

Facility Design & Consulting

Crawford & Associates, LLC offers Emergency Operations Center (EOC), Crisis Information Management System (CIMS), Public Safety design and consulting services. Several Federal, State, Local Government and Corporate clients have taken advantage of our design services performed by our team members. Even with the best systems in the world, a poor facility design can adversely affect EOC operations. Crawford & Associates, LLC can work with you to document requirements, evaluate systems and infrastructure, and recommend process and facility improvements on everything from acoustics to backup power. Whether building a new EOC or renovating an existing facility, we can offer suggestions to you or your Architectural & Engineering firm that will enhance any project. Our onsite design reviews begin with an in-brief of local officials. A facility walk-through normally follows where we document existing systems and equipment and obtain an understanding of their use. Next, we interview personnel to learn how the facility functions during routine and high-density operations. Working with the customer, we identify systems and applications that are candidates for integration. The facility itself is evaluated to address the following points:

- Is it large enough to support planned operations? Can the room be modified to support a large audio-visual solution or projection system?



- Is lighting adequate and appropriate for the task? Depending on the type of display system installed, florescent lighting can degrade or 'wash out' projected images.
- Is raised access flooring necessary to support electrical or premise wiring? This not only enhances a facility's overall appearance (hides wires, cables, junction boxes, etc.), it also simplifies the process of modifying a room as missions or support systems change.
- Are power and universal wiring drops adequate? Is the power conditioned? What type of emergency power is available and to what level of redundancy (individual or centralized UPS, backup generators, etc.). Are critical systems, and only critical systems, plugged into emergency power outlets that have been clearly identified for this purpose? Is power transfer automatic or manual?
- Is noise an issue during full or partial activations? Sound abatement through carpeting and acoustic wall panels may be appropriate.
- What is communication like within a room? Do phones ring? Are update briefings conducted via Public Address, or are voice conferencing systems used? Are there any other audible devices routinely used which may disrupt operations?

- Has ergonomics been considered? Is the space allocated to each responder adequate? Is seating fully adjustable? Comfort and support are key issues during protracted activations.
- Have group roles and responsibilities been evaluated with adjacency requirements in mind?
- How does information flow into and within a room or facility? How is it documented, tracked, and shared?
- Do traffic patterns within a facility hinder operations?
- Does the EOC have space, whether in one large room or complex of rooms, for an operations area (to perform emergency response and management functions), conference/media room (for meetings and press briefings), communications room (for centralized facsimiles, radios, and video teleconferencing [VTC]), and secure communications (secure voice, facsimile, and VTC)?
- What security features, such as access controls, barriers, secure areas, and surveillance devices, are required?
- Are Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems centrally (building-wide) or locally managed?

- Can EOC activation and operations be tailored to the scale of emergency response activities? (For example, a small-scale event might require the activation of fewer staff and capabilities, and the conduct of limited emergency response operations; a large-scale event, the activation of all staff and capabilities, and the conduct of extensive emergency response operations.)

These and other topics are examined during every design review. After analyzing the information collected, we discuss our findings with the customer and ultimately provide a summary of recommended improvement areas. Our intent is to enhance a customer's overall emergency response capability. We take a macro view of the entire system to ensure the tools used (i.e., hardware, software, internal processes, etc.) are consistent with sound Conduct of Operation practices.