

National Agricultural Library

REG-10296999

ULL

Dept of Labor
Library
200 Constitution Ave NW
Room N2445
Washington, DC 20210-0001

ATTN: SUBMITTED:
PHONE: PRINTED: 2005-09-16 12:01:14
FAX: REQUEST NO.:REG-10296999
E-MAIL: SENT VIA: Manual

REG	Regular	Copy	Journal
-----	---------	------	---------

DELIVERY: E-mail Post to Web: wagner-bryan@dol.gov
REPLY: Mail:

THIS IS NOT A BILL.

NOTICE: THIS MATERIAL MAY BE PROTECTED BY COPYRIGHT LAW

---National-Agricultural-Library/-Document-Delivery-Services-Br-----

DISASTER PLANNING AND RECOVERY

Disaster Planning and Recovery: A Regional Approach

In 1983, ARMA's Region V began to examine the possibility of establishing a regional disaster recovery team. Over the next three years, emphasis shifted to disaster prevention, disaster preparation, and member education. This process culminated in a February, 1986, regional workshop on disaster prevention and recovery. The result of this process has been a strong regional network of local disaster preparedness committees, numerous local programs on disaster topics, the beginnings of chapter libraries concerning disaster prevention and recovery, and the identification of local and national resources to call upon when disaster strikes.

By SUSAN BULGAWICZ and DR. CHARLES E. NOLAN, CRM

Disaster planning and recovery is a grassroots program of cooperation in ARMA's Region V. The region includes Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas where hurricanes, fires, tornadoes, and flash floods have been frequent, though unwelcome visitors in recent years.

In 1981, annual regional meetings were initiated to orient new officers, share ideas, and renew professional acquaintances. These annual gatherings of chapter officers and committee heads formed the necessary framework for the extensive cooperation required to identify and address a major regional need such as disaster planning and recovery.

At the 1983 annual meeting, a proposal to explore the possibility of a regional disaster recovery team to assist member organizations after a major flood, fire, or hurricane was submitted. The idea was not original. The Northeast Document Conservation Center, an outgrowth of library cooperation in the New England area, had operated the United States' first such team for more than a decade. In the 1970s and early 1980s,

numerous library and/or archives floods and fires had resulted in a wealth of experience and literature, particularly in regard to the salvage of water-damaged paper records, books, and art objects. Between 1980 and 1983, ARMA's journal published occasional articles on disaster planning and recovery and the closely related topics of vital records and security.

Interest in disaster preparedness and recovery was engendered in the New Orleans archival community by George M. Cunha, the Northeast Document Conservation Center's first director and founder of the center's disaster team. Mr. Cunha conducted a week-long seminar on conservation at St. Mary Dominican College in 1977. The same year, Tulane University's library prepared (and shared) one of the country's pioneer disaster plans for educational institutions. Between 1978 and 1983, New Orleans suffered three major, non-hurricane related floods. In 1982, the Greater New Orleans Chapter of ARMA established Region V's first disaster preparedness committee.

The committee developed a questionnaire to survey chapter members on their existing disaster plans and their interest in disaster preparedness. Although the survey highlighted a great interest in and need for disaster plans, such plans were in fact few.

The encouragement and enthusiasm which greeted the 1983 proposal for an ARMA regional disaster recovery team revealed a significant, unmet need. A concrete plan of action, stressing member education through a regional workshop and local programs, was to be drawn up for review by delegates at the 1984 regional meeting.

The concept of a regional disaster recovery team percolated slowly for a year. Mr. Cunha was contacted in October, 1983 about the proposed team. He heartily endorsed our initial approach to regional cooperation, offered several key suggestions that became part of the planning process, and tentatively agreed to conduct a workshop. A concrete proposal took form during the year from correspondence among interested regional members.

At the 1984 Region V meeting, the delegates were presented three overlapping options: 1) to concentrate on

gathering and disseminating information within the chapters; 2) to host a regional workshop on disaster planning and recovery; and 3) to form a regional disaster recovery team. The participants unanimously endorsed the concept of a regional disaster recovery team with options 1 and 2 as intermediate steps towards such a goal.

The 1984 meeting also approved two major steps towards its goal of regional cooperation. First, a regional disaster preparedness committee was established. Each chapter, with one exception, appointed at least one member to serve on the committee and act as local chapter liaison. Secondly, a regional workshop was mandated for early 1986.

While plans for the regional workshop were formalized during the interval between the 1984 and 1985 regional meetings, interest in disaster preparedness was growing quickly within Region V. The Houston Chapter established an active disaster preparedness committee that surveyed member interest and plans, began gathering a library of books and articles, and took charge of preparations for the 1986 regional workshop.

The Fort Worth Chapter worked with the Society of Southwest Archivists and the Dallas Public Library to host a one-day program; the Chapter also surveyed its members concerning existing disaster plans. In September, 1984 the Dallas Chapter hosted a monthly meeting concerning disaster recovery. Several other chapters also disseminated the original New Orleans Chapter questionnaire.

During this developmental period, several major questions about the proposed Region V disaster team were also raised. Could ARMA, as a non-profit organization, sponsor a regional disaster team? What liability risk would such a team incur? How would participating team members (and/or their companies) be reimbursed for lost work time while assisting another organization in salvaging its information and records? Would companies accept the help of information managers from competing organizations?

During 1984-1985, ARMA interest in disaster questions also was quickly surfacing on an international level. At the Association's 1984 International Conference in Calgary, Alber-

ta, Canada, the ARMA Standards Committee established a Subcommittee on Disaster Recovery and quickly began gathering material on disaster questions. After the Cheyenne, Wyoming, floods the following summer, the Subcommittee began work on a video of the disaster recovery process. The ARMA technical publication on the salvage of water-damaged business records was in its final draft; the Standards Committee's new publication on Vital Records appeared in 1984. While only two sessions at the 1984 Calgary conference directly addressed the related questions of disaster recovery and vital records, six such sessions, including one on security, were scheduled for the 1985 New York City conference. During this same period, the ARMA Technical Publications Committee authorized a new ARMA publication on developing a disaster plan.

REGIONAL PLANNING

The two years of planning bore fruit at the 1985 Region V annual meeting. The proposed disaster preparedness workshop was scheduled for February 20-21, 1986 in Houston Texas. The workshop was limited to 50 regional ARMA members to provide an opportunity for exchanges of ideas, questions, and information. Special invitations were also sent to several key members of the ARMA Subcommittee on Disaster Recovery.

A one day pre-workshop planning meeting of chapter liaison officers was scheduled with Mr. Cunha for February 19 to develop a model for regional cooperation. This meeting was an exciting day for the participants. A morning of dreaming how to spend a mythical \$100,000 grant on regional disaster preparedness was followed by a critical examination of our priorities and direction for the next two years.

Our dreams were many, but not extravagant: a regional or local resource library of books and articles; audio-visual materials to convince top management that, as Mr. Cunha put it, "Only fools believe that disasters happen only to others"; a regional or local hot line; a resource directory of experienced disaster recovery experts; a meeting of our five state archivists with the director of the Kentucky Department of Archives and History to introduce them to that remarkable program which

offers protection to private businesses as well as state offices; regional or local storage centers for disaster supplies; local workshops and programs on disaster planning and recovery; apprentice training for regional members in disaster recovery.

When our afternoon session translated these dreams into concrete priorities and a mission statement, the participants chose a path that was both realistic and cost-conscious. The top priority was the appointment of a local disaster preparedness coordinator in each chapter. Each coordinator would agree to accomplish at least four goals over a two year period: 1) forming an initial resource library of books and articles; 2) hosting a seminar, workshop or monthly meeting on disaster planning and/or recovery; 3) preparing a list of at least three major local resources such as freezer space, recovery supplies, and local disaster agencies; 4) collecting local disaster plans already in place.

The participants' second priority was the development of resource material to assist information managers in convincing management to avoid Mr. Cunha's proverb about the fool and disaster. The participants commended the Subcommittee on Disaster Recovery for its video on the Cheyenne, Wyoming flood, and encouraged ARMA's Board of Directors to facilitate its availability.

The third priority was a national directory of resource organizations and individuals to call upon for help in disaster recovery operations. The participants asked that such a directory be considered by the ARMA Board of Directors and, if feasible, assigned to the proper committee. The resolution acknowledged the legal and professional difficulties in developing and maintaining such a select directory. An initial directory of such consultants is included in ARMA's technical publication, *Handbook for Recovery of Water-Damaged Business Records*.

The most significant decision of this preliminary planning meeting was to put the proposed regional disaster team on hold. Most existing teams offer salvage and recovery efforts as part of their non-profit service to the professional community or their consultant's work. Participating ARMA members felt they simply could not take off for three days to assist a colleague in need,

particularly in the hard economic times that the oil price decline produced in the region. A period of staff reductions and longer work hours was not the opportune moment to approach management about the possibility of expanding the ARMA time commitment, even though reciprocal agreements offered inexpensive protection and assistance in crisis situations.

Workshop participants later added two priorities. The first was to begin evaluating the possibilities of a national, regional, or local supply center for disaster recovery materials. Such a possibility on an international level had already been discussed within the Subcommittee on Disaster Recovery. Regional and local centers for supplies (rather than heavy equipment) were also considered. The second added priority was a suggestion that a disaster preparation and recovery track be offered at the 1987 international conference.

REGIONAL WORKSHOP

Mr. Cunha used the next two days to impart invaluable information and first-hand experiences to the participants. He explained that the Northeast Document Conservation Center team responded to needs of the library community. Libraries, unlike businesses, have the luxury of being able to close sections of their collections to patrons for an extended period of time while recovery takes place. Businesses, on the other hand, must resume operation quickly and orderly. Delays or confusion can result in an inability to resume business at all.

Disaster preparedness and disaster recovery were compared and contrasted; each must be addressed separately and completely if an organization truly expects to resume business after a disaster. Disaster preparedness was defined as a common sense approach to disaster minimization in the workplace. Emphasis should be placed on avoiding disasters by careful attention to items such as location of storage areas, periodic physical inspection of facilities, "smart" records handling techniques such as use of pallets for



AUTHOR: Susan L. Bulgawicz is Corporate Records Manager for ENRON Corp., an international organization specializing in exploration, drilling, and transportation of oil and natural gas. Her responsibilities include developing overall direction for the corporation's records management program in the areas of filing systems and equipment, record center operation, retention scheduling, vital records protection, and micrographics. She is an active member of the Houston Chapter of ARMA, serving on the Board of Directors and chairing the local Disaster Preparedness and Recovery Committee. She serves on the Region V Disaster Preparedness and Recovery Committee and was Houston's 1985 Chapter Member of the Year. Susan earned a B.S. in Industrial Technology, cum laude from the University of Houston.

AUTHOR: Dr. Charles E. Nolan, CRM, is the associate archivist and records manager for

the Archdiocese of New Orleans. He has taught graduate and undergraduate courses in the records management and archives at the University of New Orleans and Delgado Community College and has lectured internationally on historical, paper preservation, information, and educational topics.

Dr. Nolan holds a Doctorate in Church History and a Master's Degree in Educational Administration. He is the author of several books on Southern Catholic history.

Dr. Nolan is past president of the Greater New Orleans Chapter of ARMA; he is founding chairperson of ARMA's Region V disaster preparedness committee and founding chairperson of ARMA's Industry Action Committee for non-profit/not-for-profit organizations. He is presently working with Susan Bulgawicz on a new ARMA technical publication on preparing a company disaster plan.

staging boxes of records prior to shelving, and choosing the most effective fire protection methods. Early warning drills for approaching potential disasters such as hurricanes or tornadoes were recommended.

Adequate prevention also includes predetermination of those records which must be available in order to resume business. A well thought out and *implemented* vital records program is essential. Priorities for recovery and reconstruction should be set and agreed upon before a disaster occurs. It is also important to predetermine the recovery task force authority and responsibilities, as well as recovery priorities.

Since the principal enemy of records is water, freeze stabilization and freeze drying, or sublimation, were thoroughly reviewed. Other excellent techniques for recovery of

water damaged, charred or burned records were discussed. Recovery of microforms, diskettes, video film, and magnetic media were also addressed.

The hours immediately after a disaster can be confusing, frantic, and frustrating if recovery efforts must be delayed while fire and police personnel check the area for safety prior to reentry. Mr. Cunha suggested several activities which should be completed while awaiting clearance to reenter the facility: establishing contact with local authorities; assembling the recovery team; reviewing safety precautions and recovery priorities; establishing the alternative site for recovery activities; gathering recovery supplies; contacting facilities with freezer space; training and properly identifying volunteers; con-

Continued on page 44

Book Reviews . . .

Continued from page 42

There are many significant entries which invite further investigation. In each case, if I were so inclined, I could pursue this investigation, because the authors have provided the names of the sources and their addresses. I'd have only one problem, and it stems from my own ignorance. I lack a knowledge of the French language. Why is this a problem? Because many of the entries are in French, and the titles are not translated into English. Further, not all of them have an English summary of the entry's subject. The problem is not insurmountable, however, since the titles are closely enough related to English to deduce what the translation might be. I suppose a further problem would arise if you decided

you wanted to read one of the French language articles. I'm sure the problem also exists in reverse. If I spoke only French, I might lose the benefit of the entries made only in English!

There is one other very positive and important item. The final page has two pockets containing microfiche. The first fiche contains the complete list of items assembled by the authors—some 4,000 items. Bear in mind that the text of the book contains only a small sample of selected items. To have annotated more would have been logistically difficult and possibly uneconomic in terms of return. The complete collection on fiche is not annotated, but is a valuable resource nonetheless.

The second fiche contains the full text of those items the authors felt would be difficult to obtain, such as conference papers. I think this is a fine idea, since it can be quite frus-

trating to search for a particularly important, but totally unavailable, "unpublished" reference.

On the whole, this is a credible effort. I'd recommend the purchase.

INFORMATION

Title *Records Management The Canadian Contribution*

Authors Betty D. Seldon-MacFarlane (Editor); Patricia A. Mills; Brian M. Owens; Marthe Veillet

Published by The Department of Secretarial and Administrative Studies; The University of Western Ontario

Address: London, Ontario, Canada N6A 5C2

Contents 50 Subject Headings, 158 pages; paperbound; 2 fiche

Price: \$12.00 including postage (book rate)

ISBN: None

Disaster Planning and Recovery: A Regional Approach . . .

Continued from page 20

tacting specialists when necessary; assigning a team member to chronicle and photograph the recovery effort hour by hour.

The seminar included reference materials and an extensive bibliography. These materials will form the beginning of disaster preparedness reference libraries in the participating regional chapters.

THE FUTURE

Awareness is the top priority for ARMA Region V's local disaster preparedness committees. Educating our own members, the management teams of participating companies, and the business community in general is essential to preparing adequately to respond to a disaster. Most chapters have held or at least scheduled programs to inform their members about both disaster preparation and disaster recovery. Networking, pooling resources, and sharing experiences will add to our level of expertise. Prior identification of local resources (freeze space, salvage supplies, refrigerated transportation) and national resources (consultants, ARMA publications and presentations) make quick and efficient response a possibility after a disaster. Adequate chapter libraries specifically addressing disaster prepared-

ness and recovery issues will also enhance our abilities to respond professionally and effectively in case of a disaster.

Although the original 1983 proposal to establish a local ARMA disaster recovery team did not materialize, a concrete, workable, and cost-effective program of regional cooperation among ARMA members has resulted from the process of carefully examining this proposal. A shift has taken place from helping member companies recover from a disaster to assisting ARMA members in averting the effects of a disaster and preparing for floods, fires, hurricanes, and related phenomena. The program is one concrete example of how an ARMA region has enhanced the records and information skills of its members through regional cooperation.

Are You Too Small for Records Management . . .

Continued from page 28

If one organization plans to propose increasing its time allocations, the annual renewal is an ideal time to propose it. New projects or additional areas of responsibility might also be discussed. The annual renewal option allows for growth or retrenchment in regard to all employers' records management needs.

The Unexpected:

What about the unexpected? With care, consideration, and a certain amount of flexibility, the unplanned can be handled. It won't always be easy, but it isn't always easy when you're the sole employer either. Some flexibility and change of work schedules on the part of the employers may be required, and perhaps on the part of the employee as well.

GIVE IT A TRY

Is shared expertise for you? If you and some other organizations are presently doing without certain records management services because you can't afford to be the sole employer, or if you're limping along by including them in the content of some other, possibly unrelated job, I think you can find a satisfying solution in this method. You're probably going to find that unexpected efficiencies can be uncovered that you did not suspect existed, because a record management expert can streamline operations and perhaps even save enough time on the part of others in your organization to meet a major part of the cost of the salary incurred. Since the proposal involves an annual renewal, wouldn't it be desirable to give this approach a try?