



Sam M. McCall, CPA, CGFM, CIA, CGAP
City Auditor

HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights of City Auditor Report #0707, a report to the City Commission and City management.

WHY THIS AUDIT WAS CONDUCTED

Tallahassee is the largest metropolitan area within the surrounding eight-county area and the largest city between Jacksonville and Pensacola. The City offers the majority of businesses and regional services, including a regional airport and two regional hospitals. Should a disaster strike Tallahassee or any surrounding county, the City government will be very important in providing services to city, county, state, and federal governments as they mobilize efforts to assist citizens in need.

This audit focused on the City's Emergency Management (EM) Program to determine the adequacy of planning and implementation activities based on criteria from federal and state requirements, best practices, and lessons learned.

WHAT WE FOUND

Overall, we found the City's EM Program adequately addresses most federal and state EM criteria. The EM Program, initiated in 1992, has many strengths, including:

- An all-hazards citywide Incident Management Plan addressing all-hazards;
- Adoption and implementation of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) command structure within emergency management operations;
- A full time EM coordinator to lead the City's EM efforts;
- A process to record expenses associated with declared disasters for submission to the federal government;
- A dedicated EM team composed of employees across all departments; and
- A new ordinance that provides emergency provisions to expedite permitting needs due to damage from a significant disaster.

While the City has demonstrated that EM planning and response preparation are important endeavors and is to be commended for its efforts, we identified areas that could be improved to further enhance the City's EM Program. These areas related to the administration of the City's EM Program and to the planning and preparation for responses to emergencies.

To view the full report, go to: <http://www.talgov.com/Tauditing/index.cfm> and select *Auditing Reports*, then *Reports Issued FY 2007*, then *Report #0707*.

For more information, contact us by e-mail at auditors@talgov.com or by telephone at 850/891-8397.

Audit Conducted by: Beth Breier, CPA, CISA

January 8, 2007

AUDIT OF

Emergency Management Program

WHAT WE RECOMMEND

Our recommendations to further enhance the City's EM Program were related to the administration of the program and to the planning and preparation in responding to emergencies.

Recommendations related to the administration of the City's EM Program included:

- 1) Furthering compliance with the Federal National Incident Management System (NIMS) requirements in order to increase eligibility for federal funding;
- 2) Evaluating the location and reporting of the EM coordinator position in the City's organizational structure;
- 3) Tracking and reporting of costs outside of the EM Division associated with planning and "non-declared" response activities in the City's EM Program;
- 4) Advancing coordination of resources, cooperation, and communication between the City and County EM Programs; and
- 5) Developing and implementing performance measures.

Recommendations related to City's planning and preparation for responses to emergencies included:

- 1) Ensuring the EM teams are fully staffed with needed expertise and completing the NIMS training for EM team personnel and City executive management;
- 2) Developing, testing, and reviewing of departmental Continuing Operations Plans;
- 3) Periodically reevaluating the appropriateness of selected critical software applications to be immediately restored after a disaster;
- 4) Developing, testing, and implementing a backup communications plan for EM efforts and activities;
- 5) Identifying locations for a primary and backup EOC that meet the City's needs related to size, functionality, and strength; and
- 6) Developing and communicating criteria for when emergency personnel should take shelter during major storms.

Appendix A of this report provides management's action plan to address each of the issues identified in this report.

This page intentionally left blank.

Emergency Management Program

AUDIT REPORT #0707

January 8, 2007



Copies of this audit report #0707 may be obtained from the City Auditor's web site (<http://talgov.com/auditing/index.cfm>), by telephone (850 / 891-8397), by FAX (850 / 891-0912), by mail or in person (City Auditor, 300 S. Adams Street, Mail Box A-22, Tallahassee, FL 32301-1731), or by e-mail (auditors@talgov.com).

Audit conducted by:

Beth Breier, CPA, CISA, Audit Manager

Sam M. McCall, CPA, CGFM, CIA, CGAP, City Auditor

Table of Contents

<i>Executive Summary</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Scope, Objectives, and Methodology</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Background</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Overall Summary</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Issues and Recommendations for Improvement</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Conclusion</i>	<i>42</i>
<i>Response From Appointed Official</i>	<i>44</i>
<i>Appendix A – Action Plan</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>Appendix B – City Emergency Management Team Chart</i>	<i>48</i>

Emergency Management Program



Report #0707

January 8, 2007

Executive Summary

We reviewed the City's Emergency Management Program to determine the adequacy of its plans and implementation activities.

Overall, the City's EM Program adequately addresses most federal and state EM criteria and has many strengths, but there are also areas that can be improved.

This audit reviewed the City's Emergency Management (EM) Program to determine the adequacy of planning and implementation activities based on criteria from federal and state requirements, best practices, and lessons learned.

Tallahassee, the only incorporated city within Leon County and state capital of Florida, is vulnerable to a variety of natural and manmade disasters, including, but not limited to hurricanes and terrorism. A disaster, as defined in the Florida Statutes, is "any natural, technological, or civil emergency that causes damage of sufficient severity and magnitude to result in a declaration of a state of emergency by a county, the Governor, or the President of the United States."

In terms of importance in the event of a disaster, Tallahassee is the largest metropolitan area within the surrounding eight-county area and the largest city between Jacksonville and Pensacola. The City offers the majority of businesses and regional services, including a regional airport and two regional hospitals. Should a disaster strike Tallahassee or any surrounding county, City government will be very important in providing services to city, county, state, and federal governments as they mobilize efforts to assist citizens in need.

Our review of the City's EM planning and implementation activities showed that overall the program adequately addresses most federal and state criteria and has many strengths. For example, the City:

Potential issues were noted and recommendations were provided to improve the City's EM planning and implementation activities.

- Formally adopted and incorporated the federal government's NIMS command structure into the EM operations.
- Has embraced the state's philosophy that City government is responsible for providing EM activities to mitigate potential damage caused by emergency events and to respond and recover efficiently and effectively to emergency events.
- Employs a full-time EM coordinator to lead the City's EM efforts.
- Developed and implemented an all-hazards citywide Emergency Incident Management Plan for how to respond to emergency events and individual plans and checklists for each section of the EM team (operations, planning, logistics, and administration and finance).
- An overall all-hazards Emergency Incident Management Plan was adopted for how to respond to emergency events along with individual plans and checklists for each section of the EM team (operations, planning, logistics, and administration and finance).
- Implemented processes to record expenses associated with declared disasters for submission to the federal government for reimbursements.
- Employs dedicated staff that has demonstrated knowledge, skills, and abilities during prior storms in our area and has provided assistance to hurricane-impacted areas. In 2005, the City deployed its incident management teams to Harrison County, Mississippi, and Key West, Florida, to respond to Hurricanes Katrina and Wilma, respectively. Feedback from officials in the affected areas was extremely positive.

- Departments (Planning and Growth Management) assisting their counterparts in the County address the potential need for temporary sheltering of citizens during the period after emergency response sheltering has ended and before long term housing is available through the federal government (usually this would be the period between four and 90 days after a major hurricane or event).

While the City has demonstrated that EM planning and response preparation are important endeavors and is to be commended for its efforts, we identified issues where improvements can be made. Specific issues/recommendations include:

- The City may be at risk of losing potential federal preparedness funding assistance, beginning in FY 2007, if it is not compliant with certain National Incident Management System (NIMS) requirements. The extent of how much federal funding could be lost is not known at this time as NIMS is a new requirement. Among the actions that need to be completed include updating and completing training of all applicable staff, executive management, and elected officials.
- The location and reporting of the EM coordinator position in the City's organizational structure does not adequately reflect the high level of importance the City places on the City's EM planning and response activities.
- Costs outside of the EM Division associated with the City's EM Program planning and "non-declared" response activities are currently not tracked. Only costs associated with "declared" emergencies are currently tracked citywide.

- The City should continue to work with the County EM director to improve the communication, cooperation, and coordination of resources. The City should continue to submit its Emergency Incident Management Plan to the County requesting feedback either to provide assurance that it is coordinated and agrees with the County's EM Plan, or to be notified of areas that need to be addressed accordingly for resubmission.
- Performance measures should be developed and implemented to provide management the ability to track and evaluate the program's performance, impact, costs, and benefits.
- Twenty-two of 32 departments have developed and tested Continuing Operations Plans. Of the departments that provide "critical" services (i.e., Electric, Water, Gas, Public Works, Transportation), only one department (Fleet) had not developed a plan; the remaining nine departments that did not have plans did not provide "critical" services.
- The City's currently identified "critical applications" need to be periodically reevaluated, additional applications considered, and then prioritized in the sequence that applications will be needed to operate during emergencies. This will provide guidance as to what order critical City applications should be restored.
- There is not adequate planning for backup communication systems. Plans should be developed and implemented to ensure that there are adequate backup equipment available and educated users to operate the equipment should the

primary communications systems (800 MHz, cell phones) be damaged and/or destroyed.

- The current facilities used for the City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is not adequate in size, facilities, and/or strength, and there is no designated facility for a backup EOC.
- Written criteria and general guidance is needed as to when emergency personnel (both for public safety and non-public safety) should seek shelter during emergency events to keep employees safe.

Appendix A provides management's action plan to address each of the issues identified in this report.

We would like to thank and acknowledge the full and complete cooperation and support of the Fire Department and all members of the City's EM Advisory Committee and EM teams, County EM director and staff, as well as key City and County staff, the executive director of the Capital Area Chapter of the American Red Cross, and staff from the Florida Division of Emergency Management.

Emergency Management Program



Report #0707

January 8, 2007

Scope, Objectives, and Methodology

This audit addressed the City's emergency management planning and implementation activities.

We reviewed documentation from the City, County, state, and federal governments, as well as reports identifying best practices and lessons learned.

The scope of this audit included a review of the City's emergency management (EM) planning and implementation activities. We conducted our fieldwork between March and August 2006, and considered EM activities that occurred through September 30, 2006. Our primary objectives were to determine whether the City's Emergency Incident Management Plan and activities: 1) adequately addressed federal and state criteria, best practices, and lessons learned; and 2) were adequately implemented, as applicable.

To meet the audit objectives, we performed a variety of procedures including reviewing documentation and reports, interviewing key City staff and other EM representatives, and reviewing processes related to EM.

Documents reviewed included: the City's 2003 "Emergency Management Plan" and "Continuity of Operations Plan"; Leon County 2002 "Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan"; State of Florida 2004 "Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan"; Florida Statutes Chapter 252, "Emergency Management"; relevant City and County ordinances; National Fire Protection Association 1600, "Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs"; the "Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina Lessons Learned" report; various Department of Homeland Security reports including the 2004 "National Response Plan", "Tribal Government and Local Jurisdiction Compliance Activities: Federal Fiscal Year 2006",

and “Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5”; relevant City-contracted consultant reports; and other related articles and best practice documents.

We interviewed key staff from the City, County, state, other municipalities, and partner agencies.

We interviewed key staff from the City, County, and state departments, Leon County Sheriff’s Office, selected municipal EM directors in Florida, and the Capital Area Chapter of the American Red Cross. From the City, we interviewed the former and current EM coordinator, members of the EM Advisory Committee, EM team and sub-team leaders, and other key operational staff. We interviewed staff from the County and state divisions of EM, and attended some County EM planning meetings related to response functions (including emergency services, long term housing, debris management, and needs for special populations). To obtain input from other municipal EM programs, we interviewed the EM directors and coordinators from Clearwater, Jacksonville, Lakeland, Kissimmee, Key West, Orlando, Tampa, and West Palm Beach.

We also reviewed processes related to the plan development and EOC management, and tested the compliancy with federal requirements (NIMS).

Processes reviewed related to: developing and revising the City’s Emergency Incident Management Plans (including EM response plans, and departmental Continuity of Operations Plans); implementing Emergency Incident Management Plan activities; tracking and monitoring of City staff EM training; recruiting City staff to be on EM teams; complying with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Incident Management System (NIMS) requirements; managing the City’s emergency operations center (EOC); and compensating City staff for EM related hours worked.

This audit was conducted in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards and Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing, as applicable.

Background

The City of Tallahassee is the only incorporated city in Leon County. The City encompasses approximately 64% (174,800) of the County’s population (245,800) residing in 15% (103 square miles) of the land area. Tallahassee is the largest metropolitan area among eight northwest Florida counties shown in Figure 1 below. Forty-five percent of the total eight-county population resides in Tallahassee.

**Figure 1
Leon County and Surrounding Florida Counties**



Source: National Atlas of the United States

Tallahassee, as the only incorporated city within Leon County and state capital in Florida, is vulnerable to a variety of natural and manmade disasters, including, but not limited to hurricanes and terrorism.

The City also offers the only regional airport and has two regional hospitals. In addition, the majority of businesses in Leon County are located in the City; we noted that 79% of the public schools and 79% of the hotels in Leon County are also within the City limits. Should a disaster strike Tallahassee or any surrounding county, City government will be very important in providing services to City, County, state, and federal governments as they mobilize efforts and restore services to assist citizens in need. Chapter 252, Florida Statutes, defines a disaster, as “any natural, technological, or civil emergency that causes damage of sufficient severity and magnitude

to result in a declaration of a state of emergency by a county, the Governor, or the President of the United States.”

In the event of a disaster, the City will be expected to respond to and recover from all damage and/or destruction in order to restore services to customers and residents. Services to be restored include electric, water, and sewer, stormwater, solid waste, and natural gas. Additional City services that would be called upon include Police, Fire, Public Works, and StarMetro.

Florida, as a peninsula between two warm bodies of water, the Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico, is susceptible to storm related natural disasters. Over the years, Florida has been the target of more hurricanes than any other U.S. state, being struck by destructive hurricanes over 30 times in the last 20 years. In 2004 and 2005, eight named hurricanes came through Florida (Charley, Dennis, Frances, Ivan, Jeanne, Katrina, Rita, and Wilma). But, as we’ve seen in New York and across the globe, manmade disasters are also viable threats, and Tallahassee, as the capital of Florida, could also be a possible target.

As Florida has experienced so many hurricanes over the years, the state of Florida has become a leader in EM planning and response efforts. The County and City have benefited from the state’s Division of EM close proximity, coordination, and training in developing their EM plans and securing EM related resources.

Florida Statutes Chapter 252, “Emergency Management”

Florida Statutes dictate EM planning and response activities for state and local governments.

Florida Statutes Chapter 252 provides direction for state and local governmental entities related to EM planning and response activities. Through this statute, the legislature intended to “reduce the vulnerability of the people and property of this state; to prepare

for efficient evacuation and shelter of threatened or affected persons; to provide for the rapid and orderly provision of relief to persons and for the restoration of services and property; and to provide for the coordination of activities relating to emergency preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation among and between agencies and officials of this state, with similar agencies and officials of other states, with local and federal governments, with interstate organizations, and with the private sector.”

The Governor has the ultimate authority across the state. Next, the county EM has jurisdiction over and serves its entire county.

The Governor has the ultimate authority to utilize all available resources of each political subdivision of the state as reasonably necessary to cope with an emergency. The state’s philosophy related to EM is that the initial response to disasters belongs to the local governments affected. Therefore, the state assigns the responsibility and authority to provide effective and orderly governmental control and coordination of emergency operations to each of the 67 counties. Each county EM agency shall have jurisdiction over and serve its entire county.

Cities are encouraged to develop EM programs. The programs must comply with all laws, rules, and requirements applicable to county EM agencies, and coordinate its activities with the county EM agency.

Chapter 252, Florida Statutes, also encourages municipalities to create municipal EM programs. If a municipality elects to establish an EM program, it must comply with all laws, rules, and requirements applicable to county EM agencies, and coordinate its activities with the county EM agency. The municipal EM plan must be consistent with and subject to the applicable county EM plan. In addition, the municipality must coordinate requests for state or federal emergency response assistance with its county.

The City’s Emergency Management Program

In 1992, the City initiated an EM program, but it is not recognized as a municipal EM program as defined in the Florida Statutes.

Management determined in 1996 there were no requirements of or benefits to the City to become a formal program. Therefore, no City ordinances exist directing the City to establish an EM program. However the City does have an active EM program with a full-time EM coordinator, citywide EM and Continuity of Operations Plans, and operates an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for monitoring conditions and controlling City resources during disaster situations.

The City has initiated an EM Program, consisting of a full-time EM coordinator, citywide EM plans, and an EOC that operates during emergencies.

The City's overall Emergency Incident Management Plan (last updated in October 2006) serves to organize and coordinate the City's "response to both minor and major emergencies, facilitate critical decisions in an emergency, shorten reaction and setup time, and smooth the transition from normal operations to emergency operations and return to normal." It is modeled after the systems and structure of the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Departments are directed to have their own emergency plans and procedures that are separate from and subordinate to the City's overall plan, but should be "consistent with the format, structure, and terminology of the City's Emergency Incident Management Plan."

Over the years, the City has submitted their Emergency Incident Management Plan to the County for review and received feedback but the plan has not received, or been required to obtain, official approval. There are differences between the County's plan and the City's plan due to the different organizational structures utilized by each, i.e., the City has incorporated NIMS command structure and the County operates using an unified command structure and emergency support functions. Even with the differences, the current City EM coordinator believes that the City's current plan reflects the County's plan appropriately.

Oversight of the City's EM Program is provided by an EM Advisory Committee.

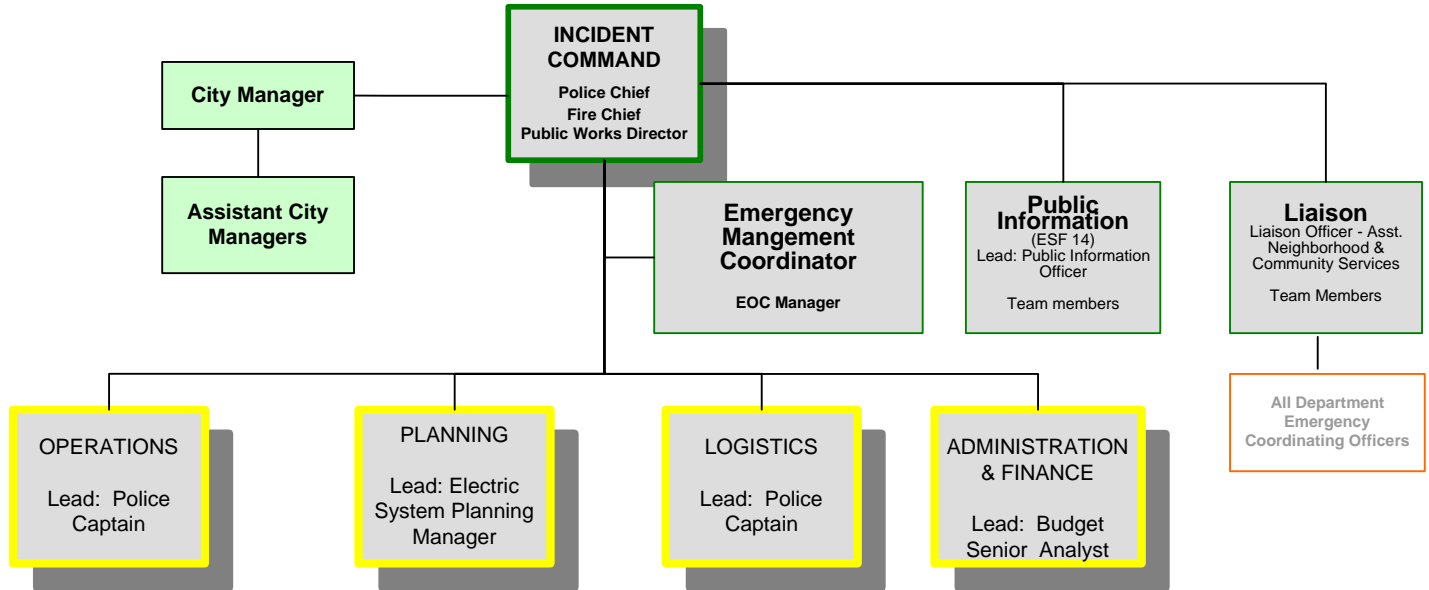
Oversight of the City's EM Program is provided by an EM Advisory Committee, which consists of the three incident command chiefs (Fire chief, Police chief, Public Works director), section team leaders (operations, logistics, planning, and finance & administration), and other key City staff from Electric, Airport, Police, and StarMetro.

The City EM team has incorporated the federal NIMS command structure, a uniform set of processes and procedures for emergency responders to use to conduct response operations.

As stated above, the City's EM team structure is based on the NIMS command structure recommended by the Department of Homeland Security. NIMS "establishes a uniformed set of processes and procedures that emergency responders at all levels of government will use to conduct response operations." By implementing these standardized processes, it promotes the ability to effectively coordinate response and assistance during large-scale or complex incidents. This was evident during the 2005 hurricane season, when the City deployed its incident management teams to assist Harrison County, Mississippi (after Katrina), and Key West, Florida (after Wilma), with Police, Fire, Communications, Public Works, and EM coordination. The City participants stated they were able to contribute more effectively and efficiently to the recovery efforts since the same NIMS structure was utilized in each of these communities. Beginning in October 2006, state and local governments will be required to verify they completed several activities toward full implementation of NIMS to be eligible for Homeland Security Grant Program funding.

Figure 2 shows the City's EM team overall structure and positions assigned to the NIMS identified teams. Appendix B provides a more detailed structure showing the positions assigned to the teams and sub-teams.

Figure 2
City’s Emergency Management Team Structure



The City EM teams are staffed by employees that either volunteer or are assigned.

EM teams are staffed by City employees. Some City employees are assigned based on their position, while others volunteer, depending upon the nature of the position. For example, Public Safety and Utility employees are “essential” positions and they are expected to respond during emergency events; therefore, staff is assigned to positions on the City’s EM teams and sub-teams. Employees not in “essential” positions and already assigned to emergency roles can volunteer to participate. With supervisor’s approval, these volunteers are assigned to teams and sub-teams that can best utilize their skills and experience.

Thirty-six percent (29 of the current 80) EM team members are not eligible to receive compensation for overtime worked during emergency events.

In the City, employees are compensated according to the positions they hold and the services they provide. Whether or not employees are eligible to receive overtime pay depends upon how their positions are classified. EM team members and other City employees that are first responders consist of employees that are and are not eligible for overtime compensation. Table 1 identifies

the classification types, whether the position qualifies for overtime compensation, number of the positions in the City, and the number of employees in the classification on the City’s EM teams.

Table 1
City Positions Eligible for Overtime Compensation

Position Classification	Number of City Employees	Number of Employees on EM Teams	Compensation Rate For Overtime Worked
Supervisory – first line	274	4	Time and a half base rate
Supervisory - second line	76	8	Straight time at base rate
Non-exempt	2,039	16	Time and a half regular rate
Professional – 1	511	23	Hour for hour compensatory time
Professional – 2	110	18	Typically not compensated (1)
Managerial	46	11	Typically not compensated (1)
Totals	3,056	80	

Note (1) Policy states they can receive hour for hour comp time, but this has not typically been applied during time associated with emergency events.

Source: Human Resource Management System for current full-time employees as of 8/29/06.

The City’s EOC is located at the Tallahassee Police Department. The EOC is activated as the Incident Command Post for situations that require an emergency response beyond the scope of routine departmental and interdepartmental response capabilities. The activation and subsequent deactivation is based on predefined criteria (and authority) identified in the City’s Emergency Incident Management Plan. The City’s EM team section leaders typically coordinate the City’s response activities from the EOC. The City will also place liaison(s) at the County’s EOC to enhance communications between the two EOCs and assist in coordinating emergency response efforts.

For emergencies, the City activates its EOC located at the Police Department.

The EM Program’s budget is included with the Fire Department’s budget.

The City’s EM coordinator and all funding related to the City’s EM Program is in the Fire Department. In June 2006, a new EM coordinator was hired.

Funding for the City's EM Program is accounted for in the Fire EM cost center, while costs for the program, however, are spread across departments. For example, the coordinator's salary and specific costs associated with EM coordinator's activities and some training costs are being accounted for in the Fire emergency cost center, however, all other costs (labor, equipment, and some training) incurred by other departments are accounted for in their respective operating budgets.

Table 2 shows the expenditures for fiscal years 2002 through 2006, and the approved budget for 2007. Unclassified contractual services is the largest account due to maintenance agreements related to information technology software applications. Travel and training costs are included not only for the EM coordinator but also the EM Advisory Committee members and EM team members.

Table 2
Fire Emergency Management Program Expenditures (FY 2002-06)
And FY 2007 Budget

Account Description	FY 2002 Expended	FY 2003 Expended	FY 2004 Expended	FY 2005 Expended	FY 2006 Expended	FY 2007 Approved Budget
Total Personnel Services (5)	\$ 62,187	\$ 68,612	\$ 73,645	\$ 76,996	\$ 67,622	\$ 84,504
Operating Expenses:						
Unclassified Contractual Services	1,458	3,556	6,534	10,473	8,617	3,327
Unclassified Supplies (1)	15,095	6,542	2,850	466	126	2,000
Office Supplies (2)	2,136	5,774	7,611	--	3,174	
Travel & Training (3)	983	3,617	150	438	14,768	28,301
Vehicle Garage Expense	57	582	1,468	4,210	6,547	1,971
Vehicle Replacement	--	255	1,677	2,616	--	--
Other Allocated Expenses (4)	--	--	--	--	--	8,761
Total Operating Expenses	19,729	20,326	20,290	18,204	33,231	44,360
Total Expenses:	\$ 81,916	\$ 88,938	\$ 93,935	\$ 95,200	\$ 100,854	\$ 128,864
% Increase		9%	6%	1%	6%	28%

Sources: City Accounting Financial Reports, 2006 and 2007 City Budgets

Notes: Category is combined to also include:

- (1) Unclassified charges and lab supplies.
- (2) Computer software, food, telephone, uniforms and clothing, and reproduction.
- (3) Journals, books, and memberships.
- (4) Allocated expenses were previously accounted for in the Fire Administration cost center.
- (5) The EM coordinator position was vacant for 2 months in 2006.

Overall Summary

Overall, the City's EM Program adequately addresses most federal and state criteria.

Our review of the City's EM planning and implementation activities showed that overall, the program addresses most federal and state criteria and has many strengths. Even so, we noted areas that can be improved. Over the years, the City has progressed and expanded its EM program to respond appropriately and adequately to the emergencies that have impacted its jurisdiction. To date, the City has been fortunate in that there have not been a large number of emergency events, but those that have occurred included major storms (Kate 1985), many smaller storms annually, and airplane crashes (Fed Ex, 2003).

During our audit, we noted the following strengths related to the City's EM Program. The City has:

- Formally adopted and incorporated the federal government's NIMS command structure into the EM operations. In addition, some City departments (Police, Fire, Public Works) have implemented the Incident Command Structure to respond to smaller non-emergency events as well as some daily operations. Because employees are familiar with the incident command structure, they can easily operate using the NIMS command structure during larger emergencies.
- A full-time EM coordinator and has embraced the philosophy that the City government is responsible for providing EM activities to mitigate potential damage caused by emergency events and to respond and recover efficiently and effectively to emergency events. As an example of the City's dedication to EM planning, 65 of the 82 local participants in FEMA's specialized training for local communities in Mt. Weather,

The City has many strengths related to the EM Program, but we also noted areas that can be improved.

Virginia, were City employees, including EM team members, executive managers, and elected officials.

- An overall all-hazards Emergency Incident Management Plan was adopted for how to respond to emergency events along with individual plans and checklists for each section of the EM team (operations, planning, logistics, and administration and finance).
- Implemented processes to record expenses associated with declared disasters for submission to the federal government for reimbursements.
- Employees that have demonstrated knowledge, skills, and abilities during prior storms in our area and has provided assistance to hurricane-impacted areas. In 2005, staff volunteered to travel to Harrison County, Mississippi, and Key West, Florida, to respond to Hurricanes Katrina and Wilma, respectively. Feedback from officials in the affected areas was extremely positive.
- Departments (Planning and Growth Management) assisting their counterparts in the County address the potential need for temporary sheltering of citizens during the period after emergency response sheltering has ended and before long term housing is available through the federal government (usually this would be the period between four and 90 days after a major hurricane or event). These departments are identifying the optimal locations for temporary housing taking into consideration centrality, ease of access, foliage, and capability of electric, water, and sewage. In addition, both the City and the County have introduced emergency permitting ordinances that

could be enacted to allow for temporary housing structures to be placed on residential and commercial properties.

Issues and Recommendations for Improvement

Areas where improvements can be made in the EM Program are 1) the administration of the City's EM Program, and 2) the City's EM planning and preparation for response.

While the City has demonstrated that EM planning and response preparation are important endeavors, there are some areas in which the City's EM planning and implementation activities can be improved. We have recommendations in the following two main areas: 1) the administration of the City's EM Program, and 2) City EM planning and preparation for response.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE CITY'S EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

During our audit, we noted that improvements could be made in the administration of the City's EM Program related to: 1) compliance with the Federal National Incident Management System (NIMS) requirements in order to increase eligibility for federal funding; 2) the location and reporting of the EM coordinator position in the City's organizational structure; 3) the tracking and reporting of costs outside of the EM Division associated with planning and "non-declared" response activities in the City's EM Program; 4) coordination of resources, cooperation, and communication between the City and County EM Programs; and 5) development and implementation of performance measures.

The City may be at risk of losing potential federal preparedness funding assistance, beginning in FY 2007, if it is not compliant with certain National Incident Management System (NIMS) requirements. The extent of how much federal funding could be lost is not known at this time since it is a new requirement.

As described in the Background section, NIMS is the federal government's incident management structure and process. The goal

of NIMS is to provide a seamless, coordinated, consistent, and efficient framework for responding to emergencies of any size. The Department of Homeland Security believes that the implementation of NIMS within every state, territory, tribal and local jurisdiction creates a baseline capability that, once established nationwide, will be the foundation for prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery strategies. In order to encourage compliance, all federal preparedness funding assistance will be dependent on NIMS compliance beginning in FY 2007 (October 1, 2006).

During our audit, we reviewed the NIMS requirements and determined, along with the EM coordinator, the City’s level of compliancy with NIMS. There are 18 applicable compliance items. Of these 18 items, the City had completed ten, partially completed seven, and one item has not yet been addressed. Table 3 shows the ten completed items and Table 4 shows the remaining eight items to be completed.

**Table 3
NIMS Implementation Requirements Completed**

Compliance Item	City’s Status and Actions
1) Adopt NIMS through executive order, proclamation, resolution, or legislation as the jurisdiction’s official all-hazards, incident response system.	Completed. The City Commission formally adopted NIMS as the City’s official all-hazards, incident response system on December 6, 2006.
2) Incorporate concepts and principles of NIMS Command and Management.	Completed. The City has implemented these concepts and principles into their Emergency Management Program.
3) Coordinate and support emergency incident and event management through the development and use of integrated multi-agency coordination systems.	Completed. The County EM Program coordinates the multi-agency efforts and activities. When invited, the City participates in these efforts.

4) Revise and update plans and SOPs to incorporate NIMS components, principles and policies, and to include planning, training, response, exercises, equipment, evaluation, and corrective action.	Completed. The City's plans and response procedures incorporate NIMS components, principles, and policies.
5) Establish the community's NIMS baseline against the FY 2005 and FY 2006 implementation requirements.	Completed. The EM Coordinator completed the NIMS baseline assessment in September 2006.
6) Incorporate NIMS/ICS into all training exercises.	Completed. NIMS is incorporated into all exercises and trainings.
7) Participate in an all-hazard exercise program based on NIMS that involved responders from multiple disciplines and multiple jurisdictions.	Completed. When invited, the City participates in all exercises with the County, region, and state.
8) Incorporate corrective actions into preparedness and response plans and procedures.	Completed. After every exercise, an evaluation takes place where strengths and weaknesses are identified, and corrective actions are planned.
9) To the extent permissible by law, ensure that relevant national standards and guidance to achieve equipment, communication, and data interoperability are incorporated into tribal and local acquisition programs.	Completed. The City's 800 MHz voice system is interoperable with state and county communication systems.
10) Apply standardized and consistent terminology, including the establishment of plain English communications standards across public safety sector.	Completed. There are standard operating protocols for operating the 800 MHz system communicated to all users.

Source: FEMA NIMS Integration Center ; City's EM coordinator

The seven partially completed, and one outstanding item, along with the status of each are provided in Table 4.

**Table 4
NIMS Implementation Requirements Not Addressed and Partially Completed**

Compliance Item	City's Status and Planned Actions
1) Implement processes, procedures, and/or plans to communicate timely and accurate information to the public during an incident through a joint information system and joint information center. [Such information systems and centers should include both city and county.]	Partially complete. The County EM Program coordinates the multi-agency communication efforts and activities, and the City is included in these efforts. There are some joint efforts in process to develop joint GIS applications for both the City and County EOCs, but there is not a joint information system. There are also efforts to increase communication and public information announcements between the City and County EOCs to ensure that messages to the public are consistent and accurate. However, as of September 30, 2006, there was not a joint information center or plans to develop one.

<p>2) Listing of community response assets categorized by homeland security resource standards.</p>	<p>Has not been addressed yet. The EM coordinator understands that this is a regional project, and the City will be required in the near future to provide a listing of assets categorized by homeland security standards to a regional coordinator.</p>
<p>3) Participate in and promote intrastate and interagency mutual aid agreements, to include agreements with the private sector and non-governmental agencies.</p>	<p>Partially Completed. The City has mutual aid agreements with the state, other electric utilities, and municipal police and fire organizations. The City also has agreements with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the County for fire and law enforcement; • the Capital Area American Red Cross for emergency sheltering; and • private contractors for debris removal. <p>There is still a need for a mutual aid agreement with the County related to transportation to be provided during emergency preparation, response, and recovery.</p>
<p>4) Develop a baseline assessment of the NIMS implementation requirements that your jurisdiction already meets and using that baseline, develop a strategy for full NIMS implementation and maintenance.</p>	<p>Partially complete and in process.</p>
<p>5) All persons with a direct role in emergency preparedness, incident management, or response, complete training courses IS-100 and FEMA IS-700 NIMS.</p>	<p>Partially complete and in process. As of September 30, 2006, required training had been provided for approximately 90% of City supervisors, front line supervisors, and middle management. Updated training is still needed for some of the new additions to the EM teams, elected officials, and executive management.</p>
<p>6) Front line supervisors and other response personnel that require a higher level of ICS/NIMS, complete training courses IS-100, IS-200, and FEMA IS-700 NIMS.</p>	
<p>7) Middle management and EOC staff, complete training courses IS-100, IS-200, IS-300, FEMA IS-700, and FEMA IS-800 NIMS.</p>	
<p>8) Command staff, complete training courses IS-100, IS-200, IS-300, IS-400, FEMA IS-700, and FEMA IS-800 NIMS.</p>	<p>Management is currently developing appropriate training for elected officials and executive management. When the training is developed, City officials and managers will be scheduled to attend the training.</p>

Source: FEMA NIMS Integration Center ; City's EM coordinator

To be NIMS compliant, the City needs to: 1) categorize its inventory based on homeland security standards; 2) complete training of all applicable City employees; and 3) be part of a joint information system/process.

City management indicated they are continuing efforts to meet the NIMS compliancy requirements. Should the City not meet NIMS compliancy requirements, it may be at risk of losing potential federal preparedness funding assistance (the extent of funding that could be lost is unknown at this time since the requirement just began in October 2007). In addition, by implementing all NIMS

requirements, the City is more likely to manage emergency situations more efficiently and effectively. We recommend that the City continue to pursue compliance to meet all of the NIMS requirements within its control and responsibility. We also recommend that the City execute a mutual aid agreement with the County for bus transportation that will be provided during emergency preparation, response, and recovery.

The location and reporting of the EM coordinator position within the City's organizational structure does not adequately reflect the level of importance the City places on the City's EM planning and response activities.

As shown in Figure 3 on the next page, this position reports to and is evaluated by the Fire chief within Safety and Neighborhood Services. The City's position description states that the EM coordinator:

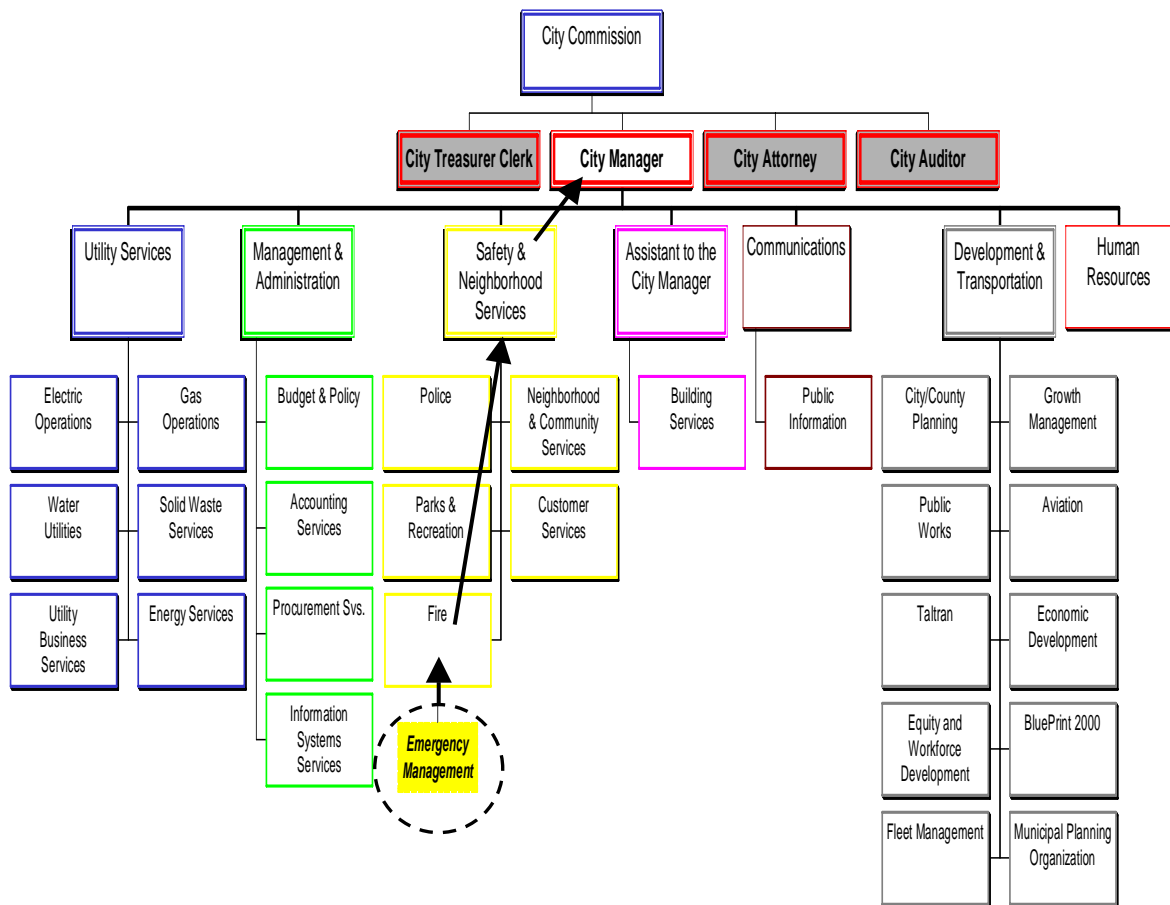
The EM coordinator is responsible for coordinating and administering the EM activities for the entire City.

Is a responsible administrative position coordinating and administering the emergency management activities for the City of Tallahassee. Duties include development and coordination of emergency preparedness programs for mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery from natural, technological and man-made disasters. Work is performed with considerable independence and latitude and is subject to general supervision of the Emergency Management Steering Committee and the work is reviewed through conferences, reports, observations, and by results attained.

Also stated in the position description, the EM coordinator is responsible for preparing, coordinating, training, and guiding City staff across multiple departments during emergency preparations and response activities. Currently, the EM coordinator is evaluated by the Fire chief; however, the position description states the position is subject to the general supervision of the EM Steering Committee (the Fire chief is a member of the EM Steering

Committee, along with the Police chief, and Public Works director). Because the position reports within the Fire Department, the EM coordinator does not appear to have the authority that accompanies his citywide responsibilities and this may diminish the importance of the Citywide EM preparation directives. Other City and department managers, supervisors, and staff may not be as responsive to his coordination directives and recommendations in order to prepare the City for emergencies.

**Figure 3
Organizational Position of the Emergency Management Coordinator
in the City of Tallahassee**



During our audit, we interviewed EM directors and coordinators from seven Florida municipalities, including Clearwater, Key West, Kissimmee, Lakeland, Orlando, Tampa, and West Palm Beach. We asked a variety of questions, including to whom does the EM director/coordinator report. We noted a wide variety of reporting structures among the seven municipalities.

- Three reported directly to the city manager (including one police chief assigned the EM responsibilities);
- One reported to the Mayor;
- Two reported to the fire chief; and
- One reported to the risk manager.

EM coordinators can be more effective when placed in organizations with authority across all departments they are responsible for coordinating.

All seven EM coordinators/directors noted that this position was more effective when placed in organizations with authority across departments so that they would be more effective in coordinating and managing citywide EM planning activities. Additionally, NIMS Integration Center staff recommends that the EM coordinator position report to the City official that carries the EM responsibility.

We recommend that management reevaluate the location and reporting of the City's EM coordinator position within the City's organizational structure and give consideration to assigning EM responsibilities at an executive level in the government's organizational structure. Some alternatives might include the EM coordinator reporting to the (1) city manager; (2) Safety and Neighborhood Services assistant city manager; or (3) the assistant to the city manager.

In addition, since the EM coordinator is responsible for providing services to all City departments, we also recommend that the evaluation of the EM coordinator include input from City executive management or those persons that can best convey how effectively

the EM coordinator has worked in their respective departments during the evaluation period.

Costs outside of the EM Division associated with the City’s EM Program planning and “non-declared” response activities are currently not tracked. Only costs associated with “declared” emergencies are currently tracked citywide.

Only costs expended within the EM cost center and those costs associated with “declared” emergencies are currently tracked citywide.

To determine whether a program is meeting management’s goals and objectives, management needs to evaluate the costs and benefits of that program. Table 5 shows 26% the City’s 2007 EM Program budget includes costs other than those specifically related to the EM coordinator’s position. The unclassified services and supplies includes software licenses, EM equipment, office and lab supplies that will be used by the entire EM team. Travel and training costs apply to the EM coordinator, EM team members, and other appropriate City staff.

**Table 5
2007 EM Program Budget**

Account Description	FY 2007 Approved Budget	Percentage of Total Budget
Salary & Benefits	\$84,504	65%
Vehicle Garage Expense	1,971	2%
Other Allocated Expenses	8,761	7%
Unclassified Contractual Services & Supplies (1)	5,327	4%
Travel & Training (1)	28,301	22%
Total Program Expenses:	\$128,864	100%

Sources: 2007 City Budget
 Note (1) These monies will cover related expenses across City departments (i.e., not solely encountered in the EM Division).

Currently, most labor and direct costs associated with EM expended by other departments are not tracked as EM expenses. Instead, these costs are absorbed in each department’s budget. Examples of these costs include: departments’ labor and direct costs associated with all “non-declared” emergency events; equipment and supplies

purchased in preparation for emergency events; and a portion of EM training obtained by Police employees (training for their employees comes from the Police budget).

The only EM expenses tracked outside of the EM budget include the labor and costs associated with “declared” emergency events so that the City has the proper documentation required by FEMA when requesting federal disaster assistance funding. Without a process in place to determine the actual costs of EM activities, the funding level for the current year is not known or available to assist in projecting future needs for the EM program. We recommend management implement a process to identify and track the costs directly associated with EM planning and response activities for declared and non-declared emergencies in order to determine the total cost and effort for EM activities.

Communication, cooperation, and coordination of EM resources with the County have not been effective.

The City and the County should improve their communication, cooperation, and coordination related to EM planning and response activities.

Florida Statutes Section 252.38 states that counties are responsible for planning and providing EM services to citizens within their county that are coordinated and consistent with the state’s comprehensive EM plan and program. Within the county’s EM agency, a director is responsible for the organization, administration, and operation of the county’s EM agency. The director is to coordinate EM activities, services, and programs within the county and serves as liaison to the division and other local EM agencies and organizations. Authority is given to the counties to perform EM functions within the territorial limits of the county within which it is organized and outside its territorial limits in accordance with state and county EM plans and mutual aid agreements. Counties shall serve as liaison for and coordinator of

municipalities' requests for state and federal assistance during post-disaster emergency operations.

Florida Statutes Section 252.38(2) encourages cities to create their own formal municipal EM program. Specifically,

If a municipality elects to establish an emergency management program, it must comply with all laws, rules, and requirements applicable to county emergency management agencies. Each municipal emergency management plan must be consistent with and subject to the applicable county emergency management plan. In addition, each municipality must coordinate requests for state or federal emergency response assistance with its county. This requirement does not apply to requests for reimbursement under federal public disaster assistance programs.

As stated in the Background section of this report (page 9), the City has implemented an EM Program, however it is not recognized as a municipal EM program as defined above. City management determined that there were no requirements of or benefits to the City to become a formal program.

Management determined that there were no identified benefits to the City to formalize the EM program.

Florida's 67 county EM programs and directors play a large role in coordinating EM planning and response activities between the state Division of EM and its 411 municipalities. Good communication, coordination, and cooperation are crucial in order to have effective and efficient responses during emergencies. The importance placed on the need for good coordination and communication between the City and the County is emphasized by the size of the City within the County, the City services provided to the citizens, and the City's resources that could be available during emergencies. As described in the beginning of the Background section of this report (page 9), Tallahassee plays an important role with the surrounding eight Florida counties (Leon, Gadsden, Wakulla, Franklin, Jefferson, Madison, Taylor, and Liberty).

A consultant hired by the City and County to review the current Fire EMS dispatch/response systems noted that there is a lack of trust among the leaders in the City, County, and Sheriff.

In the County, the EM program director reports to a major in the Sheriff's Office. In April 2006, the City and County hired the Public Technology Institute (PTI) to review the current Fire-EMS dispatch/response systems independently managed by the City and the Sheriff and provide suggestions for improvement. One of the main findings of the report addressed this strained relationship.

The question of political trust and collaboration between the leadership elements (City leaders, County leaders, independently elected Sheriff) is what makes the deployment of a truly optimal solution (combined County/City 911 dispatch operation) difficult. The consultant team found a degree of trust lacking amongst those elements, and this lack of trust would make an intergovernmental solution difficult if not impossible to deploy at the current time.

The report addressed the need for improved coordination and cooperation between the City and County governments.

We also mentioned the significant lack of trust we found in our interviews with local leaders. It is difficult to imagine regional coordination of emergency resources and leadership energy so important in modern and progressive management of both public safety, as well as Homeland Security management in the current climate. It is imperative that steps be taken to heal this divide and produce a coherent and mutually reinforcing strategy across the City and County governments.

City management is taking steps toward resolving the issues between the City and County EM leaders.

To address the concerns in the consultant's report, the City, County, and Sheriff began working together to develop and implement a joint dispatch center. A Public Safety Communications Board was created consisting of the county manager, city manager, Sheriff, Police chief, Fire chief, and Emergency Medical Services chief. This board is a first step working together toward the common goal

of creating a joint dispatch center for the purposes of dispatching all law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical services.

During our audit of the City's EM Program, we observed a level of dissatisfaction and frustration, and instances of lack of coordination, cooperation, and communication between the County's EM director and both of the City's current and former EM coordinators. City management, while acknowledging there were issues that needed to be resolved between the City and County EM Programs, believes that both organizations have the public's welfare as their top priority. Therefore, to address the issues, City management stated their intention is to continue efforts toward improving relations between the City and County EM Programs.

Through effective cooperation, coordination, and communications, the County and the City will be more effective during their planning for and responding to emergency events, thereby providing a more efficient and effective service to the citizens when impacted by an emergency event. We recommend that efforts be made to improve the level of communication and effectiveness of working relationships between the City and County EM personnel. We also recommend that the City continue to request the County review the City's Emergency Incident Management Plan annually to ensure that the plan is coordinated and agrees with the County's EM Plan, or to be notified of areas that need to be addressed accordingly.

Performance measures have not been utilized to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the City's EM Program.

As stated in the Government Accountability Office's published brochure on "Performance Measurement and Evaluation," measuring performance provides management with a way to assess the extent to which a program is operating as intended and

Performance measures should be utilized to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the City's EM Program.

determine if the program is progressing toward pre-established goals. Other benefits that come when managing for results include determining the program's:

- Impact by comparing program outcomes with an estimate of what would have happened in the absence of the program.
- Cost-benefit and cost effectiveness, by comparing the program's outputs or outcomes with the costs to produce them.

Currently, management is developing performance measures specifically for the EM Division.

When management does not measure its performance, impacts, and/or costs, they will not know whether the program is needed, operating as intended efficiently and effectively, or progressing toward pre-established goals. We recommend that the EM coordinator, in coordination with City executive management, develop and implement appropriate performance measures to provide management information on the program's performance, impact, costs, and benefits.

CITY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANNING AND PREPARATION FOR RESPONSE

*Improvements can be
made in the
administration of the
City's EM Program.*

During our audit, we noted that improvements could be made in the administration of the City's EM Program related to the following six areas: 1) staffing, expertise, and training of EM team personnel and City executive management; 2) development and testing of departmental Continuing Operations Plans; 3) the appropriateness of selected critical software applications to be immediately restored

after a disaster; 4) backup communications planning; 5) adequacy of City's Emergency Operations Center; and 6) defining criteria for when emergency personnel should take shelter during major storms.

City EM teams need to be fully staffed with employees that have been fully trained and have participated in planning exercises for all types of hazardous events.

The City could be better prepared for major emergency events if all EM teams are fully staffed with the appropriate expertise. Periodic updated training needs to be conducted and should include all executive and elected leaders.

As shown in Tables 3 and 4 (beginning on page 19), NIMS requires that government EM programs adopt and implement the NIMS command structure. Specific training courses should be completed by organizational leaders and decision makers, EM leaders and personnel, and front line responders during emergency events.

The City has designed its EM command structure and team composition based on those recommended by NIMS, and includes staff expertise from all areas of the City. As described in the Background section of this report, staff can either be assigned or can volunteer to participate on the City's EM teams. Once designated on the EM team, employees are assigned to specific emergency role based on their area of expertise.

City management has participated in specialized EM training in the past. In March 2001, 82 members of the community attended a FEMA sponsored integrated EM course for local governments. Sixty-five attendees were from the City, including EM team members, commissioners, and executive management. Management indicated that the City is one of less than 5% of municipalities nationwide that have participated in the specialized local community training in Mt. Weather, Virginia.

In 2001, City and County leaders and EM team members attended a special FEMA course for local governments held in Mt. Weather, Virginia.

Since 2001, the City has experienced a change in leadership in some key EM related positions, including the Public Works director (2003), Fire chief (2005), and EM coordinator (2006), EM team members, and City commissioners. While most of these new leaders and EM team members have participated in some NIMS trainings, they did not participate in the 2001 special training. Also, during the last few years, a turnover in other City staffing has created a “void” in the number of City employees that: (1) are on the EM teams, (2) have been adequately trained; and (3) have participated in the practice exercises.

During our initial review of the EM team membership, the team leaders were not familiar with all of the assigned team members (planning, logistics, and administration and finance), some teams were not fully staffed (planning and administration and finance), and many team members (approximately 40 of the 50 EM team members reporting) had not completed all of the NIMS required training courses (operations, planning, logistics, and administration and finance).

Without fully staffed and trained EM teams and executive management, there is a risk that the City may not be fully responsive to major emergency events. We recommend the EM Advisory Committee:

Public safety exercises include non-weather emergency events and “unified commands” to enhance working relationships and communications among departments.

- 1) Reexamine the structure and composition of the EM teams to determine the most beneficial composition of team members to provide the necessary skill sets among the teams; and
- 2) Implement a process to ensure that all required training courses have been completed by City leaders, managers, team members, and emergency response personnel.

Subsequent to fieldwork, the new EM coordinator and EM Advisory Committee worked to adequately staff sections for the 2006 storm season. Additional training was provided for front-line emergency responders and EM team members. Information submitted to the City commissioners indicated that over 1,100 employees have been trained by November 30, 2006. Public safety departments also took additional steps, in that Police and Fire have provided exercise activities to respond to spontaneous hazardous threats. These exercises included: 1) developing checklists to supplement Police SOPs related to non-weather related events; 2) working with Fire to create “unified commands” during non-emergency events; and 3) conducting “ride-alongs” with Fire and Police personnel so as to improve working relationships and communication.

Management is developing appropriate training to be provided to elected officials and executive management.

In addition, management is currently developing appropriate training for elected officials and executive management. When the training is developed, City officials and managers will be scheduled to attend the training.

Some departments have not developed Continuing Operations Plans, and other department plans are not adequate in that they do not describe the activities that will need to be performed either during emergency events or recovery.

A Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) is an essential element of a government’s comprehensive EM plan. An effective COOP plan outlines official lines of succession by delegating authority prior to the occurrence of emergencies; establishes procedures for safekeeping essential records; creates a secure emergency operations center and alternative command sites; and provides

measures for protecting government personnel and resources (NGA Center for Best Practices, November 2003).

Each City department's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) should be reviewed by EM staff for its adequacy, appropriateness, and reasonableness, and should be periodically tested.

In FY 2003, the City received a \$50,000 grant to develop the City of Tallahassee COOP plan. A citywide COOP plan was developed in December 2003, which addresses the City's Emergency Incident Management Plan and specific continuity of operations related to Communications, Police, Fire, Utilities and Public Works. This plan has not been updated since it was initially developed. During the development of the City's plan, all departments were requested to develop individual COOP plans to document procedures for how they would continue operations during emergencies and loss of critical resources.

During our audit, we requested copies of each City department's COOP plan. At the end of June 2006, we noted that 22 of 32 City departments had developed a COOP plan for review by EM staff for its adequacy, appropriateness, and reasonableness. Of the departments that provided "critical" services (i.e., Electric, Water, Gas, Public Works, StarMetro), only one department (Fleet) had not developed a plan; the remaining nine departments that did not have plans did not provide "critical" services. A plan for Fleet is considered critical due to the fuel and emergency repair support the Fleet Department will need to supply to City departments during emergency events. We also noted that there was no one monitoring to ensure that departments had developed adequate plans and that their plans were periodically tested.

Without adequate plans communicated to employees, departments might not be able to effectively restore operations in a timely manner. For example, in February 2005, a computer virus infected the City's network making the network resources inaccessible. We

noted during an audit of the virus activities, the departments that were able to continue operations more efficiently and effectively were those that had detailed plans related to the loss of network access. Departments without adequate plans were virtually shut down. [“Inquiry Into The February 2005 Network Computer Virus”, City Auditor Report #0523, June 3, 2005].

To minimize loss of City resources and operations, we recommend that COOP plans be developed for all remaining departments. In addition, we also recommend that the EM coordinator, EM team leaders, or other knowledgeable persons review departmental COOP plans for adequacy, appropriateness, and reasonableness and to ensure that they are periodically being tested.

The City’s currently identified “critical applications” do not include all the computer applications that the City may need to operate during emergencies.

The City’s Business Recovery Plan and Information Systems Recovery Plan should be coordinated so that critical business applications are prioritized and restored in a timely manner.

Best practices recommend that contingency planning for information systems work in conjunction with the business recovery plan. In an organization that is heavily reliant on information systems, the Information Systems Recovery Plan will not work without a Business Recovery Plan, and vice versa. Decisions regarding risk assessment and which applications need to be available should consider total business survival and not just computer room survival. Personnel responsible for the continuity of the organization and who will be responsible for implementing the recovery strategies selected should be involved in decision making.

The ISS Steering Committee (consisting of the treasurer-clerk, assistant city managers, and director of Management and Administration) approved ISS’s recommendation (based on input

from department directors) that the four critical application systems needing to be immediately restored after an emergency would be E-Mail, and the Financials, Human Resources, and Customer Information Systems. These applications are included in the ISS Disaster Recovery Plan and will be first to be restored whenever computer operations are interrupted. Separate provisions are provided for the backup and recovery of the critical public safety communications and related applications (including but not limited to the 800 MHz, Computer Aided Dispatch, Records Management System, and Geographic Information System).

Based on our interviews with key EM Advisory Committee members and City management, we noted that there were other application systems that should be considered as “critical” for business continuity purposes during or immediately after emergency and/or disastrous events. Examples of business critical applications that should be considered include the Web EOC (the EM team) and PETS (the Growth Management permitting).

If the computer applications needed to perform critical services are not available during and/or immediately after an emergency or disastrous event, there is an increased risk that the business critical applications will not be available to support City operations.

We recommend the City’s currently identified “critical applications” be periodically reevaluated, additional applications considered, and then prioritized as the sequence that applications will be needed to operate during emergencies. This will provide guidance to ISS as to what order critical City applications should be restored in the event that information services were damaged, destroyed, or otherwise made unavailable.

There has not been adequate planning for backup communication systems.

There needs to be better backup planning for emergency communications.

There was a common theme among the lessons learned reports from the 2005 hurricanes related to the need to improve communications and interoperability. The City's Emergency Incident Management Plan indicates that the 800 MHz system will be the main source of communication during emergencies and this system is interoperable with the state's communications system. However, we noted the following three issues related to communications planning in the City.

- The communications lead on the EM team has not been trained or been actively involved in EM team communications and/or exercises.
- There has not been sufficient planning and testing of backup communication systems. This has resulted in users not knowing how to operate the 800 MHz system radios in the backup mode (referred to as "fail-safe mode") and a lack of assurance that the radio system will work as intended during emergency events.
- A complete inventory of communications equipment and locations was not available. Also, EM team members expressed a need for additional satellite telephones for backup communications.

The 800 MHz system is managed by the Information Systems Services Radio Communications Division (RCD). It is their responsibility to ensure that the system is fully functional, available, and system users have been trained. In March 2006, the EM team requested training on the implementation and use of the fail-safe mode on the 800 MHz radios, but as of September 30, 2006, this

had not been provided. Recent delays caused by technical issues with the 800 MHz system have further delayed user training and testing of the system, as well as the development of an inventory of communications equipment and locations.

We did note that the ISS Radio Communications Division had developed a draft disaster recovery plan for the 800 MHz system, but this plan had not yet been tested. We also noted that the RCD manager was designated as the communications lead on the EM team, however, he indicated that he had not attended any NIMS training, City EM meetings, or City exercises in the past five years.

Without adequate training, backup and recovery planning and testing, and inventory information related to the 800 MHz radio system, there is an increased risk that the City will have to operate without electronic communications during and immediately after emergency events. Therefore, we recommend that plans be developed and implemented to ensure that there are adequate backup equipment available and educated users to operate the equipment should the primary communications systems (800 MHz, cell phones) be damaged and/or destroyed.

The current facilities used for the City’s Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is not adequate in size, facilities, and/or strength, and there is no designated backup EOC facility.

During emergencies, EM personnel and City leaders need a location to work and monitor the situation status in order to be able to coordinate and facilitate a response to expedite citizens’ safety needs and the restoration of City services as effectively as possible. Traditionally, an EOC is used to house the EM team and City

The current EOC for the City is not sufficient in size, provisions, and strength.

leaders during and after emergency events while they lead the City's safety and restoration efforts.

FEMA and the state have provided guidelines for state and local officials responsible for emergency management that include recommended specifications for EOC facilities. The facility should be: 1) large enough to support the EOC staff (approximately 50-85 square feet per person is recommended); 2) strong enough to sustain through strong storms (a minimum of 100 protection factor and comply with minimum building codes); and 3) able to house staff (including sleeping arrangements, food supply, hygiene and sanitary). In addition, it is recommended that a secondary facility be identified and available as a backup EOC in case the first location is damaged or destroyed.

The City has designated the police training room as the EOC during declared emergency events. This facility, located on the 2nd floor of the Police Department, does not meet the EM team's requirements as an EOC, in that:

- The training room provides a total less than 1,500 square feet (averaging about 30 square feet per person). This is not large enough to house the City's EM personnel. In addition, there are not enough computer terminals for all EOC users to access available systems and information. The EM team has identified other rooms at the Police Department to utilize during emergency events. Depending upon when the emergency occurs, EM teams that are located in other police offices or conference rooms could potentially interrupt other police operations.
- The Police Department is not a self-sustaining facility. For example, the facility does not have provisions or space for

team members to be able to prepare meals and sleep. However, there is a break room that has been utilized to distribute delivered food for the teams.

- The City's building inspection and structural engineer do not believe the entire Police building meets current building code or could sustain strong winds during a major storm. The east wing of the building was designed to 90 MPH wind load parameters, but the EOC is located in the west wing of the building built in the 1930s, and renovated in the 1970s.

Without adequate provisions in a fully operational EOC, the City may not be able to work effectively during emergencies if they are not provided adequate working resources (space and equipment) and able to be self-sustaining (i.e., feeding and sleeping provisions). We recommend that the EM Advisory Committee assess the needs of the City's EOC and review City locations to determine if there is a better location to house the EOC, as well as a secondary facility for a backup EOC.

Subsequent to fieldwork and prior to the beginning of the hurricane season, efforts were made to assess working needs of each EM team and to facilitate the designated locations in the Police Department with necessary network connections, identify computer needs, etc. In addition, City staff are exploring various funding opportunities to establish a facility that could be utilized by a variety of emergency related functions, including joint dispatch for Fire and EMS services, regional transportation communications center, and joint emergency operations center. After this year's hurricane season, the EM coordinator and Advisory Team noted that they will reevaluate the needs for the City's EOC and inventory City buildings to see if there is a better location for the EOC in the future.

Written criteria related to when employees should seek shelter during emergency events could help keep employees safe.

There are no written criteria or general guidance as to when emergency personnel (public safety or non-public safety) should seek shelter during emergency events to keep employees safe.

Should staff stay out in the dangerous winds and conditions, there is an increased risk of injury and/or death of emergency response personnel. On the other hand, should staff be called off the streets prematurely, there is an increased risk of injury and/or death of citizens if emergency personnel do not respond to distress calls for service.

It is the role and responsibility of the City's public safety departments (Police and Fire) to respond to distress calls for service (i.e., emergency calls). These employees are trained and experienced in responding to different emergency calls in various climates and circumstances. During emergencies, it will be the City incident commander's responsibility to determine whether it is safe for personnel to respond to public safety and non-public safety calls for service.

During our audit, we attended County EM planning meetings with public safety personnel from County and City departments and the Sheriff's Office discussing when weather conditions would make it too dangerous to respond to emergency calls. Due to the large number of variables, they were unable to define clear-cut criteria that would guide the decision that it was too dangerous to respond. In addition, there are various types of responders during emergency events with different purposes, including Police, Sheriff, Fire and Rescue, Utility, Transportation, and Public Works. Public safety personnel may be expected to take a higher level of risk than public works or transportation personnel.

Because of employee safety concerns, we recommend that the EM team work with Risk Management to develop general criteria for when emergency personnel should take shelter to be out of harm's way during emergency events. Because of the complexity of the issue, separate guidance will most likely be needed for public safety and non-public safety personnel. In addition, we recommend that the criteria and guidelines be communicated to City staff involved in EM response and recovery activities, as appropriate.

Conclusion

Our review of the City's EM planning and implementation activities showed that overall, the program adequately addresses most federal and state criteria and has many strengths. Such strengths include: 1) formally adopted and successfully incorporated the NIMS command structure into its EM operations; 2) embraced the EM philosophy that the City government is responsible for providing EM activities to its residents; 3) employing a dedicated full-time EM coordinator position; 4) developed and implemented all-hazards Emergency Incident Management Plans for how to respond to emergency events; 5) implemented processes to capture expenses associated with declared disasters; 6) employing dedicated staff that has demonstrated knowledge, skills, and abilities during prior storms in our area and has provided assistance to hurricane-impacted areas; and 7) working cooperatively with the County departments to address the potential need for temporary sheltering of citizens during the interim period (i.e., after emergency response sheltering has ended and before long term housing is available through the federal government).

We also noted during our review the following areas where there were opportunities to improve the City's EM Program.

1) The administration of the EM Program related to: compliance with the federal NIMS requirements; the location and reporting of the EM coordinator position within the City's organizational structure; the tracking and reporting of EM program costs outside of the EM Division related to planning and "non-declared" emergency response activities; the continued efforts to improve the coordination of resources, cooperation and communication between the City and County EM Programs; and the utilization of performance measures to evaluate the EM Program's effectiveness and efficiency.

2) The EM planning and preparation activities related to: staffing and training of EM personnel and City executive management; development and testing of departmental Continuity of Operations Plans; reevaluation of "critical" software applications for disaster recovery; backup communications planning; adequacy of City's Emergency Operations Center; and defining criteria for when emergency public safety and non-public safety personnel should take shelter during major storms.

Appendix A provides management's action plan to address each of the issues identified in this report.

We would like to thank and acknowledge the full and complete cooperation and support of the Fire Department and all members of the City's EM Advisory Committee and EM teams, County EM director and staff, as well as key City and County staff, the executive director of the Capital Area Chapter of the American Red Cross, and staff from the Florida Division of EM.

***Response From
Appointed
Official***

We appreciate and thank the audit staff for the thoroughness of the Emergency Management Program audit. The importance of planning and preparing for events that threaten the safety of our citizens cannot be overstated. I am pleased to know that the members of the City Emergency Management Team have accomplished many important objectives thus far and appreciate the recommendations for improvement. Efforts are currently underway on many of the action items and an aggressive schedule is in place to address the remaining items.

Appendix A – Action Plan

Action Steps	Responsible Employee	Target Date
<i>Administration of the Emergency Management Program</i>		
A. Objective: To improve the administration of the City's EM Program.		
1. Continue to pursue NIMS compliance by meeting all requirements within the City's control and responsibility.	Robby Powers, Fire	Ongoing
2. Develop and execute a mutual aid agreement with the County for bus transportation that will be provided during emergency preparation, response, and recovery.	Ron Garrison, StarMetro Robby Powers, Fire	6/1/2007
3. Reevaluate the location and reporting of the City's EM coordinator position within the City's organizational structure and give consideration to assigning EM responsibilities at an executive level in the government's organizational structure.	Tom Coe, ACM Safety & Neighborhood Services	9/30/07
4. Implement a process to periodically gather input from City executive management or those persons that can best convey how effectively the EM coordinator works in their respective departments to incorporate into the EM coordinator's performance evaluation.	Cindy Dick, Fire Chief EM Advisory Team	3/1/2007
5. Evaluate and determine the most cost effective and beneficial method to identify and track costs directly associated with EM planning and response activities for declared and no-declared emergencies in order to determine the total cost and effort for EM activities.	Robert Bechtol, Budget & Policy	6/1/2007
6. Management continue efforts toward improving the level of communication and effectiveness of working relationships between the City and County EM personnel.	Cindy Dick, Fire Chief Robby Powers, Fire	On Going
7. City periodically (annually or as necessary due to changes in the plan) request the County review the City's EM Incident Management Plan to ensure that the plan is coordinated and agrees with the County's EM Plan, and to adjust the plan accordingly.	Robby Powers, Fire	9/1/2007

Action Steps	Responsible Employee	Target Date
8. Develop, obtain management approval, and implement appropriate performance measures to provide City management information on the program's performance, impact, costs, and benefits.	Cindy Dick, Fire Chief Robby Powers, Fire	3/1/2007
<i>Planning and Preparation for Response</i>		
B. Objective: To improve the City's EM Program related to the planning and preparation for response areas.		
1. Reexamine the structure and composition of the EM teams to determine the most beneficial composition of team members to provide the necessary skill sets among the teams.	Cindy Dick, Fire Chief EM Advisory Team	6/1/2007
2. Implement a process to ensure that all required training courses have been completed by City leaders, managers, team members and emergency response personnel.	Robby Powers, Fire	9/30/2007
3. Coordinate the development of COOP plans for all City departments that do not have a COOP plan.	Robby Powers, Fire	12/30/2007
4. Ensure that the departmental COOP plans are periodically reviewed for adequacy appropriateness, and reasonableness and to ensure that they are periodically being tested.	Robby Powers, Fire	12/30/2007
5. Implement a process to periodically reevaluate the City's identified "critical applications", consider additional applications, and then prioritize and sequence the applications that will be needed to operate during emergencies for restoration. The results of each evaluation should be shared with the ISS Steering Committee for consideration and be incorporated into the ISS Business Recovery Plan as appropriate.	Don Deloach, CISO Robby Powers, Fire	7/30/07
6. Develop and implement a backup communications plan for Emergency Management to ensure that there is adequate backup communications equipment available and educated users to operate the equipment should the primary communications systems be damaged and/or destroyed.	Don Deloach, CISO Levin Magrueder, ISS Robby Powers, Fire	7/30/07

7. Assess the needs of the City's EOC and review City locations to identify a primary and secondary EOC.	Tom Coe, ACM Safety & Neighborhood Services EM Advisory Team	7/30/07
8. Develop and implement a plan to fund and make existing or new EOC locations operational.	Tom Coe, ACM Safety & Neighborhood Services EM Advisory Team	7/30/07
9. Develop, implement, and communicate (via training and written guidance) general criteria for when emergency personnel should take shelter to be out of harm's way during emergency events.	Cindy Dick, Fire Chief EM Advisory Team	6/1/2007

Appendix B – City Emergency Management Team Chart

