

Fire Department



1044 Middlefield Road  
Redwood City, California 94063  
Telephone (415) 388-1424

OES FIRE SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING OF APRIL 13, 1979

WOODLAKE INN  
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

John Keller, Chairman - Chief, Redwood City Fire Department  
Pat McLaughlin representing Phil Favre, State Fire Marshal  
Dick Millar representing Zane Smith, U.S. Forest Service Region 5  
Clyde Bragdon, Chief Engineer, Los Angeles County Fire Department  
Philip Ward, Protection Specialist, National Park Service  
Larry Richey, Deputy Director, California Department of Forestry  
William Powell, Chief, Sacramento City Fire Department  
Donald Parker, Chief, Lakeshore Fire Protection District  
A. V. Streuli, Chief, Contra Costa County Fire District  
Richard G. Barrows, Chief of Fire & Rescue Division, OES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Willis Pinkerton, Chief, Barstow Fire District  
Harry Bigglestone, Insurance Services Office

OTHERS PRESENT:

Bob Irwin, Program Manager, Firescope Program  
Jerry Letson, Asst. Chief of Fire Control, Calif. Dept. of Forestry  
Vincent Del Pozzo, Chief, Menlo Park Fire District  
William Strenne, Chief, Hillsborough Fire District  
E. R. McBeath, Chief, Rancho Cordova Fire District  
Paul Scott, OES Fire and Rescue Division  
William Tonguet, OES Fire and Rescue Division  
Dianne Monaco, OES Fire and Rescue Division

OPENING REMARKS

Chairman Keller called the meeting to order at 1000 hours, and clarified the fact that he had called this special meeting due to urgent matters pertaining to the stability and future of the OES Fire and Rescue Division. Chairman Keller reviewed the agenda items, stating the purpose of this Committee is to relate to OES while inter-relating with the total fire service. He further introduced two special guests — Chiefs Strenne and Del Pozzo, who desire to become more involved with supporting OES and the mutual aid system.

REPORT ON OES FIRE AND RESCUE DIVISION

A. Budget

Chief Barrows presented a review of the status of OES and the Fire & Rescue Division, with a brief recap of last year's budget efforts; i.e., contact with the Legislature, Department of Finance, budget hearings, etc. He explained that in late 1978, the Dept. of Finance agreed the OES program should be supported since it has long been proving itself valuable. Yet, when it came to actual dollar figures, it was informally agreed that a total of \$300,000 equipment replacement money should be provided, to be used at the discretion of OES Fire & Rescue Division. HOWEVER, the money was not placed in the budget; and as of this time, the Senate Select Committee on Fire Services is attempting to have the funds put in the 1979-80 budget. Chief Barrows summarized by stating the OES Fire & Rescue Division program is status-quo at this time, but will inevitably begin to deteriorate without increased future funding and the continued support and recommendations of this Committee. He cited the increased activities being performed by the Division; i.e., evacuation plans, emergency plans, workshops, Firescope participation, development of prototype equipment. These duties were assumed in the interest of getting the job done; but now the continuance of these duties must be recommended and supported by this Committee.

B. Heavy Rescue Project

Chief Barrows provided the background on the development of the prototype heavy rescue-fire fighting apparatus now under construction at the OES fire shop; stating the Federal government has provided a grant to subsidize the project, which includes development, design, and construction of the prototype unit, development of an operator's manual, and development of a statewide heavy rescue training program. The purpose of the project is to hopefully set a standard for statewide fire-rescue equipment and training. By preparation of a standard operator's manual, locals could purchase components and build their own unit at a reduced cost.

C. Post-Proposition 13 Workshop

Chief Barrows briefly explained the intent of the final Workshop Report — identify problems, develop alternatives, and stand unified to accomplish those alternatives/solutions.

D. Jaws of Life

Chief Barrows explained the recent acquisition of seven Jaws of Life heavy rescue tools as a "gift" to the State of California, with the only stipulation being they be assigned from Tulare County, north — one unit to Nevada. Chief Barrows requested input on criteria to be used for assignment, where and how should the units be assigned, etc.

Discussion followed with suggestions that the units be assigned in conjunction with, and not necessarily on, an OES unit; with flexibility to use the unit in an assigned area with no limitations. The committee agreed the units should be placed in departments participating in the mutual aid program (OES assignees) because of their willingness to transport the unit when and where it is needed. Only departments remaining loyal to the mutual aid system should be considered; with incidents cited wherein OES assignees no longer wished to participate in the mutual aid program as a result of Proposition 13, and subsequently gave back their OES fire apparatus. After lengthy discussion, it was the consensus of the Committee that assignment criteria could best be obtained through the Area Coordinator; therefore,

IT WAS MOVED BY CHIEF BRADON, SECONDED BY CHIEF PARKER, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED THAT THE JAWS OF LIFE HEAVY RESCUE TOOLS BE ASSIGNED THROUGH THE AFFECTED OES OPERATIONAL AREA FIRE AND RESCUE COORDINATORS, USING CRITERIA BASED UPON THE NUMBER OF UNITS PRESENTLY AVAILABLE; CONSIDERATION OF RAPID RESPONSE TIME; AND WITH THE COMMITMENT THAT THE ASSIGNEE WILL TRANSPORT THE UNIT ANYWHERE WITHIN THE ASSIGNED AREA - OR OUTSIDE IF REQUESTED - WITH TRAINED PERSONNEL.

Before moving to the next agenda item, Chief Barrows requested guidance on the disposition of twenty float-type 60 gpm PTD pumps which Fire & Rescue Division is in the process of purchasing. The Committee was in agreement to place the apparatus in the field, on OES units, rather than placing them in prepositioned caches.

#### E. Firescope

Progress is being made despite Proposition 13; however, implementation has been affected.

#### POLICY DISCUSSION - LOAN OF OES ENGINES

Chief Barrows reviewed the current policy and intent of the loaner program. In the wake of Proposition 13, many departments have decided to repower their units and as a result, OES has been receiving numerous requests for long-term loans (longer than 30 days) while the local equipment is being repowered. Some requests have been denied because the fleet of 100 OES engines would be critically depleted with so many units on extended loan. This Committee must decide whether or not to continue loaner program, and to what degree, with consideration of how many units can be "tied up" in a single county.

Discussion followed, with Chief Strouli suggesting in the interest of total reciprocal aid, engines only be available to departments participating in the mutual aid program. The Committee agreed that all loans should be made with the stipulation requiring the temporary assignee respond with the OES engine when and if dispatched to a mutual aid

emergency. In other words, no OES engines will be loaned to a department who has no intention of participating in the mutual aid program if it is required.

The condition of units returned from loans was also mentioned. Some OES assignees hesitate to loan out the units because they are returned in poor condition. Increased maintenance costs for the remaining four "loaner" engines prompted the Committee to agree they should be phased out of the program by January 1980, with the remaining 100-engine fleet available for short-term (30-day maximum) loans.

IT WAS MOVED BY CHIEF PARKER, SECONDED BY CHIEF BRAGDON, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED THAT THE REMAINING FOUR OES "LOANER" ENGINES BE DISPOSED OF BY JANUARY 1, 1980. OES FIRE & RESCUE DIVISION WILL THEN PROCEED ON A TEMPORARY ASSIGNMENT BASIS WITH A TIME LIMIT OF 30 DAYS PER LOAN, WITH ANY EXTENSION OF THAT LOAN (NOT TO EXCEED AN ADDITIONAL 30 DAYS) TO BE AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHIEF OF THE FIRE & RESCUE DIVISION. THE LOAN OF AN OES ENGINE TO ANY DEPARTMENT SHALL NOT EXCEED 60 DAYS PER CALENDAR YEAR; AND THE PROVISIONS OF THE LOAN SHALL INCLUDE ALL RESPONSIBILITIES OUTLINED IN THE AGREEMENT FOR TEMPORARY TRANSFER OF VEHICULAR EQUIPMENT, INCLUDING RESPONDING TO MUTUAL AID EMERGENCIES IF REQUIRED.

REIMBURSEMENT - CREWS MANNING OES EQUIPMENT IN SUPPORT OF CDF AND/OR USFS

Under the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding between CDF-OES-USFS dated July 14, 1975, crews manning OES equipment will be reimbursed \$150.00 per man, per 24-hour shift, following the first 24 hours, which is mutual aid. Chief Barrows feels the initial 24 hours as fire mutual aid should remain unchanged; however, reimbursement after that time should be increased. Many departments which have manned OES equipment in the past can no longer provide extended mutual aid due to budgetary limitations which prohibit excessive overtime and call-back for personnel.

IT WAS MOVED BY CHIEF STREULI, SECONDED BY CHIEF PARKER, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED THAT OES INITIATE THE NECESSARY EFFORTS TO UPDATE THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR THE PURPOSE OF ADJUSTING THE CURRENT REIMBURSEMENT FIGURE OF \$150.00 PER MAN, PER 24 HOURS; WITH A BUILT-IN CLAUSE TO INCORPORATE INFLATIONARY FACTORS ON A BIENNIAL BASIS.

MASTER MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT

The agreement states that all elements of government which are signatory to the agreement shall exchange services, but there is no time limit; i.e., 24 hours. Chief Barrows cited recent examples where the agreement is being challenged as a result of Proposition 13, and departments are taking advantage of the agreement. Some of the excessive costs of providing and/or receiving mutual aid must be taken off the local jurisdiction in order to preserve the concept. Chief Bragdon stated that while a jurisdiction cannot afford to provide mutual aid, they cannot afford not to, since they may require the same at a later time.

Larry Richey and Jerry Letson (CDF) do not feel the State is affected in this issue since they have emergency funds which can be expended only when CDF initiates a request for assistance. A system and concept must be established which is fair and equitable. Chairman Keller suggested the Area Coordinators discuss this issue with their fire chiefs. Chief Bragdon feels incident interpretation should be processed through the Attorney General's Office again, citing the recent incident with the City of Vernon.

IT WAS MOVED BY CHIEF BRAGDON, SECONDED BY LARRY RICHEY, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED THAT OES, THROUGH THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE, OBTAIN A RE-AFFIRMATION OF THE INTENT OF THE MASTER MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT CONCERNING MANDATES ON A LOCAL EMERGENCY.

PROJECTED ROLE FOR OES IN THE FIRE SERVICE - CONSOLIDATION OF STATE FIRE PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITIES INTO A SINGLE AGENCY:

Initially, OES Fire Division was looked upon as a coordinator/administrator for mutual aid. However, there are many functions performed by OES that simply cannot be performed by any other agency, all of which pertain to total continuity and coordination of efforts. Duties are not limited to civil defense and providing fire equipment. The system has provided the necessary catalyst to bring people together to accomplish many goals. No other association or vehicle can do this. Fire Division provides incentive, equipment, and guidance; but the fire service keeps the system operational. The Division is supported by the total fire service, which it represents. Chief Barrows solicited input as to what role the Fire Division should play now and in the future; and what does this Committee wish it to do.

Chairman Keller feels the relationship has been established and there is no limit as to how far it can and should go. Larry Richey, CDF, cited the critical role OES Fire Division assumes in addressing the problems of major fire emergencies, the mutual aid system, and rescue; along with dispatch channels and communications to make the system work. Further, smooth operations in moving and coordinating equipment must go through OES.

Chief Barrows mentioned a proposal that infers the State doesn't have it all together -- a central focal point is needed. However, the system as it is today, functions very well. General discussion ensued with Committee members stating that each agency has a distinct function, with no overlap of duties. Also, creation of another agency would create more bureaucracy and be more cumbersome. Existing agencies are specialized and distinct, and are working well -- leave them alone.

Pat McLaughlin, SFM Office, stated the proposal was originally a political issue to consolidate the problem of fire code development. It later was amended to include all elements of fire protection in state agencies.

Speaking on behalf of the Advisory Committee, Chief Bragdon reaffirmed the Committee's position regarding OES Fire Division as the best manifestation of coordination in the state. It is a small organization, but works because of the vast fire service support.

Chairman Keller stated his concern over this proposal was one of the main reasons for calling this meeting. He sees the proposal as a power thrust; it prevents the comradery where individuals who know each other can sit down and discuss issues and reach decisions. He also is not appreciative of the fact the proposal was written and submitted for consideration without knowledge of the fire services or state agencies it involves, and contains statements which are not completely correct.

Pat McLaughlin attempted to clarify that the State Fire Marshal was not behind the proposal -- he was directed to prepare the document by the Governor's Office as a political move. Chief Bragdon replied political decisions are rarely reliable.

As an Advisory Committee, the members can support OES. As individuals in the fire service, they can, and should, voice opinions through the mutual aid system.

Dick Millar, USFS, suggested the Committee use the system to voice opposition to the proposal for consolidating fire protection agencies, yet support the concept of consolidating code issues.

At this point, Chairman Keller introduced Bob Irwin, Program Manager of the Firescope Program, who wished to speak for the Firescope Board of Directors on the proposed consolidation. The Firescope information load is quite heavy. Concentrated in seven Southern California counties, it encompasses 255 fire departments, 10,000 personnel, hundreds of fire apparatus, and 15 million acres of topography, vegetation fuels, and structures on wildland areas. The basic premise is that computer management through Firescope is the only means to effectively handle this vast amount of information. The Firescope Board of Directors firmly decided that an agency without area jurisdiction -- one that could cover the full range of involved agencies -- should act as Information Manager. OES was chosen. In the development of the Firescope Program, it was critical that no one took over; but that all work together collectively.

OES has a record of support and service. It is guided by the agencies it works for, and that tradition - being responsive to local needs - must be maintained. Over \$7 million has thus far been expended on Firescope, with approximately \$13 million to go. Plans and procedures are developed, and a number of agreements based on OES have been consummated. If there is a reorganization, Firescope progress will most likely be materially delayed, and its continued success doubtful. The basic concept of information management will have to be reworked and several agreements and fiscal arrangements would have to be re-negotiated. If the new department did not share the common goals of Firescope, the whole system would have to be reworked.

Dick Miller, USFS, further stated the close working relationship between CDF and USFS would be lost if a statewide consolidation was accomplished.

Pat McLaughlin mentioned the possibility of the SPM being part of the CDF and OES. Larry Richey replied the CDF is an operating agency — doesn't set standards like the SPM. These functions in the CDF would not be useful.

Bob Irwin questioned this "bureaucratic rush" toward consolidation. Why can't people sit down and find out how they can work together rather than rush into a large consolidation, which is usually unsuccessful. Pat McLaughlin reiterated the proposal still has to be deemed viable; it is now an issue being studied by the Governor's Cabinet.

Chairman Keller, with the Committee members in agreement, stated that whether the issue is a proposal under study, or a political decision, it represents a suspicious action which never should have been considered without informing the agencies involved and the fire service. The Committee demanded it be kept apprised of any new developments, and be permitted to provide input. OES should remain neutral — the Advisory Committee will take the necessary action.

Chairman Keller will contact the Director of OES, Alex Cunningham, to discuss the proposal and plan what course of action should be taken. Chairman Keller will also personally contact the State Fire Marshal, Phil Favro, to discuss certain issues.

Chief Barrows wished to go on record stating that issues must be kept out in the open; and there are times when administrators must stand on their own principles to support the best interests of all concerned. If the Governor's Office had requested such a proposal be prepared by him, Chief Barrows would have recommended all agencies and individuals involved be given the opportunity to provide input and express their opinions. The input and opinions would have been presented for consideration prior to further action.

Chairman Keller again stated he will contact the OES Director and the State Fire Marshal, and sincerely thanked the Committee for its efforts and continued support.

The meeting adjourned at 1022 hours.

15/ John W. Keller

JOHN W. KELLER, Chairman  
OES Fire Services Advisory Committee