Your facilities and staff working conditions should be periodically inspected in order to ensure the appropriate level of safety. While OSHA does not apply to the Authority, as a standard to ensure safety, the Authority will consider OSHA standards when performing general maintenance and upgrades to the facility.

In the case of each location for the Authority, “Business Locations Plans” should be established for alternate facilities, equipment, personnel, and other resources necessary to maintaining service during crisis, or to resume service as quickly as possible following disaster. Further, the Authority will periodically review its evacuation plan to ensure that escape corridors are sufficiently clear for emergency exits.

Typically, organizations will identify and pre-contract for alternate facilities in the event of catastrophic infrastructure loss. Facilities should meet accessibility standards to ensure an employee or contractor with a disability can affectively perform their duties.

The Authority should also include inspections and periodic review of computer security. Cyber-attacks and loss of data are critical components of this Procedure and is an additional consideration to facility security measures.

Network failure may be caused by faulty or damaged internal components, direct cyber-attack to the agency’s network, direct attack to a peripheral system or network, or even a blanket computer virus. The result may be loss of communications or operations capabilities as well as misinformation by hacking into a website or server. Back-up files should be kept for key financial records, vehicle maintenance records, and details about customers and personnel. Most computer network professionals recommend daily back-ups for daily users, and weekly back-ups for less occasional computer users. Back-up technologies include magnetic tape, zip drives, DVDs, jump-drives and external hard-drives. Backup files should be stored in a fireproof and secured location. An additional copy of computer backups, along with duplicate hard copies of important documents, should be kept off-site in a secured location. A regular schedule should be established for off-site record storage to ensure that those records remain up-to-date. Computer file passwords and firewalls may also be indicated, depending upon the nature of your organization.

1. Operator Vehicle Inspections:

Transit vehicle operators must complete a vehicle safety pre-trip inspection before placing any vehicle into service. The pretrip listing for the Authority includes security measures as well as safety measures. From a security perspective, this inspection should cover:

• Vehicle emergency supplies and required security equipment

• Sweep of vehicle interior to detect unauthorized objects or tampering

• Checking of interior lights to make sure they are operational

• Inspection under the vehicle to detect items taped or attached to the frame

• Gas cap for signs of tampering or unusual items

• Engine compartment for signs of tampering or unusual items

• Exterior of the vehicle for scratches or marks, or signs of tampering such as unusually clean or dirty compartments or items attached using magnets or duct tape.

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1. Vehicle Readiness:

Vehicle Readiness It is imperative that on-board life-safety equipment be fully checked periodically, and resupplied after use. Required on-board life-safety equipment includes, but is not limited to:

• Fire Extinguisher

• First Aid Kit

• Bio-hazard Kit

• Seat Belt Cutter

• Reflective Triangles

Though not required, additional recommended equipment includes a working flashlight, a drag blanket (for warmth, evacuations and fire suppression) and emergency instructions for high-probability incidents. On-board personnel should be fully trained in the use of all onboard life-safety equipment.

1. Training and Development Protocol for Emergency Communications:

In the event of an emergency, a transit operator is trained to include the most pertinent information that dispatch needs to contact the appropriate first responder.

• Emergency calls must state the nature of the emergency, precise location of emergency, and what assistance is required.

• Normally, the Dispatch/Supervisor is the only unit authorized to communicate with transit vehicle operators requesting assistance until the crisis is resolved.

It is important to practice normal and emergency communications with driving staff as a part of initial and refresher training. Crisis Management Training must cover emergencies the vehicle operator may face while out on the bus/train including:

• Vehicle accidents

• Passenger falls

• Ill and injured passengers

• Lift operations and/or failures

• Fire safety

• Vehicle evacuation

• Blood borne Pathogens (bodily fluid spills and clean-up procedures)

• Handling conflict (including acts of violence or terrorism)

• Recognizing and communicating about transit security risks

1. Training of other Personnel

At a minimum, the following should be part of the training curriculum for non-revenue service personnel during emergency situations e:

Maintenance:

• Incident response protocols Scheduling and Dispatching

• Scheduling and Dispatching Skill development

• Customer Relations

• Radio Usage

• Crisis Management

• Incident response protocols

Management and Supervision:

• Crisis Management

• Accident Investigation

• Crime scene Preservation and evidence collection requirements

1. Security Awareness:

Management must provide clear direction to staff regarding safety, security, and incident management watches and warnings. This includes awareness for crisis preparedness procedures, special safety and security measures involving buses and other vehicles, heightened awareness of suspicious persons and activities, and verifying the identify of service and delivery personnel.

1. Suspicious Items, Vehicles, People and Activities:

Suspicious Items Recognition and Reporting Public transportation systems frequently encounter items left unattended in stations and on vehicles. These unattended packages impose a tremendous burden on security. Although unattended packages seldom turn out to be bombs or other weapons of terror, they all represent a potential threat and need to be examined systematically.

Packages and devices should be considered suspicious if they meet any of the following criteria:

• Common objects in unusual locations

• Uncommon objects in common locations

• A threatening message is attached

• Unusual wires or batteries are visible

• Stains, leaks or powdery residue are evident

• Sealed with excessive amounts of tape or string

• Lopsided or lumpy in appearance

• Tanks, bottles or bags are visible

• A clock or timer is attached

• A strange odor, cloud, mist, vapor or sound emanates from it

• Addressed with cut and paste lettering and/or common words misspelled

• Have excessive postage attached

• Abandoned by someone who quickly leaves the scene

• No one in the immediate area claims it as theirs

• An active attempt has been made to hide it (i.e. Placed in an out-of-the-way locations)

If an item, package or device is determined to be suspicious:

• The item should not be touched or moved

• The area and/or vehicle should be immediately evacuated uphill and upwind

• Radio and cell phones should not be used within 300 feet of the suspicious package

• System management should be immediately notified

• Appropriate action should be taken (i.e., notifying of bomb analysis team).

If an unattended package is deemed not suspicious, it should be treated as lost property and handled according to agency protocol.

1. Suspicious Vehicles Recognition and Reporting.

Vehicles (cars, trucks, boats, bikes) are frequently used in criminal or terrorist attacks. Therefore, agency employees should be alert to suspicious vehicles in and around their work environment and should notify system management of vehicles that:

• Show signs of forced entry

• Have altered or makeshift company insignia or license plates

• Are located in an unauthorized area or near a potentially catastrophic target

• Contain unusual equipment which could be used in a violent act

• Appear to be overloaded and/or have bulging tires or sagging frames

• Emit unusual odors, leaks or residues

1. Suspicious People and Activities:

The key concern in determining what is suspicious is always based on 1) where someone is, 2) when he or she is there, and 3) what he or she is doing. It is important to focus on behaviors and not on a person’s color, nationality, ethnicity or religion. Behavior may be considered suspicious based upon:

• Attitude of the person

• Actions in and around crowds

• Inappropriate apparel/accessories (e.g. Heavy coat on a hot day)

• Body language (e.g. reaction to uniformed presence) Specific actions of concern include individuals appearing to be:

• Gathering intelligence

• Testing security response tests

• Attempting infiltration of a secure facility

It normally is a combination of factors that will accurately identify a suspicious person or act. Employees should be encouraged to trust their judgment based on their experience in and around the agency’s facilities and the community. If it does not feel right, it is often worth reporting.

1. Safety/Security Data Analysis:

Your agency should have a protocol that provides for the review of safety/security performance and identification of corrective actions that will reduce the likelihood of repeating preventable losses in the future.

Specific focus should be on safety/security related events such as passenger injury or claims, employee injuries, and accidents and incidents. It is essential to identify safety/security accident/incident trends, and to take steps that eliminate hazards and threats where possible, reduce their impact when appropriate, and shift liability to other parties where necessary.

A critical incident is any incident that threatens assets essential to your transit system or your community. Regardless of how well you plan, train and exercise you will not be able to fully eliminate all hazards and threats facing public transit. The ability to perform under these conditions should be applied to incident response based on the incident objectives.

Common incident response objectives are, in priority order:

1) Preservation of self

2) Protection of others

3) Protection of property

4) Stabilization of incident

5) Preservation and safety of family

1. Internal Incident Response Reactions/Drills:

Actions that should be performed by all personnel:

• Become familiar with, and operate within, all safety, security and emergency preparedness procedures for assigned duties

• Use good judgment when managing volatile passengers and situations

• Immediately report all suspicious activity to the Transit Director or his/her designee

• Notify the Transit Director or his/her designee when a physical or mental condition, or required medications or therapies, may impair ability to meet performance standards for safety, security, and/or emergency response activities

• Immediately report all safety and security incidents

• Participate in security and emergency preparedness training, drills and exercises.

1. Cyber Security:

Not only is your data vital to your operation, but also includes sensitive information for customers, contractors, and employees. Appropriate cyber protection should be in place, including passwords and update protocol. Your agency should perform periodic checks to ensure data integrity. Appropriate email security and rules should be established to ensure protection from viruses and third party destruction. Emergency response to virus or third party data collectors should be explored with staff and consultants to minimize damage or interruption of service.

1. Executive Director/CEO/General Manager:

The Transit Director has overall authority and ultimate accountability for critical incidents including:

• Activating Emergency Response Team

• Coordinating with the Emergency Operations Center

• Establishing incident objectives for the Authority

• Developing and managing the incident staffing plan

• Communicating with governing board chair and members and major stakeholders

• Ensuring that sufficient resources are allocated to incident response

• Providing leadership on response and recovery operations

• Reviewing incident response actions and incident investigation reports

• Implementing changes to reduce the likelihood of future losses

• Available as agency spokesperson in selected situations throughout response and recovery (mainly to reassure the public and instill confidence in the agency’s emergency response)

1. Safety and Security Officer:

During incident response, someone must be charged with safety and security, including:

• Ensuring protection of transit assets from a safety/security perspective

• Establishing staffing limits that consider rest and recovery protocols

• Debriefing and crisis counseling for the Authority’s staff

• After-action recommendations to limit future losses

* Reporting to appropriate risk management personnel and consultants when necessary

1. Public Affairs/Communications:

What you say during a crisis can be as important as what you do. The public, your employees and emergency providers must be assured that the situation is being addressed, that you are cooperating and that the Authority is prepared for an emergency situation- even if an emergency cannot be anticipated and even if every step in the process is not handled appropriately.

Public Affairs/Communications staff is responsible for:

• Crafting messages incorporating verifiable incident information and impact on service delivery

• Notification of internal audiences (board, staff, advisory committees) and external audiences (media, public)

• Coordinating press conferences and other public announcements in accordance to NIMS

• Coordinating with partner agencies

• Preparing after-action reports

1. Dispatchers:

Dispatchers are integral in the catastrophic loss procedure. Regardless of the event, Dispatchers will be on the front lines. All persons who fill any dispatching role must be fully trained for handling an incident including addressing the incident and remaining calm. Dispatchers are expected to:

• Receive calls for assistance

• Obtain incident details and determine response requirements

• Provide direction to on-scene personnel

• Dispatch supervisors and emergency response personnel, as appropriate

• Arrange for alternate transportation, including wheelchair accessible vehicles, for passengers that may be stranded by an incident

• Coordinate with first responder resources

• Notify supervisory and management staff of serious incidents

• Notify area hospitals in case of a mass casualty incident

• Notify social service, contract agencies, and community based organizations serving the elderly and disabled of disruptions and/or cancellations of service

• Coordinate with marketing regarding cancellation of fixed-route services

1. Operations Managers/Supervisors:

Operations managers/supervisors are responsible for implementing incident response objectives established by the transit director/incident commander, and ensuring smooth function of both incident operations and continued provision of transit services.

To fulfill that responsibility operations managers must:

• Have full knowledge of all standard and emergency operating procedures

• Provide leadership and direction to employees during safety and security incidents

• Make decisions regarding the continuance of operations

• Provide for needed on-scene assistance and coordination

• Communicate incident response activities to marketing/PR

• Compile incident photos and witness statements

• Ensure that all information gathering and reporting requirements are satisfied

• Coordinate any required post-accident drug-testing requirements

• Complete necessary safety and security-related reports

1. Vehicle Operators:

Vehicle operators are responsible for managing on-board safety and security incidents from impact until supervisors and/or first responders arrive including:

• Continually assess hazards and threats, and determine when to call for assistance

• Report all accidents or incidents to agency dispatch

• Take charge of any safety or security incident scene in which they are involved until the arrival of supervisory or emergency personnel

• Keep passengers together in a safe location (on or off the vehicle, depending upon the incident)

• Request that passengers complete incident witness information cards

• Maintain control of transit equipment until relieved of that responsibility by supervisory or emergency personnel

• Support emergency response activities as directed, assuming that such direction does not conflict with standing organizational policies and procedures

• Complete all necessary safety and security-related reports

1. Maintenance:

During incident response, mechanics (including volunteers and contractors) are expected to:

• Provide priority response to safety and security requests for equipment and personnel

• Discuss with the transit manager or his/her designee any mechanical hazards associated with using agency equipment for particular response activities

• Assist with law enforcement access and search vehicle for suspicious packages

• Follow-up on personal effects left onboard

1. Finance/Administration:

Finance/Administration Finance plays a critical role in incident response, including:

• Notification of the state agencies, if applicable, regarding significant incidents

• Tracking financial resources dedicated to response activities

• Conducting emergency procurement of supplies and materials necessary to sustain agency and operations during the emergency

1. Board Members:

Board Members play a unique role during emergency situations and should perform passive support through reliance on the emergency process the Authority has established:

* Stay apprised of events
* Decline comment and rely upon management and staff to perform their emergency functions
* Do not interfere in the process

1. Claims/Risk Management:

Claims or Risk Management staff is closely involved during incident response by:

• Documenting incident details and working with legal counsel on issues of potential litigation resulting from an incident

• Identifying and reporting casualty losses to insurance or other reimbursement sources

• Following-up on questionable claims Legal Counsel Provides advice to the incident management team on the transit agency’s legal responsibilities, potential labor union issues and possible litigation that may result from an emergency incident.

Note: In smaller transportation agencies, one individual may fill multiple roles and have multiple safety, security and emergency preparedness responsibilities. Additionally, smaller agencies will often establish agreements with others outside their agency to help fill functional roles and responsibilities during critical incidents.

1. Contract Operators:

Special consideration must be given to employees of contract operators. In these cases, vehicle operators are not agency employees but rather employees of a private sector firm working under contract. Operating contracts must contain provisions requiring contracted firms to provide appropriate risk reduction and recognition training, emergency response instruction and other any other preparation for emergency incidents.

1. Phone Tree:

Call Down Lists – Activation During a crisis each department or team leader will initiate activation of your Emergency Response Team by contacting two people on the agency call tree. Those two people will in turn contact two others and so on. If a staff person only reaches voicemail, he or she should leave a message but continue down the tree contacting the next person on the list until he or she has spoken with at least two people.

When making activation calls, each person should communicate the following:

• A very brief synopsis of the crisis

• If and where the employee is expected to report, and what will be expected of them

• The status of other members of the response team (if known)

• How to reach the team leader

Additionally, the caller should confirm:

• Who on the call list the employee is responsible for contacting

• How the team can contact the employee for changes (e.g. cell phone number)

After making calls the caller should report to their team leader. Sample call:

“This is Tom Jones. Am I speaking with Jane Doe? We have had a serious accident with injuries/fatalities and need your help. You are expected to report to the Whittier Facility as soon as possible. I believe you will be working in the plans section gathering and producing incident reports. The Team Leader Mark Walters is already there. Check in with him when you arrive. If you have an emergency enroute, contact Walters at 916-916-1234. Is this the best number to reach you while you are in transit?

**RESTORATION OF SERVICE**

1. Suspension/Restoration of Service:

Prior to an incident, agency management should develop a set of protocols to help determine the thresholds at which a partial or complete suspension of service should take place. These guidelines should take into account the following:

• Number of vehicles in service at the time of the incident

• Time of day

• Hours of service status of transit operators

• Number of passengers on transit vehicles

• Availability of nearby drop-off locations

• Safety and security status of those locations

• Availability of alternate transportation

• Possible duration of service suspension

• Public and rider notification of the service interruption

The Executive Director will, after being notified of an emergency, evaluate the status of agency assets (people, information and property), and the risk to those assets, to determine if transit operations can be maintained. Board communication is a critical step when the Authority determines that a suspension of service must occur. If service must be suspended, the appropriate personnel will be responsible for coordinating service suspension protocols, and for taking steps to restore essential transit services as soon as is practical within the constraints of resource availability and safety considerations.

Issues to be considered during service suspension/ restoration include:

Emergency Public Information:

During critical incidents what is said to the public is critically important. The watchword for emergency public information is “maximum disclosure with minimum delay”. Throughout a crisis the media relations/public information function must work proactively with the media, elected officials and partner agencies to provide accurate, verified information regarding: 1) What has happened 2) What you are doing about it 3) How it might affect the community.

Staffing of the emergency public information function is vital during an incident due to the overwhelming demand for information from the public and media outlets during an incident. The availability of resources to rapidly make accurate information available after an incident can relieve much of the pressure on public information staff. In order to be prepared for transmitting public information the following shall be prepared:

• Prepare an initial holding statement template that will provide the basic details of any incident and can be quickly supplied to staff at the incident scene, receptionists, customer service representatives, the media and other stakeholders.

• Staff should be pre-assigned to take telephone calls from the media and log contact names and phone numbers of reporters to maintain responsiveness and provide support to designated agency spokespeople.

1. Release of Sensitive Information:

The Authority depends on first responder agencies to tend to the injured, arrange for their transport to local hospitals or extract and remove the deceased from an incident scene. Questions about the identities or conditions of those individuals are best answered by the lead first responder agency or the appropriate medical personnel at the receiving hospital. Under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) it is illegal to release to the public or the media information about the names of the injured or the nature of their injuries without patient consent. This is, of course, precisely the kind of information the media will want.

Information concerning the number of injured or deceased is appropriate for release by the transit agency. There may be additional information relative to safety and security incidents that may be withheld under company policy. This could include information containing security procedures and capabilities, personnel details, or details that could increase the vulnerability of personnel, facilities, or operations. These policies and protocols must be established in writing in advance of any critical incident, and practiced during disaster drills and exercises. See Technical Appendix C for incident response protocols and procedures.

**CHAPTER 4. RECOVERY**

Putting things back together after an emergency or disaster can be a difficult process. This chapter addresses the disaster recovery process.

1. Continuity of Operations:

Transit supervisors, after being notified of an emergency, must evaluate the status of and the safety risk to agency assets (people, information and property) to determine if transit operations can be maintained. And while the FTA does encourage transit to partner with community agencies in order to serve as a first responder resource, there is a balance every agency must strike between supporting community disaster incidents and maintaining day-to-day transit service requirements that are the core mission of transit resources. By maintaining service, transit facilitates ensure the continued mobility of the community.

1. Business Resumption:

If service must be suspended, essential transit services should be restored as soon as is practical within the constraints of resource availability and safety considerations. Transit Agencies should be prepared to sustain identified essential functions for up to 30 days. Prior to any reduction or suspension in service, critical routes should be identified in order to resume critical service in the face of any partial loss of fleet or reduction of service.

1. Post-Incident Clean-up and Inspection:

Immediately after a critical incident, facilities, equipment and rolling stock must be inventoried and inspected. Management must document the status and the condition of vehicles used during an event. Photos should be taken of disaster-damaged property. Narrative should be provided for the cause of the incident, and to document disaster-damaged human and information resources. Insurance providers should be notified. The purpose of this activity is to begin to restore assets to their pre-emergency condition.

1. Follow-Up Debriefing:

In order to mitigate the possible negative psychological effects of an emergency, staff involved in emergency incidents should meet to discuss response activities and to process emotional issues that may arise. Transit managers should ensure the availability of support services to all parties who may have been directly or secondarily impacted by the event, including family members of all employees involved. Stress and grief are a normal response to an abnormal situation. It is important for the incident management team and front-line employees to have time to decompress and recover from an incident.

G. Crisis Counseling:

The impact of employee involvement in emergency incidents can include post-traumatic stress syndrome, grief and even physical and psychological injury. This impact can manifest itself in increased fear and stress, absenteeism and loss of productivity, job turnover, and disruptions in personal life. It is essential that impacted employees be supported by the management/ supervisory team and their peers in any way possible and that they are offered external counseling assistance. Consideration should be given to Employee Assistance Programs for staff that may need post-incident counseling.

The following represents a list of available counselors in the Authority’s area who should be contacted for support to staff and employees after an incident. The listing of persons should be contacted by the Human Resources to ensure their awareness of any incident. Staff has already communicated with Crisis Counseling to advise that they are included within the Authority’s Emergency Plan so that they understand the Authority’s role in the community and the challenges the Authority faces on a daily basis.

1. Long Term Recovery:

The goal of long-term recovery is to ensure that your organization emerges from crisis even stronger that it was before the event. On large incidents, additional assistance may be available through FEMA or the state and local offices of emergency services. Long term recovery initiatives should include the following steps:

• Determine the financial impact of the emergency on the transit agency and budget for recovery, including insurance reimbursement and non-reimbursement issues, and federal and state financial assistance opportunities

• Build relationships with emergency management and first responders based on unmet coordination needs illuminated by interagency reaction to the event

• Initiate public relations activities to rebuild confidence in the transit operation on the part of customer and the community as a whole

* Establish continuity of operations
* Resume normal operations Post incident clean-up and inspection
* Follow-up debriefing of personnel
* Ensure counseling support for impacted employees

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