PREFACE: Student’spersonal commentary:

This Continuity of Operations Plan has been constructed as a first step in the “Plan, Do, Check, Act” cycle mentioned in the NFPA 1600 for what I imagine I might create if I were a Continuity of Operations “consultant”working with the Risk committee of the Board of Directors of Casey’s General Stores, Inc.My intent is to persuade them of the wisdom and economic benefit to develop a rigorous – andvigorous - plan to prepare their stores to survive – and even thrive despite - the likely disasters of their region. Moreover, with Casey’s strong commitment to their respective communities, I confidently believe that implementing this COOP effort would result in Casey’s developing a reputation as a bulwark of stability, safety, and resilience throughout the region.

My imagination took flight in considering which entity to select when I recalled an inspiring Wall Street Journal article in 2011 about Waffle House andthe “Waffle House Index”, designated as such by FEMA director Craig Fugate.

(See Bauerlein, V. [2011 Sep 1]. How to measure a storm’s fury one breakfast at a time. *Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved from https://www.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424053111904716604576542460736605364)

Director Fugate noted that the operational status of the local Waffle House operations, of which there are now more than 1650 restaurants open 24/7 in 25 states, is a dependable index of the severity of a disaster. He told The New York Times in 2012 about his “signature way of determining” how much aid a community needs after a disaster:

*If a Waffle House is damaged but open; keep driving. If it’s totally knocked out,that’s where you stop. …Waffle House has a very simple operational theory: get open. They never close. They run 24 hours a day. They have a corporate philosophy that if there is a hurricane or a storm, they try and get their stores open. It don’t matter if they don’t have power, it don’t matter if you don’t have gas. They have procedures that if they can get a generator in there, they’ll get going. They’ll make coffee with bottled water.*

(See Chuck, E. [2013 Sep 23]. ‘The old FEMA is gone’: Craig Fugate’s cleaned-up FEMA. *NBC News*. Retrieved from http://www.nbcnews.com/news/other/old-fema-gone-craig-fugates-cleaned-fema-f4B11229783).

Waffle House restaurants predominate in the US Southeastern states where they are well-known as a haven during hurricane season. I wanted to identify a company that might replicate in the tornado country of the US Midwest what Waffle House has done in the South. I surveyed stores and restaurants that originated in Iowa and have expanded throughout the Midwest region to identify a company whose resources and culture might embrace such a challenge.

I selected Casey’s General Stores.

Casey’s has expanded from three small combined gas station-convenience stores in Iowa more than 50 years ago to more than 1900 stores in all Midwest states northeast to Ohio and southwest to Oklahoma. It is converting many of its stores to operate 24 hours/day. It has in-house bakeries to produce fresh donuts and pizza, with online pizza home delivery service. Profit margins from “Prepared Food and Fountain” are 4-5 times as high as for that of gasoline. Stores thrive in smaller communities, with 57% being in towns with populations less than 5000. Last year Casey’sbuilt its second distribution center in Terre Haute, Indiana with plans to build more stores within a second 700-mile radius around the Terre Haute distribution center as it has done around its original warehouse in Ankeny, Iowa. The company “self-supplies” its stores from its distribution centers on a weekly basis throughout the region, including fuel, with its own fleet of fuel tankers. Casey’s plans to add 100 more new stores nationwide this year.

(Levin, K. (2017 Feb 19). Casey’s eyes expansion in Northeast Oklahoma. *The Joplin Globe.* Retrieved from<http://www.joplinglobe.com/news/local_news/casey-s-eyes-expansion-in-northeast-oklahoma/article_ffdfef4e-ff9e-5980-84c4-8938936a6af1.html> )

As a private business, Casey’s provides to its communities the **critical infrastructure** of shelter and community gathering place with the potential of providing - in time of disaster - power by back-up generator, alternate potable water supply by filtration system, alternate sewer service by portapotties, and clearance of debris from roadways with on-site chainsaws.

As a for-profit private businessit providesto its communities the**key resources**of food, drinking water, fuel, basic supplies, and money from ATMs. With its focus on smaller communities, Casey’s is often the only source of these key resources for miles around.

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Here is the written proposal that I would develop with members of the Casey’s Risk Committee, based on the COOP Multi-Year Strategy and Program Management Plan Template. Without insider information I cannot reliably make accurate estimates of the budget needed or of the rate and direction that the Committee would want to proceed beyond this first organizing step. I would eagerly help the Risk Committee create a COOP team with anticipated enthusiastic support of Corporate Management and the Board of Directors. I would then work to facilitate implementation of the proposed first steps with individuals whose knowledge and expertise willidentify a long-term step-by step process to improve Casey’s disaster readiness.

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**I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The mission of Casey’s General Stores, Inc.(“Casey’s)is

1) to provide quality products at competitive prices with courteous service in clean stores at convenient locations;

2) to provide a work environment where employees are treated with respect, dignity, and honesty and where high performance is expected andrewarded;

3) to provide shareowners with a fair return on investment.

As of September 2016 we have 1940 corporate stores. We feel that our success has been attributed to our clean stores, restrooms, and the friendly employees who pride themselves in customer service. Our customers have come to know that inside each store they will find dedicated, helpful, and well-trained employees, exceptionally prepared food items, and a clean environment in which to shop.

Casey’s values are the 4 P’s:

POSITIVE: We believe a positive attitude and a passion for excellence can achieve anything.

POLITE: We believe treating everyone with dignity and respect, the way that we all want to be treated, is simply the right thing to do.

PROFESSIONAL: We believe in integrity and self-discipline: knowing and doing what is right, is the heart of our great team.

PROUD: We believe in our purpose to make the daily lives of our customers and their communities better.

To support our mission, Casey’s must be operationally prepared to continue operations during any type of threat or emergency, and to be able to effectively resume essential operations if they are interrupted. All of our stores are located in the Midwest region of the United States, which is susceptible to tornadoes, thunderstorms, extended periods of rain, flooding,ice storms, and severe winter snowstorms, with concomitant power outages and destruction of community infrastructure.Less likely natural disasters include earthquake, drought, landslide, and wildfire. Human-causedthreats(also less likely) include armed intruder/robber, motor vehicle crash, fuel explosion at gas pumps, fuel shortage, information systems failure, cybersecurity attack, utilities failure (power, water, sewer), hazardous material exposure, bomb threat, and civil disturbance.

Included in this responsibility is the requirement to formulate guidance and establish common objectives for Casey’s to use in developing a viable, executable Continuity Of Operations Plan (COOP). This document provides some strategic guidance, performance measures, and resource requirements of our Continuity of Operations Program.Casey’s will develop a program to implement the COOP for our stores throughout the multi-state region. We also will develop a plan to provide for the continuity of essential functions in the event of an emergency that prevents the use of Corporate Headquarters in Ankeny.

**II. INTRODUCTION**

This document contains strategy and program management concepts that we intend to use to ensure and improve Casey’s COOP capability over the next five years. It provides some objectives, performance measures and resource requirements to support the COO plan for FY-17 though FY-21.

**III. PURPOSE**

COOP planning is a good business practice and part of our fundamental mission as a private business committedto making Casey’s a great neighborhood place. With a vast majority of our stores situated in rural settings in towns across the Midwest, Casey’s values are rooted in a sense of belonging to these communities. Our stores are often the center of the community activities. Customers regularly enter our stores for directions or information about an event in town. Our customers give us a sense of purpose in our work and can be the basis for lasting relationships in support of the communities that we serve. True joy comes from helping others.

COOP planning will help ensure that even when disaster strikes, Casey’s willstill provide a safe, dependable, helpful, and functioning center for our communities. Today’s changing threat environment and recent emergencies, including local acts of nature, accidents, technological emergencies, civil unrest, and terrorist attacks, have increased the need for COOP capabilities and plans that enable businesses to continue their essential functions and services across a broad spectrum of emergencies.As of April 30, 2016Casey’s General Stores was comprised of 35,000 personnel (41% full-time, 59% part-time) and 1940 Stores.

**IV. AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES**

Authorities and References include

Casey’s General Stores 2016 Annual Report:https://www.caseys.com/media/cms/2016%20Caseys%20Annual%20Report.pdf

Casey’s website, with the Risk Committee Charter:<https://www.caseys.com/corporate-governance/risk-committee-charter>

FEMA Continuity of Operations (COOP) Multi-Year Strategy and Program Management Plan Template Guide:https://www.fema.gov/pdf/about/org/ncp/coop\_multi\_year\_plan.pdf

Continuity Plan Template and Instructions for Non-federal Governments; https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1389194640607-1a5f9a6d6557846f6e5924eea089f798/Non\_Federal\_Continuity\_Plan\_Template\_and\_Instructions.pdf

the Waffle House website <https://www.wafflehouse.com>

and media reports about the success of Waffle House in sustaining its disaster preparedness in the Southeastern US.https://www.wafflehouse.com/whcareers/culture-and-history

**V. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Risk Committee of the Board of Directors of Casey’s General Stores, Inc. (“Casey’s) has been appointed to assist the Board in overseeing Management’s identification and evaluation of Casey’s principal operational and business risks, including Casey’s risk management framework and the policies, procedures and practices to manage those risks. It meets at least four times a year. Risk assessment and risk management are the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer and Casey’s Management. The Risk Committee’s responsibilities are to oversee Casey’s risk management policies and procedures dealing with the identification and assessment of the principal operational and business risks facing Casey’s, whether internal or external in nature. These includefood safety; physical security and personal safety; vendor management; fleet safety; environmental matters – and most importantly for this COOplan --business continuity and disaster recovery.

The Risk Committee periodically receives and reviews reports and presentations from Casey’s Management on the status of its risk management program. It provides oversight of Casey’s crisis management framework, including its incident response plans. It periodically reviews Casey’s approach to risk assessments and mitigation strategies with the Board of Directors.

**VI. SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC PLANNING OBJECTIVES**

This section defines the strategic planning objectives of Casey’s COOP program. The COOP strategic planning objectives were developed by utilizing an all-hazards planning approach to ensure that essential functions are continued regardless of the type of emergency. These strategic planning objectives are broad statements identifying the desired achievements of the projects. The objectives do not necessarily need to be measurable and tend to be general; however,they will be used to derive the performance measures, enabling tasks, and resource requirements.

These have been selected from the list of Federal Preparedness Circular 65 Objectives of Viable COOP programs:

1) Ensuring the performance of Casey’s essential functions/operations

2) Reducing loss of life, minimizing damage and losses

3) Ensuring a successful succession for leadership in the event a disruption renders Casey’s leadership unable, unavailable, or incapable performing their responsibilities

4) Reducing or mitigating disruptions to operations

5) Ensuring that alternate facilities are available from which to continue to perform their essential functions

6) Protecting essential facilities, equipment, vital records, and other assets

7) Achieving a timely and orderly recovery from a COOP situation and maintenance of essential functions to both internal and external clients

8) Achieving a timely and orderly reconstitution from an emergency and resumption of full service to both internal and external clients

9) Ensuring and validating group readiness by a dynamic, integrated test, training and exercise program to support the implementation of COOP plans and programs

**VII. ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS**

To support Casey’s mission, the Risk Committee in discussion with the Board and representatives of Stores Managers and Employees have designated the following asCasey’s Essential Functions (EFs):

EF1) Maintain safety of store environment

EF2) Maintain power to keep store open

EF3) Maintain capability to provide warm food to community members

EF4) Maintain safe potable water for customers and employees

EF5) Maintain functional sewer capabilities for toilets

EF6) Maintainincoming supply of fuel for fuel tanks

EF7) Maintain warm store in winter, and fans to cool store in summer

EF8) Maintain security of cash flow and vital records

EF9) Facilitate supply of money for store ATM machines

EF10) Maintain functioning management team to provide oversight

Essential Functions 1-9 support all of the Strategic Planning Objectives (SOPs) of Section VI except for SOP 3.

Essential Function 10 supports specifically Strategic Planning Objective 3.

**VIII. PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND ENABLING TASKS**

This section usually defines each of the performance measures and enabling tasks corresponding to the 9 Strategic planning objectives listed in Section VI. These performance measures are central to the planning aspect of this COOP document. They are detailed in Annex C.

For the purpose of initiating the first steps of planning for Continuity of Operations and educating the management and employees of Casey’s, here areoptions for the Management and Risk Committee members to consider implementing as they begin Casey’s plans to become well-prepared and resilient for any disaster that might strike the Midwest, notably tornados. Unlike the hurricanes, tornados do not give days’ warning to enable stores to increase their stock of supplies and equipment. A resilient company needs well-prepared, knowledgeable and skilled personnel, as well as the equipment and resources to facilitate the safety and continued operations of each Casey’s store.

Here are steps for the initial orientation and education of Management, Risk Committee members, and other employees committed to Casey’s disaster preparedness and “staying safe – and open for business”.

A)**Plan and schedule meetings to obtain input** from regional managers and store managers about plans to implement COO plan for ALL Casey’s stores: how to proceed, what to highlight, the step-by-step process.

B) **Ask Waffle House management to give presentation** about their disaster preparedness, COO plan if available, “Lessons Learned” from examplesof their implementation, and counsel for Casey’s. Seek to learn from others’ experiences and successes.

C) **Review past disasters involving Casey’s stores** and ask Casey store managers who have experienced disasters to give stories of lessons learned.

D) **Write a manual template with emergency operations plan for each store** manager to fill in with the specifics pertinent to his/her store & community.

D1)Use the Fire Dept. 1600 (2016) as a check list.

D2) Distribute the manuals and check on completion within one month.

E) **Designate the supply routes and schedules in case of disaster for** the Ankeny distribution center and the Terre Haute Distribution center. The routine operation is weekly deliveries to every store. In case of disaster, discuss how often deliveries could be made.

F) Introduce and designate **ICS command structure**at corporate headquarters, at distribution centers, in the stores and the communities /regions of multiple stores for mutual aid plans.

F1) Develop phone tree for employees and on-call employees (Keep in store COOP manual).

F2) Ask for volunteers who have interest/training in disaster recovery/ first responder training.

G) Develop/purchase an **alternate communications system** to act as “back-up Plan B” for land and cell phone system for disaster communications

G2) Give incentives to store managers and employees to get **training as Amateur radio operators.**

G3) Provide handheld transceivers for employee Amateur radio operators.

H) Determine **how much stockpile is needed** of these materials in tornado season and winter storm seasons at the two distribution centers and at the individual storesin order to support essential functions: (prefer not to depend upon availability of alternatelocal vendor).

EF1) Maintain safety of store environment.

Snow plow, chainsaw, flashlights, tarps, boards, dumpster for damaged material

EF2) Maintain power to keep store open.

Portable generator, lanterns/light source

EF3) Maintain capability to provide warm food to community members

Gas stove, propane supply, food ingredients, utensils, paper products

EF4) Maintain safe potable water for customers and employees

Water tank, Life Straws for use, pump for nearby river/lake as alternate water supply

EF5) Maintain functional sewer capabilities for toilets

Portapotty

EF6) Maintain incoming supply of fuel for fuel tanks

Chain supply for fuel delivery from distribution center; generator for pump power

EF7) Maintain warm store in winterand cool store in summer

Portable space heaters, fans

EF8) Maintain security of cash flow and vital records.

Secure safe in store

EF9) Facilitate supply of money for store ATM machines.

Inquire whether manager may use cash from cash register to replenish ATM machine by prior agreement with bank. Check if ATM yields money with power outage

EF10) Maintain functioning management team to provide oversight

Three ring-binders for in-store COOP manuals

I) In consultation with Financial department determine what **items would be best to stock**to meet community needs and increase profit margin. From the recent quarterly reports,since food and fountain yielded 62.9% margin (vs 32% for groceries and 8.9% for fuel), I suspect that the initial emphasis would be on food and fountain)

J) Determine how many **units of disaster recovery equipment should be on-site** and how fast other units should/can be obtained from nearby unaffected Casey’s stores, distribution centers, and local vendors (with MOUs, if needed)

K) Determine the **cost-benefit value of building a safe room** in middle of Casey’s storesfor tornados, first for new stores in 2017, and later for remodeled stores.

**IX. EXTERNAL FACTORS**

The Risk Committee will designate two of its members, one for the region of each distribution center,to monitor weekly for new threats and developments (i.e. weather, political changes, community events) that would accelerateour rate of preparation for these changes.

**X. COOP PROGRAM RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS**

This section usually provides a summary of the company’s budget requirements to support the COOP program. The detailed COOP budget requirements will be maintained as a separate addendum. It will account for the resource requirements needed to support the COOP objectives, including personnel, equipment, and other costs. We need to consult with Casey’s Management about how much margin can we spare for this investment, especially for the on-site generators and other equipment needed for disaster preparedness. That discussion will include how to determine the number of back-up generators we can purchase and how to transport them “just-in-time” if we do not purchase one for every store.

**XI. MYSPMP MAINTENANCE**

This section describes how Casey’s Risk Committee members will maintain, review, and update the COOP plan as a multi-year process. At a minimum, the Risk committee will report to management on progress andupcoming changes at each of its required quarterly meetings.

**ANNEX A: SUGGESTED AUTHORITIES &REFERENCES**

**Authorities**

~The Homeland Security Act of 2002, PL 107-296, enacted 11/25/02.

~Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 5121, et seq.).

~White House Memorandum, Continuity Policy/Department and Agency Essential  Functions, dated January 10, 2005, by Francis Fragos Townsend

~White House Memorandum, Background paper on Essential Functions Concept and Implementation and Recommended Guidelines for Submitting Department/Agencies Priority Mission Essential Functions Information, dated January 10, 2005, by David W. Howe

**References**

~Homeland Security Presidential Directive 3 (HSPD 3), *Homeland Security Advisory System*, dated, March 11, 2002.

~HSPD 7, *Critical Infrastructure Identification, Prioritization, and Protection (CIP),* dated Dec 17, 2003.

~HSPD 8, *National Preparedness*, dated December 17, 2003.

~FPC 65, *Federal Executive Branch Continuity of Operations (COOP),* dated June 15, 2004.

**ANNEX B: ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS INFORMATION**

This Annex usually describes the critical essential functions that government organization must be able to perform, either continuously or without significant disruption, during and following a crisis, if required, in the assurance of COOP. Though it may not be necessary for every function to be performed during every emergency, procedures must be in place to enable each function to be performed regardless of the disruption that is occurring or has occurred.

In 2005 the Homeland Security Council approved eight National Essential Functions (NEFs) that must be performed by the federal government during an emergency.

Since it is not a Federal legislative body, Casey’s has none of the National Essential Functions (NEFs)listed in Annex B; but in reflecting on the principles underlying these essential functions we can apply them to illustrate how each Casey’s store can provide leadership and stability within its community.

The NEFs are bolded. The local applications for Casey’s in the community are italicized.

1. **Preserve our constitutional form of government.**

*Contact county EMA and mayor to see how we can help.*

2: **Provide physical leadership to the nation; maintain the trust and confidence of the American people.**

*Provide active leadership to community by providing safety, food, fuel, and information.*

3. **Defend the country against all enemies, foreign or domestic, and prevent and interdict future attacks.**

*Provide safe haven as needed to community residents.*

4. **Maintain and foster effective relationships with foreign nations**.

*Collaborate with other sources of disaster relief in the community*.

5. **Protect against threats to the homeland and bring to justice perpetrators of crimes or attacks against the nation, its citizens or interests.**

*Collaborate with police and other security personnel*.

6.**Provide a rapid and effective response to and recovery from the domestic consequences of an attack or other incident.**

*Work with others to stabilize community and repair infrastructural damage*.

7. **Protect and stabilize the nation’s economy; ensure confidence and financial systems.**

*Promote financial stability of Casey’s and other businesses; maintain ATMs and sales.*

8 **Provide for critical Federal government services that address the national health, safety and welfare needs of the nation.**

*Help providebasic needs of individuals in community, including food, shelter, supplies*.

*Here are several definitions of terms for understanding the framework of the COOP planning***.**

The“Mission Essential Functions” for the Government are those “departmental”specific mission essential functions. For Casey’s as a private business,its mission stated in the Executive Summary yields thepreviously-listed 10 Essential Functions (EFs).

FEMA further delineated these EFs according to the urgency of their resumption in case of emergency or disaster.

1. **Priority Mission Essential Functions (PMEFs)**must be performed before, during, and in the immediate aftermath of an emergency. They must be uninterrupted, or resumed, during the first 24-48 hours after an emergency and continued through full resumption of all functions.

2. **Secondary Mission Essential Functions (SMEFs**) need to occur within a very short period of time or several days depending on the emergency or disaster.

For our purposes, we designate this time “within 72 hours”.

3. **Supporting Activities** are the activities that Casey’s needs to conduct in order to perform its 10 Essential Functions.

4. **Capabilities** are communications, facilities, information, trained personnel. And other assets necessary to conduct the essential functions and supporting activities.

Hence for Casey’s:

First 24-48 hours:**Priority Mission Essential Functions**

EF1) Maintain safety of store environment.

EF2) Maintain power to keep store open.

EF3) Maintain capability to provide warm food to community members

*Casey’s Index: (Styled after the “Waffle House Index” for Disasters)*

*Green: Come on in for hot fresh pizza and donuts!*

*Yellow: Come get some cold sandwiches and hot coffee.*

*Red: We’re working on getting our power back & running today.*

EF4) Maintain safe potable water for customers and employees

EF5) Maintain functional sewer capabilities for toilets

EF6) Maintain incoming supply of fuel for fuel tanks

EF7) Maintain warm store in winter, and fans to cool store in summer

EF8) Maintain security of cash flow and vital records.

EF9) Maintainongoing supply of money for store ATM machines.

EF10) Maintain functioning management team to provide oversight

Within 72 hours: **Secondary Mission Essential Functions**

Cleaning up and expanding operations, internal & external

Plan continuingdeliveries of supplies from distribution centers

Mutual aid between Casey’s stores

Replenishing ATM cash

Within 30-60 days

Rebuilding as needed

**Supporting Activities** to perform Casey’s Essential Functions:

Gain access to store and secure against threat/elements

Activate alternate power generator if power outage

Activate alternate communications system and pre-arranged plan to report to work

Activate call-in system to check redundant/back-up communication system

Check in with Corporate headquarters and designated distribution center

Set up kitchen and cooking

Set up signs

Check-in with local EMA, government, police, bank

Establish portapotty

Check supply of fuel and power needed to maintain gas pumps

Activate alternate cash register system if no power

Clean out debris to gain easy access to road and to store

**Capabilities**

Store managers and employees

Intact building structure

Redundant Communications systems

Electrical power and back-up generator

Running, potable water or backup filtration supply

Portapotty for sewer back-up

Delivery and fuel trucks with intact supply routes for supplies and fuel

Generators, chainsaws, tools and equipment

Wood planks and signs

ICS system and Management communications

**ANNEX C: PERFORMANCE MEASURES & ENABLING TASKS**

*These relate to the nine Strategic Planning Objectives of Section VI*

**OBJECTIVE 1: Essential Functions**

**Performance Measures 1.1-1.3**Identify and prioritize priority and secondary Essential Functions with supporting measures and capabilities. Completed - See Annex B

**OBJECTIVE 2: Minimizing Loss**

**Performance Measure 2.1** Develop COOP policy, plans and guidance through the Risk Committee in 2017 and coordinate measures with IT, budgeting, and distribution centers.

**Performance Measure 2.2** Develop redundant communications plan for operations, both vertically and horizontally.

**Performance Measure 2.3** Develop schedule for quarterly review and update of COOP.

**OBJECTIVE 3: Executing Succession of Leadership and delegation of Authority**

**Performance Measures 3.1-3.2:** Delineate leadership succession with contact information and distribute guidance in the COOP plan in store COOP manuals.

**OBJECTIVE 4: Mitigating Interruptions of Operations**

**Performance Measure 4.1:** Mitigate disruptions to operations through a comprehensive COOP plan., with particular attention to functioning of distribution centers, weekly supply chain routes, and generator power needed to maintain store and fuel pumps.

**OBJECTIVE 5: Alternate Facilities**

**Performance Measures 5.1-5.2:** Provide guidance and manage plans and resources to identify and support alternate COOP facilities, with particular attention to redundancy between the two distribution centers in Iowa and Indiana and facilitating exchange of resources between the two in case either is incapacitated. Forstores where another Casey’s is in close proximity, the COOP plan should describe mutual aid protocol for sharing resources and personnel.

**OBJECTIVE 6: Protection of Assets**

**Performance Measures 6.1-6.2:**

Ensure the availability, maintenance, and protection of assets to support COOP operations. Develop and ensure availability of a COOP vital records and data base management plan within an infrastructure to facilitate their storage and accessibility, particularly between the two distribution centers. Continually update and protect the vital records and data base.

**OBJECTIVE 7: COOP Recovery**

**Performance Measures 7.1-7.2:**Develop plans and procedures to ensure timely and rapid business recovery from a disaster so that essential functions continue, with the necessary human capital, equipment, communication system, and resources.

**OBJECTIVE 8:Reconstitution**

**Performance Measure 8.1:**

Ensure an effective and orderly reconstitution from a disaster to attain full service without interruption and continued operation of essential functions.

**OBJECTIVE 9:COOP Tests, Training/Exercises**

**Performance Measure 9.1:**Provide COOP training to support implementation of COOP plans and programs to Corporate leadership, Regional Managers, Store Managers, and Employees.

**Performance Measure 9.2:** Develop assessment tools to support and monitor the successful implementation of the COOP, and conduct quarterly testing of communication capabilities; semi-annual testing of plans for recovery of services and vital records, and maintenance of disaster equipment; and annual testing of redundant infrastructure and updating of store manuals.

**Performance Measure 9.3:**Conduct annual COO exercises (alternating tabletop and functional) to train and test personnel, plans, and capabilities at the local and regional level; identify areas for improvement, develop “best practices”, and complete after-action reports for exercise and actual disasters. Use ZOOM capabilities first at the interstate level, then at the intrastate level. Optional: develop COOP games for store teams to compete in recovering essential functions with a power outage, starting with hooking up the generator and cooking pizzas and coffee for a crowd of 20 hungry people.

**Performance Measure 9.4:**Promote disaster preparedness and awareness with newsletters to all employees, including success stories, tips for success, educational briefs, games.

**Final Comment**: Implementing the template of Appendix C was rather dry and nondescript. It seems concerned only with the structure and not much with the actions of preparedness.

The most dynamic portion of this document is Section VIII which lists the activities needed to build a rigorous COOP for Casey’s. Discussing these options will merit significant thought and consideration, and this process has characterized Casey’s operations for years. Senior Vice President and CFO Bill Walljasper noted in a 2014 interview for Wholesale& Distribution International that Casey’s is set apart by the discipline of its operations: “We don’t necessarily change quickly without a lot of study andthought.”

I am optimistic that Casey’s would embrace this COOP plan. In the same article Chairman and then CEO Robert J Myers stated that for Casey’s General Stores, the key to success is not always sales. Instead the relationships that the company forms are most important. He declared in 2014, “Our business is always about people.”

(http://www.wdimagazine.com/sections/non-durable-goods/211-casey-s-general-store)