

A Concise Guide to COAD Creation

Last updated: May 18th, 2015

Document Purpose

The purpose of this guide is to serve as a resource to community leaders, nonprofit agencies, and emergency managers looking to start or support Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COADs) in their area. While this guide is targeted towards the development of COADs, the overwhelming majority of the information is applicable to Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) development.

The objectives of this guide is to:

- Orient attendees to the concept of COADs
- Provide guidance and tools to initiate COADs within a community
- Provide recommendations and resources for ongoing COAD development.

It is important to note early on; there is no playbook or guide that will answer every question or solve every challenge in COAD development. While there are many best practices and themes that can be identified in effective COAD development, ultimately every COAD will look different and the creation of the COAD should reflect the community and interested parties. With that in mind, approach the contents of this workshop and guide with a critical mindset that is focused on asking the following questions:

- What will work best in my community?
- What existing networks can be utilized?
- What new networks can be created?
- What has worked for efforts like this in the past?

Guide Format

The guide is formatted to give the reader overarching knowledge of VOADs/COADs, explore COAD initiation, identify methods for COAD development and support, and provide tools/templates that will be useful in COAD formation. The information in this guide is by no means comprehensive. Instead, the goal of this guide is provide a resource that is an easily accessible platform of information on COAD formation regardless of emergency management background or knowledge. As such, you're encouraged to build upon the concepts and ideas presented on this guide with your own research.

About the Author

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Unit 1: VOAD and COAD Overview

Emergency management, as defined by the International Association of Emergency Managers, is

“... the managerial function charged with creating the framework within which communities reduce vulnerability to hazards and cope with disasters.”

Community organizations play a vital role in emergency management and must be prepared to help their communities respond and recover. Understanding what a COAD is, and the broad emergency management environment a COAD fits into, is a critical building block in the formation of a COAD. Without this understanding, and the ability to articulate it, it will be difficult to bring a people together to form this group. As such, Unit 1 will cover Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOADs), an overview of COADs, the impacts of disasters, and the Whole Community Concept.

1.1 VOAD Overview

Prior to addressing COADs and COAD development, it is important to briefly explore the National VOAD and state VOADs briefly to give some context to the vast network and principles that COADs work within.

The National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster was founded after Hurricane Camille in 1969. Prior to the founding of the National VOAD, organizations responded independently to disaster events which created a large amount of unmet needs and a duplication of efforts.¹ Volunteer and donations management was equally challenging with donations arriving where they were not needed and material donations being turned away or unutilized.

In response to this, seven national disaster response organizations came together to identify a way to better collaborate during disaster responses. This in turn led to the formation of the National VOAD.² The National VOAD is a coalition of organizations that come together to plan for disasters.

The National VOAD’s mission as is follows:

“National VOAD is the forum where organizations share knowledge and resources throughout the disaster cycle—preparation, response and recovery—to help disaster survivors and their communities.”²

Members

The National VOAD is comprised of faith-based, nonprofit, and nongovernment organizations that provide disaster services that are nationwide in scope. In addition to these members, representatives from state VOADs participate in the National VOAD and thus represent many other local organizations. A full list of all National VOAD members can be found on their website at: <http://www.nvoad.org/>.

State VOADs

In addition to the National VOAD, states have established VOADs on a statewide level. VOADs play a vital and active role in many states. On larger scale disasters, state VOADs can help coordinate the efforts of national and state level voluntary organizations. Depending on the scale of the disaster, the National VOAD may also be involved. In this way, state VOADs coordinate these efforts and serve as a conduit to state operations and, at times, county responses. This is an important function as it ensures larger scale responses, that often cross county lines, are coordinated in an efficient manner.

With that in mind, it is important to understand that every state VOAD is different. Often times, information about State VOADs can be easily located by performing an online search.

The “4 C’s”

The guiding principles are an essential part of the National VOAD, State VOADs, and local COADs. They set the tone for true partnership and should guide how VOADs/COADs work with one another. Adherence to the principles helps to ensure effective disaster response and recovery.

Cooperation

“WE will work together to overcome challenges.”

Coordination

“WE effectively utilize resources to help communities prepare and recover.”

Communication

“WE develop and maintain effective channels for sharing information.”

Collaboration

“WE identify common goals and create shared solutions.”²

VOAD – COAD Interaction

The roles, responsibilities, functions, and relationships of state VOADs and COADs can vary drastically from state to state. Often times, local COADs receive guidance and support from the state VOAD and work in partnership with them. Whereas the state VOAD is often concerned with matters that impact its members and the state as a whole, local COADs focus on issues pertinent to their area.

As such, state VOADs may serve as a statewide coordinating network for the more local networks that COADs create. Some state VOADs invite COAD representatives to meetings and at times give them voting rights. Additionally, state VOADs can serve as a coordinating agency for multiple COADs when the impact of disaster span across multiple COAD areas. Close collaboration and partnership with the state VOAD will connect a local COAD to a broader array of networks and information while ensuring more effective disaster response and recovery.

1.2 COAD Overview

A COAD, Community Organizations Active in Disasters, is a local coalition of agencies and groups that wish to collaborate with one another to effectively prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. COADs follow the principles of the National VOAD and often work in close collaboration with state VOADs. Whereas state VOADs bring together stakeholders to address issues that are primarily statewide in scope, COADs focus on topics relevant to their jurisdiction which may be a county or several counties. All COADs look different in terms of membership and structure, but all are similar in purpose.

Purpose of COADs

Local COADs play an important role in disaster response by helping share information and coordinating local community organizations during disaster response and recovery. They do this by engaging in readiness activities, such as preplanning specific response functions (like sheltering or volunteer management), and implementing those plans during a response in a coordinated fashion. Additionally, some COADs may be engaged in educating and preparing the local community. So, while State VOADs are coordinating efforts at a broader scale, a COAD is ensuring that local organizations are meeting needs in the most expedient and effective manner.

The purpose and goals of a COAD are determined by the capabilities and ambitions of the members. Some COADs may have a robust network of organizations that provide food, while others may be particularly strong in casework and so forth. As the COAD partners with local emergency managers to identify needs and gaps, they should target recruitment towards organizations that help fill those gaps. A list of possible COAD services is provided on the next page.

Potential COAD services:

- Feeding
- Sheltering
- Bulk Distribution
- Mental Health
- Spiritual Care
- Child Care
- Damage Assessment
- Casework
- Debris Removal/Clean-up
- Transportation
- Rebuilding services
- Education/Outreach
- Volunteer Management
- Donations Management
- Long-Term Recovery
- And more...

Keep in mind; a COAD is not an organization that provides its own services. Instead, it helps coordinate the services of its members to effectively and efficiently serve the community while avoiding both a duplication of services and unmet needs. As such, while the direct services a COAD coordinates will vary, every COAD should be engaged in activities that promote the 4 C's of the National VOAD movement: Collaboration, Communication, Coordination, and Cooperation.

Regardless of what services COAD members can provide, COADs have been shown to provide several benefits:

- Reduced duplication of services
- Reduced unmet needs of individuals and communities
- Improved information and resource sharing among participating agencies, including providing aid to one another during a disaster (mutual aid)
- Reduced unsolicited donations, improved donations management
- Improved coordinated volunteer management
- Increased ability for community to recover
- Inclusion of groups that may be left out of typical response efforts, thus reducing the chance of "rogue" spontaneous volunteers and volunteer groups

Involved Players

The membership of the COAD will vary depending on the interest of potential members, coordinating groups that may already exist within the area, and the membership requirements set during the formation of the COAD itself. Some COADs elect to include businesses while others allow only non-profit agencies. Some seek to be even stricter and require a 501 c3 classification for membership. Additionally, some COADs may elect to give voting rights to government partners while others may not.

Effectively, there is no right or wrong answer in determining who should be part of the membership, but there are pro's and con's to both. In summary, COADs always include 501 c3 organizations and engage government partners (in some fashion), typically include faith-based groups and other community organizations regardless of their 501 c3 status, and may include for-profit agencies.

Considerations regarding broader inclusion:

Benefits

- Allows a COAD to facilitate coordination of a larger sector of the community
 - This in turn means the COAD has access to a broader array of resources and services
 - Lowers the chance of “rogue groups” emerging during disaster response
- Integrates more perspectives into the COAD and disaster preparedness
 - This is likely to foster a more integrated approach across the whole community
 - This may also lead to more extensive and effective education efforts
- Increases the amount of support for the COAD within the community
 - Not only in terms of sheer number of members, but also potential leaders

Challenges

- More demanding on COAD leadership to coordinate across broader sectors and more services
- Requires more fragmentation or creation of groups within the COAD
 - Discussions naturally take on a broader context, more sub-groups must be created to addresses specific issues
- COAD leadership must have an understanding of how to integrate different sectors during disaster planning and response
 - Support from emergency managers is particularly important to achieve this

1.3 The Whole Community and Emergency Management

VOADs and COADs are not the only entities active in emergency response and management nor will they be the only groups coordinating disaster response and recovery. Governments of all levels are responsible for emergency management and many private sector agencies take an active role also. VOADs and COADs are not first responders and they must work in collaboration with government efforts to ensure an effective response.

Let's work on an example that illustrates the roles each sector plays in a disaster:

At 7:15 am this morning, an earthquake began to shake the buildings of your town causing significant damage to roads, buildings, and other infrastructure. Currently, damage and fatality information is unknown and the cell-phone networks are unreliable.

With this limited information, consider what the needs of the community may be and list them below:

Material needs of survivors:

Informational needs of survivors:

After you've generated some possible needs of individuals and the community, consider what groups may be able to meet these needs. Keep in mind several different categories: Faith-based Organizations, Community Groups, Non-profits, Government, and Industry. Next to each need, write down which group you think would meet that need.

It takes the “Whole Community”

The purpose of the brief activity of above is two-fold: 1.) You should have begun to orient yourself to the possible needs a community may have in the event of a disaster, and 2.) You should have come to the realization that there is not a single group or entity that can meet all these needs by themselves. In effect, it takes the “Whole Community” to effectively respond to a disaster. This is essential for COAD members to realize as they will be working within a diverse network of agencies both within and outside the COAD structure.

Whole Community

The term “Whole Community” was born out of the recognition that it is impossible for government to meet all the needs generated by a disaster. Instead, a Whole Community approach recognizes that it is important to engage faith-based organizations, nonprofits, community groups, and businesses in emergency management.

“As a concept, Whole Community is a means by which residents, emergency management practitioners, organizational and community leaders, and government officials can **collectively understand and assess the needs of their respective communities and determine the best ways to organize and strengthen their assets, capacities, and interests**...In a sense, Whole Community is a philosophical approach on how to think about conducting emergency management.”³

COADs and VOADs play a critical role in achieving the vision described above by serving as an effective way to organize and mobilize large portions of a community. It is important to understand the concept of a Whole Community approach to emergency management as a potential COAD leader.

For more information about the Whole Community approach, access FEMA’s document *A Whole Community Approach to Emergency Management: Principles, Themes, and Pathways for Action* currently located at:

http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1813-25045-0649/whole_community_dec2011_2.pdf

Collaboration with Emergency Management

As stated, COADs must integrate into existing emergency management networks on a local level. While this can look very different from community to community, there are some general themes. First, COADs should have direct interaction and connection to the local emergency manager (which may be by city or county). This is particularly important to ensure a successful start to the COAD. Clear communication about expectations, roles, responsibilities, and capabilities is essential to ensure a successful partnership.

Secondly, COADs must study and understand the emergency operations plan for their area. These can be attained from the emergency manager. Understanding this plan will be essential for successfully integrating with a local disaster response. Lastly, COADs should seek opportunities to engage in emergency management training and exercises. Both training and exercises provide excellent opportunities to grow understanding of expectations and capabilities while strengthening partnerships and individual relationships.

The three examples given above are by no means exhaustive. Any opportunity to engage local emergency managers in COAD development should be pursued. Not only is it essential for effective disaster response, but emergency managers are also a wealth of information on disaster education, training, and plan creation.

Unit 2: COAD Initiation

Equipped with a broad understanding of what a COAD is, who typically is involved in a COAD, and the emergency management network a COAD works within, it is now possible to explore how to create a COAD. This section will explore the essential elements for COAD initiation, who can create a COAD, the specific steps in COAD creation, and the common pitfalls. While the previous section was the conceptual overview, this section will be the step-by-step guide.

2.1 What is needed for COAD initiation?

Before starting to build a COAD, there are certain things that should be in place. That is not to say that COADs can't be started without these elements; they can and have. Rather, the elements listed below are extremely helpful in COAD creation and are essential elements in its continued success. Odds are likely that all of these elements won't be initially present; that should not halt the process of starting a COAD. Instead, pay close attention to these elements as the COAD develops and try to integrate them as the opportunity arises.

Community Support

As noted previously, the COAD should be the manifestation of the will of the community to prepare for disasters. If community organizations are not willing to participate, there won't be a COAD. Initially, it may take time and effort from community champions and the emergency manager(s) to generate interest and enthusiasm around the idea. It is beneficial to circulate the idea of a COAD through already existing networks and meetings for a period of time before a kick-off meeting is called.

United Way meetings, interfaith groups, Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs), and any other meeting that involves potential COAD members/partners are sources to garner interest. Be prepared to talk about local hazards and why a COAD is important. Interest in COAD development tends to rise after disasters that receive a lot of media attention, or particularly, when there has been a disaster nearby.

Support from Emergency Management

Without support from local emergency management, in whatever form that is, it is highly unlikely that a COAD will flourish. Simply put, emergency managers serve as the connection point between COADs and the rest of the emergency management community/response. Without that life line, COADs won't be able to effectively plan, assist with response, and aid in recovery.

Aside from being a connection, emergency managers also bring a wealth of information that will assist with COAD development in the form of knowledge about hazards, plans and procedures, policies, vulnerable populations, and already active groups.

Local Community Champion

Each COAD needs a local champion or a set of champions. Without someone to “carry the torch” and promote the COAD, it will likely fizzle out after the initial excitement. It is important that this champion is local- it should be someone that is part of the community and ideally well connected. Additionally, it is helpful if the champion (but not mandatory by any means), that the individual is from a local organization or group instead of the traditional response organizations.

By having someone that is championing the COAD cause on an extremely local level, it creates a degree of ownership that cannot be found otherwise. That ownership is essential as the COAD should truly be the manifestation of the will of the community to prepare for disasters.

Community Convening/Facilitation Skills

Regardless of how a COAD is structured, who is leading it, or who is at the table, there will be meetings involved. If there isn't an ability to conduct effective meetings among the group, a COAD will struggle to maintain meeting attendance. Many of the individuals that will be engaging in the COAD already extremely busy; a meeting that continues on without achieving something will not keep them engaged. Additionally, being able to balance getting feedback and input from all members and managing those who may want to comment too much is essential.

With all this in mind, the group needs individuals who can effectively convene meetings and facilitate group discussions.

State VOAD Support

The state VOAD can serve as a resource for information, networking, and coordination for COADs. State VOADs may be able to provide input on creation of guiding documents and plans while helping COADs connect with potential members and partners in their areas. Additionally, support from the state VOAD is essential to ensure successful coordination of disasters that cross COAD areas. Furthermore, state VOADs can help COADs network with one another which opens up vast resources to learn about trends, lessons learned, and best practices.

In some states, COADs become part of the state-wide VOAD network with some receiving voting privileges in the state VOAD. As the relationship between state VOADs and local COADs is drastically different from state to state, it is important to reach out and identify how to partner on COAD initiation and development.

Knowledge of COADs

To build a COAD, it is important to have at least some understanding of what a COAD is and what it does. While this guide serves as a first step to building that knowledge, it certainly isn't exhaustive and there is much more to learn. Doing independent research online to learn about other COADs, reviewing their documents, and exploring other COAD guides can help build knowledge. Additionally, connecting with other COADs and their leadership is extremely useful. Often times the challenges the COAD may be facing are challenges another COAD has already solved. Some of these guides are included in final unit of the guide.

Tools & Resources

There is no need to reinvent the wheel. While documents and tools should be tailored to fit the COAD, there are many templates that can help forming COADs take the first step. Some of these templates are included in the final unit of this guide. Additionally, many of the same tools a COAD may look to utilize may be created locally already by other organizations.

For example, if the COAD is looking to build a resource directory there may be a social service agency locally that has already created one that can be expanded. Although it isn't necessary to start from scratch, be mindful that a document/plan must be tailored to meet the needs of the COAD.

2.2 Steps to Initiate a COAD

With an understanding of the key elements to COAD initiation developed, it's time to look towards the specific steps in COAD creation. The steps described below give a clear, linear progression in COAD development. Unfortunately, reality doesn't fit that mold. During COAD creation, a group may find it has already completed some steps, or, that some steps are done out of the order listed below. This is completely normal.

This series of steps should serve as a guide and checklist- not a process that must be followed exactly. It has been developed through the process of guiding numerous COADs through the process of community convening.

1.) Identify Lead Individual(s)/Group(s)

Realistically, nearly any individual or group could take the lead to create a COAD locally. The purpose of the initial lead(s) is to bring the various organizations together to begin starting a COAD. The lead takes the role of a convener until the COAD develops a formal steering committee after its initial meeting. With that in mind, the initial lead often becomes part of that steering committee.

Whatever entity is trying to create the COAD, whether it is an individual or group, needs to have several qualities.

Qualities of the lead(s):

- Member of an organization who has a disaster response, or potential disaster response, role
- Able to energize people towards an idea and goal
- Able to mobilize interest into action through consensus building
- Able to facilitate group discussion and host a meeting

Remember: One person doesn't have to have all these qualities if they can be found in members of the group. It is also important to note, starting a COAD doesn't need to be a huge time commitment. The pacing of COAD creation is determined solely by those involved.

2.) Attain Emergency Management Support

As explained, without support from emergency managers, a COAD is likely to achieve very little. As such, once leads are identified it is important to attain support from the local emergency manager(s) if they are not already one of the leads. Many national response organizations, such as the American Red Cross, Southern Baptist, or Salvation Army, have connections with local emergency managers.

If no one in the group has that connection, contact information can often be found on county/city websites. Open and honest conversations should take place early on in COAD development to clearly develop expectations and understanding.

3.) Host a Stakeholder Orientation & Meeting

The leads have been identified, support from emergency management has attained, now it is time to bring together the community. The initial meeting is extremely important as it sets the tone for the rest of COAD development. This meeting creates the groundwork for all future steps. A sample agenda will be included at the end of this step.

Goals of the initial COAD stakeholder meeting:

- Educate potential COAD members about the concept of a COAD
- Explain the benefits of a COAD and why it is needed locally
 - Elaborate on local hazards (emergency managers are well equipped to do this)
- Identify interest and buy-in on COAD creation
- Identify additional leadership to support COAD creation

Attendees of this meeting should include (depending on how broad inclusion is intended to be):

local emergency managers (county/city, public health, etc.), representatives of national and state VOAD agencies (American Red Cross, Salvation Army, Southern Baptist, and more), local faith-based groups, service organizations, and business representatives.

The National VOAD member list can be found on their website (www.nvoad.org) and many state VOADs also publish their membership list.

Sample Initial COAD Meeting Agenda

- I. Welcome & Introductions
- II. Meeting Purpose & Goals
- III. Overview of Local Hazards & Vulnerabilities
 - Needs Analysis Activity (Suggested)
- IV. Introduction to COADs
 - What is a COAD, Why build a COAD, Who makes up a COAD, How is a COAD built
 - Capabilities and Resources Activity (Suggested)
- V. Next Steps
 - Steering Committee: Purpose, Scope, Structure
- VI. Conclusion

Above is a sample agenda for an initial COAD meeting. Two activities are suggested to engage the participants in the discussion and begin orienting them towards the challenges a disaster can bring and how a COAD can meet those challenges. As an important note, have facilitators keep their eyes open for natural leaders that arise during these activities; they may be good potential candidates in assisting with COAD development.

The *Needs Analysis Activity* is a simple variation of the activity completed in Unit 1 of the guide. Propose a potential and realistic disasters that may impact the local community, then have each of the tables have a conversation around the potential needs, then have each group report out to collect ideas and perspectives. This is a great activity for local emergency managers to lead. It should take 10-20 minutes depending on the size of the groups.

The *Capabilities and Resources Activity* gets meeting attendees to consider what services and resources they could provide to the community after a disaster. Ask each group to reference the needs generated by the previous activity, and then brainstorm within their groups how each of their organizations could contribute to meet that need either in form of services or resources. This activity can be particularly helpful in COAD development if each participant is provided a form that records their interest in the COAD and provides room for them to list the potential services or resources they could provide. This can be reviewed later to build functional groups, during emergency operations plan creation, or even to evaluate gaps in membership. This activity should take 15-20 minutes depending on the size of the groups.

4.) Build Preliminary Steering Committee

With the initial meeting conducted and energy built around the COAD, it is time to build structure that will allow the group to continue working forward. Hopefully, a few individuals arose during the initial meeting that expressed interest and capability to help form the COAD leadership. The initial lead(s) for the COAD should bring these individuals together to form the preliminary steering committee which will work to develop the COAD structure going forward.

The preliminary steering committee will define three important things for the fledgling COAD: purpose & scope of the COAD, structure of the COAD, and initial goals/objectives. Members of this committee are individuals willing to take on a leadership role to help the COAD form and are either potential members or potential partners of the COAD (depending on how membership will be defined).

While joining the preliminary steering committee does not mean committing to an ongoing leadership position, many members of the committee do decide to continue as leaders of the COAD. The very first objective of the preliminary steering committee is to host a meeting, or series of meetings, to determine the three items noted above.

5.) Identify Purpose & Scope of COAD

While the purpose and scope of a COAD may seem obvious, individuals may come into the discussion with a lot of personal assumptions. Although COADs are certainly involved with disaster response and recovery, some are involved with community education while others are not. Additionally, some COADs may organize themselves more “loosely” as a network while others formulate a more defined function. As such, it is important the steering committee explores the purpose and scope of the COAD thoroughly.

The purpose statement should reflect the intent of COAD members for the mission of the COAD. Additionally, it should define the scope in which the COAD operations, which may be a city, a county, or even a larger area. Some sample purpose statements are included below that have been taken from existing or forming COADs/VOADs:

ORVOAD Purpose:

“To convene Oregon voluntary organizations active in disaster to encourage more effective service delivery to people affected by disasters through cooperation, collaboration, and coordination of efforts, education and communication at all community-based levels, including governmental agencies. To provide training and increased awareness in mitigation, preparedness and recovery for all participating groups.”⁴

Lane County COAD Purpose:

“The mission of Lane County Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD) is to bring together a broad array of community organizations to foster an effective response and recovery for the people of Lane County in times of disaster.”⁵

East Idaho VOAD Purpose:

“The purpose of the EIDVOAD shall be to bring together voluntary organizations active in disaster services to foster more effective response to people affected by a disaster in Eastern Idaho through: cooperation, coordination, communication, collaboration, education, convening meetings and training. EIDVOAD seeks to ensure the availability of needed services and to encourage uniform impartial provisions of these services.”⁶

Sample Mission Statement from Georgia Community VOAD Toolbox 2012:

“The mission of the Community VOAD is to bring together community, government, faith based organizations, business, and volunteers committed to making their community become more prepared, resilient and self-sufficient. Together, members will enhance the community’s ability to mitigate, prepare, respond and recover from disasters thus ensuring that human needs compromised in a disaster situation are evaluated and addressed. This will be achieved through cooperation, coordination, communication, and collaboration of member organizations.”⁷

While every mission statement varies, it becomes obvious that there are **several key themes**:

- A COAD serves as a community convener
- A COAD’s mission is to improve disaster response and recovery for the area they cover
- Some COADs engage in community preparedness outreach and mitigation efforts
- The 4 C’s are an essential part of how a COAD conducts business
- COADs have a defined area in which they cover

6.) Identify Structure of COAD

Leadership Structure

Determining the structure of the COAD services several important functions. It gives a framework in which the COAD can set direction and priorities. It gives the COAD a way to make decisions and divide up work. Finally, it provides a clear understanding of how the COAD will function and grow. Most COADs are led by either a **steering committee** or an **executive committee**.

These committees are often supported by either **workgroups** and/or **sub-committees**. Once again, no method is particularly better than the other- it depends entirely on the organizations involved, the goals of the COAD, and the skillsets of the members.

Advantage of Executive Committees:

- Requires less individuals in leadership roles
 - Often includes a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary
- Allows for quicker decision making
- Enables clear succession planning for the Chair

Advantage of Steering Committees:

- Allows more COAD members to participant in leadership
- Provides more perspectives for decision making
- Creates more redundancy in leadership
 - Less likely to have a leadership void

While the leadership team helps propose and set goals and objectives, they are not the group that conducts all the work. There should be opportunities for the general membership to engage in creating documents and plans, developing the COAD, and working within the community. This is essential as it provides opportunities for different levels of engagement depending on the interest and skills of COAD members.

Support Structure

Committees and workgroups are often formed to provide additional opportunities for engagement and to undertake specific projects and/or goals. Committees are often utilized to carry out ongoing functions of a COAD, such as membership recruitment, disaster planning, training, and so forth. Additionally, workgroups may be set up to address concerns related to a

specific sub-group of the COAD, such as feeding, sheltering, and volunteer management. Alternatively, project workgroups may be created with the specific task of completing a project like the Emergency Operations Plan. To generate ideas, some examples of workgroups and committees are provided below.

Potential Committees:

- Membership Committee
 - Responsible for outreach, member retention, member tracking
- Response Committee
 - Responsible for overseeing creation of emergency operations plan, resource directory, and so forth
- Training & Exercise Committee
 - Identifies and facilitates training and exercises for COAD and its membership

Potential Workgroups:

- Functional Workgroups
 - Workgroups divided up by function area (Sheltering, Feeding, Volunteer Management, and so on) to create COAD plans to respond during a disaster
 - Members of similar groups meet together and create their annex to the operations plan
- Project Workgroups
 - Temporary workgroups formed to complete single projects such as emergency operations plan creation/revision, creation of resource director, outreach to potential members, creation of emergency operations plan, etc.

Guidance

Whatever structure is defined for the COAD, it is important to document that structure in some sort of guiding document. This document may come in the form of something very formal, such as bylaws, or very flexible, such as guiding principles. The tone and level of formality will depend on the group; some groups thrive with a very defined structure while others require a more fluid approach. Creating a guiding document is essential for a COAD as it provides a foundation for COAD members to conduct business upon and lays the ground rules for discussion and problem solving. Examples of both bylaws and guiding principles can be found Unit 4 of this guide.

Regardless of the type of guiding document, the documentation should address:

- Purpose of the COAD
- Membership requirements
- Frequency of meetings
- How decisions will be made
 - Roberts Rules of Order, majority rule, consensus, etc.
- Structure of the COAD
 - Leadership, workgroups/committees
 - How leaders/members are selected & elected
- Requirements to amending the guiding document

7.) Create Initial Objectives and Goals

With the foundation set to do the work, the steering committee needs to generate some initial goals and objectives to bring forward to the general group. Often times, COADs look initially to conduct some sort of assessment of the capabilities and resources among the group. Not only will this provide information on response and recovery capabilities, but it also reveals gaps in membership.

COADs also tend to move towards creating some sort of emergency operations plan for the group to define how the COAD will respond during a disaster and what agencies can do what tasks. This may or may not be kicked off with a table-top exercise to identify what strengths and weaknesses reside in the group. Working with the local emergency manager(s) will help inform what the priorities of the COAD may need to be to meet existing vulnerabilities.

Regardless of where the group starts, it is important to provide vision to the general membership on what the COAD can be working on immediately that is tied to the mission. Try to generate objectives that engage all members, even if multiple objectives need to be pursued. If people are not engaged, they will not stay.

8.) Present Findings to General Group

With all the pre-work done, it is time to present the ideas and outcomes to the general group. These should be presented as suggestions- not finalized decisions. This group is still in formation at this point, and until the group votes upon the structure proposed, it isn't an official organization. Allow time for and facilitate feedback as it will provide valuable insight and also create buy-in and ownership from the membership. It is highly likely that the suggestions of the steering committee will need to be presented at one meeting, revised, and voted upon at another meeting.

Conduct voting and consensus building on the proposed structure, guiding documents, and initial goals. After that, select or elect membership by the methods identified in the guiding documents and begin the COADs work!

9.) Begin Executing Structure and Working Towards Goals

Once the COAD has come this far, it is simply a matter of achieving the mission in the structure created. Build out sub-committees and workgroups as applicable to delegate out the work to achieve engagement. Hosting both regular membership meetings, with committee/workgroup meetings in between, is a great way to provide multiple levels of engagement. Have leaders frequently report out on progress and ensure the general group is educated on what is happening and how it is moving along. Ensure opportunities are created to build relationships and achieve goals; both are essential to the success of the COAD.

2.3 Common Pitfalls

During COAD creation, there are common pitfalls that tend to present themselves. Knowing these pitfalls, and understanding how to avoid them, will be important for the COAD's success.

Getting Stuck in Administrative Items

While the structure, guiding documents, and other administrative items are important, they are not the reason why people join a COAD. Stalling on these items for an extended period of time causes members to become disengaged and lose interest. Instead, have the steering committee work on these items over a period of a few months and present outcomes for input during the general session. This process should not take half a year to achieve. Essentially, the administrative items are the rules to “the game”.

Participants should be quickly and actively engaged in “the game” and not stuck on rule making.

Lacking Common Vision and Purpose

There are a lot of challenges and needs generated by disasters and people who join COADs are often passionate about those things. With this in mind, it is important to realize the COAD has a place and role to play in a larger structure and it isn't a “be all end all” solution. Participants need to understand the vision, purpose, and scope of the COAD and work to further that vision.

If members are not on the same page, confusion and frustration will occur.

Failing to Walk the Balance

This guide has repeatedly emphasized that different solutions work for different COADs. This is a very important concept; the information included in this guide must be customized to the community it is being implemented within for the COAD to be successful. COADs must walk

the balance between fluidity and structure, pacing and engagement, goal driven and relationship driven, and so on. And while there is no right answer, different COADs and their memberships will thrive with different balances.

Understanding what balance works for the goals, needs, and skills of the members is key to success.

Unit 3: Ongoing COAD Development and Support

Once a COAD is established and running, when done correctly, it will help propel itself forward. This being said, it takes vision and diligence to ensure the COAD is constantly making progress and is providing engagement for its members. This is particularly true for areas with low disaster frequency- those areas will need to be creative in their methods to keep members engaged. How COADs manage their progress towards their goals, and even what those goals are, will vary drastically. As such, it is impossible to give a step-by-step guide to ongoing COAD development. Instead, this section will briefly cover best practices and themes that should apply to all COADs.

3.1 Keeping the COAD going & growing

Below are included various themes noted by COADs to help ensure that the group keeps going and growing over time.

Constant Goals = Constant Growth

A COAD that fails to continue to grow and achieve goals is a COAD that stymies and falters. Without something to constantly work towards, members may fall away from the COAD as they view the job as “done.” Within the world of emergency management, the job is never truly done- there is always more that can be done.

With this in mind, it is important that the COAD is constantly working towards a specific goal. There is always an issue that needs to be explored further, a plan that needs to be tested, a procedure that needs to be refined, and a vulnerability that needs to be addressed.

One COAD addressed this need for ongoing engagement by creating their base emergency operations plan and then selected two functional annexes to work on each year. Then, members of those functional annexes (Feeding, Sheltering, Communications, etc.) picked one meeting to present on their organization and its capabilities. After that, members of that functional group met and drafted their annex to the emergency operations plan. The whole group then conducted an exercise at the end of the year to test the overall plan and those specific annexes. This simple but creative approach provided the COAD several years’ worth of goals and meeting topics that could be outlined at the start of each year.

Below are some examples of topics/objectives a COAD can explore after achieving some basic goals such as the base emergency operations plan, resource directory, and so forth. The objectives and outcomes should always be clear and definable- this makes progress apparent.

Examples of ongoing objectives:

- Community outreach and preparedness education
 - Businesses, Nonprofits, Faith-based, and Individuals
- Creation of functional annexes to emergency operations plan
 - Sheltering, Feeding, Volunteer Management, Casework, Donations Management, Long-term Recovery, etc.
- Integrating partners outside the COAD core group, either geographically or in terms of sector representation
- Creation of community recovery guide that lists all available recovery resources
- Drills and exercises on COAD activation and coordination
 - Partnering with local emergency management exercises benefits both the COAD and emergency management
- Undertake activities that improve member organizational preparedness, such as a continuity of operations planning workshop

Delegation & Empowerment

While covered previously, it is important to note that delegation and empowerment is essential to keep COAD members engaged in an ongoing basis. Creation of workgroups and subcommittees allow individuals to engage in COAD development without having to commit to leadership positions. Additionally, mentoring and building COAD leaders is imperative to avoid gaps in leadership.

As projects arise, try to integrate different members into them as applicable. Incorporating as many individuals as possible not only achieves engagement but it also brings in different perspectives that may be missed otherwise. Additionally, it helps avoid other COAD members getting overtasked.

Demonstrate Benefits

Aside from achieving goals and objectives, a COAD must be able to clearly demonstrate the benefits of involvement to members. This happens several ways. First, by creating opportunities for individuals to network and build relationships, COADs provide a tangible benefit for day-to-day activities. The partnerships built in the COAD often help members in their regular operations.

Create time for member agencies to promote events and trainings to the group, ask for assistance, and provide announcements. These announcements shouldn't be limited to emergency management activities.

Second, a COAD should provide education and resources to help get its members prepared. In this way, not only is the COAD ensuring its members will be ready to respond, it is also providing a direct benefit of being a resource for member agencies to safeguard their own operations. Lastly, a COAD should be given opportunities to demonstrate its effectiveness and role during a disaster. This solidifies and reminds members of the need for the COAD. If disasters aren't frequent, some sort of exercise should be hosted yearly at least.

Emergency Management Inclusion

A COAD shouldn't operate on an island- it must be part of the local emergency management network. Aside from direct partnership with emergency managers, the COAD should provide a representative(s) to other emergency management groups such as Local Emergency Planning Committees, Emergency Management Associations, Preparedness Coalitions, and other groups. Additionally, COADs should be part of the regular planning process and provide input on the creation of government emergency operations plans. Lastly, COADs should be kept aware of local training and exercises that are relevant to the group and individual members.

Regular Review of Progress & Successes

As the COAD achieves its objectives and goals, take time to share the progress and celebrate. As the group identifies the goals and objectives for the year, be sure to provide room for workgroups and committees to report out on their project. At the end of the year, do a “year-in-review” to explore the COAD’s progress and achievements over the year. Beyond sharing success of the COAD in general, create time in the agenda for member agencies to share their successes within their own organizations. Constantly sharing progress and successes keeps energy within the group.

3.2 Common Pitfalls

As COADs grow and develop, there are a number of things that can stifle progress. Knowing these pitfalls, and understanding how to avoid them, is essential to keep the COAD moving forward.

Fruitless Meetings

Fruitless meetings will effectively destroy any energy and enthusiasm for a COAD. The individuals that comprise the COAD are likely busy with other obligations and are engaging in the COAD to achieve something. If meetings carry on without a clear flow and outcomes, it is likely that people won't return.

While the meeting doesn't need to be conducted according to a strict adherence to parliamentary procedures like Roberts Rules of Order, having some structured approach to group facilitation is essential. Discussions shouldn't be monopolized by single individuals and quiet members should be encouraged to provide input. The objectives of the meeting should be clear and it should be conducted according to schedule. It is better to not meet than to meet without purpose.

Dictatorships

While it doesn't happen often, at times individuals may be inclined to form a "dictatorship" within the COAD. This may happen within a specific workgroup or committee, or, it may happen around a certain topic. Regardless, it is important that all members understand that a COAD conducts business in a collaborative manner. No topic or activity should be under strict control of any given member and cooperation should be encouraged. Although different individuals will be entering the conversation with different knowledge and background, all perspectives are valuable and should be heard.

Burnout of Individuals

COADs shouldn't be a second job for anyone. That being said, if delegation and empowerment isn't achieved, individuals may be forced into a position where they spend more time on the COAD that is sustainable. Overtasking people will ultimately cause them to disengage from the COAD. Since they were being overtasked, it is likely they didn't mentor a replacement either.

This can be mitigated by encouraging and facilitating engagement and delegation. Additionally, the COAD ultimately controls the pace in which it achieves its goals. Some COADs will, and should, work at a slower pace than others. It is important to approach the development of the COAD as a marathon and not a race. Sustainable progress is key.

CHALLENGE: Low Disaster Frequency

Low disaster frequency isn't a pitfall but is a challenge. Areas with frequent disasters will have a much easier time keeping members engaged and excited because the benefits are demonstrated in a disaster on a frequent basis. Areas with low disaster frequency will need to emphasize and incorporate the day-to-day benefits of the COAD as described above.

Furthermore, training, drills, and exercises are excellent tools for ongoing engagement that demonstrate the importance of a COAD. Participating in community outreach and education also provides an avenue for COADs to stay active regarding of disaster frequency.

Unit 4: Conclusion & Tools

Initiating and developing COADs requires a lot of forethought and consideration; but the effort is well worth the reward. Building a COAD locally helps to ensure that the community is actively engaged in emergency management which in turn reduces the duplication of efforts and helps eliminate unmet needs. As emphasized above, it is important to always be considering what the next step is for the COAD regardless if the COAD is just starting to form or has been established for years.

The information in this guide should be tailored to meet the needs of the local group and challenges should be approached creatively. By working through the steps provided, and being aware of the challenges that may arise, a COAD is likely to flourish and grow into a meaningful way for community partners to address vulnerabilities in their communities.

The remaining sections of this guide will include several sample documents collected from various COADs/VOADs in the country and links to other resources for COAD development. Please note, several of the guides listed below include templates in addition to the ones provided directly in this guide.

4.1 Tools & Guides

www.nvoad.org

Website for the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster. Includes information about VOADs and a robust resource center with guides and consensus points for: drought response, case management, spiritual care, donations management, mass care, volunteer management, repairing/rebuilding, long-term recovery, VOAD development, and a by-laws template.

Indiana COAD Guidance Manual 2012

COAD guidance manual developed for Indiana that includes information on COAD development, sample goals, and sample by-laws.

Currently located at: <https://ag.purdue.edu/extension/eden/Documents/COAD-Guidance-ManualJan2012.pdf>

Georgia Community VOADs Toolbox 2012

VOAD toolbox that explains VOADs, VOAD development, and response/recovery plan creation. Template resources including a letter of commitment, membership resource forms, and position descriptions.

Current located at:

<https://gavoad.communityos.org/cms6/files/os156/p435/GA%20Community%20VOAD%20Toolbox.pdf>

State of Missouri COAD Guidance Manual 2014

COAD guidance manual specifically tailored for Missouri COADs. Includes sample by-laws, membership forms, and function specific annexes including: donations management, volunteer management, long-term recovery, emergency assistance, mass care, and spiritual and emotional care.

Current located at: <http://www.sema.dps.mo.gov/programs/documents/mo-coad-manual.pdf>

LANE COUNTY COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN DISASTER **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Mission

The mission of Lane County Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD) is to bring together a broad array of community organizations to foster an effective response to the people of Lane County in times of disaster.

Values

The COAD's working relationships are achieved through the promotion of cooperation, communication, coordination, and collaboration of member organizations.

Cooperation: No member organization has all of the answers for the challenges communities face. Members treat each other as partners.

Communication: Members regularly share their capacities, accomplishments, and commitments. The COAD maintains good channels for sharing information, listening carefully to each other, and dealing openly with concerns.

Coordination: COAD members work together towards the goal of effective service to the community. The COAD will equip members to be coordinated in times of disaster through planning and preparation.

Collaboration: COAD members dedicate themselves to working together.

Function

The COAD exists to coordinate member organizations' activities in relation to emergency response. It is a support to County and City emergency managers but is not run by emergency management personnel. Through regular meetings, communication, planning, and training together, member agencies will be well connected, organized, and ready to respond. On an ongoing basis, the COAD helps with sharing information, resources, and expertise. The COAD will know what resources COAD members have to potentially offer and the contact person to access them.

During a Disaster

The COAD can be activated when requested by the County and City emergency managers or COAD members. The COAD does not self-dispatch when there is a declared disaster situation. Generally, activation by a COAD member is for smaller situations when it is not a declared disaster but a COAD member is in need of peer assistance or there is a demonstrated need in the community. Operating at its full potential, the COAD will

- Organize resources and services needed
- Manage community volunteers and donations
- Coordinate among members to reduce duplication of services
- Link to the Oregon state organization, Oregon Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (ORVOAD)
- Expedite local response by COAD members
- Ensure that human needs are being met as best as possible

The details of how the COAD will be activated and operate are outlined in the COAD Emergency Operations Plan. While some COADs also focus on preparedness and mitigation, it is recognized that in Lane County the Lane Preparedness Coalition and Red Cross actively fill this role; therefore, the Lane County COAD will focus its time and energy on being prepared for a role in response and recovery.

Membership

Eligibility: The COAD believes that every organization and business has something they can contribute. Be it tangible goods, services, volunteers, or time, there are a variety of roles and services that will need to be filled. In that spirit, membership is open to any interested organization, non-profit, agency, group, public agency, or business operating within Lane County. The intent is to have a broad-based coalition involving those who are not traditionally involved in disaster response and those who are.

Each member maintains its own identity and independence, yet collaborates and coordinates with other agencies to improve services and eliminate duplication. COAD member organizations may provide services during a disaster and do so under their own direction.

Individuals not affiliated with an organization may attend meetings as a non-voting participant but would not be eligible for membership.

Commitment: It is recognized that many organizations want to help but may not have the capacity to do so when needed. In order to fully commit to the COAD, a member must complete a signed Letter of Commitment on behalf of their organization (see Appendix A) that indicates their intent to contribute as resources allow. It is also expected that member organizations will work to increase their internal capacity to be ready to respond as indicated in their Letter of Commitment.

Selection: Those interested in becoming members of the COAD will submit a signed Letter of Commitment to the Chair of the COAD. At the first available meeting of the full membership, the interested member will share their interest in joining with the full group. All new members will be selected by a majority vote of the members present.

Meeting Attendance: To maintain membership, a representative of the organization must attend at least three meetings per calendar year. To maintain consistency, it is preferable to have the same person attend each meeting in person if possible, but designees or attendance by conference call or remote means are acceptable.

Change of representative: If a COAD member would like to change its representative to the COAD on an ongoing basis, such as due to a change of personnel, the organization should notify the COAD Chair of the change. The COAD membership will remain in good standing.

Resignation or Removal: A member organization may resign by giving written notice to the COAD Chair. A member organization may be removed by a majority vote of the Leadership Team. Alternatively, the Leadership Team may request that the COAD organization change their representative to the COAD. Grounds for removal or a request to change a representative may include but is not limited to failing to meet the meeting attendance requirement, obstructive behavior during meetings, or acting in a way that is contrary to the values of the COAD.

Meetings

Meeting frequency: The COAD will hold a minimum of four meetings per calendar year for the general membership. One meeting per year will be the Annual Meeting where elections for the Leadership Team take place. The Leadership Team may call additional meetings as necessary.

Meeting conduct: COAD meeting will be conducted with the values of cooperation, coordination, communication, and collaboration in mind. When attending meetings, members agree to:

- Respect each other
- Act in a way consistent with a belief system that values diversity
- Listen as an ally and with an open mind
- Respect that only one person speaks at a time

- Honor the limitations of time; speak concisely
- Ensure that all members have an opportunity to voice their opinion
- Work towards common ground for coordinated action, not necessarily agreement
- Offer solutions if there is a problem to be addressed
- Maintain confidentiality of sensitive information that is shared

Meeting roles: The Chair of the Leadership Team or designee will create and distribute the meeting agendas ahead of time and will facilitate and lead the meeting. The facilitator may call for a vote on an item that needs membership approval to move forward. The Secretary takes notes at each meeting or assigns a note-taker. The Secretary will record pertinent discussion items and decisions made and distribute meeting summary notes to all members within ten business days.

Voting: Each member organization will only have one vote, regardless of how many people from the organization attend the meeting. When a call for a vote is made, a simple majority of votes of the members present will be considered the will of the full membership. All members agree to support the outcome of the majority vote.

Leadership Team

Role: The COAD will have a Leadership Team that provides organizational direction for the general membership, plans and executes meetings of the general membership, and leads the group in matters related to strategy, planning, training, organization, and risk. The members of the Leadership Team realize their commitment is to the overall practice and issues of the concern for the totality of the COAD. The COAD will strive to have a diversity of types of organizations on the Leadership Team, so that the Leadership Team is reflective of its membership.

Leadership Team members: The Leadership Team will consist of six people at a minimum and eight at a maximum. Any general member is eligible to be on the Leadership Team. There will be one Leadership Team member who is also an active member of the Lane Preparedness Coalition and will serve as a liaison between the two groups. The term of the Leadership Team members is one year with re-election possible three times.

Election of Leadership Team members: The general membership will elect the Leadership Team members through a vote of members present at the Annual Meeting. The Leadership Team will elect its Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary.

Chair: The role of the Chair is to provide leadership for the organization, plan the annual cycle of general and Leadership Team meetings, set the agendas for these meetings based on member interest, facilitate the meetings or designate a facilitator, ensure that decisions made at meetings are implemented, and be the designated spokesperson for the organization with media or where appropriate. The term of the Chair is one year with re-election possible three times.

Vice Chair: The role of the Vice Chair is to act for the Chair when she/he is not available. The Vice Chair may also share in the work and responsibility of the Chair through collaboration. The Vice Chair ensures that the organization has a leader who can assume the Chair's responsibility and is familiar with their work should a sudden absence occur. The term of the Chair is one year with re-election possible three times.

Secretary: The role of the Secretary is to take accurate meeting minutes for records and keep updated files of meeting minutes and major decisions. The term of the Chair is one year with re-election possible three times.

Committees

Creation and dissolution: Temporary and Standing Committees can be created by the Leadership Team to carry out specific work of the COAD, such as providing guidance and planning, training, or short-term tasks as needed. The Committee Chair will be appointed by the Leadership Team Chair. Any member in good standing may join a committee. The Leadership Team will provide the Committee Chair with the objectives of the committee. The Committees may be dissolved upon completion of their charge or the term of appointment.

Communication: The Committee Chairs will report on work, progress, and decisions to the Leadership Team. The Chairs will report at general meeting when appropriate.

Amendments

These Guiding Principles can be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present at a general meeting. Proposed amendments can be submitted to the Chair of the Leadership Team. Proposed amendments will be distributed to the general membership at least two weeks prior to a general meeting at which the changes will be considered for adoption.

**BYLAWS
EAST IDAHO
VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN DISASTER**

ARTICLE I

- Section 1.1 The name of this organization is the East Idaho Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (EIDVOAD). EIDVOAD is a regional component of the Idaho Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (IDAVOAD) that includes: Clark, Fremont, Butte, Jefferson, Madison, Teton, Bonneville, Bingham, Power, Bannock, Caribou, Bear Lake, Franklin, Oneida, Lemhi and Custer Counties.
- Section 1.2 The chief place of correspondence for EIDVOAD shall be determined by the current Chairperson.
- Section 1.3 These bylaws are subject to approval by the IDAVOAD.

ARTICLE II, PURPOSE

- Section 2.1 The purpose of the EIDVOAD shall be to bring together voluntary organizations active in disaster services to foster more effective response to people affected by a disaster in Eastern Idaho through: cooperation, coordination, communication, collaboration, education, convening meetings and training. EIDVOAD seeks to ensure the availability of needed services and to encourage uniform impartial provisions of these services.

ARTICLE III, MEMBERSHIP

- Section 3.1 EIDVOAD is not intended to be a competing agency but a coalition of existing agencies. Each member and partner organization maintains its own identity and independence, yet collaborates and coordinates with other agencies to improve service and eliminate duplication.
- Section 3.2 Organizations eligible for voting membership are those that are operating within the EIDVOAD region, qualify under Internal Revenue Service Regulation 501(c)(3), utilizes volunteers in providing their services, and have a purpose in disaster preparedness, response, relief, recovery, and mitigation, and have a stated policy of commitment of resources to meet the needs of people affected by disaster without discrimination, can become voting members of the EIDVOAD. Organizations that have chapters, districts, conferences, etc. may sit at the table but will only have one vote.

- Section 3.3 To maintain membership, the voting member of an organization, or designated representative, must attend at least three meetings per calendar year; preferably in person but if cost prohibitive via teleconference is acceptable.
- Section 3.4 Voluntary Organizations that are members of the IDAVOAD in good standing will be extended membership to EIDVOAD after verification with IDAVOAD.
- Section 3.5 Interested businesses, organizations or governmental agencies may maintain a partnership without vote. Any number of representatives may attend regular and annual meetings. The Bureau of Homeland Security (BHS) Area Field Officer(s) for the EIDVOAD region is/are non-voting, non-office holders of the Executive Committee.
- Section 3.6 Membership in EIDVOAD shall be one representative, or their designee, from each of the member and partner organizations as approved by the membership. Any number of representatives may attend regular and annual meetings, with voice, with the provision that each member organization will have only one vote. Members and Partners may be appointed to committees and hold office in those committees, including the Executive Committee. Officers serving on the Executive Committee shall be limited to one representative from any 501(c)(3) organization and only one representative from all of the Partner Organizations participating.
- Section 3.7 Membership will be contingent upon an organization being current with attendance and paperwork, such as membership application, proof of 501(c)(3) and other forms as established by EIDVOAD.
- Section 3.8 All members and partners shall be selected by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.
- Section 3.9 Any member may resign by giving written notice to the EIDVOAD President. Any member is subject to removal upon recommendation and majority vote of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE IV, MEETINGS

- Section 4.1 There will be a minimum of four regular business meetings of EIDVOAD per calendar year. The annual meeting will occur during the fourth quarter meeting of the year. The Executive Committee may call additional meetings as necessary.
- Section 4.2 Mailed or emailed notice of no less than two weeks in advance to all members shall constitute proper notice for the conduct of business at any regular or annual meeting.

- Section 4.3 Decisions on any question at a meeting of EIDVOAD shall be by majority vote of the member organizations present and voting. Member organizations may email a vote if received four days prior to the meeting. Meeting site and date may be decided as a final act of business at each current meeting or delegated by the decision of the Executive Committee if no consensus is reached.
- Section 4.4 Roberts Rules of Order shall be considered the general rules for the conduct of general meetings.
- Section 4.5 Minutes will be taken by the EIDVOAD Secretary or a member or partner designated by the President in the Secretary's absence. Said minutes shall be distributed by email or mail if email is unavailable and approved at the next regular meeting.

ARTICLE V, COMMITTEES

- Section 5.1 Temporary and Standing Committees will be enacted to carry out specific charges such as providing guidance and planning, and preparing products as needed. The Committee Chair will be appointed by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall provide the Committee Chair with the objectives of the committee. Committees shall be dissolved upon completion of their charge or the term of the appointment.
- Section 5.2 Committee Chairs are required to report on work progress and decisions, and to provide information to the Executive Committee. The Chairs will report at the meetings when warranted.

ARTICLE VI, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Section 6.1 The executive committee shall consist of three (3) persons elected from the membership and representation of the BHS Area Field Officer(s) is encouraged. In as much as possible, membership will be representative of differing organizations. The members of the executive committee shall realize that their commitment is to the overall business practice and issues of concern for the totality of EIDVOAD. The BHS Area Field Officer(s) only serves as a technical advisor and has no voting authority.
- Section 6.2 The executive committee officers shall be a President, Vice President, and Secretary. Officers will be elected by popular election of the EIDVOAD membership at large. Terms of office will be staggered and be for two years with a maximum of three consecutive terms. Elections will be held in fourth quarter of each year. Terms of service will begin January 1 following the election. The President will be elected in even numbered years; the Vice President and Secretary will be elected in odd numbered years. No compensation shall be paid to the Executive Board for their services as such.

- Section 6.3 The President shall be the principal executive officer of the EIDVOAD and shall in general supervise and control all of the business and affairs of the EIDVOAD. He/she shall preside at all meetings of the Members and Executive Committee, unless unavailable. He or she may sign any contracts, or other instruments which the Members have authorized to be executed, except in cases where the signing and execution thereof shall be expressly delegated by the directors or by these bylaws to some other officer or agent of the EIDVOAD, or shall be required by law to be otherwise signed or executed. He or she shall in general perform all duties incident to the office of the President. When requested during an emergency or disaster, the President or his or her designee will act as liaison to the local Emergency Operations Center.
- Section 6.4 The Vice President shall preside at meetings of the Members in the absence of the President. The Vice President shall assume the position of President in the event that the President fails to complete his/her term. The Vice President shall also perform such other duties as may be assigned by the President.
- Section 6.5 The position of Secretary shall keep the minutes of the Members' meetings. He or she shall see that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws or as otherwise required. He or she shall be the custodian of the EIDVOAD records. He or she shall keep a register of the post office address of each Member and Partner. He or she shall in general perform all of the duties incident to the office of Secretary and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him or her by the President.
- Section 6.6 The executive committee will meet when called by the President as necessary to conduct business or by call of any two other members of the executive committee.
- Section 6.7 The executive committee shall have the power to act for EIDVOAD between regular meetings within the adopted guidelines of the organization.
- Section 6.8 An officer may resign by submitting his/her resignation in writing to either the President or Secretary. The officers are subject to removal by an affirmative vote of the members by a majority vote of those present and voting. Upon vacancy a special election will be held after thirty (30) day notice to EIDVOAD membership.

ARTICLE VIII, AMENDMENTS

- Section 8.1 Proposed amendments must be distributed by email or mail if email is unavailable no less than two weeks prior to a meeting at which the amendments will be considered for adoption.

- Section 8.2 Amendments to these bylaws shall be made by a two-thirds majority vote of represented organizations at any regular meeting, to be recorded by the Secretary.
- Section 8.3 The EIDVOAD may be dissolved by two-thirds majority vote of its membership. All assets held by EIDVOAD will be reverted to the IDAVOAD.
- Section 8.4 The EIDVOAD bylaws will be reviewed at the annual meeting every two years.

EastIdaho VOAD Membership Agreement

East Idaho VOAD Membership Agreement

_____, hereinafter referred to as “We”, would like to work cooperatively with the East Idaho Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (EIDVOAD).

1. We accept the purpose and program of EIDVOAD as set out in EIDVOAD By-Laws and subscribe to the same principles for our organization.
2. We recognize and agree to work in the spirit of Cooperation, Communication, Collaboration, and Coordination before, during, and after disasters. Furthermore, we agree to function within the guidelines set forth by the EIDVOAD Emergency Operations Plan when collaborating with the EIDVOAD during disaster responses.
3. As a 501(c)(3) organization active in disasters, we seek recognition as a member of the EIDVOAD with the opportunity to share in EIDVOAD’s purposes and programs. We will participate in general meetings to provide representation, input, and guidance in fulfilling the mission of the EIDVOAD.
4. When/if requested, we will provide a copy of our IRS recognition as a 501(c)(3) organization and written evidence of our commitment to provide services, utilizing volunteers, to meet the needs of people affected by disaster without discrimination within Eastern Idaho.
5. We accept our responsibility to maintain and provide EIDVOAD with a copy of our 24 hour contact information with this application and annually as requested thereafter. We agree to keep EIDVOAD advised of changes.
6. EIDVOAD agrees to act as catalyst to ensure Cooperation, Coordination, Communication, and Collaboration during all phases of disaster response (mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery) while being diligent to not assume an operational or command/control role itself.

Submitted:

Approved:

Representative

President – EIDVOAD

Date

Date

**LANE COUNTY COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS
ACTIVE IN DISASTER
LETTER OF COMMITMENT**

_____ (Interested organization) is making a commitment to the Lane County Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD). This commitment is with the understanding that:

The mission of the Lane County COAD is to bring together a broad array of community organizations to foster an effective response to the people of Lane County in times of disaster.

COAD members may offer services and resources during a disaster under their own direction and as their resources allow.

Each member organization maintains its own identity and independence yet works closely with other agencies to improve services and eliminate unnecessary duplication.

COAD members promote coordination among members to facilitate access to available resources and services.

The best time to prepare, train, and become acquainted with one another is prior to an actual event.

COAD members will work to increase their internal capacity to be ready to respond as indicated in this Letter of Commitment.

COAD members agree to abide by the Lane County COAD Guiding Principles.

_____ (Interested organization) anticipates being able to commit the following resources during a disaster. It is understood that this does not constitute an obligation, but the intent to follow through as resources and the situation allows.

By signing this letter of commitment, the organization commits to the work of the COAD and contributing to the highest functioning of its members.

Organization's Name

Date

COAD Representative's Printed Name

COAD Representative's Signature

CEO, Executive Director, or Board Chair Name
(If applicable)

CEO, Executive Director, or Board Chair Signature
(If applicable)

Member information

Name(s) of other representatives, if there will be more than the one signed above _____

Member Address _____

Phone number(s) _____

Email _____

Best way to be contacted during emergency situations _____

CITATION END NOTES

¹ National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster. (2014). *National VOAD Strategic Plan*. Retrieved from http://www.nvoad.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/nvoad_strategicplan_double-sided_PRESS-1.pdf

² National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster. (2014). *National VOAD Strategic Plan*. Retrieved from http://www.nvoad.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/nvoad_strategicplan_double-sided_PRESS-1.pdf

³ FEMA. (2011). *A Whole Community approach to Emergency Management: Principles, themes, and pathways for action*. Retrieved from http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1813-25045-0649/whole_community_dec2011__2_.pdf

⁴ Oregon VOAD. (2010). *By-laws of Oregon Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster*. Retrieved from <https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B1nZbBbvL06XVE43d1UyOW4xVG8/edi>

⁵ Lane County COAD. (2015). *Lane County COAD - Guiding Principles*.

⁶ EIDVOAD. (2011). *East Idaho VOAD By-laws*.

⁷ Georgia VOAD. (2012). *A toolbox for prospective Community VOADs*. Retrieved from <https://gavoad.communityos.org/cms6/files/os156/p435/GA%20Community%20VOAD%20Toolbox.pdf>