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THE ROLE OF TRANSPORTATION IN CAMPUS EMERGENCY PLANNING

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Colleges and universities represent a concentration of population that is generally ill-prepared for emergencies. Most members of the campus community are young, often away from home for the first time, with low personal incomes and little financial reserves, and are unused to being self-sufficient. When college and university campuses are involved in providing room and board to their students, they will also be expected to provide care and shelter during a disaster until alternative accommodations can be arranged.

Campuses can indeed become involved in disasters, either natural or by acts of humans. In 2005, Hurricane Katrina created the greatest natural disaster in American history. Louisiana State University's role in Katrina rescue and recovery efforts is an excellent example of how disasters impact institutions of higher learning.

Campus Emergency Operations Centers tend to focus their emergency plans on immediate response by the university's police/security, and by local fire and emergency medical services personnel.

The goal of this project is to create a model university Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) checklist set that integrates transportation assets appropriately through both Operations and Logistics Sections. This model can become a resource nationally, as the ICS and NIMS are national mandates; and within California, where SEMS is also required.

Why was this report created?

The federal Department of Homeland Security, under Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5, requires all public agencies that want to receive federal preparedness assistance to comply with the National Incident Management System (NIMS), which includes the creation of an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). Universities, which may be victims or resources during disasters, must write NIMS-compliant emergency plans. While most university plans address public safety and logistics management, few adequately address the transportation aspects of disaster response and recovery.

The State of California Office of Emergency Services Agency provides the basic template for an EOP that complies with both the Incident Command System (ICS) and NIMS, as required by federal law. It includes compliance with the California State-mandated Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), which is required of all state agencies, including publicly funded education organizations.

Who can benefit from this report?

This Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI) report describes the value of integrating transportation infrastructure into the campus emergency plan, including helicopter operations. Included in this report is a complete set of EOP checklists and organizational charts updated to acknowledge lessons learned from Katrina, 9/11, and other wide-scale emergencies, including the 1995 Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake (Kobe, Japan) and 2007's Virginia Technical University shootings.

Campus emergency planners can quickly update their existing emergency management documents by integrating selected elements from each Appendix, or create their own NIMS-compliant plans by adapting the complete set of appendixes to their university's structure.

To access the full report and the appendixes, please visit the MTI website at: <http://www.transweb.sjsu.edu/MTIportal/research/publications/summary/MTI-0806.html>.

About the Authors



Frances L. Edwards is the Director of the Master of Public Administration program and Professor of Political Science at San José State University (SJSU). She is also a Research Associate at MTI, and teaches emergency management in the Master of Transportation Management program.

Previously, she was Director of the Office of Emergency Services in San José, California for 14 years, including one year as acting assistant chief, San José Fire Department. She was Director of San José's Metropolitan Medical Task Force (MMTF), a CBRNE terrorism response unit, and head of the four-county "San José Urban Area Security Initiative.

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Mr. Goodrich serves as a consultant to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and has provided training services for NASA/Ames Research Center staff in emergency management. He has a Master of Public Administration degree from SJSU, and is a Certified Emergency Manager.