



RON GALPERIN
CONTROLLER

January 16, 2019

Honorable Eric Garcetti, Mayor
Honorable Michael Feuer, City Attorney
Honorable Members of the Los Angeles City Council

Re: In Case of Emergency: The City's Disaster Service Worker Program

Nearly 50,000 people serve the City of Los Angeles, cleaning our streets, running departments and developing policy in the nation's second most populous municipality. But, when a critical incident occurs, some civilian City employees may be called into action to help Los Angeles as Disaster Service Workers (DSW), an unused program and the subject of my latest report.

What are DSWs?

DSWs are not first responders, as police officers and firefighters remain the frontline response units for all emergencies, answering the immediate need to confront disasters. However, state law and a City Executive Directive authorize City departments to reassign employees as DSWs to aid in the response and recovery phases of a disaster or emergency.

When would DSWs be activated?

If disaster recovery requires additional time and resources, the City is empowered to deploy civilian employees to serve as DSWs in a variety of support roles, such as answering phones, delivering supplies, preparing food, filling sandbags or managing volunteers.

When has this program been used?

Never. The DSW program Executive Directive was issued in 2011, but while most civilian City employees are eligible to be reassigned as DSWs, the City has not activated employees as such. In fact, the City currently lacks adequate policies and procedures to ensure that civilian employees are prepared to take on these critical roles.

Why does this program exist?

Earthquakes, fires and other disasters are an unfortunate reality in a large metropolis like Los Angeles. Recently, a series of destructive fires ripped through Southern California neighborhoods, wreaking havoc on communities and exacting a tragic toll. While firefighters and public safety officers heroically worked on the front lines, the City might have missed an opportunity to lend a hand by reassigning employees as DSWs.

Assuming DSWs get the call, would they be ready?

When they do get the call, City employees must be trained and ready to serve. Unfortunately, too many components of this program are either nonexistent or lacking in scope. I conducted this review of the City's DSW program to assess what departmental policies and practices currently exist, how aware employees are of the program, and whether the City has prepared employees to serve as DSWs in the event of an emergency.

What are the next steps?

Based on my findings, I offer the following recommendations:

- **Establish a cloud-based database of employee contact information:** The City does not have a database of employee cell phone numbers and other contact information to facilitate DSW deployment. Establishing a cloud-based database will ensure the City has the necessary information available in one centralized location;
- **Develop procedures to identify which departments and employees should be deployed first:** The Emergency Management and Personnel Departments should develop methods to identify which departments and employees within those departments should be prioritized for deployment;
- **Implement DSW trainings for City employees:** The City should do a better job informing employees about these duties and update DSW trainings. New employees learn about the DSW program during their initial orientation, but regular refresher trainings about the DSW program will help all employees prepare to serve; and

- **Test DSW deployment as part of annual activation drills:** City employees participate in annual Emergency Operations Center activation drills, but DSW deployment scenarios have been included only once. Deployment should be tested yearly.

I urge the City Council and Mayor to consider the suggestions presented in this report. Establishing a clear program to identify, contact and train DSWs will improve the City's emergency response capabilities when disaster strikes - a direct benefit to all Angelenos.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Galperin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

RON GALPERIN
L.A. Controller

In Case of Emergency: The City's Disaster Service Worker Program



RON GALPERIN
LA CONTROLLER

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	i
BACKGROUND	1
OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	5
I: DSW DEPLOYMENT PRACTICES.....	5
II: EMPLOYEE AWARENESS OF THE DSW PROGRAM	8
APPENDIX I – SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS	12
APPENDIX II – DEPARTMENTS’ FORMAL RESPONSES & ACTION PLANS	13

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Los Angeles must be prepared for any natural or man-made catastrophe. When disaster strikes, the City's primary emergency responders (Fire and Police) will be first at the scene to provide aid to preserve and protect life and property. The Emergency Management Department would support response efforts by coordinating activities between key City departments and regional organizations at the City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Additional relief support would be provided through designated and certified volunteer organizations, such as the American Red Cross and Salvation Army. But as relief efforts continue, the City may need to call on its employees, through the Disaster Service Worker (DSW) program, to assist in response and relief work.

The State of California designates all public sector employees, including the City's civilian employees, as DSWs. DSWs are not expected to perform duties beyond their ability or skill set, but to supplement and support those who are specifically trained in disaster response and relief. Potential DSW duties include answering phone calls, delivering supplies, working in a shelter, translations, etc. Employees acting as DSWs are assigned within their scope of training, skill, ability and are not expected to provide medical treatment or aid in disaster response activities for which they are not qualified.

City employees serving in a critical function that is necessary to support the continuity of a department's operations would not be called to serve as DSWs. Employees supporting critical functions such as the 911 call center, restoring water and power, providing traffic control, etc., would be performing those assignments. However, tens of thousands of so-called non-critical City employees, including administrative staff, would be appropriate for temporary reassignment as DSWs.

While the DSW program has never been activated by City leaders, the City must have effective processes in place to do so, and be able to rely on its employees to serve during or immediately after a disaster. Our review found that the City needs to improve its planning capabilities to efficiently and effectively deploy DSWs, and raise awareness about the program to ensure employees are fully equipped to answer the call to serve.

DEPLOYMENT PRACTICES

1. The City does not have a database of employee contact information and skillsets to facilitate the deployment of Disaster Service Workers.

It is critical that employees can be reached during an emergency, not only for those who have roles in assuring the City's continuity of operations, but also to serve as DSWs.

Of great concern is the reality that there is no true citywide contact database. Rather, each department is expected to collect and maintain emergency contact information for their employees. In surveying ten departments on how they would reach their employees for DSW

deployment, we found they planned to use different methods, such as downloading data from the payroll system, collecting information from employees to transfer data into the City's mass notification system (NotifyLA)¹ or into a departmental database/spreadsheet, or by assuming they could rely on supervisors to have contact information for their staff.

Each of these methods presents challenges and limitations; attempts to retrieve the information during an actual emergency are not the most efficient or effective way to deploy DSWs.

- **To improve DSW deployment practices, the Personnel Department should require all departments [with the support of City leaders] to maintain a complete and current listing of their employee contact information, including skill sets and other relevant information. A uniform method by which employees can update and self-certify their DSW information on-line would be optimal. In addition, employee DSW information should be maintained in a cloud-based customer relationship management software (CRM) program that can be available to the EOC.**

2. The City lacks a method to prioritize which departments or employees would be activated as DSWs.

When a major emergency or disaster occurs, incident commanders can request assistance to be provided by DSWs through the City's EOC. Such a request would be fulfilled by the EOC after the Mayor has officially made a disaster proclamation to activate emergency protocols and the DSW program, through the EOC's Personnel Department representative. However, we noted that the Personnel Department lacked a plan regarding which department(s) to prioritize for a DSW activation. This proves challenging, since one department indicated that none of its employees would be available because everyone would be busy restoring critical services for the City. A broader perspective would not just prioritize departments, but would consider citywide employees' functional responsibilities, as well as their specific skills and duty preferences, location, and limitations.

- **To improve DSW deployment practices, the Personnel Department should partner with the Emergency Management Department (EMD) to establish a method to prioritize departments and/or individual employees for DSW assignment/deployment.**

¹ On August 28, 2018, Controller Galperin issued a report entitled, Alert and Aware: Review of NotifyLA, the City's Mass Notification System.

LACK OF EMPLOYEE AWARENESS

3. The City should better publicize the potential duties employees may be asked to perform as DSWs.

Employees should know what it means to be a DSW. The Emergency Management and Personnel departments have developed an extensive “DSW Toolkit” (Toolkit), which provides some examples of the various jobs that a DSW may perform. Identified duties are as diverse as animal care to food service to language interpreter. While the Toolkit is available to those directly working in personnel or emergency coordination roles, it is not shared with all employees that could benefit by knowing what to expect.

A general idea of the DSW role is provided through an online training course that employees are required to complete within thirty days of hire, but it lacks details noted in the Toolkit. As of July 2018, 91% of the City's full-time employees were in compliance with the mandatory DSW training, but compliance drops to 58% for part-time employees.

- **The Emergency Management and Personnel Departments should provide more detail on possible roles and responsibilities to City employees.**

4. While City employees take a loyalty oath and are apprised of their DSW responsibilities at initial hire, the City needs to clarify the consequences of not complying with that role.

Mayoral Executive Directive 15, states that an employee who fails to comply with their DSW duties may be subject to disciplinary action; however, there are no details about the range of personnel actions that could be taken should someone fail to report for duty.

During orientation, new employees are informed of their obligation to comply with the DSW program and administered a loyalty oath; however, new employees may be reluctant to express concerns about the DSW program. As experienced by Mendocino County during a DSW activation relative to that County's fires, some employees simply failed to report for duty. Though officials noted “disciplinary actions” would be taken against those that promised to show up and ultimately did not, it was unclear what or how it would be enforced.

To mitigate risks related to ineffective deployment and potential disciplinary actions, the City of Los Angeles should couple ongoing training, drills, and awareness with clarifying information on the range of personnel actions that may be taken by the City, should an employee disregard their DSW assignment or related duties.

- To improve awareness of the DSW program, the Personnel Department should include DSW requirements in City job postings and ensure that all employees are aware that disciplinary actions may be taken should an employee not comply with a directive to serve as a DSW if they are reassigned from their regular job to specific DSW duties.

LACK OF TRAINING AND PREPARATION

5. While one mandatory DSW training is required for new hires, there is no established refresher training to reinforce the program to employees.

More training is needed to reinforce employee awareness of their potential DSW responsibilities and required participation in the program. Since Departmental Personnel Officers (DPOs) are responsible for DSW training and would be key in actual deployment, they should know what DSWs may be called upon to do. While the DSW Toolkit should be a source of guidance for DPOs, during our survey of ten departments, none seemed aware of the Toolkit.

Additionally, since no refresher training is currently required, employees may go through their entire career with the City without revisiting the program's requirements or potential DSW duties.

- The Emergency Management and Personnel Departments should update existing DSW training and require all City employees to take refresher training on a regularly scheduled basis. Further the Personnel Department should establish protocols for effective monitoring and compliance reporting for required refresher DSW training.
- The Personnel Department should develop standard trainings for all staff responsible for deploying DSWs in their departments in order to review DSW requirements, policies and procedures, available toolkits, and any guidance for selecting and deploying employees to DSW duties during an emergency.

6. Since the inception of the DSW program, the City has held only one exercise drill (in 2015) to simulate the deployment of DSWs.

The EOC regularly performs drills to help prepare the City for assuring continuation of critical services by simulating various catastrophic scenarios. However, only once did the drill include a DSW activation. In 2015, an EOC functional exercise was conducted to simulate a large-scale Anthrax terrorist attack throughout Los Angeles County. The objectives of the exercise were to demonstrate effective activation of the DSW program to administer an antidote to victims of the bio-agent.

The exercise's "After Action Report/Improvement Plan" noted that some DSWs were identified, but it noted that opportunities to enhance effectiveness and/or efficiency existed. Moreover, the Personnel Department indicated that while it reached out to departmental representatives to identify potential DSWs, the departments did not actually contact any City employees. Had they attempted or actually contacted employees for DSW assignment, they might have been able to gauge employee response, establish prioritizations, and identify additional potential issues to remedy.

By periodically holding comprehensive DSW drills and learning from those experiences, the City may be able to avoid some of the challenges noted by Sonoma County officials in an after action report of that area's recent fires.

- **EMD and the Personnel Department should test DSW deployment processes as part of the City's annual EOC activation drills by communicating activation roles and responsibilities, with a select number of departments and employees being contacted.**

CONCLUSION

While the City has never deployed its employees as DSWs, State law and City policy require that all civilian employees be ready, willing, and able to serve in that capacity. The City must be prepared to supplement its response efforts to any emergency or disaster by effectively deploying DSWs. Efficient methods to prioritize and assign City employees as DSWs is critical, and all employees should be aware of their responsibility and understand the duties they may be required to perform. To better prepare the EOC, departmental management, and individual employees, the City should address the issues noted in this review.

Review of the Report

On November 21, 2018, a draft of this report was provided to the Emergency Management Department (EMD) and Personnel. Neither department requested an exit conference or provided additional comments, and accepted all seven recommendations offered.

Based on our evaluation of each department's action plans [included in Appendix II], we consider five recommendations to be "In Progress." The recommendations relate to the following:

- deployment prioritization of employees and departments for DSW activations. (Recommendation #2).
- updating training for employees that could be reassigned as DSWs. (Recommendation #3).
- improving training for departmental personnel officers responsible for contacting potential DSWs. (Recommendation #5).

- increasing employee awareness by adding DSW requirement to all job postings and ensuring employees know the repercussions of non-compliance. (Recommendation #6).
- incorporating DSW deployment in annual EOC training exercises. (Recommendation #7).

We consider two recommendations as “Not Yet Implemented.” The recommendations relate to the following:

- implementing a complete, cloud-based citywide employee contact database. (Recommendation #1).
- establishing protocols for effective monitoring of DSW trainings. (Recommendation #4).

We thank both EMD and Personnel staff and management for their time and cooperation during this review.

BACKGROUND

PUBLIC SERVANTS' ROLE AS DISASTER SERVICE WORKERS

What is a Disaster Service Worker (DSW)?

A DSW is an individual who aids in the response and recovery phases of a disaster or emergency. Pursuant to State law, all public sector employees in California are considered DSWs, and may be called upon to serve in that capacity. Examples of general duties DSWs may perform include clerical support, answering telephones, delivering supplies, running messages, managing volunteers, staffing barricades, working in a Red Cross shelter, food preparation and serving, interpreting, and filling sandbags. The duties of a DSW differs from the work performed by employees who are charged with restoring critical City services to ensure the safety of the general populace and mission-essential functions, as identified in their departments' Continuity of Operations Plan. Employees acting as DSWs are to be assigned within their scope of training, skill, ability and will never be expected to provide medical treatment or aid in disaster response activities for which they are not qualified. Employees whose work is not time sensitive or directly impacting City services may be needed to work outside their normal scope of duties by serving as DSWs. All DSWs are compensated for their work in accordance with established agreements between representative labor organizations and the City, including overtime.

Disaster Service Workers have never been activated in the City of Los Angeles.

Southern California has the highest level of earthquake risk in the U.S., and has experienced many other types of disasters such as fires, mudslides, civil unrest, and mass shootings. The City's first line of defense for emergency response is through the deployment of firefighters and police officers. Further, there are recognized volunteer organizations such as the Red Cross and CERTs² who will assist the public during a crisis. The DSW program is mandatory for all non-sworn City employees (both full and part time). Non-essential civilian employees can be assigned to assist any agency or organization in performing its emergency response duties. In major disasters, there may be an extended period for clean-up and restoration of services; first responders and designated volunteer groups may need additional support; and City employees may then be called upon to serve.

DSW Deployment Process

If a significant natural or man-made disaster affects the City and DSWs are needed, the following steps would be taken to activate and deploy City employees as DSWs:

1. The Mayor makes a Proclamation of a Local Emergency and activates the City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

² CERTs are Certified Emergency Response Team volunteers trained in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations.

2. Field responders request resource support through the City's EOC. If the request cannot be fulfilled solely by EOC representatives and volunteers³, the EOC recommends that the Mayor activate DSWs to fill operational needs.
3. The Mayor officially activates the DSW program through a memo citing Los Angeles Administrative Code Section 8.30 --noting the disaster and that the activation shall remain in place until a written de-activation memo is issued by the Mayor. Upon the Mayor's activation, the EOC's Logistics⁴ and Personnel representatives determine the type and number of DSWs needed, and their reporting locations, based on field responders' requests.
4. The Personnel Unit Coordinator contacts Personnel's Departmental Operations Center (DOC) to deploy City DSWs by contacting department personnel officers (DPOs)⁵.
5. DPOs contact their respective departments' employees and provide direction and training to DSWs including identifying tasks, reporting requirements and site assignments.

DSW deployments in other jurisdictions

Two California jurisdictions that have deployed DSWs in recent years realized challenges. The City can learn from these experiences to improve its DSW program.

Mendocino County Complex Fires

Media reports about the Mendocino County Complex fires noted that the Mendocino Sheriff expressed disappointment that county employees refused to come in on their days off to work during the emergency.⁶ According to County Officials they reached out to 60+ employees and found that 90% of them either did not answer phone calls, did not return calls or said they would serve as a DSW, but did not actually report in. According to the County CEO, the "employees who did answer and refused to come in would be getting a letter in their personnel file because of the serious nature of the issue." In addition to noting resistance from staff, two department heads refused to allow their employees to serve as DSWs.

Sonoma County – Tubbs, Nuns and Pocket Fires

The County's "after action report" noted that employees were only trained as DSWs when they were initially hired, and that "many County staff do not understand their roles and responsibilities as Disaster Service Workers (DSWs)".

³ Certain types of volunteers would be activated prior to DSWs, for example, the Red Cross holds a seat in the EOC and has a cadre of trained disaster volunteers and the Fire Department provides volunteer teams (CERTs).

⁴ The Logistics Unit Coordinator (General Services Department) is responsible for providing all resources. The Personnel Unit Coordinator (Personnel Department) supports the Logistics Unit Coordinator.

⁵ This term is generically used to include anyone performing the HR function within various City departments; it includes the Personnel Department's liaison Personnel Directors, independent HR Directors, and others performing that function.

⁶ Ukiah Daily Journal, 7/31/18 <<http://www.ukiahdailyjournal.com/general-news/20180731/mendocino-county-officials-to-deal-with-employees-who-refused-to-work-during-fire>>

ORIGINATION & LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR DSWs

History

The State of California conceptualized Disaster Service Workers (DSW) in the 1940s, based on legitimate concerns of a potential attack along the Pacific coast during World War II (WWII). Legislative actions since WWII ultimately resulted in the creation of the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) in 2013, which empowered the State and local governing bodies to execute emergency management programs and duties.⁷

Legal Requirements

State law recognizes that in conditions of disaster or extreme peril to life, property and resources, responsible efforts of public and private agencies and individual citizens will be required. To further those efforts, per State Code: *in protection of its citizens and resources, all public employees are hereby declared to be disaster service workers subject to such disaster service activities as may be assigned to them by their superiors or by the law.*⁸

The law also states: *the term "disaster service worker" includes all public employees and all volunteers in any disaster council or emergency organization [that is] accredited by the Office of Emergency Services. The term "public employees" includes all persons employed by the state or any county, city, city and county, state agency or public district, excluding aliens legally employed.*⁹

On March 17, 2011, Mayor Villaraigosa issued Executive Directives #15 (ED15) for Emergency Management and #16 (ED16) for Disaster Service Workers in accordance with State laws. ED16 states that all City employees are declared to be Disaster Service Workers subject to such disaster service activities as may be assigned to them by their superiors or by law. The City excludes its sworn employees, such as firefighters and law enforcement officers from the DSW program. ED16 also requires the Emergency Management Department (EMD) to ensure disaster training is approved, documented and supervised, and ensure disaster training is commensurate with the duties of the disaster service worker. It also calls for periodic refresher training.

Every non-sworn City employee is designated as a DSW. As cited by the City's DSW Activation Toolkit:

⁷ California Emergency Service Act.

⁸ State of California Government Code, Division 4, Chapter 8, Section 3100 (Amended by Stats. 1971)

⁹ State of California Government Code, Division 4, Chapter 8, Section 3101 (Amended by Stats. 2013).

Consideration should be made to amend the State law regarding the exclusion of legal aliens from being assigned DSW duties.

- “In the event of an emergency during normal working hours, City employees shall remain at work and may be assigned duties that can be performed safely to assist in the emergency response and recovery efforts of the City.”
- “Whenever an emergency occurs outside normal working hours, all employees are directed to follow news media broadcasts and comply with instructions issued for City employees or respond in accordance with established departmental procedures.”

OBSERVATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

SECTION I: DSW DEPLOYMENT PRACTICES

The City does not have a database of employee contact information and skillsets to facilitate the deployment of Disaster Service Workers.

The completeness of employee contact information and how the information is collected varies by department. Despite the fact that complete and up-to-date information must be available to activate DSWs when needed, departments are not required to adopt any particular method or standard for collecting or storing employee information.

We surveyed 10 departments¹⁰ and noted that City agencies indicated they would use various methods to obtain employee information during a DSW activation. Some departments indicated they would use the City's payroll system to extract the necessary contact information, others stated they would use internal databases (if maintained), or rely on supervisors to have contact information for their direct reports; one indicated it would use the City's NotifyLA system to contact employees.

Each of these methods presents challenges that could prevent the City from efficiently contacting employees, or effectively deploy them as DSWs where they would be most needed or well-suited.

Departments relying on the employee data in the City's payroll system would find that it only allows for one phone number (labeled home phone) and one address (which may not be the employee's current domicile). Also, the information may also not be current as it is self-reported and not regularly updated or verified, increasing the likelihood that the City would not be able to reach intended parties. Internal databases or spreadsheets could also be incomplete, and reside on hard drives or departmental servers that may not be accessible from offsite locations, or after a catastrophic event that includes a power outage.

Departments could also use the City's cloud-based NotifyLA system to contact a large number of employees at one time; provided that their information has been uploaded into the system. Of the ten Departments included in our survey, only the Recreation and Parks Department (RAP) uploads their employee contact information to Notify LA, and stated it would use it for a potential DSW activation.

San Francisco *requires* that all employees have up-to-date contact information in their HR system, which *automatically* exports to the City's mass notification system that can message any or all employees during a DSW activation. San Francisco also prioritizes employees for certain DSW roles based on their job classifications and specialized skills (e.g., languages, licenses and certifications, first aid and CPR, and/or commercial driver's licenses).

¹⁰ Surveyed departments included Library, Animal Services, Recreation and Parks, Transportation, Finance, Cultural Affairs, Department of Water and Power, City Clerk, Planning, and Public Works' Bureau of Engineering.

Employee Skill Set Information

City departments noted there is insufficient information to prioritize specific employees for potential DSW assignment/deployment. This presents an opportunity for departments to collect additional information on their staff, based on:

- additional language skills for interpretation services;
- limiting health issues (e.g., mobility or allergies) that may otherwise prevent serving in a particular role;
- physical limitations that would otherwise prevent heavy lifting so they are not assigned to a laborer group;
- consideration if an employee is already designated as essential to mission-essential services in the department's Continuity of Operations Plans (COOPs); and
- where employees actually live to more efficiently deploy DSWs and potentially facilitate travel to and from assigned locations.

If employees had the ability to self-certify this information, as well as to indicate their preferred job/duties¹¹ if called upon to serve as a DSW, it would both reiterate their acknowledgement of program requirements and support a better method to prioritize deployment.

The City lacks a method to prioritize which departments or employees would be activated for DSW assignment.

When an emergency or disaster occurs, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and its Personnel Department representative are responsible for working with City departments to identify and prioritize staff to deploy to the location of an emergency event. During a 2015 drill that simulated a DSW activation, the Personnel Department did not have a plan for which departments or staff to call. Departments were selected in alphabetic order.

EOC represented departments indicated that priority to deploy DSWs should be to those City departments that do not have critical functions focused on restoring essential services during an emergency or disaster. However, a broader perspective would not just prioritize DSW activation by departments, but consider employees' functional responsibilities within the departments.

In order for the City to be fully prepared for a DSW activation, there must a citywide method for prioritizing who (i.e., which civilian employees, from which departments) to call for assignment. There is an opportunity for the City to improve overall effectiveness by having access to a citywide database with contact and related information for all current employees, including their phone/email and domicile address, specific skillsets, preferred job duties and any limitations that could be used to classify and prioritize DSW assignments. In addition, any such listings (either citywide or by department) must be able to be accessed remotely, to inform the EOC of who should be deployed, based on the specific needs of an emergency/disaster.

¹¹ EMD's 2014 "DSW Toolkit" includes examples of DSW job assignments. See Section II, page 8.

Recommendations:

- 1. The Personnel Department, with the support of City leaders, should require all departments to maintain a complete and current listing of their employee contact information, including skill sets and other relevant information. A uniform method by which employees can update and self-certify their DSW information on-line would be optimal. In addition, employee DSW information should be maintained in a cloud-based customer relationship management software (CRM) program that can be available to the EOC.***
- 2. The Personnel Department should partner with the Emergency Management Department (EMD) to establish a method to prioritize departments and/or individual employees for DSW assignment/deployment. Considerations could be based on job classifications and departmental function(s), skill sets, preferred job/duties, relevant limitations, and home or work location, to best meet the specific needs of an emergency or disaster.***

SECTION II: EMPLOYEE AWARENESS OF THE DSW PROGRAM

The City should better publicize the potential duties that employees may be asked to perform as DSWs.

While the City informs employees of their mandatory participation in the DSW program, there are limited details about what tasks employees may actually perform. The Emergency Management and Personnel departments have developed an extensive “DSW Toolkit” (Toolkit), which provides some examples of the various jobs that a DSW may perform. The Toolkit is available to personnel or emergency coordination staff, but it is not shared with employees, who could benefit by knowing what to expect. Identified duties are as diverse as animal care, to food service, to language interpreter, etc., as shown in the following table:

#	JOB	DUTIES
1.	Animal Care Assistant	Assists in animal care and welfare by providing routine feeding of companion and service animals.
2.	Call Center Operator	Takes telephone calls from and provides information to the public.
3.	Data Entry Assistant	Enters and retrieves data required to support Planning Section activities.
4.	Dormitory Worker	Assists in collection and distribution of linens, and in keeping dormitory area clean.
5.	Entertainment and Recreation Aide	Assists in organizing and conducting recreation and entertainment activities.
6.	Facility Maintenance Worker	Performs routine maintenance that does not require special skills, training or license.
7.	Finance Clerk	Maintains files, invoices, requisitions and other financial documents. May perform basic bookkeeping tasks.
8.	Food Service Assistant	Assists with general food preparation and distribution at mass feeding settings (no cooking).
9.	Greeter	Greets and provides information to clients.
10.	Information Gatherer	Assists supervisors in gathering information through observation, personal contact, media review, or web-based research.
11.	Laborer	Lifts and moves equipment and supplies to required locations. Sets up tables, chairs and other physical arrangements for site operations.
12.	Language Interpreter	Provides language interpretation services.
13.	Logistics Clerk	Maintains status of resource requests, contacts vendors, and maintains other records as requested.
14.	Parking and Traffic Attendant	Assists in directing vehicle traffic and parking.

15.	Personal Assistance Service Support Personnel	Provides person-to-person Activities of Daily Living (ADL) services to people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.
16.	Registration Worker	Assists with check-in and check-out of staff and clients.
17.	Runner	Physically carries forms, requests for information, or directions between locations at the site.
18.	Safety Support Worker	Assists trained safety officers or security personnel.
19.	Supply Clerk	Maintains lists of supplies and materials. Records receipt, storage place and release of supplies and materials.
20.	Transportation Assistant	Assists with coordination of transportation services for clients.

Additional information that could be provided to all City employees as potential DSWs include the types of locations where they may be stationed to support emergency response and recovery operations, e.g.,:

- Mass Care and Sheltering / Feeding
- Local Assistance Centers
- Family Assistance Centers
- Resettlement Processing Centers
- Commodity Points of Dispensing
- Medical Points of Dispensing

While one mandatory DSW training is required within thirty days of an employee’s hire date, there is no established refresher training to reinforce the program to employees.

More trainings are needed to reinforce employee awareness of their potential DSW responsibilities and required participation in the program. EMD has developed a mandatory online training that all employees must take within 30 days of hire, and an optional training that is intended to be viewed prior to being assigned a DSW duty. DPOs are to monitor their departments’ employees’ compliance to the mandatory training at onboarding, but nothing beyond that.

Currently, there are no refresher trainings, even though they are required by ED16. With only one mandatory training, an employee can go their entire career without revisiting the DSW program requirements.

Personnel’s citywide DSW Report dated July 31, 2018 to the Emergency Management Committee noted that 91% of all full-time employees and 58% of part-time employees had taken the mandatory training. Based on these results, some employees may not be aware that they are required to serve as a DSW.

In addition, while the Personnel Department's Emergency Management Coordinator noted that the DSW Toolkit has been disseminated to all DPOs charged with monitoring training compliance, all ten departments we surveyed appeared unaware of the Toolkit.

Since the inception of the DSW program, the City has held only one exercise drill (in 2015) to simulate the deployment of DSWs.

Every year the EOC performs a functional (training) exercise, often in conjunction with other agencies, that provides the City the opportunity to envision and practice how the City's response to catastrophic events. The 2015 functional exercise is the only instance when the EOC included a DSW activation.

The exercise simulated a large-scale Anthrax terrorist attack throughout Los Angeles County. The objectives of the exercise were to demonstrate effective activation of DSW program in order to administer an antidote to victims of the bio-agent. While the City did identify some potential DSWs, the exercise's "After Action Report/Improvement Plan" identified opportunities to enhance effectiveness and/or efficiency.

During the drill, Personnel's representative did not prioritize departments based on a set criteria, such as skill sets or essential functions. The drill also stopped short of DPOs contacting employees as potential DSWs. Had they done so, DPOs may have identified additional challenges and opportunities for improvement in reaching employees. They may also have established prioritizations, gauged employee response, and identified other potential issues.

Based on the experience of Sonoma County, Los Angeles may also have difficulty deploying DSWs during an actual emergency. Reminders and drills do not regularly occur for the DSW program and employees may not remember their obligations. Various scenarios could be developed with Personnel, including ensuring DPOs are trained and able to execute their assignment/deployment function.

Without regular DSW activation drills, field responders may not be aware that they can use DSWs. According to one member of the Emergency Management Committee, the City had the opportunity to use DSWs to support emergency efforts during the La Tuna Canyon Fire; but instead, relied on volunteers from nearby churches.

While City employees take a loyalty oath and are apprised of their DSW responsibilities at initial hire, the City needs to clarify the consequences of not complying with that role.

Employees need to know that they may be called upon to serve as a DSW. While disaster responses vary, general information about the possible roles and expectations should be disseminated to all employees.

As part of the City's hiring process, a new employee is required to take a loyalty oath and is told of the general requirement to serve as a DSW. In addition, while ED15 states that an employee may be subject to disciplinary action for failing to report to DSWs duties, there are no details about what specific actions could be taken. The City/County of San Francisco clearly states the DSW requirement in its job listings.

Mendocino County officials publicly expressed disappointment that employees had disregarded the County's order for DSWs to report for fire relief efforts. The County's CEO noted that disciplinary actions would be taken against those that failed to report. In order for the City of Los Angeles to avoid similar issues and to mitigate risks related to potential disciplinary actions, it should make clear to all civilian employees (staff and management) the potential personnel actions that may be taken by the City, should employees disregard their DSW assignments or related duties. Increasing awareness of the program, requiring refresher training, and establishing a method for all employees to self-certify their emergency contact information, skillsets, limitations and preferred duties would also serve to reiterate the program requirements.

Recommendations:

- 3. The Emergency Management and Personnel Departments should update existing DSW training, providing more detail on possible roles and responsibilities, and require all City employees to take refresher training on a regularly scheduled basis.***
- 4. The Personnel Department should establish protocols for effective monitoring and compliance reporting for required refresher DSW training.***
- 5. The Personnel Department should develop standard trainings for all staff responsible for deploying DSWs in their departments in order to review DSW requirements, policies and procedures, available toolkits, and any guidance for selecting and deploying employees to DSW duties during an emergency.***
- 6. The Personnel Department should include DSW requirements in City job postings, and ensure that all employees are aware that disciplinary action(s) may be taken should an employee not comply with a directive to serve as a DSW if they are reassigned from their regular job to specific DSW duties.***
- 7. EMD and the Personnel Department should test DSW deployment processes as part of the City's annual EOC activation drills by communicating activation roles and responsibilities, with a select number of departments and employees being contacted.***

APPENDIX I: SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation #	Recommendations	Responsible Entity
SECTION I: DSW DEPLOYMENT PRACTICES		
1	The Personnel Department, with the support of City leaders, should require all departments to maintain a complete and current listing of their employee contact information, including skill sets and other relevant information. A uniform method by which employees can update and self-certify their DSW information on-line would be optimal. In addition, employee DSW information should be maintained in a cloud-based customer relationship management software (CRM) program that can be available to the EOC.	Personnel Department City Policymakers
2	The Personnel Department should partner with the Emergency Management Department (EMD) to establish a method to prioritize departments and/or individual employees for DSW assignment/deployment. Considerations could be based on job classifications and departmental function(s), skill sets, preferred job/duties, relevant limitations, and home or work location, to best meet the specific needs of an emergency or disaster.	Personnel Department Emergency Management Department
SECTION II: EMPLOYEE AWARENESS OF THE DSW PROGRAM		
3	The Emergency Management and Personnel Departments should update existing DSW training, providing more detail on possible roles and responsibilities and require all City employees to take refresher training on a regularly scheduled basis.	Emergency Management Department Personnel Department
4	The Personnel Department should establish protocols for effective monitoring and compliance reporting for required refresher DSW training.	Personnel Department
5	The Personnel Department should develop standard trainings for all staff responsible for deploying DSWs in their departments in order to review DSW requirements, policies and procedures, available toolkits, and any guidance for selecting and deploying employees to DSW duties during an emergency.	Personnel Department
6	The Personnel Department should include DSW requirements in City job postings and ensure that all employees are aware that disciplinary actions may be taken should an employee not comply with a directive to serve as a DSW if they are reassigned from their regular job to specific DSW duties.	Personnel Department
7	EMD and the Personnel Department should test DSW deployment processes as part of the City's annual EOC activation drills by communicating activation roles and responsibilities, with a select number of departments and employees being contacted.	Emergency Management Department

APPENDIX II: DEPARTMENTS' RESPONSE & ACTION PLAN

As part of our protocol, we requested a formal response and action plan from both the Personnel and Emergency Management Departments, which are included in the following pages.

**BOARD OF CIVIL SERVICE
COMMISSIONERS**

Room 360, PERSONNEL BUILDING

—
JEANNE A. FUGATE
PRESIDENT

RAUL PEREZ
VICE PRESIDENT

COMMISSIONERS:
ERICA L. JACQUEZ
NANCY P. McCLELLAND
TODD SARGENT

—
BRUCE E. WHIDDEN
COMMISSION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**CITY OF LOS ANGELES
CALIFORNIA**



ERIC GARCETTI
MAYOR

PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT

PERSONNEL BUILDING
700 EAST TEMPLE STREET
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

—
Wendy G. Macy
GENERAL MANAGER

December 14, 2018

The Honorable Ron Galperin, Controller
City of Los Angeles
200 N. Main Street 3rd Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RESPONSE TO REVIEW OF THE CITY'S DISASTER SERVICE WORKER PROGRAM

Dear Mr. Galperin:

Enclosed is Personnel Department's response to your Audit of the City's Disaster Service Worker (DSW) Program. It includes an action plan for each of your recommendations. We are working diligently to continue our work toward improving the Disaster Service Worker Program and preparing city staff in the event of a disaster.

In regards to specific recommendations, we have in place a Learning Management System (LMS) that will track employee emergency contact information, and could track skill sets and resources. The system can help prioritize deployment of DSWs in accordance with the type of disaster the City may be confronting and the skill sets and location of the individuals being deployed.

Additionally, we are working toward further encouraging employees to understand their responsibilities and roles as DSWs through four supplemental training videos we are preparing and expect to launch within this fiscal year, thereby rendering the features of the DSW Program more robust.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Michael De La Rosa, Chief Management Analyst at michael.delarosa@lacity.org or at (213) 473-9145 or Bobbi Jacobsen, Senior Management Analyst I at bobbi.jacobsen@lacity.org or at (213) 473-9148.

Sincerely,

Wendy Macy
General Manager of Personnel Department

Enclosure

cc: Emergency Management Department

LIST OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Report Title: Answering the Call to Serve: The City’s Disaster Service Worker Program □

Report Issuance Date:

Departments responsible for Implementation: Personnel & EMD

Reported Status Date:

Recommendation	Entity Responsible for Implementation	DEPARTMENT REPORTED INFORMATION				
		Current Status	Basis for Status	% Implemented	Target Date for Implementation	
SECTION I: DSW DEPLOYMENT PRACTICES						
1	With the support of City leaders, require all departments to maintain a complete and current listing of their employee contact information, including skill sets and other relevant information. A uniform method by which employees can update and self-certify their DSW information on-line would be optimal. In addition, employee DSW information should be maintained in cloud-based customer relationship management software (CRM) program that can be available to the EOC.	Personnel Dept. City Policymakers	NYI	Personnel Department will work with City leaders to require all departments to maintain a complete and current listing of their employee contact information. We will create a template for City departments to facilitate maintaining this information and to keep employee contact information up-to-date. It will include fields for skill sets and resources, including language skills, emergency training and useful tools/vehicles owned. We will explore storing and tracking this information on the City's Learning Management System (LMS). Personnel Directors will use this information to contact their department staff when the EOC requires DSW Program activation. Departments should store electronic and paper versions. (EMD is holding off on providing any further Nixel training, as they will be switching over to Everbridge shortly.)	0	3/31/19

Recommendation	Entity Responsible for Implementation	DEPARTMENT REPORTED INFORMATION				
		Current Status	Basis for Status	% Implemented	Target Date for Implementation	
2	<p>The Personnel Department should partner with the Emergency Management Department (EMD) to establish a method to prioritize departments and/or individual employees for DSW assignment/ deployment. Considerations could be made based on job classifications and departmental function(s), skill sets, preferred job/duties, relevant limitations, and home or work location, to best meet the specific needs of an emergency or disaster.</p>	<p>Personnel Dept. Emergency Management Dept.</p>	NYI	<p>We recommend that the Personnel Department utilize employee contact information to strategize DSW deployment. Upon knowing what type of disaster has happened and its location, it would then be possible by plotting LMS data on heat maps to identify the least affected zones, as well as job classifications and departmental function(s), skill sets and resources, preferred job/duties, relevant limitations, to ascertain who is available to come to work during the crisis (depending on street closures, house status, etc.).</p>	0	6/30/19
SECTION II: EMPLOYEE AWARENESS OF THE DSW PROGRAM						

Recommendation	Entity Responsible for Implementation	DEPARTMENT REPORTED INFORMATION				
		Current Status	Basis for Status	% Implemented	Target Date for Implementation	
3	<p>The Emergency Management and Personnel Departments should update existing DSW training, providing more detail on possible roles and responsibilities and require all City employees to take refresher training on a regularly scheduled basis.</p>	<p>Emergency Management Dept.</p> <p>Personnel Dept.</p>	I	<p>Personnel Department has embarked on a baseline study of best practices adopted by major metropolitan municipalities, which will inform enhancements to the DSW Program.</p> <p>In the meantime, Personnel Department is already developing four new DSW training videos, which will supplement onboarding materials currently available. These training videos include Activation, Employee/Family Preparation, Psychological Resilience, and Possible Scenarios. Upon completion, the videos will be made available Citywide.</p> <p>The department already requires its Emergency Cadre to take specific EMD and FEMA courses. In the new year, the cadre will be further required to take First Aid/CPR/AED classes provided by the American Red Cross. Personnel will recommend to departments Citywide a like approach.</p> <p>Similarly, the department will share Citywide its efforts in orienting employees to work as a DSW by (1) providing information on 20 possible roles to which they may be assigned and (2) by sending out an annual memo to staff each January regarding their responsibilities during a crisis.</p>	100%	<p>Personnel Department can share this information with departments at the January EMC meeting, or electronically. 1/31/19 for introduction of the training videos. 6/30/19 to complete all videos and place on the City's LMS.</p>
4	<p>The Personnel Department should establish protocols for effective monitoring and compliance reporting for required refresher DSW training.</p>	<p>Personnel Dept.</p> <p>EMD?</p>	NYI	<p>Departments give initial DSW training during onboarding of new staff. EMD is seeing to it that Cornerstone will be tracking all training soon. EMD originally designed the DSW Toolkit for Personnel Directors use. Currently Personnel Dept. is developing four DSW Training videos, which will serve as refresher information: Activation, Employee/Family Preparation, Psychological Resilience and Possible Scenarios.</p>	0	<p>First video completed by 2/28/19</p>

Recommendation	Entity Responsible for Implementation	DEPARTMENT REPORTED INFORMATION				
		Current Status	Basis for Status	% Implemented	Target Date for Implementation	
5	The Personnel Department should develop standard trainings for all staff responsible for deploying DSWs in their departments in order to review DSW requirements, policies and procedures, available toolkits, and any guidance for selecting and deploying employees to DSW duties during an emergency.	Personnel Dept. EMD?	I	EMD trained all Department Personnel Directors through the HR Round Table meetings, and most recently on 12/7/16. Personnel Department will work with EMD to make this training a regular part of the HR Roundtable meetings, and will request EMD to offer Department Personnel Director training annually. This will include distribution of the Personnel Director DSW Toolkit.	100%	3/31/2019
6	The Personnel Department should include DSW requirements in City job postings and ensure that all employees are aware that disciplinary actions may be taken should an employee not comply with a directive to serve as a DSW if they are reassigned from their regular job to specific DSW duties.	Personnel Dept.	PI	Personnel Department will add DSW information to job postings, including language about discipline.	50%	3/31/19
7	EMD and the Personnel Department should test DSW deployment processes as part of the City's annual EOC activation drills by communicating activation roles and responsibilities, with a select number of departments and employees being contacted.	Emergency Management Dept.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

I - Implemented

PI/IP - Partially Implemented or In Progress

NYI - Not Yet Implemented



ERIC GARCETTI
MAYOR

January 14, 2019

The Honorable Ron Galperin
City Controller
200 N. Spring Street
City Hall East Room 300
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: AUDIT OF THE CITY'S DISASTER SERVICE WORKER PROGRAM

Dear Controller Galperin,

In response to your request, please find the attached Action Plan for the above referenced audit.

Should you have any questions please contact me at 213 484-4804.

Sincerely,

Rob Freeman
Assistant General Manager

Attachment

LIST OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Report Title: Answering the Call to Serve: The City's Disaster Service Worker Program

Report Issuance Date:

Departments responsible for Implementation: Personnel & EMD

Reported Status Date:

12/12/2018

Recommendation	Entity Responsible for Implementation	DEPARTMENT REPORTED INFORMATION			
		Current Status	Basis for Status	% Implemented	Target Date for Implementation
SECTION I: DSW DEPLOYMENT PRACTICES					
1	With the support of City leaders, require all departments to maintain a complete and current listing of their employee contact information, including skill sets and other relevant information. A uniform method by which employees can update and self-certify their DSW information on-line would be optimal. In addition, employee DSW information should be maintained in cloud-based customer relationship management software (CRM) program that can be available to the EOC.	Personnel Dept. City Policymakers			
2	The Personnel Department should partner with the Emergency Management Department (EMD) to establish a method to prioritize departments and/or individual employees for DSW assignment/deployment. Considerations could be based on job classifications and departmental function(s), skill sets, preferred job/duties, relevant limitations, and home or work location, to best meet the specific needs of an emergency or disaster.	Personnel Dept. Emergency Management Dept.	PI	Emergency Operations Center (EOC) standard operating procedures lay out the process for involving the DSW program and compiling a list of needs or tasks that require DSW staffing. The requests are organized and submitted to the Logistics Section Personnel Unit Leader for action. We need to review and further develop the procedures for identifying and prioritizing the available DSW labor, just the tasks that need DSW support	50% 30-Jun-19

Recommendation	Entity Responsible for Implementation	DEPARTMENT REPORTED INFORMATION				
		Current Status	Basis for Status	% Implemented	Target Date for Implementation	
SECTION II: EMPLOYEE AWARENESS OF THE DSW PROGRAM						
3	The Emergency Management and Personnel Departments should update existing DSW training, providing more detail on possible roles and responsibilities and require all City employees to take refresher training on a regularly scheduled basis.	Emergency Management Dept. Personnel Dept.	PI	Current training provides a good overview of the DSW program but should be updated to include more detail on specific roles and responsibilities DSW staff may be asked to perform. New updated video footage should be developed .	50%	30-Jun-19
4	The Personnel Department should establish protocols for effective monitoring and compliance reporting for required refresher DSW training.	Personnel Dept.				
5	The Personnel Department should develop standard trainings for all staff responsible for deploying DSWs in their departments in order to review DSW requirements, policies and procedures, available toolkits, and any guidance for selecting and deploying employees to DSW duties during an emergency.	Personnel Dept.				
6	The Personnel Department should include DSW requirements in City job postings and ensure that all employees are aware that disciplinary actions may be taken should an employee not comply with a directive to serve as a DSW if they are reassigned from their regular job to specific DSW duties.	Personnel Dept.				
7	EMD and the Personnel Department should test DSW deployment processes as part of the City's annual EOC activation drills by communicating activation roles and responsibilities, with a select number of departments and employees being contacted.	Emergency Management Dept.	PI	DSW program was tested in the 2015 EOC annual functional exercise. We can do this for future annual exercises but recommend Personnel develop and conduct drills on how their department supports the EOC to receive DSW requests and actually process them through department personnel officers to identify and confirm specific staff for specific tasks. EMD can assist them with this.	50%	31-Dec-19

I - Implemented

PI/IP - Partially Implemented or In Progress

NYI - Not Yet Implemented