

Mt. San Antonio Community College  
**Fall 2018 Building Evacuation Drill**  
October 11, 2018 – 10:05am and 7:05pm  
After-Action Report

## **Executive Summary**

Mt. San Antonio Community College emergency preparedness and response involves a cycle of awareness, planning, capability development, training, exercise, evaluation, and improvement. Successful exercises lead to improvements in the College's overall efforts to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergency situations.

## **Scenario Summary**

The Fall 2018 Building Evacuation drill conducted on October 11, 2018 was designed to test and evaluate the readiness of Mt. SAC emergency response teams, (CERT, Building Evacuation and Campus Safety), to respond to an evacuation involving multiple buildings. The drill assessed building evacuation team performance, coordination with campus response teams, and emergency radio communications, and tested the Mt. SAC emergency alert systems, BlackboardConnect and Alertus.

Each drill lasted approximately 15 minutes. The morning drill at 10:05 A.M. consisted of the evacuation of buildings 1A-1C, 2M, 2T, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9A-9F, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16A-16D, 17, 18A-18D, 19A-19C, 20, 21A-21I, 26A-26D, 44, 45, 60 and 61, Mountie Café, Express Shop, Prime Stop, WOW Café and the Mt. SAC Bookstore. The evening drill began at 7:05pm. It included the evacuation of buildings 1A-1C, 2M, 6, 7, 11, 13, 17, 18A-18D, 19A-19C, 26A, B & D, 44, 45, 60 and 61.

The drill evaluation focuses on identifying gaps, threats, issues and concerns related to campus emergency preparedness, and response operations.

## **Exercise Objectives**

For the exercise Mt. SAC identified the following objectives related to campus preparedness and response capabilities:

- **Emergency alert notification** system will deliver prompt, reliable and actionable information to the campus through clear, consistent, and accessible methods. Notifications will effectively relay information regarding building evacuations.
- **Campus field teams and emergency responders** will establish and maintain a unified and coordinated operational structure that supports the execution of the campus' capability to evacuate buildings.
- **Campus field teams and emergency responders** will provide timely communications in support of security, situational awareness and operations by all means available, among and between affected groups in the impacted area and response teams.
- **Police & Campus Safety responders** will provide timely, accurate and actionable information to campus field teams based on the collection, and dissemination of available incident information.

## Assessment

The purpose of the after-action report is to assist Mt. SAC in improving its preparedness and response efforts. Analysis of the exercise will aid the College in identifying program strengths to maintain and build upon, potential areas to improve, and corrective actions to take that will support and develop the Mt. SAC Emergency Operations Plan.

## Major Strengths

The major strengths identified during this exercise are as follows:

- The Mt. SAC community received the BlackboardConnect message and Alertus desktop display. The Alertus beacons and pagers were successfully activated in building 13
- All building evacuation team members were appropriately identified by safety vests and assisted occupants to the nearest evacuation assembly site within 15 minutes. *84% of survey respondents knew what actions to take when they received the Alert message.*
- The Incident Command Post was successfully established.
- All response teams operated the Family Radio Service, FRS, radios as trained and reported evacuation status to Building Managers.
- Building evacuation teams and Campus Safety Officers promptly cleared buildings and provided status updates to the Incident Command Post.
- CERT members and Campus Safety Escorts assisted with evacuations in areas with few or no building evacuation team members.
- Survey comments included:
  - *Evacuation teams were well prepared and provided good directions.*
  - *The drill did not last long.*
  - *Event was clearly identified as a drill.*
  - *Campus responders were clearly identified by vests*
  - *The drill information was good for their class.*

## Primary Areas for Improvement

Through the exercise several opportunities for improvement in the College's ability to prepare for and respond to a major incident were identified. Recommendations for improvement include:

- **Improve emergency alert message delivery time & interoperability with existing message system components:**
  - Many drill and survey respondents received the Alert message after the drill concluded, that is, 15 to 30 minutes **after** the alert message was originally sent.
  - The alert message did post to a popular social media site (Facebook).
  - Marketing must physically manage two emergency messaging systems to send effective emergency alerts.
- **Improve emergency alert message delivery to campus community and visitors:**
  - Third party vendors and contractors cannot not sign up for emergency alerts.
  - Science labs in Building 60 & 7 were required to place cell phones in lockers and no one received the alert message.
  - *Drill and survey participants suggested the campus develop audible alerts for building evacuations.*

- **Update emergency building evacuation procedures and evacuation team roles:** Several gaps were identified in the current emergency building evacuation plan and evacuation team roles.
  - Many teams successfully used two-way (FRS) radios in their buildings but experienced significant challenges communicating across campus with other emergency responders and the Incident Command Post (ICP). Information reporting to ICP was inefficient.
  - Evacuation terminology was confusing - “cleared the building” and “all clear” were used to describe both the building status and re-entry into the building.
  - In buildings or areas with only a few, or no evacuation team members, classrooms did not evacuate promptly, or evacuate at all.
  - Some assembly area were overcrowded, too close to buildings and blocked emergency access paths.
- **Improve Incident Command Post (ICP) protocols and communication with the building evacuation teams:** The first Police & Campus Safety Officer responding to the drill message was the incident commander (IC) and established the incident command post. Police & Campus Safety officers provided status updates to the IC. Throughout the process several gaps were identified
  - The incident command post did not have adequate supplies or resources at the scene to document or manage the incident.
  - The incident command post could not communicate with evacuation team members until a two-way (FRS) radio was available.
  - Police & Campus Safety officers were unable to perform building “walk-throughs” and relied on building marshals for building evacuation status.

## Action Plan

Item	Topic	Action
1.0	<b>Improve emergency alert delivery time &amp; interoperability with existing message system components</b>	The BlackboardConnect service agreement expires June 2019. A committee formed to review mass notifications systems and found the RAVE system delivered messages faster than Blackboard and integrated with our Alertus, message boards, and social media platforms. Marketing is requesting funding to purchase the RAVE system to replace BlackboardConnect.
2.0	<b>Improve emergency alert message delivery to campus community and visitors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical Services will install Alertus beacons/pagers in Building 19 (WVSD), and Buildings 60 and 7 (laboratories &amp; classrooms).</li> <li>• Until a new alerting system is place, emergency services will work with IT and other departments to develop a process for instructing contractors and outside groups on how to receive campus emergency alert messages</li> </ul>
3.0	<b>Update emergency building evacuation procedures and evacuation team roles</b>	<p>The Emergency Building Evacuation Plan will be updated to reflect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assign building managers as primary point of leadership for evacuation teams in a building or area, and the communication link with Incident Command Post and Emergency Operations Center when activated.</li> <li>• Assign Disaster Service Workers and other staff groups to assist evacuation teams during a large-scale emergency or areas without evacuation team support.</li> <li>• Appropriate staff parking lots as alternate evacuation assembly sites for large crowds.</li> <li>• Clarify terminology to describe the status of an evacuated building.</li> </ul>
4.0	<b>Improve Incident Command Post (ICP) protocols and communication with the building evacuation teams</b>	<p>To ensure all Police &amp; Campus Safety officers are effective in their role, the department will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct regular incident command system refresher training.</li> <li>• Mentor less experienced officers in using incident command, especially during drills and exercises.</li> <li>• Ensure officers have tools and resources available to document and manage an incident.</li> <li>• Practice radio communication with building evacuation teams.</li> </ul>