

Office of Emergency Services
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
FIRESCOPE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Meeting of March 25, 1992

MEMBERS PRESENT

William Maxfield, Chairman - Chief, Contra Costa County Fire Department
Donald Manning, Vice Chairman - Chief, Los Angeles City Fire Department
Rich Aronson, Chief - OES Fire and Rescue Division
Jim Brannon, Chief - Linda Fire Protection District
Frank Buscher, Chief - Tiburon Fire Protection District
Ronnie Coleman, California State Fire Marshal
Gary Costamagna, Chief - Sacramento City Fire Department
Michael Freeman, Chief - Los Angeles County FD
Dick Henry, Director - U.S. Forest Service, Region V
Larry Holms, Chief - Orange County Fire Department
Donald Perry, Deputy Chief for Al Faoro, Chief - Santa Barbara County Fire Department
Bill Teie, Deputy Director for Richard Wilson, Director - California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection
Bob Crim, Deputy Chief for George Lund, Chief - Ventura County Fire Department

MEMBERS ABSENT

Chris Cameron, Regional Fire Management Officer - National Park Service
Al Faoro, Chief - Santa Barbara County Fire
Pat Kidder, Fire and Aviation Officer - Bureau of Land Management
Loren Pettis, Chief - Montclair Fire Department
Richard Wilson, Director - California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection

SPECIAL ADVISORS PRESENT

Eldon Nagel, General Manager - California State Firefighter's Association

SPECIAL ADVISORS ABSENT

Brian Hatch, Director - California Professional Firefighters

OTHERS PRESENT

Andy Anderson, Chief - Quincy Fire Department
Richard Andrews, Director - Office of Emergency Services
Tom Bender, Chief - Waterloo Morada Fire Department
Will Brock, Assistant Chief - OES Fire and Rescue Division
Mike Dacy, Chief - Sacramento County Fire Protection District/OES Region IV
Mike Dougherty, Assistant Fire Coordinator - U.S. Forest Service, South
Ray Engel, Chief - Clements Fire Department
Larry Fry, Assistant Chief - El Dorado Hills Fire Department
Mark Ghilarducci, US&R Program Coordinator - OES Fire and Rescue Division
Candace Gregory, Division Chief - CDF, Sacramento
Mike Guerin, Assistant Director - OES Response and Recovery
Stan Lake, Deputy Chief - CDF, Sacramento
Dan Matson, Deputy Chief - Mutual Aid Region II
Mark Marshall, Chief - Williams Fire Department
Merrill McMurray, Deputy Chief - Sacramento County Fire Department
Bev Passerello, Legislative Liaison - Office of Emergency Services
Lisa Ramer, Legislative Aide - Senator Petris' Office
Gene Starks, Deputy Chief - CDF
Dick Starr, Deputy Chief - OES Fire and Rescue Division
Sherri Stromlund, Office Technician - OES Fire and Rescue Division
Rick Tye, Chief - Marysville Fire Department
Jack Underwood, Chief - Northstar Fire Department
Dave Walizer, Chief Deputy - California State Fire Marshal
Kim Zagaris, Assistant Chief - OES Fire and Rescue Division

The meeting was called to order at 0930 by Chairman Maxfield. Round-table introductions were made and logistics were discussed.

Chief Maxfield stated that he would like to make a modification to the agenda. He explained that as a result of a lot of rumors dealing with the mutual aid system, organizational changes at OES, legislation, and the director of OES, a meeting was held yesterday with the director to find out what the facts are, as opposed to dealing with rumors. Present at yesterday's meeting were Chief Freeman, Chief Holms, Chief Costamagna, Chief Maxfield and Dr. Andrews. Chief Maxfield stated that he was very satisfied with the outcome of the meeting, and he asked Dr. Andrews to relate his perception of yesterday's meeting.

OPEN DISCUSSION/FIRE SERVICE CONCERNS

Dr. Andrews advised the Board and guests that yesterday's discussion covered a broad range of issues, some of which dealt with concerns that had been raised by the fire service. There were specific issues with regard to the fire and rescue service mutual aid system, some dealing with publications that have been put out by OES, possible reorganization at OES, and the role and structure of this advisory committee. Dr. Andrews stated that he would summarize the issues discussed yesterday, and invited questions or comments on issues of concern at any time.

Dr. Andrews stated that he would like to start with some specific issues and then go on to broader issues. With regard to his commitment to be an active participant in the meetings of this Advisory Committee and the role of this Committee, he said that his background is to work with advisory groups and to take seriously their recommendations on a broad range of issues. He has formed advisory groups in a number of different areas; as part of the development of the Urban Search and Rescue Program here in California, OES created a 45 member advisory group that meets regularly. Dr. Andrews advised Chief Maxfield yesterday, and re-stated today, that he will be in attendance at all the meetings of this Committee, and plans to be an active participant in those meetings unless he directed elsewhere by the Governor.

Dr. Andrews and Chief Maxfield will be meeting between Advisory Committee meetings to discuss issues which have come up that the Director needs to be aware of. They will do this on a regular basis, approximately six weeks after each Advisory Committee meeting. As an advisory group to the Director of OES, Dr. Andrews said that he expects to relay concerns he may have, as well as to hear concerns from the fire service. His intent is to work together to develop strategies as to where the fire services in California need to go and the need to focus on large policy issues and the challenges facing all emergency service and public safety organizations. Dr. Andrews said he talked to Chief Maxfield, and the other Chiefs yesterday, about his desire to make some changes in the agenda and the structure of the Advisory Committee. They came to a general concurrence to do a couple of things that are fairly innocuous, such as putting time frames around the items on the agenda, indicating whether those items are for discussion or action, and provide Board members with background material on any action items. Members will then have a chance, in advance of the meetings, to review any action items and give them their full consideration.

Also discussed, was the Advisory Committee having an Executive Committee, a small committee of three to five people that could meet between the Advisory meetings and participate in the development of the agenda.

With regard to apparent rumors and concerns, that somehow the Director has a plan or a mission to make fundamental changes to the fire and rescue mutual aid system, to dismantle that system and somehow fundamentally change the way it works, Dr. Andrews indicated there is no such plan, and there never has been such a plan. He re-iterated that there are clearly challenges that face the fire and rescue mutual aid system, and that OES and the fire services need to work together to come to a collective solution. Dr. Andrews stated that he indicated to the Chiefs yesterday, and to the Board and guest publically today, "there will be no changes to the fire and rescue mutual aid system that are not subject to consideration, evaluation, review and recommendation from the Board", and that he would expect to be an active participant in that process.

The most substantial changes or proposals, that have been circulating around Sacramento, and perhaps elsewhere, with regard to the fire services and emergency services in general, would have abolished the Office of Emergency Services entirely and OES would have been consumed under a new Department of Fire that was to be located in the Governor's Office. This department would have included all fire related activities in state service. Dr. Andrews assured the Board that did not come from his office or the Office of Emergency Services and there is absolutely no plan that he has, or the Office of Emergency Services has, to make any fundamental changes in the fire and rescue mutual aid system that are not products of open discussion by this committee about where the fire and rescue mutual aid system needs to go in the future.

Chief Manning questioned the Governor's Office memo 1/16/92 (distributed) which states "....OES has broad responsibilities for coordination as well as direction and control during emergency situations", and, in the second to last paragraph which states "This notification is not intended to dilute the statutory authority of departments that have emergency operational responsibilities but to ensure that standard procedures are followed in providing early notification to the Governor and his staff through OES." Chief Manning stated that he felt the Board should have something in writing as to OES policies and procedures. Chief Maxfield said that he would write a letter to the Director requesting an outline of OES policies.

Dr. Andrews said that concern has also been voiced about one particular document, prepared by the OES Planning Division, entitled "California's Mutual Aid System" (1991). The concern is that the information contained in here is not compatible with the fire and rescue mutual aid system's current structure. It was suggested that somehow, this was what the Director really had in mind for making basic changes in the fire and rescue mutual aid system. To clarify and give some background on this document, Dr. Andrews explained that the document was produced by the OES Planning Division. It was produced in the aftermath of the Loma Prieta earthquake, and was developed to clear up some uncertainty within the various jurisdictions and levels of government, about how the mutual aid systems in California work.

He further explained that he first saw a draft of this document sometime in mid-1990 while in the Deputy Director position in Southern California. At that time, he didn't like the document. He didn't see this document again until late 1991, when it came to him in this final form, and he was told by the Planning Division staff that OES was now the proud possessors of one thousand printed copies. Dr. Andrews asked staff at that time, if the document had been reviewed by everyone at OES, and if all Division's had signed off on it, he was assured they had.

The same concern has been expressed about a flow chart, contained in the back that shows how the mutual aid system works. Dr. Andrews explained that this is the same flow chart contained in the California Emergency Services Plan and it has been in the Plan for 15 years.

The title of the document California's Mutual Aid System is technically wrong, it is not a single mutual aid system, but mutual aid systems, which are not exact overlays of each other and that this document does not reflect any program opposed to the fire and rescue mutual aid system. It is a generic description of the systems.

Concerns were also raised whether the Director was planning to somehow dismantle the Incident Command System and Dr. Andrews stated "Absolutely not, I am committed to the system and I have no plans to dismantle it."

Chief Maxfield invited members and guests to ask any questions they may have at this time.

Chief Anderson, Quincy Fire Department, asked Dr. Andrews about the FIREScope budget, and plans for further reducing it. Dr. Andrews answered that the entire agency is in a budget crisis. There is a possibility that OES will be asked to cut another 15%. If that occurs, all programs will be looked at to absorb that cut, including the FIREScope program.

Again, Chief Maxfield asked if anyone else had any questions or concerns they would like to discuss with Dr. Andrews. No other questions were raised. Chief Maxfield thanked Dr. Andrews for his response to the fire service's concerns.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - OCTOBER 2, 1991 MEETING

IT WAS MOVED BY CHIEF MANNING, SECONDED BY CHIEF BRANNON AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 8, 1992 MEETING.

OAKLAND REPORT

Dr. Andrews reviewed the process leading to the publication of the Oakland Hills Fire Report. This report was originated due to a request from Mayor Harris to Governor Wilson. The report is an overall assessment of the Oakland Hills fire with particular emphasis on procedures, policies, training and equipment. The focus of the report was on emergency operations during the fire.

The review panel members interviewed 75 firefighters who were part of emergency operations and reviewed dispatch logs from all agencies involved. A survey was sent out to over 300 departments who responded to the fire, and OES received more responses to the survey than were actually sent out.

The report contains 53 recommendations, covering specific aspects of Oakland and Berkeley and in general, overall improvements in the Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid System and coordinating functions. (Each Board member has a copy of the Oakland Hills Fire Report in their packet).

URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE REPORT

Mark Ghilarducci, US&R Program Coordinator, addressed the Board and updated them on the US&R Program.

Twenty-five US&R Task Force Sponsoring Agencies were selected nationwide by FEMA to participate in the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System. Of those 25, eight are located in California. Roughly 1/3 of the nations capability exists here. The eight California Task Force Sponsoring Agencies are:

- 1. Sacramento City Fire Department*
- 2. Menlo Park Fire Protection District*
- 3. Oakland City Fire Department*
- 4. Los Angeles City Fire Department*
- 5. Los Angeles County Fire Department*
- 6. Orange County Fire Department*
- 7. Riverside City Fire Department*
- 8. San Diego City Fire Department*

At this time, OES is holding Joint Task Force meetings on a monthly basis, with representatives from each of the US&R Task Force Sponsoring Agencies. This allows the eight Task Force representatives to work together in the development and organization of the task forces.

Coordination, standardization and prioritization of resources, equipment and training are the key factors being addressed at each of the joint meetings. In addition, task force mobilization procedures, logistics training, and local, state and federal administration procedures are discussed and refined. Each of the US&R Task Force Sponsoring Agencies are also;

- 1. Coordinating with other departments and agencies in their area for resources to make up the 56 man US&R Task Force and meet the "three" deep requirement.*
- 2. Purchasing equipment to support the US&R Task Force operations.*

Federal matching grants of up to \$100,000.00 were awarded to each of the sponsoring agencies for the purchase of equipment. In addition, OES is purchasing a specialized cache equipment that will be issued to each of the Task Forces.

- 3. Beginning training of the various Task Force members.*

Funding is an issue, particularly at the federal end. FEMA has no identified budget for US&R for FY 92-93, at this time. A large effort is underway to change that. It is anticipated that there will be funding put back into the FEMA budget at least for training and exercises during this year.

A call to your local federal representative indicating your support for the program and the need for funding would be helpful at this time.

The State funding for US&R is in good standing at this time. Barring no further significant cuts, the state budget will continue to support the US&R development in California.

The FIREScope US&R Specialist Groups have continued to meet. They have been working on the day-to-day US&R response system. They have made much progress and have recently turned over to the Task Force recommendations for "Basic", "Light", and "Medium" US&R operations. These recommendations include typing of resources, equipment and apparatus. They will continue to meet to work on the ICS operational guidelines and training issues.

OES is continuing on the development of the State US&R Training Center. The project is being completed in phases. The first phase is complete. It included the construction and establishment of classrooms, office space and a student resource area. This facility has a 70 person and a 30 person classroom with all state-of-the-art audio visual and instruction materials. Phase II, the development of the field training props, is underway now. It includes

addressing some environmental issues regarding the field site, design of the site, acquisition of materials and negotiations with various state agencies. It is anticipated that Phase II will be completed within the next year. The training center is being developed at Camp San Luis Obispo.

The State/Federal US&R Response System development is a three year program. Following the third year, we will have a substantially enhanced capability for complicated US&R operations in the State of California.

Any further questions or comments regarding the US&R Program can be directed to Mark Ghilarducci, Program Coordinator, State US&R Programs, Fire and Rescue Division, 2151 East D Street, Suite 203A, Ontario, CA 91764 (714) 391-4485.

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT/REIMBURSEMENT REPORT

Dick Starr reported that since the Board's decision, at the January 8, 1992 meeting, to revise the reimbursement formula for the cooperative agreement, staff has received numerous telephone calls objecting to the new payment system. The objective was to remove the losses experienced by the high labor areas of Regions 1 and 2. However, calls from Regions 3, 4, and 5, were very negative. Many callers stated that they would not respond in the future if their rate was cut.

In order to gather hard statistics on this issue, staff prepared and mailed a statewide survey. The survey explained the reasons for the change and asked if responders would continue to respond under the new payment system. Response to this survey was somewhat disappointing in that 9 of the 65 operational areas did not respond, including 6 in the impacted regions. Validity was further weakened by the fact that the vote was not secret and was open to discussion and peer influence.

As predicted, there were no objections from Regions 1, 2, and 6, since they would be receiving more money. Regions 3 and 4 voiced strong objections with 29 percent of the responders in Region 3, and 25 percent in Region 4 stated they would no longer respond. Only one of 12 in Region 5 registered as refusing to respond. It should be noted that two counties, including Fresno the largest in Region 5, did not return a survey, thus the Region 5 information is invalid.

In addition to the statistics gathered, comments were added to the survey form and many strong letters were received. These letters and comments, such as "we'll go, but we don't like it!" clearly identified the dissatisfaction in Regions 3, 4, and 5.

Statistically, only 67 responders, or 14 percent of the 537 replies, declared themselves as non-responders. But more are expected to decline to respond as they compare reimbursement rates

with adjacent regions while at fires. The overriding theme of the objections was that any units doing the same work should get the same pay. Staff feels that there are certain points of discussion that need elaboration:

1. Volunteer departments "profiting" from their reimbursement.

Volunteers leave jobs to respond. They do not receive pay from their job while absent. The department in effect employs them during the mutual aid response and allocates a percentage of the reimbursement to them, usually received months later after the department receives the check. The remainder goes for departmental operating costs - equipment, apparatus upgrades, safety equipment, which will help them respond on the next request.

If profiteering is an issue, it will only increase for those small departments in Regions 1, 2 and 6. Using 1991 figures, a Region 2 volunteer department's personnel reimbursement will increase \$392 in 1992 for a Type 1 engine crew, 24-hour period. In 1993, under payment by region, the disparity between these similar departments in Region 2 and Region 3 would be \$1,012 for each 24-hours.

2. Hidden Costs

Most smaller paid departments immediately man vacated stations with overtime personnel when a unit departs on mutual aid. They also pay for relief crew time and travel costs. Many paid departments and some volunteer departments have labor agreements on continuous duty time. These costs are not reimbursed.

3. Is it mutual aid or contract for hire?

There is nothing in the cooperative agreement about reimbursement for forest agencies for help to a city; the agreement is strictly for local government help to forest agencies. Since 1962, it has been a flat rate, the value of an engine and crew. Bulldozer and strike team leader vehicles have statewide rates; why not manned fire engines?

4. The regions that provide most of the mutual aid for Northern and Central California, especially immediate response, have been weakened. Over the last five years, Region 3 has provided 12% of the state's cooperative agreement mutual aid, while Region 4 has provided 25% and Region 5 provided 10%. This may appear to save money for the forest agencies, but savings will be offset by increased response from Region 2.

5. *FEMA reimbursement may well be impacted.*

The cooperative agreement with the statewide flat rate was accepted by FEMA for the Loma Prieta earthquake after months of justification discussions. It was subsequently applied on the Santa Barbara Paint fire and the East Bay Hills fire without challenge. The warning from a FEMA fire representative is that if FEMA starts probing the new methodology, they could revert back to FEMA basics - no pay for volunteers and reimbursement for work time only.

6. *There are ways to reduce costs to Regions 1, 2 and 6. The most obvious way is to reduce demands on those regions. This can be done by greater use of the OES fleet. There are 44 engines south of the Tehachapis. They should be the first to respond to Central and Northern California. There are several advantages. First to the forest agencies, there are no engine charges, this saves from \$1,400 to \$2,400 per day per strike team.*

Another factor is response speed. OES engines are geared to cruise easily at 65 to 70 mph. Local engines are geared more for acceleration or hill climbing. The reduced travel times provided by OES engines increases their productive time on the fire. The situation to be avoided is the 1990 response of eight Region 1 local government strike teams to the Shasta Complex - two days going and two days returning.

The second way of reducing demand on high labor departments is by selective response. It is possible for Operational Area dispatchers to use strike team lists which are assembled by flexible commitment depending on draw down levels. High labor departments can be put on the "don't call me until the well goes dry" list.

In conclusion, Deputy Chief Starr stated that the state fire service is too diverse to make everyone happy over an issue such as this. The most important goal is to maintain the integrity of the mutual aid system. The secondary goal is to minimize the pain to participants. Chief Starr and staff respectfully recommended that the Advisory Committee rescind the decision of January 8, 1992, and remain with the original principle of statewide average and implement selective dispatching, which will reduce the demand on high labor departments.

IT WAS MOVED BY CHIEF MANNING, SECONDED BY CHIEF BRANNON AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO RESCIND THE DECISION OF JANUARY 8, 1992 MEETING AND RETURN TO THE STATEWIDE AVERAGE FOR PAYMENT ON MUTUAL AID RESPONSE THROUGH THE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT.

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM CONSORTIUM

Chief Holms, Orange County Fire Department, reported that the meeting in San Diego with Alan Brunaccini was ultimately successful. There were some very trying and tense moments, but the outcome was good. After discussion with Chief Brunaccini, Phoenix Fire Department, participants agreed on the following issues:

- *Both systems have their place and compliment each other*
- *No one system meets all local needs without adjustment to local conditions and resources.*
- *Division, group and sector are similar terms*
- *FIRESCOPE will continue to develop and maintain ICS for its users and the N.F.A.*
- *Span of Control*

FGC/ICS - A transition statement needs to be developed that addresses timely shedding of responsibilities (building the organization) in order to avoid over load of the command function
- *Minor terminology differences may exist if function is clearly defined and synonymous terms identified*
- *Merger should allow the meat of each system be left alone unless there is real need to improve (no editorial changes)*
- *We should strive for improvement to meet need and involve our constituents*
- *FIRESCOPE and FGC to communicate closely on incident management issues*
- *Publications and editorials to focus on the positive aspects of both systems and the efforts to work together on a National IMS*

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Bev Passerello distributed a legislative summary of bills in process at this time, noting that SB 1841 was inadvertently omitted, but will be sent out to members with the minutes from this meeting. Mrs. Passerello advised that due to Easter recess coming up (April 9-20) any bills now in policy committees must be passed to fiscal committees by April 9, 1992. Mrs. Passerello advised that the East Bay fire, HAZMAT, earthquake, and disaster assistance bills are all of particular interest to the legislature this session.

Chief Maxfield introduced Lisa Ramer from Senator Petris' Office and asked her to brief the Board on bills the Senator is carrying. Ms. Ramer advised that SB 1839 is a bill for tax credit to home owners who replace their wood shake roofs. This bill will be heard on Wednesday, March 31, 1992 and Senator Petris would like the Fire Services' support.

OPERATIONS TEAM NORTH/SOUTH

Stan Lake, reported that the Operations Teams have met and the topic of both those meetings was the continued support of the representatives for the Incident Management System Consortium and pending legislation. Chief Holms will discuss the IMS representatives position and report on the outcome of the San Diego meeting.

TASK FORCE REPORT

Mike Dougherty reported the following information from the Task Force:

The NWCG has completed the draft document of the generic course curriculum. Battalion Chief Mike Colgan, Task Force Member from Orange County, has been providing FIREScope input.

The HAZMAT Specialist Group has completed the draft position manuals. The Task Force has reviewed and forwarded to the Operations Teams North and South.

Mike Dougherty and Mike Colgan represented FIREScope at the Task Force level for the IMS Consortium. They were both assigned by request to the Curriculum Committee. There is another Consortium meeting planned for July 24-25, 1992 in York, Pennsylvania.

The Communications Specialist Group reported there is no hardware at this time to allow interface between VHF and 800 MHZ frequencies. Communications issues will continue to be a problem for the fire services.

The US&R Specialist Group is currently working on US&R O.S.D. and lesson plans as needed for organizational training.

The Task Force has reviewed the Strike Team Leader Training package developed by Sacramento County. It was found to be an excellent document.

HAZARD MITIGATION REPORT

Charlie Wynn, OES Disaster Assistance Division, reported