2018 Results Deep Dive – Office of Emergency Management (OEM)

Institutionalizing the Restructured OEM into Enterprise Operations

Introduction

In 2012, OEM was removed from Regulatory Services and reassigned to the City Coordinator's Office with the intent to develop a stand-alone emergency management function. In 2013, OEM adopted a reorganization and restructuring plan to establish a minimum service level: meeting legal requirements and the applicable national standard, NFPA 1600. OEM's performance since 2013 has been measured qualitatively, through periodic self-assessment against the NFPA 1600 standard. (See page 5 of the OEM Results report for a summary of progress.)

Restructuring is scheduled to be substantially complete at the end of 2019. At that point, OEM plans to be able to assess the long-term operational, human capital and budgetary requirements of a standard-compliant OEM. One major challenge OEM faces is institutionalizing emergency management capabilities across the enterprise.

Discussion questions

1. How can OEM better coordinate enterprise capabilities through planning? Are there ways OEM can improve plan effectiveness?
   - Future Key Performance Indicator: The Emergency Operations Plan meets applicable standards and requirements.
   - Considerations
     - There may be a potential gap between capabilities that are reflected through meeting the NFPA standards and the City's actual capability to act on those standards.
     - OEM's role is to work with departments to make them aware of standards; departments must take steps to develop the capability to perform their Plan responsibilities, including reviewing, updating and training on their Standard Operating Procedures. Can OEM clarify or communicate its role to improve plan effectiveness?

2. Where will the workforce needed for Emergency Operations Center (EOC) operations come from? Under what conditions will they be assigned to OEM? How can we assure effective departmental representation?
   - Future Key Performance Indicator: Set up and staff the EOC within 60 minutes. (time metric under review)
   - Considerations
     - Issues inherent in 2011 restructuring and business model:
       - Reduction in OEM core staff based on restructuring and standard-based staffing plan from 13 to (now) 9.5 FTE.
       - There was a shift from one department providing ~ 60 trained personnel to acquiring and training personnel from across enterprise. For a model like this to function better, department representatives need to have clear authority and capability to commit authorities and resources in the moment.
     - Redesigning the EOC operational structure in 2013 has resulted in new and specialized EOC staff skillset, and OEM faces issues of recruiting, size, commitment, training, pay, contracts, expectations, management and accountability.