



# PULSE TRAGEDY

# After Action Report

[#OrlandoUnited](#)

*“June 12, 2016, was the most horrific day in the history of the City of Orlando. In the days since the tragedy, the members of our community have stood up and stood together to show the world the best humanity has to offer. Together we will remain Orlando United.” – Mayor Buddy Dyer*

City of Orlando Office of Emergency Management

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## Executive Summary

The After Action Report (AAR) for the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), Family Reunification Center (FRC), and Family Assistance Center (FAC) Response to the Pulse Tragedy reflects the findings of an after action review of response and recovery activities of public safety, public health, and community partners related to the June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016 shooting and the care and support of those impacted by the incident. The after action review was coordinated by the City of Orlando Office of Emergency Management.

This report details best practices, lessons learned and recommendations for the purpose of assisting community leaders, public safety, and public health personnel involved in the response in further developing actions that were successful and implementing recommendations.

In addition to providing assistance to response agencies and organizations, the best practices and lessons learned identified through this after action process can hopefully provide insight to other agencies, jurisdictions and organizations across the nation and assist them in better preparing for and responding to potential incidents in the future.

## Major Strengths

- Strong leadership from City and County Mayors
- City Emergency Management program and Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
- Local and state agency coordination
- Communication of information
- The use of social media

## Lessons Learned

- Develop a Family Assistance Center (FAC) Planning document
- Identify liaisons to be responsible for information flow to and from the different response and recovery locations to include the EOC, FRC, FAC, and on-scene of the incident
- Review and refine the donation management process

## Incident Overview

The deadliest mass shooting in recent U.S. history occurred at Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, Florida, on June 12, 2016, just after 0200 hours. A lone gunman was identified by police as Omar Mateen, 29. It was Latin night at the LGBTQ+ nightclub and there were approximately 300 people inside the club at the time of the shooting. An officer working at the nightclub responded to reports of shots fired and the incident turned from an active shooter incident into a hostage situation. SWAT teams entered the club just after 0500 hours in an attempt to rescue hostages. Gunfire with the gunman was exchanged and the gunman suffered a fatal injury. Forty-nine (49) individuals were killed and more than fifty-three (53) were injured. Most of the injured victims were taken to the Orlando Regional Medical Center (ORMC), which is located one-half mile north of the Pulse Nightclub. ORMC is east central Florida's only Level 1 Trauma Center.

The City of Orlando, Orange County and the State of Florida all issued Executive Orders on June 12<sup>th</sup> declaring a State of Emergency. This allowed for additional resources to be available for response and recovery operations.

In the days and weeks that followed the attack, multiple vigils, prayers services and community events occurred throughout central Florida, the nation, and around the world to show support for Orlando. Many of the more than fifty (50) events that occurred in central Florida were organized organically through social media sites and drew attendance in the thousands. In addition, many elected and appointed officials, including President Obama and Vice President Biden, visited the city. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) quickly shifted from just coordinating resources for the incident and recovery sites to providing support for the victims, families and memorial events that followed.

## Mission Areas

The mission areas include Protection, Response and Recovery.

## Incident and Response Timeline

### **Sunday, June 12, 2016**

0202 – Shooting reported at Pulse Nightclub

0240 – Shooter called 911 from inside Pulse, spoke with a dispatcher for about 50 seconds

0515 – OPD radio communications reported that the suspect was down

0517 – OPD tweeted that the shooter was dead

0844 – City of Orlando Emergency Operations Center activated to Level 1

1000 – City of Orlando activated Emergency Information line (407.246.HELP)

1100 – Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer issued a State of Emergency Executive Order

1156 – Florida Governor Rick Scott issued an Executive Order (16-142) and declared a state of emergency in Orange County

1207 – Orange County Mayor Teresa Jacobs issued Emergency Executive Order No. 16-01, declaring a State of Local Emergency

1500 – The Beardall Senior Center was established as the Family Reunification Center (FRC) and designated as the place for the crowds, gathering at ORMC and the hotel near the hospital, to go and where they could receive support and counseling. Next of kin notifications were also coordinated through the FRC.

2300 – EOC closed for the evening

**Monday, June 13, 2016**

0700 – EOC operational to support activities on-scene and at the FRC

The FRC remained operational to support the victims and families and to continue next of kin notifications

Governor Rick Scott requested a Presidential Emergency Declaration under the provisions of Section 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.

Multiple law enforcement agencies continued the investigation at the incident site

1900 – Vigil on Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts lawn, more than 10,000 people were in attendance. At this vigil, Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer announced the formation of the OneOrlando Fund. The purpose of the fund was to provide financial assistance to victims of the Pulse Tragedy and their families.

2200 – EOC closed for the evening

**Tuesday, June 14, 2016**

0700 – EOC operational to support activities on-scene and at the FRC and later at the Family Assistance Center (FAC)

1000 – Planning meeting at the EOC to make arrangements for the opening of the FAC at Camping World Stadium

State of Florida EOC activated the Florida Virtual Business EOC to provide information and resources to the businesses affected by the road closures around the Pulse Nightclub

1900 – Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer joined the community in a citywide prayer service at First Baptist Church Orlando

2100 – All next of kin notifications of the deceased were made and the FRC closed at the Beardall Senior Center

2200 – EOC closed for the evening

**Wednesday, June 15, 2016**

0700 – EOC operational to support activities on-scene and at the FAC

0800 – Press Conference at Camping World Stadium provided information about support services offered at the Family Assistance Center (FAC)

1000 – The FAC, located at Camping World Stadium, opened to assist victims and families

2000 – FAC closed for the evening

2100 – EOC closed for the evening

**Thursday, June 16, 2016**

0700 – EOC operational to support activities on-scene and at the FAC

1000 – FAC opened for the day

President Obama, Vice President Joe Biden, Senator Bill Nelson, Senator Marco Rubio, Congresswoman Corrine Brown, and Governor Rick Scott arrived to pay their respects to the victims of the Pulse Tragedy (occurred on multiple days)

2000 – FAC closed for the evening

2100 – EOC closed for the evening

**Friday, June 17, 2016**

0700 – EOC operational to support activities on-scene and at the FAC

1000 – FAC opened for the day

1100 – Planning meeting at City Hall for Lake Eola Vigil scheduled for June 19<sup>th</sup>

FBI Director James Comey visited Orlando

2000 – FAC closed for the evening

2100 – EOC closed for the evening

**Saturday, June 18, 2016**

0700 – EOC operational to support activities on-scene and at the FAC and planning to assist event organizers for vigil at Lake Eola

0800 – FAC opened for the day

1400 – FAC closed for the afternoon and evening

1500 – EOC closed for the evening

**Sunday, June 19, 2016**

1100 – EOC operational to support activities on-scene, the vigil at Lake Eola, and at the FAC

1200 – FAC opened for the afternoon and evening

Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer extended the State of Emergency for the City of Orlando for an additional week because of the continued response and recovery actions being taken.

1800 - Over 50,000 people turned out to attend a social media advertised candlelight vigil planned for a small group at Lake Eola Park. The three organizers left the invite open on Facebook and within days 27,000 individuals had confirmed attendance.

2000 – FAC closed for the evening

2100 – EOC closed for the evening

**Monday, June 20, 2016**

0700 – EOC operational to support activities on-scene and at the FAC

Florida Governor Rick Scott received the denial letter from FEMA for the Presidential Emergency Declaration under the Stafford Act.

1500 – FAC opened for the afternoon

2000 – FAC closed for the evening

2100 – EOC closed for the evening

**Tuesday, June 21, 2016**

0700 – EOC operational to support activities on-scene and at the FAC

Orange Ave. in downtown Orlando reopened to traffic, the businesses affected by the road closures are able to reopen, and Lynx bus routes resumed their normal operating schedules.

The U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch visited with victims and their families and Orlando City Hall

1500 – FAC opened for the afternoon

2000 – FAC closed for the evening

2100 – EOC closed for the evening

**Wednesday, June 22, 2016**

0700 – EOC operational to support activities on-scene and at the FAC

1500 – FAC opened for the afternoon

2000 - FAC permanently closed at Camping World Stadium to transition to the Orlando United Assistance Center (OUAC)

2100 – City of Orlando EOC closed and returned to a Level 3 status of Monitoring

Florida Governor Rick Scott requested an Economic Injury Declaration for Orange County, Florida from the US Small Business Administration.

**Thursday, June 23, 2016**

1000 – Press Conference held at Orlando United Assistance Center (OUAC)

1500 – The OUAC opened to serve the community. This Center remains open Monday – Friday from 8am-5pm.

\*During all response and recovery operations Orlando City Hall remained open and operated normal business hours.

## Key Agencies and Partners

This incident involved a response from the entire community and nation. Below are the agencies and partners that provided support and assistance at the incident site, EOC, FRC, and FAC during this incident.

### Local

City of Orlando
Orange County
Lake County
Osceola County
Seminole County
Career Source Central Florida
Central Florida Intelligence Exchange (CFIX)
Central Florida Sports Commission
District 9 Medical Examiner's Office
Greater Orlando Aviation Authority (GOAA)
Greenwood Cemetery
Legal Aid Society
LYNX
Orange County Bar Association
Orange County Tax Collector
Orlando Utilities Commission
Regional Domestic Security Taskforce (RDSTF)

### State

Attorney General's Office
Florida Crisis Response Team
Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF)
Florida Department of Health (FDOH)
Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE)
Florida Department of Vital Statistics
Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM)
Florida Emergency Mortuary Operations Response System (FEMORS)
Florida Mortician's Association
Office of the Governor

### Federal

Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF)
Department of Justice (DOJ)
Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
Social Security Administration
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs

Non-Profit

American Red Cross
Aspire Health Services
Catholic Charities
Central Florida Disaster Medical Coalition
Chambers of Commerce
Heart of Florida United Way
Howard Phillips Center for Children and Families
Pet Alliance of Greater Orlando
Salvation Army
Senior Resource Alliance
The Center
Therapy Dogs International
Victim Service Center of Central Florida
Zebra Coalition
Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts
Orange County Regional History Center
First Baptist Church Orlando

Private Sector

American Airlines
Delta Airlines
JetBlue Airlines
Mears, Inc.
Southwest Airlines
United Airlines

International

Foreign Government Consulate Officers
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## Response Overview

The following section outlines the response, recovery, and family assistance efforts from the City of Orlando Emergency Operations Center (EOC), the Family Reunification Center (FRC), and the Family Assistance Center (FAC).

### Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

The City of Orlando Emergency Manager first received information regarding the Pulse Nightclub shooting from the 911 Communications Center just before 0300 hours on Sunday morning, June 12<sup>th</sup>. The City of Orlando Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activated to a Level 1 at 0844 hours Sunday morning, June 12<sup>th</sup>. As the morning of June 12<sup>th</sup> progressed, more Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) and partner agencies reported to the EOC. The Orange County Emergency Operations Center did not activate their facility, but rather provided Liaison Officers to the Orlando EOC for coordination between the City and State EOC. The county Liaison Officer also assisted in the coordination of ESF 8 (Health and Medical) support. The District 9 Medical Examiner's Office made a request for support from the Florida Emergency Mortuary Response System (FEMORS) early Sunday morning. This request was routed from the Chief Medical Examiner to Orange County and then to the state EOC.

Recognizing the demand from family, friends and the community for information about victims, the city established an emergency information helpline. At 1000 hours on Sunday, June 12<sup>th</sup> the 407.246.HELP (4357) phone line was activated to field these inquiries and collect information from families and the public. The helpline started with 12 phones and was quickly increased by IT staff to 23 phones because



of the high call volume. The Orlando Police Department Community Service Officers (CSOs) were the initial call takers. On Monday morning, Red Cross volunteers began answering this phone line. In the first 24 hours alone, the phone line received 3,878 calls. When the phone line was ultimately transferred to the Orlando United Assistance Center (OUAC) on the afternoon of June 22<sup>nd</sup> it had received a total of 6,804 calls for information and assistance.

The EOC also provided information and support to local businesses that were forced to close due to road closures and the active crime scene investigation surrounding the Pulse Nightclub. There were more than 15 businesses which had to be closed for a period of time following the shooting. The State EOC activated the Virtual Business EOC to provide information and resources to the affected businesses. The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) also opened a Business Recovery Center at the Beardall Senior Center on Tuesday, June 28<sup>th</sup> and began offering low interest and interest free loans to affected businesses.

The personnel working within the Orlando EOC provided support and coordination for on-scene operations and support to open and operate the FRC and FAC. The EOC remained activated to a Level 1 from the morning of June 12<sup>th</sup> until 2100 hours on Wednesday evening, June 22<sup>nd</sup>. Throughout the event, the EOC served as an effective coordination point and remained operational for a total of 11 days. The EOC established and adhered to routine incident action planning (IAP) cycles. The planning section within the EOC was staffed by neighboring county emergency management staffs.

### Family Reunification Center (FRC)

The City of Orlando, in conjunction with the Florida Emergency Mortuary Operations Response System (FEMORS), the District 9 Medical Examiner's Office, Orange County Health Services, and the FBI, opened a Family Reunification Center (FRC) at the Beardall Senior Center (800 South Delaney Ave.) on Sunday afternoon, June 12<sup>th</sup> at 1500 hours to support the families of victims and provide crisis counseling services to next of kin. The FRC's focus was to identify all next of kin and assist with death notifications. The Beardall Senior Center was operational from Sunday afternoon, June 12<sup>th</sup> through Tuesday evening, June 14<sup>th</sup>. The FRC also helped to alleviate the crowds seeking information from the hospital and adjacent hotel lobby used in the initial early morning hours of June 12<sup>th</sup>. At the FRC, the victims and their families were provided support services, food, and lodging assistance from various organizations around central Florida. The family assistance phone line, 407.246.HELP(4357), also helped to provide information to families. By Sunday afternoon additional counseling centers, sponsored and operated by a diverse group of organizations, opened across central Florida to assist those who were affected by the incident.

The District 9 Medical Examiner's Office, in coordination with the FEMORS, conducted investigations to assist in positively identifying the victims. As victims were identified and families notified, the names of the victims were released on the city's website. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) managed the formal release of this information and provided it to the city. The FRC closed on the evening of June 14<sup>th</sup> after the last next of kin notification was made.

### Family Assistance Center (FAC)

On Wednesday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer and the City of Orlando, in partnership with federal, state, local and community agencies opened the Family Assistance Center (FAC) at Camping World Stadium (formerly Orlando Citrus Bowl Stadium), to address the immediate needs of, and provide information, support and resources to those directly affected by the Pulse tragedy. The stadium provided a more private and secure location for victims and families. The FAC was led by city staff personnel with one individual designated as the lead. Services were available to family members of the deceased, those suffering physical and emotional injuries, club staff and patrons and others directly impacted by this tragedy. Services available included:



- Air Travel
- Child and Family Services
- Consulate Services

- Counseling/Spiritual Care
- Crime Victim Services
- Funeral Services
- Ground Transportation
- Health Care Assistance
- Identification Documents
- Language Translation
- Legal Aid
- Lodging
- Medical Examiner
- Pet Care
- Senior Services

In total, the FAC was serviced by approximately 40 agencies. The FAC remained open until Wednesday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>. In all, the FAC served more than 900 individuals representing over 255 families. Meals were available to individuals while visiting the FAC. Many individuals and families that visited the FAC did so more than once during the eight days it was open.

### Orlando United Assistance Center (OUAC)

The FAC transitioned into the Orlando United Assistance Center (OUAC), located on Michigan Street, south of downtown Orlando, opened at 1500 hours on Thursday, June 24<sup>th</sup>. The OUAC is a partnership between the City of Orlando, Orange County Government, and the Heart of Florida United Way. The Orlando United Assistance Center (OUAC) serves as a navigation point to assess the needs of and provide information, support, and resources to those directly affected by the Pulse Tragedy. Culturally-experienced representatives from the Hispanic and LGBTQ+ communities are available and everyone impacted by the tragedy is helped.

This center provides long-term support and assistance to those in need. The OUAC remains open Monday – Friday from 0800 – 1700 hours. The Heart of Florida United Way currently operates the OUAC. The city of Orlando, Orange County, and several non-profit organizations have received financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Justice Antiterrorism Emergency Assistance Program grant to assist with the cost of these on-going services.



## Analysis of Capabilities

This section of the report reviews the performance of the capabilities, activities, and tasks. In this section, observations are organized by capability and associated activities. Each activity is followed by related observations, which include references, analysis, and recommendations.

### Communication (Operational Communication)

Overall, the communications and flow of information worked well during the response. Below is a summary of the communication capabilities utilized during this incident.

#### Communication of Public Information

The initial response information and breaking news of the shooting was relayed to the public and media via the OPD Twitter account. The City of Orlando Press Secretary's email address was quickly announced to be the conduit for all incoming media inquiries and interview requests. However, because of the large number of inquiries this overwhelmed the address's inbox capability. In future incidents a generic public information/media inquiry email address will be disseminated so that multiple staff members can access the account and respond to inquiries.

Press Conferences were coordinated by the City of Orlando. The Orlando and Orange County Mayors, Police Chiefs, Fire Chiefs, FBI, the Orange County Sheriff, Orlando Health and other response agencies followed the city's lead and relayed the same message at the same time. This allowed for clear messaging from all stakeholders to the public. In the days that followed the shooting, the size of the media at each press conference nearly tripled. Other neighboring agencies were able to assist with press conference set ups and breakdowns. This was helpful as city communications staff were already performing other duties.

The designated Public Information Officer (PIO) made sure all information being disseminated to the media and public came from or was vetted through the public information and communications personnel, working out of the EOC, prior to release. In order to increase efficiency of how information was disseminated, the city created a single webpage that listed all the various news, press releases, graphics, pictures, and assistance links. This page automatically updated with any new posts. One of these pages posted the victims' names as they were confirmed by the Medical Examiner's Office and law enforcement, after next of kin was notified. This page alone received almost 10 million views during the first month. City IT closely supported this effort due to volume and security. Through the course of the response and recovery phases a total of 17 press releases were also posted. In addition, a total of 80 unique graphics were created for use on webpages and social media.

A Joint Information Center (JIC) was not established for this response. In the first 18 hours of the response public information was handled on-scene. After this period, public information was coordinated through the Press Secretary and communications staff located at the EOC. Moving forward a JIC will be helpful for coordinating information and then providing this information to communications staff located at the various response and recovery locations.

The City also established a process and webpage with all information that was releasable as public records as it became available. This alleviated thousands of public records requests that would have had to have been individually handled through the City Clerk's Office.

Social Media

Social Media was a tremendous asset during this response. Social Media was used to communicate information to the media and the public. Social media pages and the City’s website were also used to disseminate available services, donations, transportation information, and investigation updates.

From June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016 to July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016 the social media pages logged the following activity:

<b>Twitter</b>	<b>City of Orlando Account</b>	<b>Mayor Dyer Account</b>
<b>Tweets</b>	190	145
<b>Impressions</b>	3.8 million	3.8 million
<b>Link Clicks</b>	19,200	9,100
<b>New Followers</b>	7,877	3,909

<b>Facebook</b>	<b>City of Orlando Account</b>	<b>Mayor Dyer Account</b>
<b>Posts</b>	159	119
<b>Impressions</b>	2.6 million	1.8 million
<b>Link Clicks</b>	23,919	7,023
<b>New Followers</b>	8,340	4,549

Call Center

The call center (Helpline), located in the Emergency Information Center at the EOC, was able to receive calls beginning at 1000 hours on Sunday, June 12<sup>th</sup>. The call center was originally opened with 12 phones and call takers. These 12 lines became overwhelmed within minutes. Information Technology (IT) staff was able to expand to 23 phones by 1100 hours to help accommodate the large volume of calls. In total, this call center line handled more than 6,800 calls during its 11 days of operation.

Initially, the information that the call center staff had to give out to callers was very limited. Therefore, the first 6-12 hours that the call line (407.246.HELP) was open call takers took information from callers to compile missing person’s reports. This missing person information was provided in hardcopy to the FEMORS team at the FEMORS Victim Information Center (a second call center at the Beardall Senior Center) where the information could be matched to possible victims. In any future mass casualty events these two call centers should be co-located. A level of confusion and some duplication of effort occurred because of two different call centers. Future coordination and training should occur between the Medical



Examiner’s Office, FEMORS, and the Office of Emergency Management to integrate these call center functions. In the future, it is recommended that the call center utilize the Victim Identification Program, which is a state FEMORS resource, to log all missing person and victim information. This database can then be accessed from all response and recovery locations via the Internet as needed.

Additionally, training is needed for individuals who are going to be answering the initial crisis calls. The traditional training provided to call takers is to

collect information following a natural disaster with calls mainly relating to property damage, fallen trees, and power outages. Call taking for this incident required different training for the nature of calls and emotions being fielded from family members, friends, and the public.

After the first 24 hours, most of the calls into the call center were from individuals and/or organizations offering donations, resources, and support for victims and families. There is also a need to ensure bilingual call takers are trained and available.

### Liaisons

At times it was difficult to pass information between the EOC, FRC, and FAC. Liaisons should be established between the EOC and other locations (i.e. FRC, FAC, etc.). The information flow, coordination, and resource requests between multiple locations would have worked more efficiently had there been dedicated individuals to handle these tasks. In addition, liaisons are needed for elected official and VIP visits for the different response/recovery locations. These liaisons can coordinate the visits and be available to answer questions the officials may have.

### City Staff

During the response to the Pulse Nightclub shooting, city staff were extremely helpful and fulfilled many non-traditional roles to assist with the needs of the community. However, better communication should occur with city staff who are still completing their regular assignments at City Hall or other traditional work locations. Many individuals not working directly on response activities for the Pulse were left without much information on what was taking place. Many city departments and offices received phone calls from the public requesting information or wanting to make donations; those working in City Hall and outside of the response structure didn't initially have the appropriate information to answer these questions. In response, the Office of Communications and Neighborhood Relations (OCNR) was able to quickly put together a one page question and answer document to assist with some of the calls that were received at City Hall.

### Language Translation

Almost all information disseminated about the Pulse Tragedy was provided in English and Spanish. The city has numerous bilingual personnel; however, the city is in need of more language translation services. A large number of Spanish speakers and translators were needed for this incident. Orlando is a very diverse community, and, securing additional language translators of many different languages is a high priority.

### Agency Coordination (Operational Coordination)

Agency coordination worked extremely well during this incident. Many different agencies from local, state, and Federal levels came together to assist with this tragedy. The below sections outline the various coordination aspects of the response and recovery.

### Training and Exercise

The City of Orlando staff, along with county and community partners, participate in training exercises together on a regular basis. This training helps to strengthen working relationships and response capabilities. When multiple agencies responded to the Pulse Nightclub and the EOC they were already familiar with each other and each other's capabilities.

### Intake Forms

The FBI intake forms provided to families and survivors to fill out at the FRC and FAC contained both the FBI and City of Orlando logos, as well as a long list of services available. City officials and most of the nearly 1,000 applicants believed filling out these forms would be enough to coordinate resources for the victims and affected families. However, only later did the FBI inform the city that it would not share copies of the intake forms, leaving local officials with no way of obtaining information regarding specific victims' needs. Better coordination and an understanding of public records is needed with Victim Advocates provided through the FBI.

### Family Assistance Center

There was phenomenal agency coordination and cooperation that transpired at the FAC. Quickly bringing together the organizations, agencies, and businesses in one location to provide assistance to the victims and their families and friends was beneficial in helping the community to begin the recovery process. Having the foreign consulates on site was also helpful to assist with getting families to and from the Orlando area for funerals and/or taking the deceased back to their country for burial. There were several victims with burial needs outside of the contiguous United States.

Transportation was available for victims and their families to go to and from the hospital or to the Family Assistance Center. LYNX worked in the EOC to provide transportation support throughout the duration of the response.

To further aid in agency coordination occurring at the FAC and with the EOC there should be a daily briefing between the locations. There should also be a non-disclosure agreement for individuals working at the FAC to sign, recognizing that matters being discussed are sensitive and confidential with families.

Moving forward, the city, along with other agencies, will develop a formalized FAC planning document. This will help to identify the leadership, potential locations, floorplans, and resources needed to operate an effective FAC.

### Legal Representation

In the future, Legal representation is needed in the EOC during an activation like this. At times there were decisions and actions that needed to happen quickly and having this resource available to make the most appropriate decisions would have aided in the overall response. These areas included decisions regarding city services, public records, and the establishment of the OneOrlando donation fund.

### Memorials, Vigils, and Funerals

City leaders quickly designated areas of the city where people could go to leave memorial items or pay respects near, but not at the actual crime scene. This worked well to help keep traffic flowing near the scene and provide security for visitors where needed.

Many vigils and memorials were planned and advertised via social media. Some vigils and memorials reached attendance in the thousands. Several times the City and/or County reached out to the vigil organizers to offer assistance with security,



crowd control and traffic management. The City and County provided law enforcement, security, first aid, and traffic management at the events that were known to officials.

### Facilities

The facilities utilized during the response and recovery were adequate, but several items were noted that would help with future responses.

#### Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

The City of Orlando maintains an Office of Emergency Management with a standalone dedicated EOC that remains operationally ready 24 hours a day for an incident or activation. This saved valuable time during the EOC activation phase. Computers and phones were ready for use as soon as the emergency management staff and ESF personnel arrived. In addition, the traffic cameras in the EOC were useful for situational awareness to monitor the scene and events occurring around the City. From the EOC, the City emergency management staff was able to communicate and liaison with the county and state EOCs for any additional needed resources. The City of Orlando is only one of approximately 10 cities with standalone dedicated EOCs in the state of Florida. This again was a tremendous asset in being able to quickly activate and standup the EOC in support of response and recovery activities. In addition, the City of Orlando Office of Emergency Management is currently the only municipality within the state of Florida with Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) credentials. This has assisted the City in ensuring that appropriate emergency procedures are in place to be able to respond to various natural and manmade disasters.

#### Family Reunification Center (FRC)

The original family information and reunification point very early Sunday morning was the ORMC Emergency Room. This space was not large enough to accommodate the large number of families and concerned loved ones. ORMC moved the reunification and information point to the Hampton Inn located within walking distance of the hospital. The Hampton Inn was also too small to accommodate the large number of individuals seeking information. Once this became known to city officials, the Beardall Senior Center (a city facility), was identified and established as the FRC. City staff immediately began setting this facility up to accommodate the agencies who staffed the FRC. The FRC officially opened at the Beardall Senior Center at 1500 hours Sunday afternoon. In the future an organizational chart and command structure will be developed to alleviate any confusion about what each agencies role is in the operation of the FRC.

This facility worked well to support the various services and providers for victims and families. The Medical Examiner's Office, the FBI, the Attorney General, and the FDLE were able to work closely with each other during the notification period.

Access to the facility was able to be controlled and limited to one entry and exit point. This one entry and exit point was monitored by city staff and law enforcement. This worked well to ensure only immediate family, as defined by the FBI, were allowed in. However, in the future, if only immediate family is allowed to



enter the FRC, the leading agencies need to ensure there is a counselor and/or clergy available outside to provide support to extended family and friends who arrive with the immediate family. Also, the lead agencies will need to ensure individuals working at the FRC are briefed and have guidelines to follow on how to address professional social workers, counselors, clergy and elected officials showing up at the FRC that had not been requested or pre-arranged to visit the FRC. This was important because some professionals became offended because they were turned away since their services were not immediately needed. To help with this “on the fly,” quick thinking staff created a sign-up sheet for professionals that wanted to help. This sign-up sheet created a way for professionals to leave their information for someone to get in contact with them at a more appropriate time. In addition, the Chaplains present need to be representative of the community in need. The Emergency Responder Chaplain Corp assisted at the FRC. They are representative of all major religions and this worked well to meet the needs of the victims and families. In addition, it can be helpful to use Fire and Law Enforcement Chaplains since they are familiar with disaster and crisis response.

While the Beardall Senior Center worked well for the flow of information inside the building, it was not adequate to support the large media presence that congregated outside in the public parking area and surrounding sidewalks. The media did not have a place to stage near the Beardall and at times their equipment and crews took over valuable parking places for victims and families. Additionally, the location provided no privacy for families and victims from the media, as it normally functions as a community center, open to the public.

#### Family Assistance Center (FAC)

The Family Assistance Center opened at Camping World Stadium on Wednesday, June 15<sup>th</sup>. This location provided the needed space for agencies and response partners to provide their resources. Parking at the Stadium was also much more convenient for victims and families. In addition, there was physical security in place, as it operates as a sporting and events stadium. Access to Camping World Stadium was restricted to only service providers, victims of the tragedy, and their families. The perimeter fencing helped keep the media and the curious away from the victims and their families and friends. OPD and the event security staff screened everyone who entered the facility. OFD was on-site to provide first aid and medical treatment to anyone who needed it.

At Camping World Stadium, the media was able to have their own designated staging and parking area. This provided an area for press conferences and interviews away from the victims and families.

The meeting rooms used at Camping World Stadium did lack some of the technology necessary for the FAC service providers. Portable Wi-Fi hubs were not immediately available at the FAC and data coordination was done initially by physically printing forms and hand delivering. The City’s Information Technology (IT) staff is considering purchasing portable Wi-Fi units that can be set up quickly in any location. An IT staff member was always on-site at the FAC to address any technology issues that came up.

The table configuration for the service providers at the FAC also presented some challenges. The tables were pushed up against each other in rows. This made it extremely difficult for the providers to come around from the back of the table to provide comfort to victims and families. For any future set ups it is suggested that there is enough space provided between tables for providers to come around the table or booth with ease, to comfort the victim/families. Additional room between tables will also provide some privacy for conversations.

### Logistics (Logistics and Supply Chain Management)

During this response and recovery effort there were many different logistical needs. All logistical needs were addressed as they came up, however, there are several items noted that can be improved upon for future responses.

#### EOC Setup and Equipment

During the Pulse response the City's IT staff was available in the EOC to address all technology issues that arose. Most of the technology issues that came up were able to be quickly dealt with, however, prior to the next activation all EOC computers should be routed to the local printers in the EOC to allow for more seamless operations. Moving forward, a shared network drive within the EOC would be helpful for information sharing. Many city departments operate on different network drives which can make file sharing difficult within the EOC. The availability of more power connections and mobile device charging stations is also needed. There are currently a limited number of outlets available at EOC work stations.

"Go Kits" are needed for no-notice activations. Since this tragedy occurred on a weekend, city staff members were at home and reported directly to the EOC. Most of their day to day operating equipment is located at City Hall. It is recommended that job specific equipment or "Go Kits" are established so employees can respond to the EOC from home.

The current Social Media desk within the EOC provides little table and workspace. A more user-friendly configuration is needed. Additional meeting space at the EOC would also be helpful. Semi-private meeting rooms would be a great asset for different teams needing to have smaller meetings during an EOC activation. Additionally, new chairs are needed in the EOC. The current chairs range from 10-15 years old and lack the support needed for activations and long periods of sitting.

#### EOC Staffing

The EOC staff is small on a day to day basis when not activated. There are two personnel whose daily role is emergency management and operations. During an activation, staffing the Planning Section to complete all necessary incident paperwork is challenging. During this activation several neighboring jurisdictions were able to fill these roles for the City of Orlando.

#### Resource Request and Tracking

Many of the initial requests for resources were not routed through the EOC and the appropriate ESFs. Many responders and commanders at the scene were unaware of the activation of the EOC. Official notification needs to be disseminated to the on-scene commanders notifying them that the EOC has been activated to handle and track all resource requests.

#### Donations

The outpouring of support from the community was tremendous. Various locations around the City of Orlando were overwhelmed with donations of goods and services from the individuals, the community and organizations just wanting to help and asking how. However, there was no process in place to verify, collect, and distribute such donations. The City of Orlando Communications Team placed a link on the City's homepage where individuals or groups could offer goods or services. While this link provided a place to direct the community to, it became challenging to monitor all of the offers being received. A city staff person became dedicated to sorting through and compiling a listing of all of the offers. This listing

was provided to the FAC to help match victims and families with the goods and services. Moving forward the City will need to formalize the donation management process for a similar incident.

## Conclusion

The City of Orlando and other partnering agencies and organizations came together quickly and cohesively to provide a coordinated response to this tragedy. The needed resources were put into place to serve those affected and the community. The Emergency Operations Center, Family Reunification Center, and the Family Assistance all worked well to serve the needs of the victims and the community. The Orlando United Assistance Center (OUAC) is now in place and providing long-term assistance and support to anyone who needs it. The OUAC has plans to stay open through 2017 and will reassess needs in the future. From the initial calls for help on the morning of June 12<sup>th</sup> through today, Orlando remains #OrlandoUnited.

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*"This tragedy will not define us, but will bring us together. Because we are ONE Orlando." #OrlandoUnited*

*-Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer*

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Lessons Learned Matrix

Lesson Learned	Future Action	Target Completion	Updates/Additional Comments
A Family Assistance Center (FAC) Plan is needed	Develop FAC Plan	Late 2017	Multi-jurisdictional planning committee is working to complete this plan
A Donation Management process is needed when large amounts of goods and services are offered to the city to help victims and families, etc.	Develop Donation Management Process (non-monetary goods and services)	Early 2018	
Dedicated liaisons are needed at each response/recovery location to be the official conduit for information flow	In future incidents provide dedicated liaisons between response and recovery locations to manage information flow	Ongoing	Liaison positions are being added to the FAC Plan
A physical JIC location was not used during this incident. PIOs would have benefited from having one location to work together	Establish a JIC location for all PIOs for future incidents (could include use of a mobile JIC)	Ongoing	
Current furniture (chairs) and workspaces within the EOC are not conducive to long-term operations	Replace aging furniture and workspaces within the EOC	Early 2018	
Due to the complexity of the incident and quick decision-making that needed to occur it is necessary to have a member of the City’s Legal team in the EOC for consultation	Provide a member from the Legal team to be present in the EOC for activations	Ongoing	
The City needs more access to language translation services	Work to secure additional language translation services	Early 2018	
Because this incident was a “no-notice” event and occurred on a Sunday morning, many individuals responding to the EOC did not have the equipment they needed with them	Establish “Go Kits” for personnel who would be the initial responders to the EOC	Early 2018	

## Acronyms

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>AAR</b>	After Action Report
<b>ATF</b>	Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms
<b>DHS</b>	Department of Homeland Security
<b>DOJ</b>	Department of Justice
<b>EMAP</b>	Emergency Management Accreditation Program
<b>EOC</b>	Emergency Operations Center
<b>ESF</b>	Emergency Support Function
<b>FAC</b>	Family Assistance Center
<b>FBI</b>	Federal Bureau of Investigation
<b>FDEM</b>	Florida Division of Emergency Management
<b>FDLE</b>	Florida Department of Law Enforcement
<b>FDOH</b>	Florida Department of Health
<b>FEMA</b>	Federal Emergency Management Agency
<b>FEMORS</b>	Florida Emergency Mortuary Operations Response System
<b>FRC</b>	Family Reunification Center
<b>IAP</b>	Incident Action Plan
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
<b>JIC</b>	Joint Information Center
<b>JSOC</b>	Joint Special Operations Command
<b>LGBTQ+</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, and others
<b>OCFRD</b>	Orange County Fire Rescue Department
<b>OCNR</b>	Office of Communications and Neighborhood Relations
<b>OCSO</b>	Orange County Sheriff's Office
<b>OFD</b>	Orlando Fire Department
<b>OOC</b>	Orlando Operations Center
<b>OPD</b>	Orlando Police Department
<b>OPD CSOs</b>	Orlando Police Department Community Service Officers
<b>ORMC</b>	Orlando Regional Medical Center
<b>OUAC</b>	Orlando United Assistance Center
<b>PIO</b>	Public Information Officer
<b>SBA</b>	Small Business Administration
<b>SWAT</b>	Special Weapons and Tactics