



NEWS FROM

CITY CONTROLLER LAURA CHICK

City Hall East, Room 300, 200 N. Main St., Los Angeles, CA 90012

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, July 14, 2008

CHICK FINDS DEFICIENCIES IN AUDIT OF CITY'S DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Los Angeles-- City Controller Laura Chick has found that the City lacks key components in its emergency and disaster preparedness

“The City of Los Angeles certainly has suffered from its share of natural disasters, such as earthquakes, fires and flash floods. Unfortunately, since 2001 we also know that terrorist attacks are now additional potential man-made disasters. It is only a matter of time before we face the next large-scale emergency and we must be better prepared than we are now,” said Chick who released an audit of the City’s emergency planning efforts and disaster preparedness.

“This audit was conducted to ask and answer the question: Is the City of Los Angeles well prepared for a major emergency? How can we say the City is well prepared when it doesn’t even have an overarching strategy that coordinates all the necessary pieces for a disaster recovery plan? How can we say the City is prepared when there is no follow-through to correct problems that are identified during training exercises? ,” said Chick.

“With an utterance of a code word, the City’s emergency plans should click inside the City as well as coordinating with leaders in the residential and business communities and key non-profits such as the Red Cross. To date there is no integrated, comprehensive strategy that accomplishes this,” said Chick.

The Chick Disaster Preparedness Report found the following deficiencies in the City:

- Each City Department has its own emergency plan and many have not been updated in years, are not high-quality and don’t meet national standards.
- Emergency preparedness exercises and training are not well coordinated or planned and corrective actions are not tracked or followed for implementation.

-more-

Chick Report
Add-1-1-1-1-1

- Administration of about \$200 million in Homeland Security and other public safety grants has been hampered by weak program management, excessive delays in spending the money, and not having an outcome assessment of the overall grant program performance.
- The City's collaboration with other government, private and non-profit entities, including the Red Cross, needs to be strengthened.

"While a 2006 National Peer Review on plan sufficiency found Los Angeles at the top of state and national cities, it also made numerous recommendations for needed improvement. The City still has not implemented many of those recommendations," said Chick.

"An essential role of government is to ensure the safety of its residents, being prepared for a major emergency is paramount in providing that protection. It is now up to us, the elected leadership of Los Angeles, to take swift and effective action to assure that we are absolutely ready to meet any emergency or disaster that may come our way," concluded Chick.

The Chick Disaster Preparedness Report can be accessed at her web-site at www.lacity.org/ctr.

###