

## Non-Profit Volunteer Agency Interview Questions.

Agency: Volunteer Houston

Date: March 14, 2003 Location: 3033 Chimney Rock, Houston, TX 77056

Interviewee(s): Carrie Moffitt, John Manger, II, Walter Black

### ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITIES

1. **What is your organization's role in a natural or man-made disaster from the initial response period through long-term recovery?**

Volunteer referral service. Plan a role in communications to public during a disaster. Response during a disaster is spontaneous and they receive notification of volunteer needs through VOAD and direct contacts with organizations and agencies.

2. **What services is your organization best prepared to deliver during an initial response phase?**
3. **How would these services differ during the recovery phase?**
4. **Of the services provided which do you consider to be your prime service(s) in both phases?**

### ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSE PROCESSES

5. **What initiates your organization's response?**

Are pro-active and call non-profits to determine volunteer needs and then see if they can fill them from the volunteers calling in.

6. **Does your organization require authorization to react? From Whom? Do you need separate authorizations for short and long-term services?**
7. **Does your organization have formal response procedures? Please provide a brief summary of the steps from the time you get the go sign?**

8. **How do you activate your volunteers at the time of an emergency request? Do they report automatically, call in to see whether they are needed or only respond if called?**

Volunteers call them. They do not call volunteers for specific types.

9. **Where would you stage your personnel for a response?**
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10. **How would your organization mobilize its personnel, equipment, and supplies to an incident?**

### **OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT**

11. **Are volunteer assignments predetermined?**

12. **Is your organization capable of extended hour and 24-hour operations?**

Yes. We can man our phones for an extended time.

13. **How would your organization respond to extended operations such as a recovery phase?**

Similar to our non-disaster day-to-day operations.

14. **What is the maximum amount of time that you think your organization is capable of operating without a break?**

15. **With whom do you coordinate when you are in the field for the short and long term?**

16. **Once in the field how do you communicate with your base? With your other field-deployed units? With other agencies and organizations?**

17. **From whom does your organization take requests, direction, or assignments prior to going to the field? Once in the field? Does this change between short and long term activities?**

18. **How does your organization prioritize requests for your services? Who would make this decision?**

**VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND MANAGEMENT**

19. **How does your organization currently recruit volunteers?**

Newspaper adds, web site, word of mouth, media appearances.

20. **How does your organization handle the surge in requests to volunteer at the time of an event?**

21. **Do you have sufficient volunteers?**

22. **Are your volunteers maintained in a database or list?**

Have a database of the volunteers they have referred to other agencies and organizations. Try to keep it up-to-date with follow-up surveys. Act as a first pass screen for the organizations. Rely on the organizations to ask the specific questions of the volunteer.

23. **Is there a need to develop a common database of resources to help during a disaster?**

24. **What information would you like to see in this database? Personal Information: Name, address, contact numbers? Skills/training? Availability? List any other information that you would like to see.**

25. **Does your organization utilize any volunteer assessment process to determine specific duties or responsibilities based on personal skills? Please explain how volunteer skills are evaluated and how these affect assignment.**

26. **Does your organization provide training for your volunteers? If so, list the classes offered. If not, what capability exists among your organization to provide training? Does your organization utilize training offered by other agencies and organizations?**

No.

27. **Would your organization use volunteers as trainers to provide pre-event education to the public? Would your organization use volunteer trainers who were trained by someone other than your own agency?**
28. **What types of volunteer skills or training do you require? Prefer?**
29. **Are you looking for volunteers with specialized equipment skills, i.e. boat operators, truck drivers, chain saw operators, or tractor operators?**

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30. **Do you require that your volunteers provide their own transportation, equipment, etc?**
31. **Do you provide credentials for your volunteers? Describe.**
32. **Do you track your volunteers' time and efforts? Do you provide any type of award system for service?**

No. That is left to the agencies and organizations.
33. **Based upon your organization's experience what are your biggest volunteer needs relating to event response including long-term recovery programs?**

#### **RESPONSE PREPAREDNESS**

34. **Does your organization conduct drills for its volunteers?**
35. **Do you think your organization needs such drills?**
36. **If these drills involved several organizations and agencies which (agency or organization) do you feel should coordinate?**
37. **What do you think should such a multi-organization drill include?**

#### **OTHER ISSUES**

38. **How can communications during an event be improved? Do you have any ideas, thoughts, or recommendations on the planning efforts of the communications committee?**

Dispense information immediately through the use of media.

39. **What do you see as transportation issues affecting your organization? How can these be overcome?**
40. **Based upon your experience, what do you see as the biggest problems that need to be overcome in order to coordinate the volunteer needs between the Non-Profit Volunteer Organizations?**

Information dissemination is important during an event to keep up on the changes and to know what volunteers are needed and where.

41. **In your opinion, are your organization's services utilized to the fullest extent by the community? If not how can they be better accessed?**
42. **Are there other Non-Profit Volunteer Organizations that you are aware of that you would recommend be contacted for their roles and inputs to the Council's efforts?**

#### **General Comments.**

They have worked with volunteers for 30 years. Are affiliated with 700 non-profits in Houston area. Refer approximately 25000 volunteers/year. Act as a volunteer broker during a disaster.

Do not have the staff or hardware to maintain a database to from which to query for volunteers, or direct volunteers to the proper agency or organization.