



Optimizing the Relationship between the VOAD Executive Committee and the VOAD Coordinator

Strategic Overview • August 30, 2010

Background

In both the 2008 and the 2010 grant requests to the Orfalea Fund, Santa Barbara County VOAD (SBCVOAD) identified implementing a sustainability plan as a key goal for the third year (2010–2011) of the SBCVOAD development project. Two essential objectives of this plan are (a) reconfiguring the VOAD Coordinator position from full-time to part-time and (b) transferring responsibilities that are critical to the ongoing success of SBCVOAD from the Coordinator to the Executive Committee.

During the first two years (2008–2010) of the SBCVOAD development project, SBCVOAD built a strong foundation for ongoing sustainability. Elements of this foundation include:

- Building membership to more than 40 organizations.
- Developing operating guidelines.
- Developing disaster procedures for members involved in food preparation and distribution, in-kind donations, long-term recovery, and emergency volunteer management.
- Appointing Executive Committee members as chairpersons of the Food Subcommittee, In-Kind Donations Subcommittee, and Long-Term Recovery Subcommittee.
- Conducting monthly Executive Committee meetings.
- Conducting quarterly meetings consistently attended by more than 70% of the members.

In an email message announcing the Orfalea Fund's approval of the 2010 grant request, Javier Moreno stated, "The 2010-2011 grant award. . . is specifically contingent upon implementing a structure whereby the VOAD Coordinator develops a much stronger and fluid relationship with the Chair of the VOAD Executive Committee and is housed in the same office/organization as the Chair."

The SBCVOAD Executive Committee wholeheartedly endorses the objective of developing a stronger relationship between the VOAD Coordinator and the Chair of the VOAD Executive Committee, even though it perceives this relationship as already highly functional. Doing so will make it easier for the Executive Committee to develop and implement a sustainability plan. However, the Executive Committee believes that there are more effective and appropriate ways of accomplishing this goal than housing the Coordinator in the same organization as the Chair.

Strategies for Developing a Successful Sustainability Plan

The Executive Committee will employ the following five strategies to develop and implement a sustainability plan in 2010–2011. The primary goal of the plan will be to shift operational responsibility for most VOAD activities currently undertaken by the Coordinator to members of the VOAD Coordinating Committee (the general membership) and to members of the Executive Committee.

1. Develop a comprehensive list of the organizational functions that are critical to the ongoing vitality of SBCVOAD. These include:
 - Public relations, outreach, and member recruitment.
 - Member training, and development.
 - Promoting member involvement in VOAD subcommittee activities.
 - Meeting planning, including preparing and disseminating agendas and minutes.
 - Information management and dissemination, including maintaining the VOAD operating guidelines, disaster procedures, membership roster, subcommittee assignments, and disaster resource directory.
 - Maintaining activation plans for the Emergency Volunteer Center(s), including MOUs with sponsoring organizations, on-call rosters for EVC staff, operating procedures, and activation “go kits.”
 - Forming new subcommittees (such as the Vulnerable Populations Subcommittee) as needs are identified, recruiting members, and developing disaster procedures.
 - Enhancing local disaster readiness through community outreach and education.
 - Coordinating disaster response and recovery efforts of VOAD members, government agencies, and other organizations active in disasters.
 - Financial management, including (a) developing operating budgets, (a) raising funds from dues and other sources to sustain VOAD activities beyond the termination of support from the Orfaea Fund, and (c) controlling costs.
 - Evaluating and recommending funding requests from VOAD members. TBD
2. Develop operational descriptions as needed for each area of responsibility.
3. Recruit members of the Coordinating Committee and the Executive Committee to take operational responsibility for each area.
4. Develop an operational plan, with specific action steps and a timeline, for transferring the identified responsibilities.
5. Evaluate the execution of the operational plan and take corrective action as needed to achieve its goals.

Tactics for Optimizing Communication

The SBCVOAD Executive Committee—and the Chair in particular—believe that the frequency and quality of communication between the Coordinator and the Committee are more than adequate to support the ongoing success of SBCVOAD. Nonetheless, they recognize that (a) optimizing communication is a vital issue, given that the Committee members and the Coordinator are located in different offices; and (b) formalizing, regularizing, and improving their communication will further increase the operational efficiency of SBCVOAD and facilitate the implementation of the sustainability plan. In this light, the Executive Committee will take the following steps:

- Develop and periodically distribute to all Executive Committee members:
 - An **Accountability Matrix** listing the key VOAD organizational functions and the person to whom each function will be assigned (see Appendix A).
 - A **Project Timeline** listing dated action steps through which responsibilities will gradually be transferred from the VOAD Coordinator to Executive Committee members or other VOAD members (see Appendix B).
- Institute weekly meetings of the Executive Committee Chairperson and the Coordinator:
 - At least one of these meetings each month (in addition to the monthly Executive Committee meeting) will be in person; the others may be via teleconference.
 - The primary focus of these meetings will be reviewing the Project Timeline, assessing progress towards project goals, formulating corrective actions as needed, and assigning responsibility for following up on critical tasks.
- Investigate web-based collaboration tools designed to improve communication and optimize performance of virtual teams.

Carry to members

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Location of the VOAD Coordinator

The VOAD Executive Committee strongly believes that the American Red Cross is the most appropriate organization in the county to host the position of VOAD Coordinator for the following reasons.

- Disaster preparation, response, and recovery are essential components of the mission, plans, and budget of the American Red Cross. Other VOAD member organizations participate in disaster planning infrequently and engage in disaster-related activities only when a disaster actually occurs. Red Cross staff and volunteers work to improve disaster resilience throughout the county on a daily basis throughout the year, creating an ideal atmosphere for the VOAD Coordinator's sustained focus on disaster preparedness and recovery.
- The national organization of the American Red Cross and Red Cross chapters throughout the United States are committed to fostering community partnerships through VOAD.
 - The American Red Cross is a founding member of National VOAD. (of 7)
 - Community Partnerships are listed as a discrete activity area in the Red Cross Disaster Services organizational chart (see Appendix C).
 - Red Cross Emergency Services Program Managers are tasked with supporting VOAD to ensure "that there are effective working relationships in place to allow a coordinated delivery of assistance to those affected by disasters" (See Appendix D).
 - Leadership positions of local VOADs are typically held by Red Cross representatives or representatives of other disaster response organizations. For example, the following VOADs in California have Red Cross representatives in key leadership positions: Emergency Network LA (Los Angeles VOAD), Orange County COAD, Riverside County VOAD, Ventura County VOAD, San Luis Obispo VOAD, NorCal VOAD, Humboldt County VOAD, and Solano County VOAD.
- Requiring that the VOAD Coordinator be located in the same organization as the Chairperson of the VOAD Executive Committee may restrict the number of people who are able to serve as Chairperson. Not all VOAD members have the office space, infrastructure, or other resources to support the position of VOAD Coordinator.
- Once the position becomes part-time, requiring that the VOAD Coordinator be located in the same organization as the Chairperson of the VOAD Executive Committee is likely to limit the number of qualified candidates willing to serve as VOAD Coordinator.
 - Not all VOAD member organizations have staff members who are willing, qualified, or able to serve as VOAD Coordinator.
 - A part-time VOAD Coordinator is unlikely to want to move from organization to organization each time the Chairperson changes, resulting in more frequent turnover and fewer qualified candidates for the position.
 - Of all the VOAD member organizations, it is most likely that the American Red Cross will be willing and able to support a full-time position that includes coordinating VOAD activities as a part-time responsibility. This position would almost certainly be located in the Emergency Services Department. Housing the VOAD Coordinator position at the American Red Cross is therefore most likely to result in lower turnover and VOAD Coordinators with expertise in disaster preparation and recovery.

full time support on coordination

not according to host or not near

TIME

Appendix A Accountability Matrix (Hypothetical)

Functional Area	Assigned to	Position	Date Assigned
Public relations, outreach, and member recruitment.	Mahalia Jackson	Membership Subcommittee Member	10/7/2010
Member training and development.	George Clooney	Training and Development Subcommittee Chair	12/5/2010
Promoting member involvement in VOAD subcommittee activities.	Elvis Presley		
Meeting planning, including preparing and disseminating agendas and minutes.	James Brown	Administrative Services Subcommittee Member	10/7/2010
Information management and dissemination, including maintaining the VOAD operating guidelines, disaster procedures, membership roster, subcommittee assignments, and disaster resource directory.	Desi Arnaz		
Maintaining activation plans for the Emergency Volunteer Center(s), including MOUs with sponsoring organizations, on-call rosters for EVC staff, operating procedures, and "go kits."	Lucille Ball	Volunteer Management Subcommittee Chair	11/4/2010
Forming new subcommittees (such as the Vulnerable Populations Subcommittee) as needs are identified, recruiting members, and developing disaster procedures.	Howdy Doody	Membership Subcommittee Chair	10/7/2010
Enhancing local disaster readiness through community outreach and education.	Audrey Hepburn	Community Outreach Subcommittee Chair	
Coordinating disaster response and recovery efforts of VOAD members, government agencies, and other organizations.	Pat Boone	EOC Liaison Subcommittee Chair	1/4/2011
Financial management, including (a) developing operating budgets, (a) raising funds from dues and other sources to sustain VOAD activities beyond the termination of support from the Orfalea Fund, and (c) controlling costs.	Fred Astaire	Executive Committee Treasurer	
Evaluating and recommending funding requests from VOAD members.	Ginger Rogers	Executive Committee Chair	1/4/2010

Appendix B

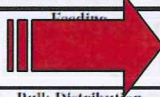
Project Timeline

(Sample)

Task ID	Task	Assigned to	Due Date
PHASE 1: INFO GATHERING			
1.1	Identify existing EQ recovery plans in SB County	DRCG	6/10/2010
1.2	Incorporate EQ plans into exercise	DRCG	6/18/2010
PHASE 2: INITIAL PLANNING			
2.01	Form exercise design team	ERIC	6/10/2010
2.02	Write exercise mission statement	DRCG	6/14/2010
2.03	Approve mission statement	EDT	6/17/2010
2.04	Develop exercise timeline	DRCG	6/16/2010
2.05	Write exercise scenario	DRCG	6/16/2010
2.06	Write exercise summary	DRCG	6/14/2010
2.07	Develop target capability list	DRCG	6/19/2010
2.08	Develop list of task assignments	DRCG	6/18/2010
2.09	Develop exercise logo	DRCG	6/10/2010
2.10	Launch participant website	DRCG	6/15/2010
PHASE 3: MID-TERM PLANNING			
3.1	Write exercise directive	DRCG	7/9/2010
3.2	Write exercise plan	DRCG	7/10/2010
3.3	Write exercise media advisory	DRCG	7/11/2010
3.4	Write exercise evaluation guides (EEG)	DRCG	7/12/2010
3.5	Prepare roster of evaluators and controllers	EDT	7/13/2010
3.8	Facilitate mid-term planning conference	DRCG	8/25/2010
PHASE 4: FINAL PLANNING			
4.1	Create situation manual (SitMan)	DRCG	8/26/2010
4.2	Create Master Sequence of Events List (MSEL)	DRCG	8/31/2010
4.3	Confirm attendance of all registered participants	DRCG	8/31/2010
4.4	Conduct Exercise Evaluator and Controller training	DRCG	10/6/2010
4.5	Facilitate final planning conference	DRCG	10/8/2010
PHASE 5: TABLETOP EXERCISE			
5.1	Supply all exercise materials	DRCG	10/19/2010
5.2	Provide SMEs to ensure exercise success	DRCG	10/14/2010
5.3	Invite community leaders and dignitaries	EDT	10/5/2010
5.4	Invite local and regional media	EDT	10/5/2010
5.5	Facilitate 3-hour exercise using ONX System	DRCG	10/21/2010
PHASE 6: AFTER ACTION CONFERENCE			
6.1	Write After Action Report (AAR)	DRCG	10/22/2010
6.2	Write Improvement Plan (IP)	DRCG	10/22/2010
6.6	Facilitate AAC	DRCG	11/5/2010
6.7	Approve AAR / IP	EDT	11/5/2010
6.8	Post AAR / IP on DHS LLIS	DRCG	11/6/2010

Appendix C

Disaster Services Human Resources Group and Activity Chart

Operations Management (OM)		Site Director (SD)		Multi-Site Director (MD)		Assistant Director (AD)		Director (DIR)	
Individual Client Services (CLS)	Mass Care (MC) CH	External Relations (ER)	Information & Planning (IP) CH	Logistics (LOG) CH	Staff Services (SS) CH	Disaster Services Technology (DST) CH			
Client Casework (CC)	Sheltering (SH)	Government Operations (LG) CH	Disaster Assessment (DA)	Facilities (FAC)	Local Community Volunteers (LCV)	Computer Operations (CO)			
Recovery Planning & Assistance (RPA)		Community Partnerships (CPS) CH	Information Dissemination (ID)	In-Kind Donations (IKD)	Staff Planning & Support (SPS)	Communications (CM)			
Disaster Health Services (HS) CH	Bulk Distribution (BD)	Public Affairs (PA) CH	Financial & Statistical Information (FSI)	Warehousing (WHS)	Staff Relations (SR)	Networking (NT)			
Disaster Mental Health (DMH) CH	Safe & Well Linking (SWL)	Fund Raising (FR) CH	Finance (FIN)	Transportation (TRA)	Staff Wellness (SW)	Customer Service (CS)			
* There is one chief position which oversees these two activities, CC/RPA Chief				Life Safety & Asset Protection (LSAP)	Training (TR)				
				Procurement (PRO)					
				Supply (SUP)					

Community Partnerships. Ensures interests, needs, concerns, and resources of individuals and organizations representing a broad array of groups are represented on a disaster.

Appendix D
Excerpt from the American Red Cross
Quick Start Guide for Emergency Services Program Managers
April 2008

Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD)

There are a number of community agencies that have unique responsibilities for providing services in times of disaster. Organizations in each community that may be part of the local Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) organization include a variety of faith-based and other non-government organizations, such as Catholic Charities, the Salvation Army and Habitat for Humanity. The emergency services program manager must ensure that there are effective working relationships in place to allow a coordinated delivery of assistance to those affected by disasters.