



POINTS OF LIGHT

MANAGING SPONTANEOUS VOLUNTEERS IN TIMES OF DISASTER

Safety + Emergency Readiness Virtual Summit
September 12, 2017



volunteerflorida



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Poll Question I

What organization or group do you represent today?

- A) Nonprofit
- B) Private
- C) Government
- D) Other

Objectives

- Explore the National Principles of Spontaneous Volunteer Management
- Understand Spontaneous Volunteers
- Review Volunteer Management 101
- Identify Stakeholders in Spontaneous Unaffiliated Volunteer (SUV) Management
- Recognize the Importance of Public Messaging
- Learn about establishing Volunteer Reception Centers (VRCs) and understand the various roles

National Principles

- Volunteering and Community Life
 - Volunteers come from all segments of a community
 - Provide essential services to that community
- Volunteering and the Emergency Management Network
 - Value can be maximized when integrated with the Emergency Management framework
 - Requires specialized planning and coordination
- The Value of Affiliation
 - It is more beneficial if volunteers are affiliated and trained with responding organizations
- Volunteer involvement in the four phases of Disaster
 - Response is an opportunity to direct toward longer term commitment in preparedness, recovery, and mitigation

National Principles

- **Build on Existing Capacity**
 - All communities have organizations that know how to manage and mobilize volunteers
- **Information Management**
 - Clear, consistent, and timely communication is essential to successfully manage spontaneous volunteers
- **Volunteer Expectations**
 - Volunteers are successful when they are:
 - Flexible
 - Self-sufficient
 - Aware of the risks
- **The Impact on Volunteers**
 - Although the primary benefit of volunteers is to the impacted community, the experience also positively impacts the volunteers themselves

What do we know about

Disaster Volunteers?



Disaster Volunteers

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- Volunteers must be willing to be coordinated by emergency management experts and accept the obligation to “do no harm”.
- Information is vital to management of SUVs

Poll Question II

Could your agency use Spontaneous Unaffiliated Volunteers to serve their mission after a disaster?

A)Yes

B)No

C)Don't Know

Who Converges?

- What are some reasons people converge at disaster sites?

Who Converges?

- People converge at disaster sites for different reasons

Helpers

Returners

The Anxious

The Curious

Fans or
Supporters

Exploiters

Questions Break



Poll Question III

Has your organization drafted Volunteer Reception Center job descriptions?

A)Yes

B)No

C)Don't Know

Volunteer Management 101

- Planning
 - Writing job descriptions for possible disaster roles and the required skills for those jobs
 - Establishing procedures; signing MOUs
- Receiving and Placing
 - Public messaging to spontaneous volunteers
 - Registering volunteers
 - Interviewing volunteers

Volunteer Management 101

- Orientation and training
 - Safety training for everyone
 - Job training depending on:
 - Risk of task
 - Complexity of task
 - Volunteer's level of experience
 - Type of equipment necessary

Volunteer Management 101

- Supervising and Recognizing
 - Watching for signs of Critical Incident Stress
 - Ensuring that volunteers take care of themselves
 - Monitoring changing situation in the disaster area
 - Recognize accomplishments as they happen
- Evaluating
 - Integrating lessons learned into plans for future disasters

Remember...

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Identify possible roles, receiving agencies, VRC locations, policies and procedures BEFORE the disaster

Risk Management

- State laws on volunteer liability vary widely
- Workers Comp issues and “Good Samaritan Laws”
- Check out www.nonprofitrisk.org
- Receiving agencies are responsible for background checks
- Have all volunteers sign a Release of Liability
- Interview all volunteers
- Some roles are more high risk than others; assign accordingly

Stakeholders

- Local government
- Community-based organizations
- POL/HON Affiliates
- Cultural and ethnic communities
- Disability groups
- Corporations
- First responders
- VOAD organizations
- Homeless organizations
- Media
- HAM radio operators
- Schools
- Faith-based organizations
- Local law enforcement
- Emergency managers
- Mental health providers
- Public officials
- Transportation companies
- National service programs

Public Messaging

- Public messaging aims to direct the flow of SUVs and unsolicited donations to places that have the capacity to manage them
- Stakeholders working together should have one consistent message
 - **Cash** – Financial gifts get help to people fast.
 - **Ask** before donating.
 - **Respond** by volunteering with local relief agencies.
 - **Everyone** can help.
- The message and messenger should be established before the disaster
 - Do NOT self-deploy

Questions Break



Setting up a Virtual VRC

Virtual VRCs are critical to managing and communicating with SUVs. Even if a “brick and mortar” VRC is established, the virtual VRC should remain operational.

1. Plan and post a banner on the website
2. Write the first message
3. Create a call center
4. Identify and post opportunities
5. Utilize social media

Volunteer Reception Center Planning

- Discuss utilizing spontaneous volunteers with partner organizations.
- Gather job descriptions for SUV positions from these organizations.
- Identify possible VRC locations and create MOUs with host organizations.
- Pre-draft public messages regarding spontaneous volunteers.

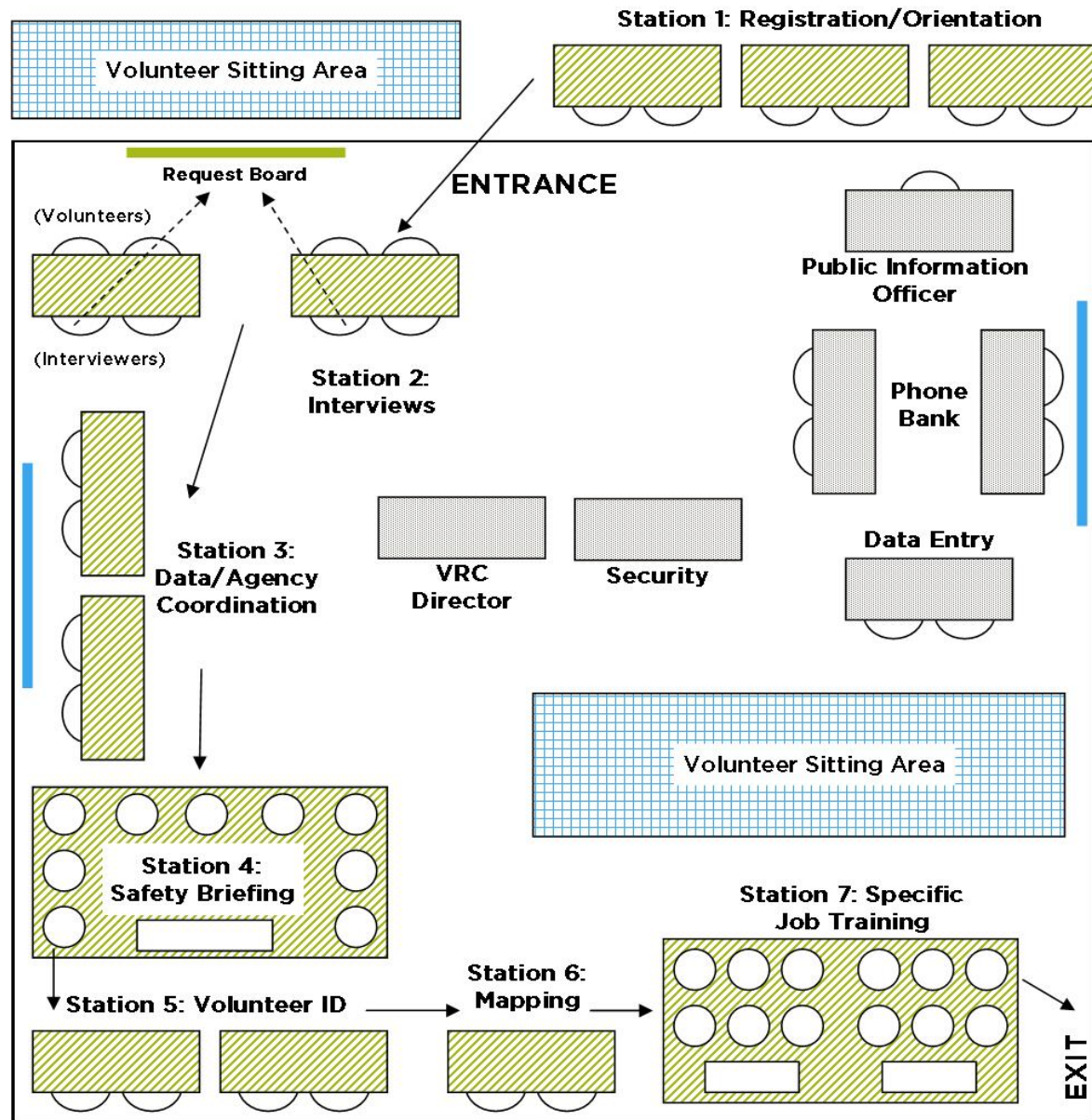
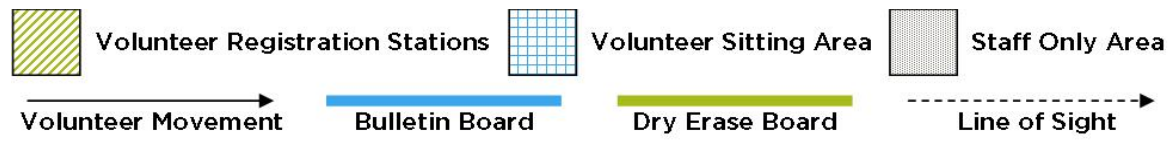
Standing up a VRC

- Recruit the VRC Management Team.
- Secure the space from pre-arranged source
 - Ensure that it can accommodate the volume of SUVs you anticipate.
- Secure supplies/equipment through MOUs you have in place.
- Set up the space according to the suggested floor plan, if available.

Standing up a VRC

- Include waiting and administration areas
- Accommodate 6/7 stations:
 - Registration
 - Interviewing
 - Data/Agency Coordination
 - Safety Briefing
 - Volunteer ID
 - Mapping
 - Job Specific Training (if applicable)

VRC Floor Plan



Poll Question IV

Do you know who would serve as the VRC Director in your community?

A)Yes

B)No

C)Don't Know

When the Dust Settles

- Follow up with volunteers as much as you are able
 - Or ensure that the organization to which you referred them does
 - Get their feedback on their experience
- Recruit from those volunteers for other opportunities
 - Spontaneous volunteers are an excellent resource for Preparedness and Recovery projects
- Participate in any after action meetings to share lessons learned with other stakeholders
- Incorporate these lessons into future planning
- Maintain and nurture ongoing relationships with stakeholders
 - Invite them to participate in planning meetings and recognition events.

Also...

Donations Management Overview –
September 21 – www.goodandready.org

Volunteer Reception Center Exercise –
September 24 – www.goodandready.org

Workplace Down Active Shooter Exercise
September 29 – www.goodandready.org

America's PreparAthon –
September 30 – www.ready.gov

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Safety Training

- Carefully follow instructions given to you
- Dress appropriately for the conditions
- Bring work gloves, sunscreen, a hat, and any appropriate tools you have
- Bring water and drink it regularly
- Take care of yourself or you can't help others
- You may have a higher than normal exposure to bacteria, so be sure to wash thoroughly.
- Attend any debriefing activity provided

Roles of the VRC Team

- VRC Director
 - Oversee operation of the VRC
 - Coordinate set up
 - Brief and assign tasks to volunteers and staff
 - Monitor operation and make staffing changes as needed
 - Meet and thank all volunteers
 - Instruct volunteers and paid staff where to sign in
- Greeter
 - Station #1: Registration
 - Greet people and determine their purpose
 - Direct them accordingly
 - Assist and thank all potential volunteers

Roles of the VRC Team

- Interviewer
 - Station #2: Interviews
 - Conduct a quick interview in order to determine a position for the volunteer. Refer the volunteer to Station #3.
- Data/Agency Coordinator
 - Station #3: Data/Agency Coordination
 - Collect the Referral form from the volunteer and match it with the corresponding Request for Volunteers form.
 - Direct the volunteer to Station #4: Safety Briefing
 - Contact the agency with referral updates and questions

Roles of the VRC Team

- Safety Trainer

- Station #4: Safety Briefing

- Brief all volunteers about what to expect on their assignments and how to be safe while they're working.
 - Answer questions or direct them to the VRC Director.

- Volunteer ID Staff

- Station #5: Volunteer ID

- Check to see that all paperwork is in order
 - Affix the volunteers' dated paper ID bracelet (or issue whatever form of ID is used).
 - Remind them that the ID is needed for entry into work area.

Roles of the VRC Team

- Mapper
 - Station #6: Mapping
 - Ensure all volunteers that come to you have proper ID
 - Help with directions and maps to and from work sites
- Phone Bank Staff
 - Phone Bank Area (in VRC or elsewhere)
 - Handle two types of calls:
 - From organizations/agencies looking for volunteers
 - From people wanting to volunteer
- Also
 - Public Information Officer
 - Data Entry
 - Runner
 - Security