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APTA Security and Emergency
Management Working Group

Emergency Operations Plan for Transit Agencies

Abstract: This recommended practice provides guidance to assist transit agencies in developing and implementing a standalone Emergency Operations Plan and supporting annexes.

Keywords: emergency management, emergency operations, Emergency Operations Plan

Summary: This document provides guidance and describes the core components for a transit agency Emergency Operations Plan. Transit agencies should tailor their Emergency Operations Plan to their agency's needs. Transit agencies should use Emergency Operations Plans to facilitate informed emergency planning decision-making for their operations, assets, passengers, employees and communities.



Foreword

The American Public Transportation Association is a standards development organization in North America. The process of developing standards is managed by the APTA Standards Program's Standards Development Oversight Council (SDOC). These activities are carried out through several standards policy and planning committees that have been established to address specific transportation modes, safety and security requirements, interoperability, and other topics.

APTA used a consensus-based process to develop this document, which is detailed in the [manual for the APTA Standards Program](#). This document was drafted in accordance with the approval criteria and editorial policy as described. Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

This document was prepared by the APTA Security and Emergency Management Working Group (SEMWG) as directed by the APTA Security Standards Policy and Planning (SSPP) Committee.

This document represents a common viewpoint of those parties concerned with its provisions, namely transit operating/planning agencies, manufacturers, consultants, engineers, and general interest groups. The application of any recommended practices or guidelines contained herein is voluntary. APTA standards are mandatory to the extent incorporated by an applicable statute or regulation. In some cases, federal and/or state regulations govern portions of a transit system's operations. In cases where there is a conflict or contradiction between an applicable law or regulation and this document, consult with a legal adviser to determine which document takes precedence.

This is a new document.



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Introduction

This introduction is not part of APTA SS-SEM-RP-019-24, “Emergency Operations Plan for Transit Agencies.”

APTA recommends the use of this document by:

- individuals or organizations that operate public transit systems;
- individuals or organizations that contract with others for the operation of public transit systems; and
- individuals or organizations that influence how public transit systems are operated (including but not limited to consultants, designers and contractors).

Scope and purpose

The primary goal of this document is to provide clear and straightforward guidance for transit agencies to develop, implement, evaluate and maintain a tailored Emergency Operations Plan.

A secondary goal is to minimize agency time and effort needed to prepare and implement an Emergency Operations Plan while maintaining the document’s clarity and comprehensiveness. Plan implementation includes having the Emergency Operations Plan approved and supported by management and staff, and continuing emergency planning activities as identified. The audience for this recommended practice is the person or team responsible for developing and implementing the Emergency Operations Plan.

Emergency Operations Plan for Transit Agencies

1. Emergency planning fundamentals

Public transportation agencies face an ever-evolving landscape of emergencies that have the potential to disrupt transit operations, cause harm to transit customers and employees, damage public and private property, and create significant economic losses. Conducting and documenting formal emergency planning helps public transportation agencies prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to and recover from all threats and hazards.

1.1 Planning principles

Applying the following principles to the emergency planning process will help transit agencies develop effective Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs) to protect their employees and the communities they serve.

1.1.1 Tailored approach

Transit agencies should tailor their EOPs to fit their organizational needs and the needs of the communities they serve.

1.1.2 Whole community

Transit agencies should engage the entire community in developing inclusive and effective EOPs that ensure equitable emergency management. Transit agencies should collaborate with key stakeholders, including transit operators, elected officials, nonprofits and community groups, to identify the community's emergency needs and realistic approaches to respond to requirements. Together, they will determine and document stakeholder roles in providing or receiving resources during emergencies. By focusing on accessibility, collaboration and targeted investments, transit agencies can promote greater prosperity and quality of life for all community members.

After identifying key stakeholders, transit agencies should determine how those stakeholders should provide or receive resources during an emergency and document these relationships in the EOP. Additionally, if a transit agency's communities have adopted FEMA's Community Lifelines concept, transit agencies may wish to consider including information gathering and reporting processes that address the Mass Transit, Railway and/or Maritime components of the Transportation Community Lifeline. Transit agencies may also want to examine their operations and identify whether other Lifelines or Lifeline components, such as Law Enforcement, Patient Movement, Power Grid, Fuel or HazMat, may apply to their operations as well. More information about Community Lifelines can be found in FEMA's Community Lifelines Implementation Toolkit.

1.1.3 All hazards and all threats

Transit agencies should develop an EOP base plan that considers all threats and all hazards. Agencies should consider developing hazard-specific annexes to address findings from their vulnerability assessment and/or threats and hazards identification risk analysis. As a starting point, agencies may refer to local agency hazard mitigation plans to further understand hazards and threats in their operational area.

1.1.4 Capabilities-based approach

Transit agencies may take a capabilities-based approach to operational planning, rather than a scenario- or function-based approach. A capabilities-based approach accounts for a wide range of threats and hazards, incorporating elements of scenario- and function-based planning. FEMA describes preparedness capabilities in the National Preparedness Goal.

1.1.5 Interoperable communications

Transit agencies should work with regional and local partners to assure interoperable communications during emergency planning and operations.

1.2 Considerations for transit agency emergency planning

Understanding the environment in which a transit agency operates is critical to the successful development and implementation of an Emergency Operations Plan. Because the environment can vary widely across transit agencies, transit agencies should tailor their EOPs to their agencies' current environment with the following considerations in mind.

1.2.1 Options for transit agency emergency planning objectives

Transit agencies should clearly define the objectives of their emergency planning efforts in their EOPs. Transit agency emergency planning objectives may include the following:

- Protecting life safety, property, and the environment
- Maintaining revenue service (or some level of modified service)
- Modifying service plans to mitigate the impacts of the incident or special event (e.g., special weather routes, evacuation routes, limited service)
- Developing contingency plans to provide alternative transportation mechanisms (e.g., bus bridges, detours)
- Considering a level of transportation for essential employees and critical resources to meet community needs (e.g., hospitals, local emergency operations centers, military bases, major employers with 24-hour needs, public safety)
- Determining if evacuation support is appropriate for the organization (e.g., resource capability, legal parameters, operator union restrictions)
- Coordinating with local governments to align with their incident objectives
- Codifying thresholds for the following:
 - service suspension or modification
 - authority needed to suspend or modify service
 - procedures needed to suspend or modify service
 - type and timing of internal and external communications
 - compensation for employees

See APTA SS-SEM-RP-015-19, "Suspension of Service of a Public Transportation System and Recovery," for additional details about service suspension.

1.2.2 Relationship with federal, state and local EOPs

Transit agencies should address local, state, federal and volunteer emergency management policies and requirements within their EOPs to streamline EOP alignment with overlapping and neighboring jurisdictions that may be similarly affected by an incident.

Likewise, transit agencies should coordinate with agencies and organizations (e.g., local law enforcement, fire, emergency agencies, utility providers, municipal bus operators, community organizations) to create and

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maintain cooperative agreements (e.g., MOUs/MOAs). Transit agencies should be familiar with resource request and allocation processes in their operational area.

Transit agencies should regularly participate in local, regional, state and federal preparedness activities to integrate the agency’s EOP processes into broader response planning as appropriate.

1.2.3 Relationship between SEPPs and EOPs

Transit agencies should possess both a security plan and an Emergency Operations Plan (also known as an emergency preparedness or emergency response plan). When combined, these documents are considered the Security and Emergency Preparedness Plan (SEPP). However, agencies should consider standalone Emergency Operations Plans so that emergency planning components can be shared where appropriate.

Regardless of whether these two plans are separate or combined, they establish a comprehensive, systematic management structure to enable security, prevention, protection, mitigation, response and recovery activities. Security and emergency preparedness plans should be reviewed annually and updated if needed.

TABLE 1
 Alignment Among Safety, Security and Emergency Operations Plans

| SMS Component | Safety Plan | Security Plan | Emergency Operations Plan |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Policy, Goals and Objectives | Defines the fundamental approach, goal and objectives, and organizational structure for managing safety. | Defines the fundamental approach, goal and objectives, and organizational structure for managing security. | Defines the fundamental approach, goal and objectives for requiring responsive action to protect life, property and/or the environment. |
| Risk Management | Hazard identification, assessment, evaluation and control to an acceptable or tolerable level. | Threat and vulnerability identification, evaluation, prevention, protection and mitigation. | Threat and hazard identification, evaluation, prevention, protection, mitigation and response for natural disasters and human-made events. |
| System Assurance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety data collection and analysis • Incident/accident investigation • Safety reviews and audits | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security data collection and analysis • Event and security breach investigation • Security reviews and audits | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collection and analysis • Post-event assessments • Emergency management procedures, including integration with city/county/state resources • Exercises • Audits |
| Promotion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee competency training • Safety public education and awareness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee awareness training • Security public education and awareness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency preparedness awareness and training • Employee response training |

1.2.4 Legal requirements and authorities

As part of the EOP development process, transit agencies should assess the legal requirements (e.g., 49 CFR 673.11(a)(6)) that influence operational doctrine and plans; grant requirements; and local, state and tribal integration and coordination.

1.2.5 Planned and unplanned events

Transit agencies should consider how their EOP distinguishes between planned and unplanned events and incidents. Transit agencies should also consider the needs of special event planning partners. See APTA SS-SEM-S-003-08, “Security and Emergency Management Aspects of Planned and Unplanned Special Event Service,” for additional details about planning for planned and unplanned events.

1.2.6 Organizational placement

Transit agencies should ensure logical placement of emergency management planning and implementation with the following considerations:

- Emergency management/preparedness should provide direct advice to senior executives for decision-making.
- Emergency management/preparedness should be included in organizational planning.
- Emergency management/preparedness should be granted the authority to act across the organization and not be diluted within another department.

1.2.7 Document accessibility

It is important that EOPs be easily shareable with both internal and external stakeholders. EOP content should not contain Sensitive Security Information unless necessary. Transit agencies must pay especially close attention to post-incident and exercise data capture, analysis, and after-action reports, as the aggregation of information may reflect a security vulnerability that would be considered Sensitive Security Information. See APTA SS-ISS-RP-003-23, “Sensitive Security Information Policy,” for additional details about protecting SSI.

1.2.8 EOP and COOP

It is important to distinguish between the EOP and a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP).

EOPs provide guidance for an incident. They are *external*-facing documents that define how a transit agency will work with stakeholders to provide a safe response.

A COOP is an *internal*-facing document that defines how a transit agency will continue business operations in the event that an incident disrupts normal operations. The COOP includes orders of succession for key transit agency personnel, critical suppliers and business relocation information.

While distinct, these plans should align so that the COOP complements the EOP, and the EOP addresses the role of the COOP in ensuring continuation of vital services during an emergency. The EOP and COOP can be activated individually or separately. See APTA SS-SEM-S-001-08, “Continuity of Operations Plan for Transit Agencies,” for additional details.

2. Emergency planning process

This section provides an overview of the process for developing a transit agency EOP.

2.1 Key roles

In order to effectively develop an EOP, transit agencies need to have an executive sponsor (generally the CEO or general manager), a planning lead (generally an emergency manager, public safety director or safety officer), and a planning team consisting of key internal stakeholders. Senior transit agency executives should work with preparedness planners to provide overarching guidance, objectives and outcomes.

2.1.1 Executive sponsor

The role of the executive sponsor is to reinforce the importance of emergency planning and to encourage or compel participation in the planning process from all departments of the agency. Sponsors should maintain active engagement in the development process, attending meetings if possible. At a minimum, the executive sponsor should receive regular updates on the status of the project and the challenges the planning team may be facing.

Executive sponsors should commit to removing roadblocks for the planning team by identifying additional resources, directing participation in the planning process, or making key decisions that require executive approval. Ultimately, executive sponsors will sign off on or approve the base plan. The executive sponsor or their designee should approve EOP annexes for implementation. Designees should be clearly identified by the executive sponsor, either in the EOP or in an accompanying policy.

2.1.2 Planning lead

The planning lead's role is to advance the planning process through meetings, identify key questions and draft the text of the EOP. The planning lead should drive the development process forward by determining decisions that need to be made by planning team members or the executive sponsor and finding areas for development and discussion in planning team meetings. Planning leads should facilitate discussion, provide context and examples for planning team members to consider, make decisions when there is a need for them, and document the developed process in the draft EOP for planning team review and approval.

2.1.3 Planning team

Transit agencies should develop a planning team that consists of representatives from all departments and relevant service providers with a role in emergency response. The following list is provided as an example and may not be inclusive of all departments that are appropriate for all transit agencies.

- Board Office/Board Relations/Board Affairs
- Bus Maintenance
- Bus Operations
- Capital Construction/Engineering
- Customer Call Center
- Emergency Management
- Facilities Operations and Maintenance
- Ferry Maintenance
- Ferry Operations
- Finance and Procurement
- Government Relations/Intergovernmental Affairs
- Human Resources
- Information Technology/Cybersecurity
- Internal Audit
- Legal/General Counsel/Corporate Counsel
- (Light/Heavy) Rail Maintenance
- (Light/Heavy) Rail Operations
- Marketing/Communications/Community Affairs/Community Engagement/Public Relations/Public Affairs
- Operations Control Center (if separate)
- Paratransit Maintenance
- Paratransit Operations
- Planning
- Public Safety/Security/Transit Police
- Safety
- Senior Leadership/Executive Office

The role of each of these planning team participants is to provide input on their department's capabilities, needs, processes, procedures and limitations during an emergency response. Planning team participants need to be decision-makers for their departments and be able to commit their department to any decisions that are made and documented during the emergency planning process.

2.2 Process for developing the base plan

2.2.1 Initiate the planning process

Once a transit agency identifies key players in its planning process, planning leads should hold a kickoff meeting for the planning team, with an opening statement by the executive sponsor, if possible, to reinforce the importance of the EOP and the planning process.

The planning lead should then review the project plan, planning team member expectations, expected timeline, and other critical information. Team members should receive information about the purpose of the planning process and be briefed on what will be asked of them in the remaining series of meetings or activities in the planning process. Agencies may consider using a planning team charter to define objectives, process, roles and team member responsibilities.

2.2.2 Establish response expectations

As transit agencies are generally supporting entities in an emergency response, agencies should identify the role that they expect to play in an emergency response within the community. Although some incidents will be transit-specific, such as an incident in a station or on a transit vehicle, transit agencies will generally be supporting first responders with information, resources and expertise in any incident that the agency responds to. It is for this reason that agencies should discuss their level of commitment to emergency response with their executive sponsor and the planning team. It is at this point when agency leadership, at the prompting of the executive sponsor, should define leadership expectations for informational updates, resource summaries, resource management and other emergency response processes.

Since transit agencies generally support emergency response at the community level, they should engage with community stakeholders, such as elected and appointed officials, local emergency managers, and community organizations, about what they expect from the transit agency. The agency should understand what these expectations are, but in some cases, it may fall to the executive sponsor to discuss and negotiate external expectations with those community stakeholders. Transit agencies and involved parties should document agreed-upon expectations in an MOU, MOA or LOI.

2.2.3 Develop response processes

Once the executive sponsor, the planning team and community stakeholders have a shared vision for the expected role of the transit agency during an emergency response, planning leads should facilitate the development of response processes to meet those expectations. Transit agencies should identify how they will develop policies and procedures to meet established response expectations.

Transit agencies should develop processes and procedures for the following:

- emergency notifications
- resource requests, acquisition and management, to include both owned and procured assets
- information-gathering, analysis and dissemination
- public information
- liaising with served community or communities
- material, logistical and financial support for responding or impacted personnel

In addition to the above leadership-driven and standard processes, agencies will need to develop specific processes to meet agreed-upon expectations with all stakeholders. For example, if the transit agency agrees to provide a certain number of buses and operators whenever a served community's EOC is activated regardless of the hazard, then the transit agency should develop specific processes for activating, staffing, supporting, tracking and demobilizing those assets.

2.2.4 Create the plan

The planning lead, or a support staff member, should document all processes and procedures developed in the Response Processes phase. As agencies develop initial processes to address the above commitments, planning leads should document those processes and assigned responsibilities in the draft EOP. Transit agencies may choose to document these processes in the base plan or provide more detail about each process in a separate annex such as a functional or departmental annex. More details about developing the base plan and annexes are available in sections 3 and 4.

Once the draft plan has reached a stage where the transit agency documents each process, the planning lead should disseminate the plan to the planning team for review and comment. The planning lead should organize multiple rounds of planning team review, incorporating at least two rounds of planning team review (i.e., an initial review and a follow-up).

Transit agencies should document and track feedback on the draft plan to ensure that comments are addressed and that stakeholders' needs are met. Agencies may consider sharing draft plans with external stakeholders for review and comment as part of this process and should address stakeholder feedback before plan approval.

2.2.5 Approve the plan

Once the planning lead adjudicates and addresses comments and changes, they should finalize the plan for approval. The president/CEO/general manager of the transit agency should approve and sign the plan. The transit agency should disseminate the signed plan to all relevant staff.

2.2.6 Maintain the plan

Transit agencies should develop a process to maintain and update their emergency operations plans. Plan maintenance should address after action reviews of recent training, exercises, and emergencies, new and revised plans and policies, organizational change, new and emerging threats, modifications to planning assumptions, and regulatory changes. Transit agencies should review plans for potential revisions annually or as situations warrant.

See APTA SS-SEM-S-004-09, "Transit Exercises," for additional details about conducting and evaluating in the transit environment.

2.3 Process for developing annexes

Agencies should include functional/departmental, hazard-specific and other annexes in their plan to complement the base plan. Transit agencies should apply processes similar to those used in developing a base plan. The main differences between the base plan and annexes are the reduced scope and scale in functional, departmental or cross-functional annexes and the hazard-specific nature of a hazard-specific annex.

As part of the planning process, agencies should determine how they will organize their emergency response. Generally speaking, transit agencies have two options, although they may adopt both to fit their needs. Agencies may organize their responses using existing agency or departmental structures, in which case they will likely use a departmental annex. Or agencies can organize their response into functions, such as ICS or ESF functions, in which case they are likely to use functional annexes.

Agencies may also wish to develop annexes that are neither functional nor departmental, in which case they should clearly define the scope of the annex and ensure that all plan users understand the contents therein.

2.3.1 Differences between functional, departmental or cross-functional annexes and the

base plan

The first key difference between developing a base plan and developing a functional, departmental or cross-functional annex is the reduced scope and scale of the plan. These annexes address how a defined group of personnel or a defined department will implement the processes and responsibilities outlined in the base plan. For example, a Logistics Functional Annex will address how designated personnel will meet the logistical needs of the agency (e.g., food, water, fuel, specialty equipment) as outlined in the base plan.

Another key difference is the composition and size of the planning team for a functional, departmental or cross-functional annex. Because the scope and scale of the annex is smaller and more defined, transit agencies should limit members of the planning team to only those who have a specific role within the defined scope. For a functional annex, this would be all departments that contribute resources, information or expertise to the area covered by the functional annex. For a departmental annex, the planning team should consist of departmental leadership and other identified key staff. For a cross-functional annex (an annex that covers more than one function as defined in the EOP), the planning team should include those departments that will contribute to that plan, such as those who have a role in the service suspension plan for the transit agency.

The final difference between a functional, department or cross-functional annex and a base plan is who should approve the plan. In most cases, designated senior personnel, such as department leaders or the chief operating or safety officer, may sign off on functional, departmental or cross-functional annexes. In some agencies, the president/CEO/general manager may prefer to approve all plans.

2.3.2 Differences between hazard-specific annexes and the base plan

The core difference between developing a base plan and developing hazard-specific annexes is that a hazard-specific annex should focus on how an agency responds to a specific hazard such as a snowstorm, hurricane, flood or terrorist incident. Agencies should research the hazards that can impact their area of operations. The planning lead or planning team members should consult local or regional hazard mitigation plans, historical records, local emergency management, academic experts, similarly situated peer agency plans and other resources to identify the types of hazards that could impact the communities they serve. They should identify which hazards are most likely to occur and which hazards are likely to have the greatest impact on the community and transit agency operations. Agencies should identify the types of impact each hazard will have and the severity of that impact on the agency's service, personnel and community. Agencies should use a consistent methodology to rank or rate hazards and their impacts and should identify the need for hazard-specific annexes to address those hazards.

Once a transit agency identifies the need to address a specific hazard, the planning lead should work with their executive sponsor to define expectations for the agency's response. Agencies may find it useful to engage in scenario-based planning, using a realistic scenario informed by data and evidence to guide discussions around what the agency should or can reasonably do to respond to an identified hazard. Transit agencies should design each hazard-specific annex to supplement, not duplicate, information in the base plan.

3. Base plan

The EOP base plan should include an overview of the transit agency's emergency management/response program and detail the transit agency's ability to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to and recover from emergencies. Transit agencies should develop a base plan that includes information regarding relevant emergency response policies and response organizations and defines roles and responsibilities clearly. The base plan should provide a solid foundation for developing more operationally oriented annexes.

3.1 Structure

The base plan should include the following sections:

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- **Purpose:** Provides a general statement of what the EOP should do, supported by a brief summary of the base plan and annexes.
- **Scope:** Explicitly states the scope of emergency response and the entities and geographic areas to which the plan applies.
- **Situation overview:** Summarizes the steps a transit agency has taken to prepare for emergencies and the hazards the agency faces. This section should include a general discussion of the following:
 - risks (including relative probability)
 - geographic areas likely to be affected
 - vulnerable facilities
 - population distribution, with an emphasis on particularly vulnerable individuals (e.g., unaccompanied minors)
 - dependencies on other jurisdictions
 - short- and long-term strategies to minimize an incident’s impacts
- **Concept of operations:** Gives an overall picture of how the transit organization accomplishes objectives to reach a desired end state. This section should offer a clear methodology to realize the plan’s goals and objectives.
- **Organization and assignment of responsibilities:** Addresses the key functions the transit organization should accomplish during an emergency and includes federal, state, local, tribal, territorial, insular area, regional and private sector organizations roles in support of operations. In this section, transit agencies should identify their selected approach for organizing emergency management—ESF, agency and department, functional areas, or a hybrid.
- **Direction, control and coordination:** Identifies who has tactical and operational control of response assets and explains how coordination systems support coordination efforts across organizations. In this section, transit agencies should include information about how department and agency plans nest into the EOP (horizontal integration) and how higher-level plans layer onto the EOP (vertical integration).
- **Information collection, analysis and dissemination:** Describes the essential information requirements identified during the planning process. In this section, transit agencies should identify the types of information needed, information sources, information users, information sharing mechanisms and any specific times transit agencies require information. Agencies should assure alignment with records retention and public access policies and laws.
- **Communication and coordination:** Documents the communication protocols and coordination procedures transit agencies use among responding organizations during emergencies and disasters.
- **Customer communication:** Transit agencies should address the public dissemination of service alerts and information.
- **Administration, finance and logistics:** Includes information on general support requirements, availability of support and services, and general policies for managing resources.
- **Plan development and maintenance:** Details the overall approach to planning and the assignment of plan development and maintenance responsibilities.
- **Authorities and references:** Documents the legal basis for emergency operations and activities.

3.2 Considerations for transit base plans

When developing the base plan, transit agencies should consider the following public transit–specific factors:

- External notifications to agency stakeholders (e.g., impacted jurisdictions, community-based organizations, ridership organizations, customers).
- Government affairs and intergovernmental affairs, particularly for transit agencies covering multiple jurisdictions.
- Service suspension (i.e., protocols or reference to a service suspension plan).

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- EOC operations or reference to a separate EOC plan. See APTA SS-SEM-RP-017-23, “Planning, Developing and Operating a Transit Agency Emergency Operations Center (EOC),” for additional details about transit agency EOCs.
- Resource allocation methodology during incidents (e.g., how to prioritize internal and external resource requests, especially if the agency serves multiple jurisdictions).
- Employee support.
- Community support, including both what the agency is willing and not willing to deliver to support community response during an emergency.
- Event classification system (e.g., the transit agency’s definitions for Level/Type 1, 2 and 3 incidents).
- Regulatory or legal requirements.
- Authorities to activate the plan and direct resources (e.g., organizations and individuals that possess the authority to activate, direct and control transit agency activities during an emergency)
- Transit agency support to traditional jurisdictions (e.g., cities, counties), multimodal centers (e.g., airports), and special jurisdictions (e.g., hospitals, universities).
- Documentation of requests (e.g., protocols for properly documenting all requests and related authorizations).

4. EOP annexes

Transit agencies should create annexes to their EOPs that describe functional/departmental processes, address how the agency will respond to specific hazards, or document agency procedures that don’t fit well under either of the previous categories.

When documenting more specific procedures to complement base plan processes, agencies have a choice between using functional annexes and departmental annexes. In general, the choice between the use of a functional annex or a departmental annex should be driven by the transit agency’s concept of operations. For instance, if a transit agency organizes its EOC or equivalent using sections or branches made up of personnel from multiple departments that perform specific functions (e.g., public safety, transportation operations, logistics, finance), then functional annexes may be most appropriate. If a transit agency organizes its EOC departmentally, with tasks assigned to specific departments and staff within their normal chain of command, then departmental annexes may be more appropriate. Both options are discussed in more detail below.

4.1 Functional annexes

The purpose of a functional annex is to do the following:

- Define the scope of the function within an emergency operations context.
- Define the makeup or membership of the function.
- Describe and document processes for assigned personnel to achieve the tasks assigned to the function in the base plan.

Agencies that decide to use functional annexes should identify the functions required to meet response expectations identified by the executive sponsor and planning team during the creation of the base plan. Once identified, transit agencies should examine the departments, units, teams or individuals assigned to each function. Transit agencies should assign the lead role of a function to a specific department, unit, team or role within the agency, with other departments, teams, units or roles playing a supporting role within that function. Examples of possible functions within a transit agency EOP include:

- bus
- direction, control and coordination
- donations/volunteer management
- energy, utilities and power transfer
- facilities and real estate
- financial management

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- logistics
- paratransit
- planning and data analytics
- public information and external affairs
- rail
- safety and security

The functional annex should define the responsibilities of the lead department, unit, team or role and the responsibilities of each supporting department, unit, lead, team or role. Additionally, agencies should define any intra-function coordination processes (e.g., specialized information or resource request processes) in the functional annex. Transit agencies should write functional annexes using language that explains all procedures or processes to both assigned staff and those outside the function who need to understand how the function operates.

4.2 Departmental annexes

The purpose of a departmental annex is to do the following:

- Define the scope of the department’s responsibility within an emergency operations context.
- Describe and document processes for departmental personnel to achieve the tasks assigned to the function in the base plan.

Agencies that use the departmental annex structure should determine the responsibilities assigned to each department in their base plan. Each department should then identify the unit, teams or titles that are responsible for executing each responsibility assigned to the department. Agencies should document assignments along with processes and procedures for executing the responsibility in the departmental annex. Additionally, agencies should define any intra-departmental coordination processes (e.g., specialized information or resource request processes) in the departmental annex. Transit agencies should write departmental annexes using language that explains all procedures or processes to both assigned staff and those outside the department who need to understand how the department operates.

4.3 Hazard- or threat-specific annexes

The purpose of a hazard-specific annex is to do the following:

- Define the scope of the agency’s response to an identified hazard.
- Document hazard-specific operational mitigations or protective measures that the agency may implement.
- Document expectations, responsibilities and processes related to a hazard.

Hazard-specific annexes are supplemental to agency base plans and functional or departmental annexes. Hazard-specific plans should add specific expectations, responsibilities and processes for all involved departments that apply to the specific hazard, rather than repeat existing expectations, responsibilities and processes from the base plan or functional or departmental annexes.

Transit agencies should document the following actions or process in the hazard-specific annex:

- assessment and control of the hazard
- prevention and infrastructure protection activities
- public warnings
- short-term stabilization actions
- recovery actions

Transit agencies should develop hazard-specific annexes for hazards that could significantly impact the agency’s service area, operations and/or community. Agencies should focus on developing plans for hazards

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that present a realistic threat and should avoid expending time and energy on hazards with negligible impact or extreme unlikelihood (e.g., a hurricane annex for a transit agency in a Midwestern state).

4.4 Other annexes

Agencies may develop other types of annexes that pertain to operations during an emergency. These documents may include a Service Suspension Plan, Community Support Annex or Employee Support Annex. When creating these documents, transit agencies should explain their purpose and how they fit into the overall planning scheme. These annexes may cross functional or departmental boundaries and are generally not tied to any specific threat or hazard.

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Related APTA standards

- APTA SS-ISS-RP-003-23**, “Sensitive Security Information Policy”
- APTA SS-SEM-S-001-08**, “Continuity of Operations Plan for Transit Agencies”
- APTA SS-SEM-S-003-08**, “Security and Emergency Management Aspects of Planned and Unplanned Special Event Service”
- APTA SS-SEM-S-004-09**, “Transit Exercises”
- APTA SS-SEM-RP-015-19**, “Suspension of Service of a Public Transportation System and Recovery”
- APTA SS-SEM-RP-017-23**, “Planning, Developing and Operating a Transit Agency Emergency Operations Center (EOC)”

References

- Federal Emergency Management Agency, “Community Lifelines Implementation Toolkit,” July 2023.
www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/practitioners/lifelines-toolkit
- Federal Emergency Management Agency, “Developing and Maintain Emergency Operations Plans, Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101, Version 3.0,” September 2021.
www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_cpg-101-v3-developing-maintaining-eops.pdf
- Federal Emergency Management Agency, “National Preparedness Goal, Second Edition,” September 2015.
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Abbreviations and acronyms

- COOP** Continuity of Operations plan
- DHS** Department of Homeland Security
- EOC** Emergency Operations Center
- EOP** Emergency Operations Plan
- ESF** Emergency Support Function
- FEMA** Federal Emergency Management Agency
- FTA** Federal Transit Administration
- ICS** Incident Command System
- LOI** letter of intent
- MOA** memorandum of agreement
- MOU** memorandum of understanding
- SEPP** Security and Emergency Preparedness Plan
- SSI** Sensitive Security Information

Document history

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