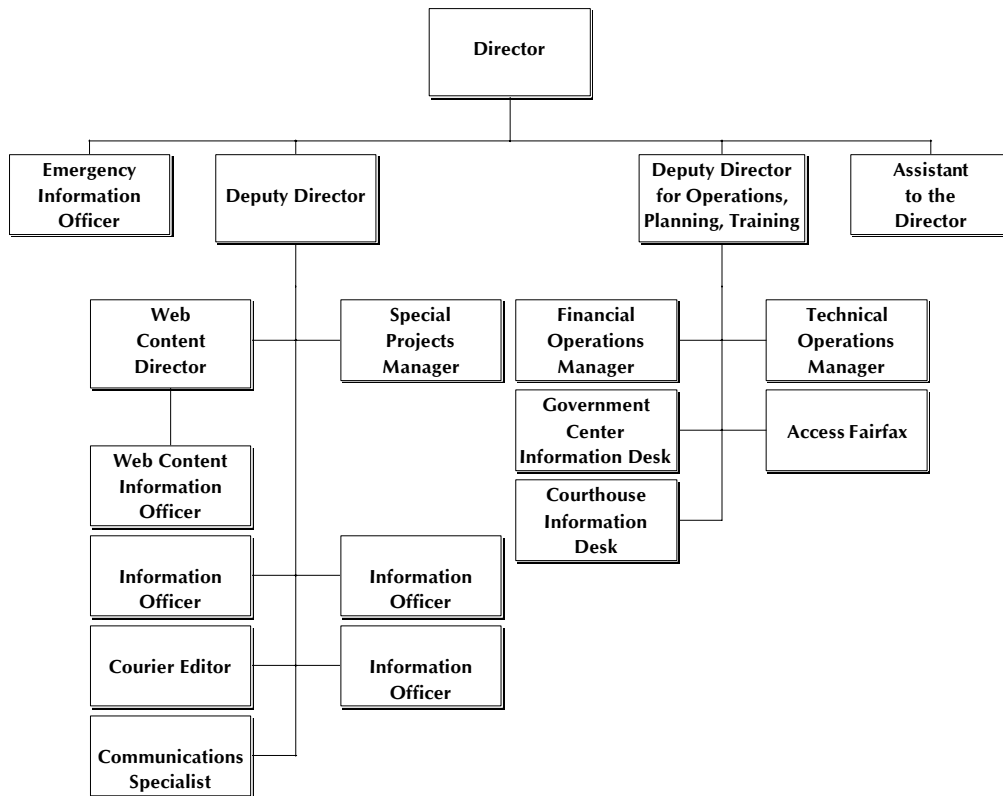


# Office of Public Affairs



## Mission

To deliver effective, timely communication and information services to the public, elected and appointed officials, County agencies and the media with integrity and sensitivity.

## Focus

The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) provides essential information to the public, elected and appointed officials, County departments and the media concerning County programs and services and is the central communication office for the County. OPA is structured to allow for flexibility in staffing, providing opportunities for teamwork, cross training and collaboration.

The Director serves as the County media spokesperson, as a liaison with the County Executive and the Board of Supervisors and as the Employee Communication Board Chair.

The Communications Section of OPA is responsible for the coordination of a comprehensive, centralized public affairs program for the County which also provides communication consulting to county agencies.

## **THINKING STRATEGICALLY**

Strategic issues for OPA include:

- Expanding crisis and emergency communications;
- Managing the County's Web content;
- Enhancing access to information through customer service, technology and communication;
- Providing information proactively to the media; and
- Providing communication consulting services to other County agencies.

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Additionally, the Deputy Director serves as County spokesperson in the absence of the director and assists with emergency communications.

The Customer Service Section of OPA is responsible for the planning, direction and administration of the agency as well as developing policy and procedures for the agency. This section will also manage the day-to-day operations of the agency's customer service and financial management staff, and providing leadership to the agency's workforce planning

OPA is organized to provide focus in four main areas: emergency information, Web content, communications and customer service. This structure facilitates the best use of OPA staffing to provide for the strategic issues that need to be addressed over the next five years: improve crisis/emergency communications; manage Web content; enhance access to information; provide information proactively to the media; provide communication consulting services to agencies without public information officers. Strategies to address these critical issues include increasing collaboration with agencies, enhancing information on the Infoweb and exploring resources for reaching diverse audiences. OPA's initiatives will support the county's vision elements and sustain the OPA vision: To be the information connection to the Fairfax County government, empowering our residents to make informed choices and improve the quality of their lives.

### Budget and Staff Resources

Agency Summary		
Category	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Adopted Budget Plan
Authorized Positions/Staff Years		
Regular	18/ 18	18/ 18
Expenditures:		
Personnel Services	\$1,123,108	\$1,377,228
Operating Expenses	353,335	316,158
Capital Equipment	0	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,476,443</b>	<b>\$1,693,386</b>
Less:		
Recovered Costs	(\$152,552)	(\$191,652)
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$1,323,891</b>	<b>\$1,501,734</b>

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### SUMMARY OF ALL AGENCY LOBS (FY 2008 Adopted Budget Data)

<i>Number</i>	<i>LOB Title</i>	<i>Net LOB Cost</i>	<i>Number of Positions</i>	<i>LOB SYE</i>
13-01	Employee Communications	\$166,860	2	2.0
13-02	Issues Management	\$166,860	2	2.0
13-03	Customer Service	\$333,717	4	4.0
13-04	Media Relations	\$166,860	2	2.0
13-05	Communication Support for County Agencies	\$250,287	3	3.0
13-06	Web Content	\$166,860	2	2.0
13-07	Emergency Communications and Planning	\$83,430	1	1.0
13-08	Agency Planning and Organizational Development	\$166,859	2	2.0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$1,501,733</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18.0</b>

### LOBS SUMMARY

#### 13-01: Employee Communications

<i>Fund/Agency: 001/13</i>	<i>Office of Public Affairs</i>
<b>LOB #: 13-01</b>	<b>Employee Communications</b>
Personnel Services	\$153,026
Operating Expenses	\$35,129
Recovered Costs	(\$21,295)
Capital Equipment	\$0
<b>Total LOB Cost:</b>	<b>\$166,860</b>
Federal Revenue	\$0
State Revenue	\$0
User Fee Revenue	\$0
Other Revenue	\$0
<b>Total Revenue:</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Net LOB Cost:</b>	<b>\$166,860</b>
Positions/SYE involved in the delivery of this LOB	2 / 2.0

#### ► LOB Summary

The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) is the lead County agency for internal communications, providing essential news and information to more than 16,000 County employees, including merit, limited-term and seasonal staff. Employees look to OPA to provide timely and accurate information that impacts the County; their agencies; jobs and professions; and personal/family lives.

#### Communication Tools Used by OPA:

## Office of Public Affairs

- Courier
- Courier supplements
- NewsLink
- Employee Communications Board
- Communication Strategy
- Lead communicators monthly meeting
- E-mail/other communications from County Executive
- Photo archives
- Classifieds

### Topics/issues include:

- Compensation
- Benefits
- Personnel policy changes
- Training and development
- Emergency preparedness
- Succession planning
- Ethics/conduct
- Information technology news/help
- Safety and security information
- County/Agency hosted events/activities
- Media coverage of County government
- Awards and honors
- Employee/agency profiles

### **Courier**

Courier is an eight-page biweekly employee newsletter published 24 times a year, on most payday Fridays, containing news for and about Fairfax County employees. Courier is produced by OPA as a resource for County news and information for County employees. More than 16,000 printed copies are distributed Countywide, including 2,700 to Fairfax County Public Schools. Electronic copies are available and archived on the County Infoweb and Retirement Administration Agency public Web page.

The executive summary of the 2006 Employee Communications Survey (about a fourth of all active employees, or 2,979 in number, completed this survey) results noted that 88.6 percent of respondents indicated the Courier is available to them; 55.6 percent of respondents indicated they read Courier frequently; 43.3 percent of respondents indicated they read it sometimes or rarely and 84.5 percent of respondents believe Courier should be continued.

Courier is an integral part of the Fairfax Framework for Excellence – building and aligning leadership and performance at all levels of the organization in order to achieve the County's vision and provide high-quality services for the community. Effective leadership and management at all levels of the County government require sharing information up, down, sideways and diagonally. It also requires making sure this essential information, including the topics/issues outlined above, has meaning and context for all employees; a principal goal for Courier.

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The Courier Editor is responsible for the publication's articles, photographs and design, in addition to the distribution of Courier with support from additional OPA staff. It is usually printed in the County's Print Shop.

### **Courier Supplements**

In addition to the biweekly schedule of issues, OPA also publishes special Courier supplements to provide additional essential information to employees beyond the space available in the regular issue.

### **Annual Supplements:**

*Benefits Open Enrollment* – Four-page tabloid issue with a summary of annual changes to the benefits package and graphs and charts detailing vendor benefits and costs. Published in October.

*Length of Service* – Two-page tabloid supplement listing employees who have achieved milestone anniversaries in their service to the County beginning with 10 years and on in five-year increments. Published in February.

### **Additional Supplements Published in 2007:**

*Compensation* – An 8-page supplement published in May with a review and summary of changes in compensation for the County's approximately 8,400 general (S-Scale) employees resulting from the 2006-2007 comprehensive review by the Compensation Task Force.

*Emergency Preparedness* – A 12-page four-color supplement published in September 2007 (National Emergency Preparedness Month) as a joint project with the Office of Emergency Management with support from OPA's Emergency Information Officer. The purpose of the supplement was to compile preparedness information from multiple County, state and federal sources and summarize in an easy-to-use reference guide for employees. It is essential that employees are prepared so that they can serve County residents in time of need.

### **NewsLink**

NewsLink is an electronic newsletter produced by OPA and transmitted via e-mail each business day to all County employees. NewsLink provides timely and important county news, announcements and information of general interest, as well as urgent issues such as air quality alerts and the lowering of the U.S., state and/or county flags, to all employees who have e-mail addresses. NewsLink also provides links to current articles in the media about Fairfax County. NewsLink effectively fills an information "gap" that Courier cannot fill due to its deadline and publication schedule and space restrictions.

The executive summary of the 2006 Employee Communications Survey results noted that 82.7 percent of respondents indicated that information is available to them via NewsLink; 60.9 percent indicated they frequently read NewsLink; while another 36.5 percent indicated they read it sometimes or rarely; 78.7 percent of respondents believe NewsLink should be continued.

NewsLink is an integral part of the Fairfax Framework for Excellence, for the same reasons outlined under the Courier header and covers all the same topics/issues.

In addition to the NewsLink Editor, four additional OPA staff support NewsLink by coming in before business hours each business day to search media sites online for County-related information and providing Web links to that information.

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## **Employee Communications Board**

The Employee Communications Board meets monthly and works to recommend and implement policy changes to better communications for and with County employees. Among other duties, the board is charged with facilitating two-way communication at all levels of government and serving as an advisor to the County Executive on matters related to employee communications. The board is chaired by the director of OPA.

The board is comprised of 23 county employees as follows:

- 1 Board Chairman
- 4 representatives of the human services agencies, appointed by a Deputy County Executive
- 3 representatives of the planning and development agencies, appointed by a Deputy County Executive
- 4 representatives of the public safety agencies, appointed by a Deputy County Executive
- 4 representatives of administrative agencies - two appointed by a Deputy County Executive (CFO), and one each appointed by a Deputy County Executive (CIO) and the Director of Human Resources
- 1 representative from the Office of Public Affairs
- 1 representative from the Department of Information Technology
- 1 representative from the Office of Equity Programs
- 1 representative from Cable Communications Productions Division
- 1 Language Access Coordinator
- 1 representative from the EAC
- 1 Courier Editor

In 2006, the board created and distributed a comprehensive communications survey to all County employees – available in both a print and electronic version. As a result of the survey findings, in 2007 the County Executive charged every County agency director with reporting on the state of internal communications within their agency. The board reviewed the agency reports and is developing a best practices report to be shared with the Senior Management Team.

## **Goals and Objectives**

- Advise the County Executive on building communications capacity within each agency
- Foster an environment where all County employees, regardless of position or job function, are well informed regarding the County's mission of service to the community and issues that affect their employment
- Promote strategic planning and communications strategies throughout the organization
- Facilitate the process of delivering accurate information to employees at the right time
- Promote employees' right to be informed – communicating all relevant news, including the rationale behind critical business decisions and how these decisions will affect employees
- Recommend and promote mechanisms for communicating employees' concerns and the necessary feedback to employees
- Promote multi-language responsibility across the organization

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- Educate employees about communication being a shared responsibility by all parties and that each employee is personally responsible for actively seeking information
- Recommend ways for agencies to streamline information
- Provide a forum to raise communication problems, act as sounding board to share ideas and solve problems
- Make recommendations for a system of communications measurement
- Interface with the Employee Advisory Council (EAC) and other entities as necessary

The Communications Board provides an annual report to the Office of the County Executive on the state of internal county communications at the end of the calendar year.

### **Communication Strategy**

Developed by OPA, the Fairfax County Communication Strategy, established in Procedural Memorandum 13-06, outlines the County's official policy, procedures and standards for providing information about County services, programs and activities. The goal of the strategy is to provide a cohesive look, feel and message in all communications with residents, based on the seven Vision Elements that define the County's values. This strategy has helped change the culture so that our messages communicate each agency's work as part of a Countywide vision of service.

All County agencies are required to comply with the strategy and any modifications or exceptions must be approved by OPA, in collaboration with the Deputy County Executives.

OPA is responsible for maintaining and updating the Communication Strategy. Implementation of this policy, including development of more specific procedures and guidelines as needed, is the responsibility of each agency. Information in the Communication Strategy may change and changes will be announced through employee communication tools, such as NewsLink and Courier. Agencies are accountable for using the most current requirements.

Communication tools/services covered by the Communication Strategy include all County:

- Letters
- Memos
- Fax cover sheets
- Business cards
- Envelopes
- Writing styles
- County Vision Elements
- Printed news releases
- Electronic news releases
- Channel 16 programs
- Brochures
- Publications
- Voice mail
- E-mail
- Use of ADA statements

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- Use of the County seal

## **Lead Communicators Monthly Meeting**

The OPA Director chairs a monthly gathering of the County's (including FCPS) lead Public Information Officers and Communications Specialists representing most County agencies. The purpose of the meetings is to share and provide updates on topics that impact communications Countywide. Topics may include:

- Issues (homelessness, enhanced code enforcement)
- Topical subjects (elections)
- Media coverage
- Personnel Changes
- Web Content
- Communications Strategy
- Multi-agency events/partnerships
- Board of Supervisors Initiatives

Participants in the Lead Communicators Meeting are encouraged to share the information from the meeting with other communicators in their agency.

## **E-mail/Communications from County Executive**

At the request of the County Executive, OPA will write e-mails and other communications to County employees for distribution under the County Executive's signature.

## **Photography**

OPA is responsible for photography and maintaining photo archives for:

- Photos used for publication in Courier.
- Presentations at Board of Supervisors (BOS) meetings.
- Other events requested by BOS and/or County Executive.
- Delegations, often international, who visit the County.

## **Classifieds**

OPA is responsible for maintaining the County employee classifieds on Infoweb. The classifieds are free and only available to County employees. In 2007, more than 1,280 classifieds were placed from Jan. 1 to mid-October.

## **► Method of Service Provision**

Service provided directly by County employees.

Regular Agency Hours of Operation: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday; OPA staff members are on-call 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

## **► Mandate Information**

There is no federal or state mandate for this LOB.



# Office of Public Affairs

## LOBS SUMMARY

### 13-02: Issues Management

<i>Fund/Agency: 001/13</i>		<i>Office of Public Affairs</i>	
<b>LOB #: 13-02</b>		<b>Issues Management</b>	
Personnel Services			\$153,026
Operating Expenses			\$35,129
Recovered Costs			(\$21,295)
Capital Equipment			\$0
<b>Total LOB Cost:</b>			\$166,860
Federal Revenue			\$0
State Revenue			\$0
User Fee Revenue			\$0
Other Revenue			\$0
<b>Total Revenue:</b>			\$0
<b>Net LOB Cost:</b>			\$166,860
Positions/SYE involved in the delivery of this LOB			2 / 2.0

#### ► LOB Summary

The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) provides strategic communications consulting for a variety of high-profile initiatives and issues. Many of these initiatives are priorities for the Board of Supervisors. OPA offers a Countywide perspective on these multi-agency initiatives and issues that require coordinated communications.

OPA takes charge of the communication on these issues, so the County can disseminate a common message with a single voice. This means that the agency leads the development of overall communications strategies and implements specific tactics, including:

- Developing key messages that properly frame the issue or initiative.
- Coordinating media response among multiple agencies.
- Creating issue-specific communications plans.
- Providing advice to elected officials, County Executive, staff, and others on media response.
- Issuing news releases, conducting media briefings.
- Monitoring media coverage, including social media, like blogs.
- Responding to related FOIA requests.

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During the past six years, OPA has played a leadership role on the following Countywide issues:

- Environment (Air Quality, Cool Counties, etc.)
- Gang Prevention
- Homelessness
- Aging
- Day Laborers
- Code Enforcement
- Mental Health
- Teen Driving

In the future, OPA will continue to respond to new, emerging issues — as identified by the Board or by changes in population, demography or economy.

### **Board-Appointed Commissions**

OPA provides communications support to a variety of board-appointed authorities and commissions (BACs). During the past six years, for example, OPA has supported the Bond Referendum Citizen Committees, the Virginia 2007 Community Citizen Planning Committee, Tysons Land Use Task Force and the Josiah H. Beeman Commission. This role for the agency will continue indefinitely into the future as additional BACs are appointed.

- **Josiah H. Beeman Commission**

OPA serves as the sole media spokesperson for the Beeman Commission, and the agency developed its communications plan. The agency also supports the commission's organized efforts to get public input from mental health consumers and providers. These efforts include surveys, communications with stakeholders and generating media attention. The Board appointed and convened this 18-member, blue-ribbon commission that is composed of local, state and federal mental health experts. The group will recommend how to improve the County's delivery of mental health services. Its task takes on even greater significance after the Virginia Tech tragedy, although the body was created well before it.

- **Tysons Land Use Task Force**

OPA supports communications for this effort, which has engaged 3,000 residents through 50 public dialogues, workshops and surveys during the past two years. The Board formed this task force to recommend updates to the 1994 land use plan for Tysons Corner. The mission of this 36-member group is vital to the future of Tysons — and the entire County. Not only is Tysons a vibrant neighborhood, but also it is the County's largest employment center. Regionally, Tysons is one of the two major economic hubs for the entire metropolitan area, according to the U.S. Labor Department. Future population and economic growth must be planned and managed if Tysons is to continue to thrive. To develop its recommendations, the task force is engaging in extensive public outreach. These outreach activities are the most far-reaching ever conducted for updating a land use plan.

## Office of Public Affairs

- **Bond Referendum Citizen Committees**

Since 1998, OPA has served as the primary staff support to these committees appointed by the Board, and the agency coordinates the overall public education efforts about County bond referendums. OPA provides these committees with detailed information about every proposed project to be funded in each referendum, so committee members can inform civic groups, homeowners associations and others. The agency also mails out an informational pamphlet to every County household, posts extensive information on the county Web site, and conducts media briefings.

- **Virginia 2007 Committee**

This Board-appointed committee was formed in 2005, and OPA exclusively staffed this group. The agency led the effort to produce a series of 10 public service announcements that have run on Channel 16 for more than a year. These PSAs promote the County's many tourism attractions, including Mount Vernon, Sully Historic Site and the Udvar-Hazy Center. (As detailed in FXVA's market research, County residents are a primary method for promoting tourism to the County by friends and family.) The committee also published a 260-page anthology, covering 400 years of history in the County. For this project, OPA assisted the committee with producing, promoting and selling this popular book.

The committee's mission is to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the founding of Jamestown, Va., the first permanent English settlement in the Americas. The commemorations have a statewide goal for promoting tourism, and OPA helped the committee successfully market the County's rich history and tourism destinations. Committee members included representatives from some of the County's largest tourism promoters and attraction such as FXVA, Mount Vernon, the Smithsonian's Udvar-Hazy Center and Wolf Trap Center for the Performing Arts.

### Issues Management

- **Air Quality**

The environment is one of the Board's six top priorities, and the Board's 20-year environmental plan specifically identifies improving air quality as a goal. OPA has been directly involved in the County's efforts, as well as the new "Cool Counties" initiative. Because the public can help reduce pollution, public education plays an important role in achieving cleaner air. OPA engages in local and regional public education efforts.

Within the County, OPA works in conjunction with the Health Department to develop and distribute informational and educational materials (including in Spanish and Korean) to explain the simple steps the public can take to improve air quality, in addition to direct outreach activities. Materials have been distributed through communitywide events such as Celebrate Fairfax!, town meetings and other County events and programs. County residents also were reached through the libraries, schools, and Fairfax Connector buses, among other outlets. During the ozone season (May 1 through Sept. 15), OPA initiates notification of County employees and the public when poor air quality days are forecast. The agency makes notifications using news releases and internal communications tools, such as EAN and CEAN.

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Regionally, OPA is a sponsor for two broader print, radio and TV advertising campaigns, separately spearheaded by the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments to help improve the region's air quality. OPA also assisted with the rollout activities for the "Cool Counties" launch.

These efforts have contributed to the steady decline in the number of days with unhealthy air quality (Code Red). In 2006, there were two Code Red days forecast, in 2007 there were none despite above-average temperatures and a record number of vehicles.

While air quality is improving, the release of pollutants will continue to increase, therefore public education activities must continue. The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments estimates that greenhouse gas emission will increase by 39.17 million metric tons by 2020. Of this total, 13 million tons will be produced by vehicle exhaust.

- **Gang Prevention**

This initiative is one of the Board's top six priorities, and OPA has provided extensive communications support for this Countywide, public-private partnership. The County launched a comprehensive, community-based gang prevention, intervention and suppression program, titled "Every Child Is Worth Saving: A Community Partnership." This program brings together County agencies, public schools, faith groups and community and nonprofit organizations.

Communications activities for this initiative began in 2005, growing over time. OPA coordinated a Gang Prevention Summit in February 2005. This summit, which was the County's first on this issue, brought together residents, community organizations, County and school employees, federal officials and the Board. Today, OPA supports the Gang Prevention Coordinator, a position established in the Office of the County Executive following the 2005 summit and the Gang Prevention Coordinating Council. OPA's activities have also expanded to include the Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force.

The office is the lead on many of the County's gang prevention activities, including media outreach for inter-agency, Countywide activities such as the Road DAWG camp program; the middle school after-school program; and the Community and Recreation Department's Youth Worker Program, among others. OPA also coordinated the Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force's major news conference in July 2006. OPA also has developed educational and informational materials for public dissemination about steps that can be taken to recognize potential gang-related behaviors at home, school and in the community. These materials also detail the resources available to prevent gang activity and help the County's youth from becoming involved in gang-related activities.

OPA assists in developing congressional testimony about the County's program, in addition to presentations and informational materials for the Board and the Gang Prevention Coordinating Council. OPA also has coordinated with the Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force on its outreach activities, including public service announcements.

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This integrated program is working. Gang-related crimes decreased 32 percent from 2005 to 2006, as well as at a greater rate than the decrease in overall crime during this period. State and federal officials from across the nation are observing Fairfax County's approach, and Chairman Connolly and the County's Gang Prevention Coordinator testified on the County's program before the U. S. House Committee on Government Reform.

- **Homelessness**

Homelessness largely remains a hidden problem in Fairfax County, unlike in many jurisdictions in the region. To address this problem in the greater Falls Church-Fairfax community, the Board endorsed a plan to end homeless within 10 years. The community has embarked on a public-private partnership. The 17-member Council on Homelessness — composed of representatives from nonprofits, faith groups, civic organizations and County agencies — developed a strategic plan in 2006 to prevent and end homelessness. This year a 96-member committee is now developing the mechanisms to put this plan into action.

OPA's communications activities are particularly important. The office has created public education materials to inform the public about the issue, including Web pages, brochures and a video. OPA also supported the planning and execution of a summit on homelessness. Communications support was also provided for the opening of the Katherine K. Hanley Family Shelter in August 2007. Media outreach efforts have generated 33 stories to date, including national coverage in USA Today. OPA also led the creation of a communications committee to ensure that the government, faith community, nonprofit and business communities all voice key, common messages.

Communications activities are expected to increase as a 10-year plan to end homelessness is implemented. OPA has developed a communications plan for the initiative.

- **Aging**

OPA coordinated the media briefing for "Anticipating the Future: Fairfax 50+ Action Plan 2007," which was released at the Oct. 15, 2007, Board of Supervisors meeting. This was the first product of the Board's focus on the opportunities and challenges of the demographic shift that is projected to result in a 32 percent increase in adults ages 50+ in Fairfax County by 2020. This shift will affect programs and services Countywide. OPA also coordinated the establishment of a Web presence on the Fairfax County Web site — [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults) — specifically focused on this demographic group and the resources available for them.

- **Teen Driving**

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors' Safe Teen Driving Initiative was launched to establish better driving instruction, increased enforcement and greater parental involvement. OPA has been the lead in coordinating two major teen driving events — a Young Drivers Summit held in June 2005 and a Teen Driving Forum held in March 2006. Both events drew hundreds of attendees from the community, the schools, public safety organizations, businesses and garnered media attention. OPA carried primary responsibility for the detailed logistical arrangements for the events, including media outreach, extensive coordination between County agencies, the Fairfax County Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Citizens Advisory Council, the public schools and community and business participants.

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- **Enhanced Code Enforcement Strike Teams**

Initiated by the Board in 2007, this new initiative focuses on combating illegal boarding houses. Overcrowded homes are more than a public nuisance. For the tenants, the result is unsafe housing. These houses may not have enough exits in case of a fire. For neighbors, the result is a reduced quality of life. There can be problems with litter, too many parked cars or other issues.

The teams bring together zoning, building, health and fire code inspectors to address the problem, and there are 15 agencies working jointly to support the teams. OPA coordinates overall communications, providing critical information to the public and media. Neighbors want information about what the County is doing to address the problem, and the media wants to know how the County's initiative ties into broader issues, such as affordable housing, homelessness and immigration.

To meet these needs, OPA designed Web pages that allow residents to submit complaints about suspected boarding houses, as well as provide district-specific statistics on the teams' enforcement actions. The agency also created a standardized presentation that's been delivered to more than 17 homeowners associations since June 2007. OPA also coordinated a media briefing to launch the teams' activities. On a weekly basis, the agency also responds to numerous media inquiries, including coverage about the displacement of residents from two motels and the jailing of an illegal boarding house owner.

- **Day Laborers**

This high-profile issue generated more than 343 print stories during the last two years, and OPA has played a pivotal role in media response, especially since the County was in litigation over this issue. In this capacity, the agency coordinated the response to media inquiries, so the County could speak with one voice. This required OPA to work with the County Attorney's Office; County Executive's Office; Department of Systems Management; Park Authority; Police Department and the County's contractors.

This issue arose because the County is funding an overall strategy for dealing with sites where day laborers gather, including the formal site in Herndon that is now defunct. While the County did not establish the site in Herndon, the County funded a nonprofit to implement the County's strategy at this location in the town.

### ► **Method of Service Provision**

Service provided directly by County employees.

Regular Agency Hours of Operation: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday; OPA staff members are on-call 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

### ► **Mandate Information**

There is no federal or state mandate for this LOB.

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### LOBS SUMMARY

#### 13-03: Customer Service

<i>Fund/Agency: 001/13</i>		<i>Office of Public Affairs</i>	
<b>LOB #: 13-03</b>		<b>Customer Service</b>	
Personnel Services			\$306,047
Operating Expenses			\$70,258
Recovered Costs			(\$42,588)
Capital Equipment			\$0
<b>Total LOB Cost:</b>			\$333,717
Federal Revenue			\$0
State Revenue			\$0
User Fee Revenue			\$0
Other Revenue			\$0
<b>Total Revenue:</b>			\$0
<b>Net LOB Cost:</b>			\$333,717
Positions/SYE involved in the delivery of this LOB			4 / 4.0

#### ► LOB Summary

The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) is the information connection in Fairfax County. As with every agency in the County government, it strives to exceed customer service expectations when doing business with our County residents. Within OPA, customer service is more than a qualitative descriptor; it is a formal organized staff with processes and procedures and deliverables. The priority objective of the staff is to respond to informational requests from our residents over the phone, face to face and by e-mail about a wide range of information. This informational exchange occurs daily in each of five locations throughout the County.

With a trending demographic increase in both the number and diversity of County residents, OPA Customer Service staff responds daily to information requested in one of the more than 49 languages spoken by residents who may also have varying ability to navigate our County government.

In the presence of County resources directed at technological transformation, an obvious expectation would be a decline in the number of face-to-face or voice to voice contacts required; however the personal contact numbers are increasing. There may be several reasons for this conundrum.

- The OPA Customer Service South County Center is located in a facility tasked to serve the Human Services needs of the community. Among other services in the center, OPA Access Fairfax provides computers and phones for residents to use as they engage in employment-seeking tasks. Technology in the home is often non-existent for these residents. Often the residents need help in understanding directions given on the center's technology as well as

## Office of Public Affairs

redirection to another facility or other services. This facility also houses new student registration for Fairfax County Public Schools, which also impacts the walk-in traffic.

- The Government Center (GC) is the centralized site of many County services and agencies that either require in-person business transactions or facilitates the personal preference of the resident to do business in person. The GC is also the site of many public meetings and conferences. These occasions may entertain repeat visitors as well as national and international one-time visitors. Although there is event information posted in many prominent locations along with a CRiS kiosk, visitors still find comfort in stopping by the Information Desk to confirm their directions. These requests become opportunities to market the positive “intangibles” of Fairfax County.
- The Courthouse location is a high-traffic location for obvious reasons. There is a sense of urgency and sometimes agitation in its visitors because they are usually responding to a requirement to perform a corrective action. Confusing directions or locations can result in life-altering penalties. Often the residents have to be redirected by Customer Service staff to one of the 14 other court-related locations. In these circumstances the service time per customer ratio is lengthened and may cause a backlog. This location has a preponderance of residents with English as a second language and literacy challenges that make the ability to use the technology that is available more challenging if not impossible. With the opening of the new larger Courthouse complex, and its additional technology support, no reduction in personal contact requirement is expected.

The Customer Service team tracks not only the volume of information requests but also the content. The resulting trend analysis provides insight to the Public Information Officers as well as those involved with Web content and non-traditional media. Issues can be anticipated and highlighted in media discussions in a timely fashion.

Statistically speaking, in 2006 the Government Center Lobby Information Desk served 18,591 walk up customers and answered 33,845 phone calls and e-mails and 247 Emergency Information Line calls. Additionally the GC staff had a plethora of back office ad hoc assignments to execute. The OPA Customer Service 5<sup>th</sup> floor reception desk in the Government Center also served walk-in visitors and responded to phone calls. In the future this position is being redefined to additionally provide backup support administratively to the Deputy Director of Operations, the Executive Administrator and to the Manager of Financial Operations.

The new Courthouse Information Desk will support Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court, Fairfax General District Court and Fairfax Circuit Court with linkages to other municipalities. In 2006 the current Courthouse Information Desk operated only half-time staffed by two Court employees and one volunteer and yet served 23,4000 walk-ups and answered 3,900 phone calls. The Courthouse Customer Service Information program delivers critical information to include: daily dockets, agency information about the Adult Detention Center, Commonwealth’s Attorney, Bar Association, Police Department, Law Library, Probation and Parole Departments, Office of the Magistrate, Sheriff’s Office and the Office of the Public Defender.

The South County OPA Customer Service staff, located in the South County Government Center, responded to 3,098 phone calls and 17,384 walk-in requests in 2006. Access Fairfax is a one-stop, stand-alone facility managed by OPA Customer Service staff in the South County Center. There are both computers and phones for County residents to use in their e-government-related activities.



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Access Fairfax is also a telework and satellite office facility for County agency employee outreach, flexible work scheduling or a conveniently located space for client meetings. 21,794 patrons were served in 2006. The South County staff is also responsible for scheduling all public meeting facilities in the building. The South County function evolved from a Fairfax County Public Library service function and a Facility Management Function of the South County Government Center.

### Customer Service Delivery Tools

- **703-324-INFO** — Coordinates and manages content of 703-324-INFO (703-324-4636). An automated information line that contains more than 200 messages and provides easily accessed, taped information with 24/7 access, about County programs, services and civic responsibilities.
- **Directory of County Information** — Maintains and updates Directory of County Information, which includes government activities, addresses, phone numbers, hours of operation and branch offices. This directory, which includes more than 1,400 entries, is used by multiple County agencies.
- **Customer Contact Center** — The Office of Public Affairs is piloting the Customer Contact Center in cooperation with the Department of Information Technology. The customer service staff uses the Customer Contact Center to track phone call and walk-in requests. The system also houses the new Directory of County Information and Homeowner and Civic Association List. As other agencies are added to the system it will serve as a central repository providing an opportunity for sharing critical information across multiple Fairfax County call centers and managing customer relationships.
- **Delegations** — OPA manages, coordinates and accommodates requests for briefings from county staff for national and international visitors to Fairfax County. Delegations range in size from one to 30 people.
- **Homeowners Association List** — Maintains list of more than 1,700 Community and Homeowner associations. This list is used by many County agencies as a primary means of communicating with residents.
- **Public Meetings Calendar** — Maintains and serves as approval for the Public Meetings Calendar. This calendar sits on the County website and lists all public meetings. This helps to fill Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requirements to post public meetings.
- **OPA E-mail Box** — The agency responds to more than 500 e-mail messages annually received through the County Web site.
- **Information Presentations** — Prepares, updates, delivers and disseminates PowerPoint presentations on the services provided by Fairfax County. The presentations are communication tools that promote the County and give the audiences a comprehensive overview of the services provided. The presentations have been given to groups of residents, students and visitors.

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## ► Method of Service Provision

Service provided directly by County employees.

Regular Agency Hours of Operation: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday; OPA staff members are on-call 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

## ► Mandate Information

This LOB (OPA Customer Service) is state mandated by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (VFOIA). The percentage of this LOB's resources utilized to satisfy the mandate is 25-50 percent. See the January 2007 Mandate Study, reference page 5 for the specific state code and a brief description.

## 13-04: Media Relations

<i>Fund/Agency: 001/13</i>		<i>Office of Public Affairs</i>	
<i>LOB #: 13-04</i>		<i>Media Relations</i>	
Personnel Services			\$153,026
Operating Expenses			\$35,129
Recovered Costs			(\$21,295)
Capital Equipment			\$0
<b>Total LOB Cost:</b>			\$166,860
Federal Revenue			\$0
State Revenue			\$0
User Fee Revenue			\$0
Other Revenue			\$0
<b>Total Revenue:</b>			\$0
<b>Net LOB Cost:</b>			\$166,860
Positions/SYE involved in the delivery of this LOB			2 / 2.0

## ► LOB Summary

Due to its proximity to the nation's capital, Fairfax County provides information to local, national, regional and international media outlets. For this reason, media relations demands a considerable amount of time from the Office of Public Affairs (OPA) staff. In addition, the Director acts as County spokesperson, which requires an additional commitment to gathering comprehensive information and developing media strategy.

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OPA approaches media relations in two ways: proactive and reactive. Every effort is made to proactively tell the County's positive stories and to make use of traditional, social and specialized media to provide residents with information on programs, services and initiatives. Outreach to traditional media includes pitching stories to general newspapers, radio stations and television stations. Reaching out to the social media includes targeting messages towards blogs and discussion forums. Outreach to specialized media, such as trade publications, allows the County to promote stories in narrowly focused outlets that help reach a particular target audience.

In FY 2007, OPA introduced News to Use as an online publication to keep the media and the general public informed about the latest happenings in the County. In response to media calls about County issues, OPA staff provides accurate, positive and timely information in a constructive way. The individual activities designed to build strong media relations are outlined in the following section.

- **Daily 24/Seven Media Response**

The Director of OPA serves as a spokesperson for the County with OPA staff filling this role in his/her absence. The office responds to an average of 70 media calls each month, which require an average of nearly 15 minutes each to complete. Since assuming the role of spokesperson in January 2001, OPA has managed media coverage of routine questions from reporters and large-scale events, such as the sniper trials and Hurricane Isabel. All non-OPA communicators in the County have a dotted-line reporting relationship with the OPA Director. In the event that more than two County agencies become involved in an incident, OPA takes the lead in coordinating communications for that incident.

- **Communication Policies and Procedures**

OPA writes or revises policies and procedures to reflect changing priorities. The office is currently in the process of producing a strategic plan using the communication audit as a springboard. Based on issues raised during mock emergency exercises, staff is also preparing a Countywide crisis communication policy.

- **Proactive Media Contacts**

OPA researches, writes, edits and distributes approximately 340 news releases annually to more than 150 print, broadcast and online media. The releases allow the agency to inform the media of events and issues affecting the County. The releases are also posted online with an RSS feed to allow the public immediate access to the news as well.

- **FOIA Meeting Schedule**

OPA prepares and distributes a weekly FOIA meeting notice to media, as mandated by the Virginia Code 2.1-340 through 2.1-346, regarding publishing notices of public meetings.

- **FOIA Requests**

OPA coordinates responses to all FOIA requests from the media, as mandated by Virginia Code 2.1-340 through 2.1-346.

- **Media Database**

OPA edits and maintains a current list of more than 150 reporters and media outlets. This list is shared with other County agencies to ensure information is disseminated to the same audience throughout the County.

## Office of Public Affairs

- **Media Paging System**

OPA enhances its availability to the media through a media paging system, which provides the media with access to the OPA Director or a designated staff member 24 hours a day/seven days a week. The system allows the caller to leave a message and page the on-call staff member.

- **Media Satisfaction Survey**

To gauge the quality of its media relations efforts, OPA has initiated a media satisfaction survey that is sent annually to any media representative that has more than three contacts with OPA during the previous 12 months. The survey is evaluated to determine any area of media relations that needs to be improved.

- **News Conferences/Media Events**

OPA provides support to the Board of Supervisors and County agencies to plan news conferences and media events and ceremonies. For example, OPA coordinates the annual news conference with the County Executive and Board of Supervisors members on the fiscal year budget.

- **Social Media**

OPA monitors online media outlets, such as blogs and discussions forums, to stay up-to-date on the pulse of the Fairfax County community. This media provides the County with instant feedback on current topics, and allows the County to respond in a timely and efficient manner if necessary. OPA also created a social media policy outlining how County agencies can utilize social media, including blogs, discussion forums, social networking sites, photo-sharing Web sites, video-sharing Web sites, wikis, virtual reality, podcasts, and RSS feeds.

### ► **Method of Service Provision**

Service provided directly by County employees.

Regular Agency Hours of Operation: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday; OPA staff members are on-call 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

### ► **Mandate Information**

There is no federal or state mandate for this LOB.

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## 13-05: Communication Support for County Agencies

<b>Fund/Agency: 001/13</b>		<b>Office of Public Affairs</b>
<b>LOB #: 13-05</b>		<b>Communication Support for County Agencies</b>
Personnel Services		\$229,538
Operating Expenses		\$52,691
Recovered Costs		(\$31,942)
Capital Equipment		\$0
<b>Total LOB Cost:</b>		\$250,287
Federal Revenue		\$0
State Revenue		\$0
User Fee Revenue		\$0
Other Revenue		\$0
<b>Total Revenue:</b>		\$0
<b>Net LOB Cost:</b>		\$250,287
Positions/SYE involved in the delivery of this LOB		3 / 3.0

### ► LOB Summary

The Office of Public Affairs assigns its staff to assist County agencies that do not have their own Public Information Officers or Communications Specialists. OPA communicators assist these agencies with media relations, communications, marketing, news releases, publications, etc. OPA currently has 11 staff members assigned as communications consultants to 29 different agencies. The agencies for which OPA currently consults are:

- Administration for Human Services
- Board of Supervisors
- Cable Communications & Consumer Protection
- Civil Service Commission
- Clerk of the Circuit Court
- Clerk of the General District Court
- Clerk to the Board of Supervisors
- Community Revitalization and Reinvestment
- County Attorney's Office
- County Executive's Office
- Elections
- Emergency Management
- Equity Programs
- Facilities Management
- Finance
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Compliance Manager
- Human Resources
- Human Rights Commission
- Information Technology
- Internal Audit
- Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court

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- Management and Budget
- Planning & Zoning
- Public Safety Communications
- Public Works and Environmental Services
- Purchasing
- Systems Management for Human Services
- Tax Administration
- Vehicle Services

## **Agency Communication Survey**

OPA conducts an annual survey of all County agencies designed to measure the effectiveness of its support to agencies and to determine their communication needs.

## **Board Presentations and Proclamations**

OPA coordinates approximately 195 presentations requested by the Board of Supervisors annually for proclamations, resolutions and certificates for more than 900 recipients; includes scheduling all participants, preparing items for presentation by researching, writing, coordinating review and producing final document, arranging photographic services in print and online, and providing support materials to the Board.

## **Communication/Media Support for BOS Meetings and Committee Meetings**

The Director of OPA or an OPA staff member is always in attendance at the Board of Supervisors meetings to gather information on County issues in order to respond to questions from residents, the media and County staff. At the conclusion of each Board meeting, the OPA Director writes and distributes an e-mail summarizing the highlights of the meeting. The e-mail is sent to the Board of Supervisors, the Senior Management Team, and the lead communicators in the County. A staff member is also present at Board committee meetings. OPA staff responds to media inquiries related to the Board agenda and to the committee issues.

## **Communication Seminars/Training**

To support the Board of Supervisors' emphasis on marketing the County, OPA coordinates a Media Relations Training, a Social Media Training, and occasional professional development seminars for County staff. The Media Relations Training provides tips to staff on how to handle interviews with the media, including what rights and responsibilities both the reporter and the interviewee have. The Social Media Training provides an overview of emerging technologies that employees need to be aware of, and what the County policy is for staff utilizing this media. Previous seminars have included "A Marketing Toolbox," "Successful Media Relations" and "How to Plan an Event."

## **County Participation in Awards Programs**

OPA manages the County's participation in many award programs; including announcing timelines; collecting, reviewing and editing submissions from other agencies; preparing submissions for review by the County Executive and submitting final selections to approximately 10 state and national award programs such as NACo, NACIO, VML, Ford Foundation Innovations in Local Government and Public Service Excellence Awards.

## **Equipment Maintenance**

OPA monitors agency audiovisual equipment and ceremonial supplies and maintains a log for lending that equipment to Board members and other agencies.

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## **Photographic Services**

OPA coordinates photographic services for a wide variety of events to be included in Courier, posted online, or distributed to the media.

## **Public Information Officer Support**

All Public Information Officers and Communications Specialists in the County have a dotted-line reporting relationship to the OPA Director. With this structure, the OPA Director is able to provide support to County communicators on a day-to-day basis in addition to an emergency situation when more than two agencies are involved.

## **Publication Editing and Design**

OPA designs, writes, reviews and edits brochures, newsletters, correspondence and other printed and online materials for County agencies.

## **Special Events**

OPA coordinates planning, scheduling, marketing, production of invitations and programs, equipment placement, event logistics and agendas with Board members, other County staff and business and residents for special events such as ribbon-cuttings, groundbreakings and dedication ceremonies.

## **► Method of Service Provision**

Service provided directly by County employees.

Regular Agency Hours of Operation: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday; OPA staff members are on-call 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

## **► Mandate Information**

There is no federal or state mandate for this LOB.

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## LOBS SUMMARY

### 13-06: Web Content

<i>Fund/Agency: 001/13</i>		<i>Office of Public Affairs</i>	
<b>LOB #: 13-06</b>		<b>Web Content</b>	
Personnel Services			\$153,026
Operating Expenses			\$35,129
Recovered Costs			(\$21,295)
Capital Equipment			\$0
<b>Total LOB Cost:</b>			\$166,860
Federal Revenue			\$0
State Revenue			\$0
User Fee Revenue			\$0
Other Revenue			\$0
<b>Total Revenue:</b>			\$0
<b>Net LOB Cost:</b>			\$166,860
Positions/SYE involved in the delivery of this LOB			2 / 2.0

#### ► LOB Summary

Fairfax County's Web pages are the places where Public Information and Customer Service come together.

The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) plays a pivotal role in creating and managing the County's Web presence to residents and to the world. As the virtual front door and the only communications medium available to anyone in the world with an Internet connection that the County fully controls, OPA's Web content purpose is simple: convey the County's mission and business effectively and efficiently. Accomplishing this means taking an approach different than typical printed communications because the Web is a different medium with its own precise set of best practices, guidelines and standards.

Fairfax County's Web presence is managed at the highest levels by two County agencies – the Office of Public Affairs and the Department of Information Technology (DIT) – and staff members in each agency/department also publish content. OPA is ultimately responsible for the content published on the public Web site and Infoweb, serving as planner, creator and coordinator.

The County's Web site is a strategic asset that's included in both OPA and DIT strategic plans. This partnership is crucial to the success of the County's Web presence because OPA manages the messages and content while DIT manages the technology assets.

OPA plays a key, vigilant role in coordinating content and ensuring that the public can access information in a usable format without always knowing what specific agency or department controls the topic. This silo-busting philosophy is critical to the foundation of a successful, useful Web site and it follows the growing trend of coordinating information more effectively. OPA has created



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many cross-cutting Web components for major County initiatives, including Emergency Information, Public Meetings Calendar, Bond Referendums (since 2002), the Enhanced Code Enforcement Strike Team, Ending Homelessness, Beeman Commission, Cool Counties, 50+ Action Plan, Senior Navigator and Pandemic Flu.

Going forward, OPA's Web content role will become more critical and influential. As the 2006 "Anticipating the Future" study noted, "The residents of Fairfax County have been rapid adopters of new technology." The study further shows that even in 2000, the County was well above the national standard for homes with Internet access as 79 percent of residents were connected versus just 42 percent nationwide. The strong level of access and the rise of video, blogs, maps and other mainstream Web content creates different expectations that Fairfax County must respond to in order to reach as many residents as possible with its services and messages. Another reason is a simple demographic shift.

Consider these numbers of age groups and their Internet use (from July 2005, Pew Internet and American Life Project):

<u>Age</u>	<u>Use</u>
12-17	87 percent
18-29	77 percent
30-49	75 percent
50-64	58 percent
65+	22 percent

The numbers point to a clear trend of more residents using the Internet more often at all age levels, especially as the demographics shift over time. Also, as the demographics of the County workforce shift, an enhanced internal Web presence will be key to doing business, improving efficiency and sharing information.

These trends will dominate Fairfax County's future. A performance-based thinking question would ask, "What is the customer doing that impacts us?" OPA's Web content line of business will need to assess the best ways to respond, in partnership with DIT and other County departments.

OPA's FY08 budget cited 18 "New Initiatives and Recent Accomplishments in Support of the Fairfax County Vision." Of those, 15 included a Web content component, either through external or internal communications.

Web content was not part of the 2001 ICAPS because the Web was in its infancy. The importance of an organization's Web presence (both external and internal) has been well documented during the last six years. One dramatic example that shows how the Web has become an integral part of everyday life comes from the Pew Internet and American Life Project. Between 1996 and 2006, the percent of Americans who access news on a Web site increased 1,450 percent, while the following sources lost major ground: national TV 53 percent; newspapers 31 percent; radio 23 percent; and local TV 22 percent.

In this new, online media world, OPA is adapting to respond and leading the County in new directions.

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### **Creating, Updating and Verifying Content**

OPA has created, updated and verified hundreds of Web pages during the last six years. In the last six months alone, OPA has created or updated Countywide pages for the Enhanced Code Enforcement Strike Team, Ending Homelessness, Josiah H. Beeman Commission, Cool Counties, 50+ Action Plan, and Pandemic Flu. This small sampling shows the depth and breadth of cross-county information sharing that's unique to OPA – we ensure a consistent message that includes all County department information on a topic. OPA publishes more than 300 news releases online a year; updates the Board of Supervisors' presentations after every meeting; maintains the news section of the County's home page with timely information such as tax deadlines, upcoming events and County initiatives; updates the central, Countywide News to Use Web page; creates biweekly podcasts; and publishes key information to the Infoweb such as the Countywide Communication Strategy, Code of Ethics and other major topics. OPA also envisions taking a more active role in managing content on major topics such as the environment and transportation.

### **Planning and Development**

OPA and DIT are jointly planning the County's new Web site and new Infoweb. These two major projects are significant because they will propel the County into a new age of Web content. Short-term and long-term needs are being addressed and efficient solutions are being discussed and implemented. OPA's Web content line of business and the County's line of business are affected by these new Web sites because they must be user-friendly and easy to access.

### **Public Outreach**

Testing and assessing Web sites constantly are key pillars to successful Web sites. OPA will take the lead in public outreach for County Web pages through online surveys, focus groups and one-on-one usability tests. This outreach is critical to planning and development because actually watching users test a product leads to important changes that make the product more effective and efficient.

### **Coordinating Web Content**

OPA's unique role as the County's central communications office extends to the Web. OPA knows the big picture of the County and conveys this on the Web through timely publishing of key information and coordinating content between agencies that may be working on the same topic and not be aware that there are relevant Web pages elsewhere. As the County continues to break down stovepipes among agencies, the Web coordinating role only will become more important, just as it has become critical for successful media relations. OPA envisions bringing together representative Web staff to form an advisory council to plan and coordinate more effectively.

### **Education and Training**

As cited earlier, other County staff members publish content to the public Web site and Infoweb. However, the level of training, the priority of Web content in their job portfolios and the intuition to link other County efforts together is inconsistent. OPA has started to take the critical steps necessary to educate and train County staff to publish Web content more effectively. These efforts will increase during the next few years. The return on investment in education and training will tie into satisfaction levels. Throughout the last six years, the levels of satisfaction with the County Web site have decreased:

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Satisfaction Levels	February 2001	August 2007
Very	32 percent	31 percent
Moderately/Somewhat	52 percent	43 percent
Not Very	5 percent	19 percent
Not At All	3 percent	7 percent
Do Not Use the Site	8 percent	n/a

Improving Web satisfaction requires a multifaceted effort which must include educating and training County Web content providers. Online resources are now available on the Infoweb, but online training modules, in-person seminars and other opportunities are envisioned.

### **Emergency Information**

According to the County's Emergency Operations Plan, OPA is mandated as the lead communications agency during major emergencies. OPA uses the Web as a primary method. Emergency information was published to the Web site for Hurricane Isabel, Huntington flooding, Tropical Storm Ernesto, sniper attacks and anthrax. In addition, the County's emergency information Web pages have been enhanced. OPA Web content staff is available at any hour to publish critical information. On a regional level, one major emergency Web-based initiative that OPA plans to lead is the development of an online Joint Information Center (JIC) for regional communications. OPA also maintains the National Capital Region's Make a Plan Web site.

### **Policy**

OPA — in consultation with the Deputy County Executive for Information, the E-Gov Committee and DIT — provides the policy backbone for the County's Web content. Conversely, DIT consults with OPA about the technical standards. The Public Web Site Content Policy is outlined in Procedural Memorandum No. 13-04. OPA will lead efforts to develop a content policy for the new Infoweb by mid-2009.

### **Internal Communications**

Currently, OPA maintains key portions of the Infoweb such as the Countywide Communication Strategy, Code of Ethics, all County Executive pages and other pages. A more robust Intranet is planned in 2008-09 and OPA's role is expected to expand to include publishing a daily news home page for employees and developing new content that helps employees become more efficient and effective.

### **Publishing Social Media**

The Internet evolves every day with new Web sites, standards and trends. OPA is keeping up to date with these changes, especially changes in social media such as blogs, podcasts and wikis. OPA has taken the lead on some social media efforts already, including podcasts. From April 2007 to August 2007, 32 podcasts were created in partnership with Channel 16. Podcasting clearly moves the County's mission forward because residents now have another option to access County information. The County is taking advantage of social media and communicating beyond traditional ways.

### **New Technologies Research**

OPA researches and analyzes new technologies to make the agency more efficient. For example, the use of automated electronic mailing lists is currently being researched. The automated electronic mailing lists will allow the agency to disseminate information quickly and easily to a large population, hence improving both the service provided and the efficiency of the agency.

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## Other Languages

According to the 2006 “Anticipating the Future” study, 39 percent of the Fairfax County population may speak a language other than English at home by 2010. Web content must keep pace so residents can continue to access information, especially life safety information. OPA is taking the lead through a Request for Proposal to develop a uniform process for agencies to accurately publish Web content in other languages.

## ► Method of Service Provision

Service provided directly by County employees.

Regular Agency Hours of Operation: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday; OPA staff members are on-call 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

## ► Mandate Information

There is no federal or state mandate for this LOB.

## 13-07: Emergency Communications and Planning

<i>Fund/Agency: 001/13</i>		<i>Office of Public Affairs</i>	
<b>LOB #: 13-07</b>		<b><i>Emergency Communications and Planning</i></b>	
Personnel Services			\$76,513
Operating Expenses			\$17,564
Recovered Costs			(\$10,647)
Capital Equipment			\$0
<b>Total LOB Cost:</b>			\$83,430
Federal Revenue			\$0
State Revenue			\$0
User Fee Revenue			\$0
Other Revenue			\$0
<b>Total Revenue:</b>			\$0
<b>Net LOB Cost:</b>			\$83,430
Positions/SYE involved in the delivery of this LOB			1 / 1.0

## ► LOB Summary

### Emergency Communications

The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) is the lead agency in providing emergency public information to residents and businesses in the County and employees of Fairfax County Government.

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According to the *Fairfax County Emergency Operations Plan*, this emergency communications task is defined as Emergency Support Function (ESF) 15: External Affairs. As lead agency for ESF 15, OPA has a mission:

*“To provide timely and accurate information to the public, the media, the private sector, and Fairfax County elected officials and employees during emergencies or threatened emergencies and to provide the protective action guidance as appropriate in order to save lives and protect property.”*

The Emergency Operations Plan also states that “when more than two County agencies are involved in emergency operations, the Office of Public Affairs, as the lead agency of ESF 15, will serve as the primary point-of-contact for release of information to the media and public.”

In the event of a mass fatality incident (as detailed in the *Fairfax County Emergency Operations Plan*), ESF 15 also provides support to the Family Assistance Center (FAC) to include family and media briefings, Web site postings, news releases, and other public information efforts, and facilitates communications with family members.

Emergency communications encompasses:

- Crisis Communications – Planning appropriate actions and coordinating the dissemination of information in response to high-profile or sensitive issues such as on-the-job employee death or employee actions that result in criminal charges.
- Risk Communications – Providing the public with information that reduces anxiety and fear and also provides suggestions for planning that will assist in responding to an emergency event (or pending crisis). Risk communications attempts to do no harm to the current situation, eases public concern and provides guidance on how to respond to the situation.
- Emergency Situations – Predicted or actual events that have the potential to affect the safety, health and welfare of the population such as drinking water contamination or wide-spread exposure to infectious disease or hazardous materials.
- Staff Support in Emergency Events – Consulting with other agencies to assist in planning actions and collecting, analyzing and disseminating key information to residents, employees and media during emergency or critical incidents.
- Weather Alerts – Predicted or actual weather events such as hurricanes, tornadoes, severe snow, ice and ozone action days.

### **County Spokesperson**

The Director of OPA serves as the County’s spokesperson on a day-to-day basis. During emergencies, the OPA Director can also serve in this role, or depending on the level of the incident, may relinquish that role to and provide support and guidance for either the elected Chairman of the Board of Supervisors or the County Executive (or designee). During emergency events, the OPA Director also serves as a member of the County’s Emergency Management Team consulting with the County Executive and senior management to assist in planning the County’s emergency response. The OPA Director is on call 24/7 to respond to emergencies and handle media inquiries.

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## **Emergency Information Officer**

During emergency events, the OPA Emergency Information Officer serves as operations lead for OPA staff in the response to the incident. This position also provides support to the OPA Director, Chairman's Office, County Executive and other agencies in responding to emergency incidents. The OPA Emergency Information Officer (Public Safety Information Officer IV) is a dedicated position in support of emergency communications and emergency planning functions for the agency, as well as the County.

## **OPA Staff**

Classified as "essential personnel" during times of crisis, OPA staff are available and prepared to respond to emergencies 24 hours a day. Each week, OPA assembles a "Red/Blue" team staffing plan with every member of the OPA staff assigned to an emergency role for a 12-hour shift – either the red team (first to respond) or the blue team (second 12-hour shift). On a weekly basis, OPA staff know their roles and responsibilities for emergency communications and are expected to respond to the call if necessary.

## **NIMS and ICS**

All OPA staff are trained in basic National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Management System (ICS) courses – ICS 100, ICS 200, ICS 700 and ICS 800. Additional OPA personnel, such as the Emergency Information Officer and other senior level management staff, have also been trained in higher level courses, such as ICS 232: Effective Communication; ICS 300: Intermediate ICS for Expanding Events; and ICS 400: Advanced ICS for Command and General Staff, Complex Incidents and MACS.

## **WebEOC**

During emergencies, OPA uses the WebEOC product – as does every other County agency – for incident management tracking and resource requests. All OPA staff are trained in WebEOC and are capable of filling WebEOC/admin positions in the Alternate Emergency Operations Center (AEOC), the Emergency Information Line Call Center or the OPA Operations Center. Because the software is primarily used for emergency management, OPA is also investigating funding and solutions to establish a Virtual Joint Information Center (JIC).

## **Emergency Planning and Exercises**

The agency's Emergency Information Officer serves on numerous countywide efforts in the area of emergency preparedness as well as emergency planning and exercise groups. OPA, because of its lead role in coordinating emergency communications for the County, is one of the few County agencies that is most often involved in emergency exercises, real-world events and "activation" of the AEOC. This position most recently served on the countywide Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP) Committee and was a part of the team that developed the Medical Needs/Social Needs Registry (as well as the communication plan for the program), served on the Government Center Emergency Response Open House planning team and was a member of the change team that led in the transition of the County's 9-1-1 Center from within the Police Department to a stand-alone County agency — the Department of Public Safety Communications.

The Emergency Information Officer (and other OPA staff) is involved in all County tabletop and functional exercises, such as the Family Assistance Center exercise, the Cities Readiness Initiative exercise (Health Department), both Patriot Challenge exercises, etc. In addition, the OPA Director, as Chair of the National Capital Region's Emergency Support Function 15, was the only

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communicator that was allowed to participate in a September 2007 NCR “Senior Leaders Seminar” to discuss emergency “events of regional significance.”

OPA staff has also participated in the facility design process for the Public Safety and Transportation Operations Center (PSTOC) to ensure that the resources required to support the Public Information Officer (PIO) function of the *Fairfax County Emergency Operations Plan* were included in the final design of the new state-of-the-art facility.

## **Emergency Support Function (ESF) 15: External Affairs**

Recent events such as the April 16, 2007, shootings at Virginia Tech, the anthrax scare and the D.C. sniper shootings emphasize the need to have trained personnel ready to respond to the incident, but also to communicate life safety and risk communication messages to county residents.

As outlined in the *Fairfax County Emergency Operations Plan*, OPA is responsible for Emergency Support Function (ESF) 15: External Affairs, which includes supervising the dissemination of emergency public information, coordinating and disseminating news releases, serving as the lead spokesperson for release of information to the public and the media, and supervising the operation of the Fairfax County Government Emergency Information Line (rumor control system).

ESF 15 encompasses the full range of external affairs functions including public information, community relations and governmental affairs:

- Public information includes providing incident-related information through the media and other sources to individuals, families, businesses and industries directly or indirectly affected by the incident;
- Community relations activities include identifying and communicating with community leaders (e.g., grass roots, political, religious, business, labor and ethnic) and neighborhood advocacy groups to ensure a rapid dissemination of information, identify unmet needs and establish an ongoing dialogue and information exchange; and
- Government affairs includes establishing and maintaining contact with the members of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and legislative offices representing the affected areas to provide information on the incident and the status of response and recovery activities. It also includes coordinating responses to inquiries from the Board of Supervisors and elected officials.

## **PIO Corps**

A component of ESF 15 is the County PIO Corps, simply defined as all County government Public Information Officers. As the lead for ESF 15: External Affairs, OPA must perform numerous functions during an emergency event or activation of the Alternate Emergency Operations Center (soon to be the EOC when the Public Safety and Transportation Operations Center is complete), including:

- Staffing and supervising 20-plus volunteer call-takers for the Emergency Information Line.
- Staffing the Alternate Emergency Operations Center (five staff positions).
- Staffing the OPA Operations Center.

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- Providing staff support as needed to a local/regional Joint Information Center (JIC) and/or Virtual JIC.
- Staffing and/or providing support to field PIO's at multiple locations.

Because of these and other responsibilities, OPA staff are often taxed. That's why the PIO Corps was established. As needed during emergencies, the Director of OPA can assign any County PIO to work the emergency incident. That PIO remains an employee of his/her agency, but for the duration of the event, is assigned to emergency communications functions as directed by the Director of OPA.

### Emergency Communication Tools

The Office of Public Affairs disseminates emergency communications to various audiences using numerous methods including:

- ♦ Media outlets
- ♦ Press Room
- ♦ County Web Site
- ♦ Medical Needs/Social Needs Registry
- ♦ RSS Feeds
- ♦ Health and Safety Podcast
- ♦ Channel 16
- ♦ Emergency Messaging System
- ♦ Emergency Information Line
- ♦ 703-FAIRFAX (324-7329)
- ♦ Community Emergency Alert Network (CEAN)
- ♦ Emergency Alert Network (EAN)
- ♦ ESF 15 Business/Nonprofit Update
- ♦ Community Meetings
- ♦ Door-to-Door Contact
- ♦ Joint Information Center (JIC)
- ♦ Virtual JIC
- ♦ 1670 AM Radio

324-SNOW (7669), 246-SNOW (7669) and 87-SNOW-FFX1 (1-877-669-3391)

Through the use of these tools and resources, OPA is able to provide emergency communications to County residents, businesses and nonprofit organizations, the media, and the County's workforce. A more detailed explanation of each follows:

- **Media outlets** – A major role of OPA is to distribute emergency communications to the media, which become a partner to the County in broadcasting life safety and property conservation messages to County residents. OPA maintains media databases and contact information on redundant systems to maintain the ability to contact the media during an emergency. OPA sends news releases, media advisories, photo releases and also schedules media briefings and news conferences as needed during an emergency.
- **Press Room** – While not a communications tool, the County Press Room, located in Suite 158 of the Government Center, is an important part of OPA's emergency information program. Designed as a location for members of the media to work on a day-to-day basis, the Press Room serves during emergencies as a location for media to position themselves in a safe and secure environment where they will be able to cover the story and have access to County spokespersons and agency heads involved with the incident. Located almost directly across from the Alternate Emergency Operations Center, the Press Room features a briefing



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area complete with broadcast-quality television lighting, podium, audio/visual system and sound system designed so that media can easily record briefings and presentations.

- **County Web Site** – With the popularity of the Internet, OPA redesigned the County’s Emergency Information Web page during National Preparedness Month (September 2007) to be more user friendly and easier to read. The Web is critical for information dissemination to such a “wired” community as Fairfax County. In addition to a specific Emergency Information Page, OPA posts emergency communications to the home page of the County Web site during severe weather events and other emergencies. From this home page announcement, Web visitors have the opportunity to click to another more detailed page about the current situation that features detailed information about the incident, where to find assistance, numbers to call, etc.
- **Medical Needs/Social Needs Registry** – A part of the County’s Web site is the newly created Medial Needs/Social Needs Registry, an online registration area where individuals with medical needs and organizations serving people with social needs can pre-identify themselves to the County so that the County can communicate with them during an emergency. OPA was part of the committee that created this registry and also developed the communication plan for this new service launched in September 2007.
- **RSS Feeds** – RSS, which stands for “Really Simple Syndication,” is a way to publish frequently updated content such as news headlines or podcasts making it possible for people to keep up with their favorite Web sites in an automated manner that’s easier than checking them manually. In addition to the generic RSS feeds of County news releases, OPA has created an emergency news RSS feed as a way to quickly “push” emergency information to County residents, media, business, nonprofits and other interested audiences that sign up to receive the feeds through their RSS reader.
- **Health and Safety Podcast** – The Health and Safety podcast is a tool designed to present emergency preparedness information, but can also be used during an emergency incident. The podcast is produced on average twice monthly and features various emergency preparedness news and information from the Office of Emergency Management, the Police Department, Fire and Rescue Department and the Health Department. The OPA Emergency Information Officer writes and records this podcast which can be listened to via the County’s Web site or downloaded and listed to on a portable device, such as an iPod.
- **Channel 16** – OPA uses the County government’s Channel 16 to disseminate emergency information through “crawl” messages that scroll across the top of the screen; OPA also has the ability in a severe emergency situation to broadcast a full screen of life safety information for Channel 16 viewers.
- **Emergency Messaging System** – OPA has the ability to override the entire County cable television network in the event of a severe emergency event. This is in addition to the ability to broadcast messages on Channel 16.
- **Emergency Information Line** – The County’s Emergency Information Line (703-817-7771) features three pre-recorded emergency preparedness messages callers can

**FAIRFAX COUNTY 703-817-7771**  
**EMERGENCY**  
**INFORMATION LINE**

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listen to. During an incident, the welcome message includes updates on the situation with instructions and information. The line is answered during normal business hours (8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) and during an emergency situation, OPA works with the Facilities Management Department and the Department of Information Technology to establish a Call Center in conference rooms 2/3 of the County Government Center. This process takes approximately 90 minutes as all phone lines, power cords, etc. are pre-wired in the room. Volunteer call-takers augment OPA staff in providing emergency information to residents through 20 telephone lines for incoming calls.

- **324-SNOW (7669), 246-SNOW (7669) and 87-SNOW-FFX1 (1-877-669-3391)** – These dedicated phone lines feature automated messages that are recorded by OPA staff to communicate emergency closure and leave information to the County’s workforce. Originally used just for snow events, these lines are utilized anytime there is an emergency event requiring emergency communications to County employees.
- **703-FAIRFAX (324-7329)** – This day-to-day information and referral line, staffed by OPA, is also used during emergency events. Depending on the time of the incident or emergency event, the line will either be staffed (8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) or feature a recorded message with emergency information and resources residents can use to get more details.
- **Community Emergency Alert Network (CEAN)**  
– The CEAN delivers important emergency alerts, notifications and updates during a major crisis or emergency, in addition to day-to-day notices about weather and traffic. Messages are delivered to e-mail accounts, cell phones, text pagers, satellite phones and wireless devices.
- **Emergency Alert Network (EAN)** – Similar to the CEAN, the EAN is the County’s internal alerting and communication tool for County employees.
- **ESF 15 Business/Nonprofit Update Newsletter** – OPA created and maintains a list of business and nonprofit organization contacts throughout the County and produces a monthly e-mail newsletter – the ESF 15 Business/Nonprofit Update. This newsletter includes information of interest for ESF 15, as well as articles of interest from national media, upcoming trainings and a section featuring emergency preparedness information and news.
- **Community Meetings** – An important part of healing within a community is the ability to come together and hear the latest news about an incident affecting their neighborhood. As ESF 15 lead, OPA is responsible for organizing these events. This includes ensuring representatives from all related County agencies are present, coordinating the meeting location and time with the Chairman and the Supervisor of the Magisterial District the emergency occurred in, promoting and publicizing the event, scheduling transportation services as needed, working with the media covering the event, etc.
- **Door-to-Door Contact** – Many times, the most efficient method of communicating with a targeted geographic area is the door-to-door delivery of news and information to County residents. OPA coordinates production of the message and then works with public safety



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agencies – most often the Fire and Rescue Department and the Police Department – to walk a neighborhood to deliver critical life safety/property conservation messages house by house.

- **Joint Information Center (JIC)** – Should an emergency event include adjacent jurisdictions or involve the National Capital Region, a Joint Information Center is normally established. A JIC is a physical location where communicators from various agencies and disciplines gather to craft messages, talking points, news releases and coordinate emergency communication efforts. OPA will staff any JIC that is established.
- **Virtual JIC** – OPA is working to establish a Virtual JIC, which will enable more communicators to be involved in an emergency response since they will be able to log into a Virtual JIC from wherever they may be regardless of the day or time. Because more communicators can access a Virtual JIC than can physically travel to a traditional JIC, more communicators will be able to provide input and experience into developing emergency communications for County residents, employees and the media. The Virtual JIC project is a proposed County Fund 104 project in partnership with the Department of Information Technology.
- **1670 AM Radio** – OPA is constantly in search of new methods to deliver emergency communications. As such, OPA established 1670 AM, “Emergency Radio for Fairfax County” as a means to get emergency news and information to County residents via that medium. Following Hurricane Isabel, the County learned that commercial radio outlets simply could not broadcast the amount and depth of information our residents needed; and since this area’s media serve the National Capital Region – which includes Northern Virginia, the District of Columbia and Southern Maryland – many jurisdictions had competing messages that caused confusion for many residents. 1670 AM is a collection of low-power AM radio signals that broadcast within a three- to five-mile radius of each signal location. Because of the size of the County, a collection of signals needed to be developed. By fall 2007, 10 broadcast signals have been established, with an 11th signal being planned for installation in 2008. The use of 1670 AM will provide the ability of highly localized “targeted” emergency communications as well as more broad based emergency communication to large parts of or even the entire County by utilizing the GPS component of the system.



### **Regional Emergency Support Function 15 (External Affairs)**

In addition to being responsible for the County’s emergency communication functions, the Director of OPA serves as Chair of both the Northern Virginia Region’s Public Information Officers, as well as the National Capital Region’s (NCR) Regional Emergency Support Function (RESF) 15: External Affairs, which serves the same function as the County’s ESF 15 except on a regional basis across the whole of the NCR.

As head of RESF 15, the Director of OPA is the only NCR communicator allowed access to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s “NICCL” line public affairs conference calls and is responsible for coordinating emergency communications across the region. Various OPA staff also assist regionally in the area of communications, as OPA manages the RESF 15 Web portal for

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communicators, plans monthly RESF 15 meetings and emergency exercises, and manages content for the regional emergency preparedness Web site “Be Ready. Make a Plan” ([www.makeaplan.org](http://www.makeaplan.org)).

### **Conclusion**

Unfortunately, “real world” emergency events are increasing every year. And to better prepare, County agencies and affiliate organizations are conducting an ever-increasing number of emergency exercises and planning sessions each year.

In the OPA Strategic Plan: 2003-2007, OPA identified as one of six critical issues “the need to expand emergency/crisis communications.” Because the need to communicate with County residents, businesses, nonprofits, the media and employees during emergency events is so critical, this identified need to continually improve on emergency/crisis communications means an increasing need to expand Fairfax County’s Emergency Support Function 15: External Affairs.

Much has been done in the area of emergency communication; however, more can still be accomplished. As lead agency for ESF 15, the Fairfax County Office of Public Affairs is committed to serving the County in the delivery of emergency communication.

### **► Method of Service Provision**

Service provided directly by County employees.

Regular Agency Hours of Operation: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday; OPA staff members are on-call 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

### **► Mandate Information**

There is no federal or state mandate for this LOB.

## **13-08: Agency Planning and Organizational Development**

<b>Fund/Agency: 001/13</b>	
<b>Office of Public Affairs</b>	
<b>LOB #: 13-08</b>	<b>Agency Planning and Organizational Development</b>
Personnel Services	\$153,025
Operating Expenses	\$35,129
Recovered Costs	(\$21,295)
Capital Equipment	\$0
<b>Total LOB Cost:</b>	<b>\$166,859</b>
Federal Revenue	\$0
State Revenue	\$0
User Fee Revenue	\$0
Other Revenue	\$0
<b>Total Revenue:</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Net LOB Cost:</b>	<b>\$166,859</b>
Positions/SYE involved in the delivery of this LOB	2 / 2.0

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## ► LOB Summary

Agency Planning and Organizational Development are both processes and outcomes and are critical components in the response to continuing demand for accountability and good governance. There is a significant increased demand for programs, services and products from stakeholders; both the public and employees who are more active and vocal today. There is heightened uncertainty about the future and significant new concerns in the face of the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001. There is a need to integrate plans of many different kinds — strategic, budget, information technology, human resource planning, communications, emergency management and financial, as well as short-term action plans (e.g., virtual Joint Information Center). The Agency Planning and Organizational Development Line of Business will emphasize both strategic and human resource planning as critical success factors in the implementation and integration of all other agency planning.

A strong infrastructure resulting from Agency Planning and Organizational Development enables an agency to run effectively and efficiently and benefits the entire organization. It ensures the optimum application of both financial and human resources in providing services for which the agency is responsible. The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) has newly dedicated resources to the coordination and management of operations, planning and training as a result of its reorganization. This resource provides leadership to the agency response to the mandated Countywide strategic planning process using the Balanced Scorecard methodology. This process renders a strategy map deliverable intended to ensure Countywide strategic planning consistency to support efforts to remain a High Performance Organization.

### **Operations, Planning and Training Activities and Deliverables:**

- **Strategic Planning Strategy Map**

The strategy map will help OPA to better understand the cause and effect of its activities as they relate to the accomplishment of OPA's mission. It is an ongoing process that supports OPA's results-based decision making, planning and budgeting.

- **Employee Development: Human Capital Management**

People are an agency's most important organizational asset. The agency's people define its character, affect its capacity to perform and represent the knowledge base of the organization. Strategic human capital management is at the center of any effort to transform the agency's culture to become less hierarchical, process-oriented, stovepipe and inwardly focused and more flat, results-oriented, integrated and externally (customer) focused. OPA will focus on addressing three strategic challenges of human capital management: (1) leadership, continuity and succession planning; (2) organizational alignment; (3) results-oriented culture. OPA training initiatives will use the Countywide Competency Map for Learning as its source document. Because OPA does not function in a stand-alone mode, collaboration with key stakeholders and Human Resources is critical to the agency's success.

- **Workforce Analysis: Workforce Planning and Deployment**

Global trends that are impacting any human resource initiative are: aging of the population, baby boomers redefining the idea of retirement; harnessing technology to change the human resource function; proliferating rules and regulations; and number of people with advanced degrees. Based on this current environment, OPA will develop a proactive workforce planning strategy that is linked to the agency's strategic program and planning efforts by identifying current and future human capital needs, including the size of the workforce, its

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deployment across the organization, and the competencies needed to produce a resident-centered, results-oriented agency. Proactive planning benefits OPA's management by anticipating and planning for replacement of low competencies and institutional knowledge. OPA's workforce planning will strive to avoid creation of additional organizational layers and redundant operations and to maintain the right balance of supervisor/non-supervisor positions supporting the County's Human Resources Division's mission of "having the right number of people in the right jobs with the right competencies at the right time."

- **Agency Budget**

OPA's Financial Operations Manager prepares, justifies and executes the agency budget and third quarter review. Also, provides monthly spreadsheets that give detailed information about agency expenditures and groups the fiscal information by project. The spreadsheets give the agency leadership team a clear financial picture for the agency and allows for the more efficient management of agency resources.

- **Dissemination Methods Research**

OPA staff researches and analyzes information dissemination methods. As a result of one such research project, the agency now has the capability to send "blast faxes" using an outside vendor. This capability allows for the faster distribution of information to a large population and frees up valuable staff time, allowing for greater efficiency.

- **Countywide PIO Training**

OPA is developing a comprehensive training program that all Public Information Officers and Communication Specialists in the County must adhere to. The program will identify a list of core competencies that will ensure all County communicators have basic training in areas such as media relations, public speaking, writing, editing, publication layout and design, and event planning.

### ► **Method of Service Provision**

Service provided directly by County employees.

Regular Agency Hours of Operation: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday; OPA staff members are on-call 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

### ► **Mandate Information**

There is no federal or state mandate for this LOB.

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## **AGENCY PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

### Objectives

- To provide communications consulting services to county agencies without public information officers while maintaining 90 percent or higher satisfaction rating.
- To provide requested information to residents contacting customer service staff and to disseminate useful information to the general public, while maintaining 90 percent or higher satisfaction rating.
- To disseminate useful information to the media that earns an 90 percent or higher satisfaction rating.

Indicator	Prior Year Actuals		Current Estimate	Future Estimate	LOB Reference Number
	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Estimate/Actual	FY 2008	FY 2009	
Output:					
Project hours in support of communication consulting services to other agencies	5,141	5,300 / 5,998	5,350	5,500	13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07,
Customer service interactions with the general public	118,998	140,000 / 172,105	175,000	175,000	13-08 13-04, 13-05, 13-06,
New/existing Web pages created, reviewed or updated	2,848	3,200 / 3,987	3,200	3,200	13-07
Publication issues (print and electronic)	373	358 / 352	358	360	13-01
News releases produced	328	350 / 331	360	400	13-04
Efficiency:					
Consulting hours per agency assisted	177	183 / 207	184	190	13-02, 13-05
Customer service hours per customer assisted	0.05	0.05 / 0.06	0.05	0.05	13-03
Visitors to the OPA Web pages per hour spent maintaining the site	1,457.97	1,406.25 / 1,496.57	1,406.25	1,406.25	13-06 13-01,
Printed/online news articles generated by the media about Fairfax County as the result of dissemination of information by OPA per news release.	1.6	1.5 / 1.0	1.5	1.5	13-02, 13-04, 13-05, 13-07

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Indicator	Prior Year Actuals		Current Estimate	Future Estimate	LOB Reference Number
	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Estimate/Actual	FY 2008	FY 2009	
Service Quality:					
Average satisfaction with OPA's services support as assessed by customers (agencies, general public, media)	92%	90% / 93%	90%	90%	13-03 13-04, 13-05
Percent of information requests from the general public answered within a day	95%	95% / 96%	95%	95%	13-03
Percent information requests from the media answered within a day	97%	95% / 96%	95%	95%	13-04
Outcome:					
Percentage rating of user satisfaction for consulting services	94%	90% / 93%	90%	90%	13-05, 13-08
Percentage rating of user satisfaction for information provided to the general public	94%	90% / 93%	90%	90%	13-03, 13-08
Percentage rating of user satisfaction for services to the media	90%	90% / 93%	90%	90%	13-04, 13-08

Note: The Director's time is not included in any of the performance indicators.