

**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER:
Up and ready or down and out?**

The Santa Barbara County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is a facility designed to bring together representatives of all relevant agencies during a major emergency. The Grand Jury evaluated the EOC's facilities....Serious deficiencies were found County employees must respond to the site and make it operational. Most of these personnel live beyond the Santa Barbara south coast region.... The Grand Jury recommends relocating the EOC to a new location more suitable to withstanding an earthquake and equipping it with emergency electrical systems that will automatically provide emergency power.

There were 4 agency's requested to respond to the "Santa Barbara County Emergency Operations Center":
County Executive Officer [SBCEO]
Santa Barbara County Fire Department [SBCFD]
Office of Emergency Services/S.B. County Fire [OES]
The Board of Supervisors [BOS]

County Executive Officer Response [SBCEO]

Recommendation 1: The Board of Supervisors and County Administration should immediately prioritize the process of identifying a new site for the EOC that meets construction standards for emergency government functions.

SBCEO Response: This recommendation has been implemented. The CEO has identified a new site for the EOC that meets construction standards for emergency government functions. The identified site is at the Santa Ynez Airport and staff have been collaborating with the Airport Authority and the Federal Aviation Administration on the logistics of developing a new EOC at this location. The CEO and the Board of Supervisors have committed funding toward the construction of a new EOC. Specifically, the Adopted 2006-2007 Budget includes \$3 million for a new EOC. Additionally, the Sheriff has committed \$300,000 and an additional \$1.7 million may be allocated toward the EOC contingent on financial health of the County's General Fund The County Architect has commenced with the drawing of a conceptual design of the new EOC.

Recommendation 6: Incorporate emergency related functions and employee training in emergency preparedness in the job descriptions of the County Administrative Officer and department managers and as a goal in their annual performance evaluations.

SBCEO Response: This recommendation has been implemented in part and the remainder of the recommendation will be implemented in the beginning of 2007. The County Department Directors annual "Executive Performance Appraisal and Plan" currently contains an assessment on the Director's cooperation in emergency preparation and operations Furthermore, NIMS/SEMS training will be required of all department heads starting in the beginning of 2007.

Santa Barbara County Fire Department response [SBCFD]

Recommendation 1: The Board of Supervisors and County Administration should immediately prioritize the process of identifying a new site for the EOC that meets construction standards for emergency government functions.

SBCFD Response: This recommendation has been implemented. The Fire Department and the Office of Emergency Services have been aware of the need for a new EOC as evidenced by the project's inclusion within the County's Capital Improvement Plan for many years.

Recommendation 2: Install a dedicated electrical hook-up between the EOC and the emergency generator whereby the generator will automatically start and provide power to the EOC in the event of a local power failure.

SBCFD Response: This recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented within 6 months. The County has secured homeland security grant funding to install an automated switch for the emergency generator

Recommendation 3: Secure the EOC telephone system and computer networking switching equipment with earthquake mounting bracketing. Printed instructions on the equipment should be visible to inform persons activating the EOC how to hook up the emergency communications lines.

SBCFD Response: This recommendation has been implemented. County-owned computer and communications equipment located in the EOC are rack-mounted, with the rack attached at the floor, and braced to the walls. Since the EOC is housed within the Employees University, there is some equipment that is the property of the Santa Barbara City College and affiliated with the Employees University rather than the EOC. It is this equipment that was not secured at the time of the Grand Jury's visit. There are printed instructions on the equipment.

Recommendation 4: Provide updated manuals, maps and decision-making information at the EOC at all times for agencies with assigned functions in the EOC.

SBCFD Response: This recommendation has already been implemented. Updated manuals, maps and decision-making information at the EOC are provided OES will continue to ensure that updated materials are located at the EOC for relevant persons.

Office of Emergency services/S.B. County Fire [OES]

Recommendation 2: Install a dedicated electrical hook-up between the EOC and the emergency generator whereby the generator will automatically start and provide power to the EOC in the event of a local power failure.

OES Response: This recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented within 6 months. The County has secured grant funding to install an automated switch and will be completed within 6 months.

Recommendation 3: Secure the EOC telephone system and computer networking switching equipment with earthquake mounting bracketing. Printed instructions on the equipment should be visible to inform persons activating the EOC how to hook up the emergency communications lines.

OES Response: This recommendation has been implemented. County-owned computer and communications equipment located in the EOC are rack-mounted, with the rack attached at the floor, and braced to the walls. There are printed instructions on the equipment.

Recommendation 4: Provide updated manuals, maps, and decision-making information at the EOC at all times for agencies with assigned functions at the EOC.

OES Response: This recommendation is being implemented. The EOC Section boxes (*file box for each EOC section*) with updated manuals, maps and decision-making information at the EOC are being upgraded

Recommendation 5: Expand employee emergency training programs to not just focus on new employees but to train all employees on an annual basis so they will remain informed of current County emergency procedures and what is expected of them in a disaster.

OES Response: This recommendation has been implemented in part, and will continue to be implemented throughout the year

In addition, County departments routinely conduct fire and earthquake drills, including evacuation procedures, so that employees are aware of emergency procedures. OES conducts specialized technical training on emergency management In addition, the CEO's office annually sponsors 10 employees with EOC responsibilities to attend a 40-hour course in emergency management at the California Specialized Training Institute in San Luis Obispo.

Board of Supervisors Response [BOS]

Recommendation 1 The Board of Supervisors and County Administration should immediately prioritize the process of identifying a new site for the EOC that meets construction standards for emergency government functions.

BOS Response: The Board adopted both the CEO and the Fire Department's response as its response.

Recommendation 2: Install a dedicated electrical hook-up between the EOC and the emergency generator whereby the generator will automatically start and provide power to the EOC in the event of a local power failure.

BOS Response: The Board adopted both the Fire Department and OES's responses as its response. (The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.)

Recommendation 3: Secure the EOC telephone system and computer networking switching equipment with earthquake mounting bracketing. Printed instructions on the equipment should be visible to inform persons activating the EOC how to hook up the emergency communications lines.

BOS Response: The Board adopted both the Fire Department and OES's response as its response.

Recommendation 4: Provide updated manuals, maps and decision-making information at the EOC at all times for agencies with assigned functions in the EOC.

BOS Response: The Board adopted both the Fire Department and OES's response as its response.

Recommendation 5: Expand employee emergency training programs to not just focus on new employees but to train all employees on an annual basis so they will remain informed of current County emergency procedures and what is expected of them in a disaster.

BOS Response: The Board adopted OES's response as its response.

Recommendation 6: Incorporate emergency related functions and employee training in emergency preparedness in the job descriptions of the County Administrative Officer and department managers and as a goal in their annual performance evaluations.

BOS Response: The Board adopted the CEO's response as its response. (The recommendation has been implemented in part and the remainder of the recommendation will be implemented in the beginning of 2007.)