BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

AGENDA ITEM

GREG COX First District

DIANNE JACOB Second District

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> > BILL HORN

DATE: September 14, 2010

02

TO: **Board of Supervisors**

FIRE DEPLOYMENT STUDY – IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (DISTRICT: **SUBJECT:**

ALL)

SUMMARY:

Overview

On April 7, 2009 (8) your Board directed the Chief Administrative Officer to retain an experienced fire planning consultant to develop a deployment study to assess the delivery of fire and emergency medical services in the San Diego County region. Through a competitive bidding process, Citygate Associates, LLC, was selected and the results of their Fire Deployment Study were presented to your Board on May 19, 2010 (1) outlining the status of fire protection and emergency medical services in the At that hearing your Board directed the Chief San Diego County region. Administrative Officer to return to your Board within 120 days with an implementation plan based on the recommendations in the Fire Deployment Study that apply to the County of San Diego and that addresses the possibility of a regional joint powers authority or a memorandum of understanding or a related approach to working together with all entities in the region. On June 29, 2010 (11), as part of Budget Deliberations, your Board approved including \$5.0 million in one-time resources in the Fiscal Year 2010-11 budget for fire protection and directed the Chief Administrative Officer to incorporate the \$5.0 million into the Fire Deployment Study Implementation Plan. This is a request to approve the Fire Deployment Study Implementation Plan and the proposed uses of the \$5.0 million to support fire protection services in the region.

Recommendation(s)

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

- 1. Receive the staff presentation on the implementation plan of the recommendations contained in the Fire Deployment Study report.
- 2. Approve the Fire Deployment Study Implementation Plan as described in the background section below.
- 3. Approve the transfer of the San Diego County Regional Fire Authority functions and staff (13 positions and 13.0 staff years) from the Department of Planning and Land Use to the Public Safety Group Executive Office.
- 4. Designate the Public Safety Group Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

- (DCAO) as the Fire Warden.
- 5. Authorize the Fire Warden to execute mutual aid and automatic aid agreements.
- 6. Appoint the CAL FIRE San Diego Unit Chief as the San Diego County Regional Fire Authority Fire Chief, reporting directly to the DCAO Public Safety Group, with responsibility for the operational control, administration and leadership of the San Diego County Regional Fire Authority.
- 7. Authorize the San Diego County Regional Fire Authority to begin discussions with CAL FIRE and regional fire protection agencies to form a Joint Powers Authority for various fire protection services in the unincorporated area of the county.
- 8. Transfer the responsibility for the following County Service Areas (CSAs) and associated Fire Mitigation Funds from the Department of Planning and Land Use to the Public Safety Group Executive Office: Elfin Forest (CSA 107), Mt. Laguna (CSA 109), Mt. Palomar (CSA 110), Boulevard (CSA 111), Campo (CSA 112), San Pasqual (CSA 113), Pepper Drive (CSA 115) and San Diego County Regional Fire Authority (CSA 135).
- 9. Transfer the responsibility for the following County trust funds from the Department of Planning and Land Use to the Public Safety Group Executive Office: 44684 Indian Gaming SDF-PLU Fire WT, 44685 Indian Gaming SDF-PLU Intermtn, 44686 Indian Gaming SDF-PLU Campo Fe and 44687 Indian Gaming SDF-PLU Sn Miguel.
- 10. Approve the proposed uses of the one-time \$5.0 million for fire protection as shown in the background section below.
- 11. Transfer appropriations of up to \$30.6 million and related revenue of up to \$7.1 million from the Department of Planning and Land Use, salaries and benefits and services and supplies, to the Public Safety Group Executive Office, salaries and benefits and services and supplies, for partial-year operation of the San Diego County Regional Fire Authority.
- 12. Authorize the San Diego County Regional Fire Authority to pursue grant funding to improve fire protection in the unincorporated area.

Fiscal Impact

Funds in the amount of \$31.4 million are included in the Fiscal Year 2010-11 budget in the Department of Planning and Land Use (DPLU) for the San Diego County Regional Fire Authority (SDCRFA). This transfer will take effect on the date of your Board's action. If approved, this request will transfer up to \$30.6 million to the Public Safety Group Executive Office (PSG). This request will also transfer 13 staff years from DPLU to PSG. In addition, this request will transfer the responsibility for the CSAs and trust funds named above. These CSAs are separate legal agencies and therefore no appropriation transfers are necessary. There will be no change in net General Fund costs and no additional staff years.

Business Impact Statement N/A

Advisory Board Statement

N/A

BACKGROUND:

On May 19, 2010 (1), your Board received the Fire Deployment Study prepared by Citygate Associates, LLC and directed the Chief Administrative Officer to return to your Board within 120 days with an implementation plan based on the recommendations in that study. As a result of this directive, PSG and SDCRFA convened a group of fire chiefs and other stakeholders. The group, known as the Regional Fire Advisory Committee (RFAC), consists of the representatives outlined in recommendation 15-5 of the Fire Deployment Study. RFAC was developed to discuss each of the recommendations in the Fire Deployment Study and develop an implementation plan for each recommendation. RFAC representation includes the following:

 CAL FIRE San Diego Unit Chief 	Tribal Fire Chief Liaison					
• Chief of the City of San Diego Fire &	• San Diego County Fire Chiefs'					
Rescue Department	Association President					
Vista Fire Chief	Coronado Fire Chief					
Volunteer Fire Chief	Fire Districts Association					
• City Managers' Association	US Forest Service Representative					
Representative						
• San Diego Fire Foundation Representative	 Public Safety Group DCAO & Staff 					
Sheriff's Department Staff	• San Diego County Regional Fire Authority					
Sheriff's Department StaffLand Use and Environment Group Staff	• San Diego County Regional Fire					
-	San Diego County Regional Fire Authority					

In addition to RFAC, a working group was developed consisting of a subset of the representatives above to discuss the granular details of each of the Fire Deployment Study's recommendations. Although staff was tasked with developing an implementation plan for only County affected recommendations, RFAC, and its working group, analyzed and prioritized each recommendation since, in general, each recommendation has a regional effect.

Implementation Plan

The implementation plan presented below breaks down the Fire Deployment Study's recommendations into eight broad categories (Aerial Assets, Dispatch, Equipment, Joint Powers Authority, Planning, Staffing, Training and Other) and offers an approach to implementation.

Aerial Assets

Recommendation 5-7 calls for securing a permanent funding source for CAL FIRE's staffing levels and aerial response capabilities. As part of the implementation plan, CAL FIRE is currently pursuing options to secure a permanent funding source for staffing and aerial response capabilities.

Recommendation 6-1 recommends that the County support future CAL FIRE requests to place a new twin engine helicopter in the region. On behalf of the County of San Diego, staff will prepare letters and advocate in support of future CAL FIRE requests for CAL FIRE to place and support a new twin engine helicopter in the region.

Recommendation 6-2 is two-pronged. The first part of the recommendation calls for the Sheriff's ASTREA unit and CAL FIRE to continue their successful partnership and explore the possibility of the County funding CAL FIRE firefighting positions, including paramedics, that currently aid the County's helicopters when deployed to an incident. The first part of the recommendation also recommends that alternative funding sources be pursued to support the region's aerial firefighting program. As part of the implementation plan for this recommendation, the Sheriff and CAL FIRE will continue their successful relationship regarding the region's aerial firefighting program and explore opportunities to expand and enhance the program. If approved by your Board, today's action will allow the SDCRFA to pursue grant funding to support firefighting capabilities in the unincorporated area.

The second part of recommendation 6-2 serves as an alternative to the County funding CAL FIRE firefighting positions that aid the County's helicopters. In lieu of the County funding the CAL FIRE firefighting positions the Fire Deployment Study recommends that the County fund an additional twin engine helicopter and its flight and maintenance operations and CAL FIRE develop a sustainable and ongoing funding source to support the CAL FIRE firefighting positions that augment the County's helicopter fleet.

RFAC recommends that a high priority be placed on securing an additional twin engine helicopter for the region if funding issues can be addressed. RFAC's preference is for the County to purchase and staff an additional twin engine helicopter in order to enhance aerial response capabilities in the unincorporated area and to maintain local control of the asset. The costs and benefits of securing an additional twin engine helicopter, including funding options, staffing, and maintenance, will have to be explored further. Additionally, when appropriate, staff will look to expand the County's Call When Needed Program to meet the aerial firefighting needs of jurisdictions in the region.

Recommendations 6-3 and 6-4 discuss the need for collaboration on mechanical and pilot training issues. The County Air Tactical Group is currently exploring options to train current pilots and replacement pilots for succession planning purposes, and to defray the maintenance costs by providing helicopter mechanics at a joint price. The County Air Tactical Group consists of the County Fire Chiefs' Association, the Sheriff's Department, the Office of Emergency Services, SDCRFA, San Diego Fire & Rescue Department and the United States Forest Service. The implementation plan for these recommendations is for the County Air Tactical Group to continue to explore training and maintenance options that will benefit the region.

Dispatch

Recommendations 5-4, 5-5, 5-6, 7-1 and 7-2 discuss the need to improve dispatch processing times, deployment of resources and dispatch consolidation. Efforts to improve dispatch operations have already been achieved. For instance, the region's Operational Area was recently

reconfigured from eight zones to four, thereby providing for a more expedient dispatch of resources. Additional improvements to processing times, deployment of resources and dispatch consolidation are currently in progress. The County Fire Chiefs' Association Interoperability Committee and Communications Committee are currently working to improve dispatch processing times. SDCRFA is a member of the County Fire Chiefs' Association. Shared dispatching, consolidation of dispatch administration, where feasible, and new advances in technology are currently being discussed by the County Fire Chiefs' Association to improve dispatch operations. The implementation plan for these recommendations is to let the County Fire Chiefs' Association Interoperability and Communications Committees continue to build on enhancing regional dispatch operations.

Equipment

Recommendations 8-1, and 8-2 refer to SDCRFA and CAL FIRE developing procurement and maintenance plans for equipment, developing supply specifications, jointly issuing bids and determining what equipment should be stored locally. To implement these recommendations the SDCRFA will continue to issue procurement bids for regional equipment and maintenance services using the County's Department of Purchasing & Contracting. Additionally, SDCRFA will work with the County Fire Chiefs' Association Equipment Committee to develop standardized supply specifications and determine what goods are not capable of being stored locally, such as certain personal protective equipment, which have a finite shelf life.

Recommendations 13-1, 13-2 and 13-3 refer to SDCRFA assuming maintenance responsibility for volunteer and County-owned fire vehicles at the volunteer fire stations and developing a program of mobile mechanics to service these vehicles. The implementation of these recommendations is nearly complete. SDCRFA uses Department of General Services' Fleet Division mechanics to service the County-owned vehicles at the volunteer fire stations. As a result, the implementation plan for these recommendations is to allow SDCRFA to continue to offer maintenance services to the volunteer-owned firefighting vehicles at the volunteer fire stations and explore the viability of developing a regional mobile mechanic system to maintain these vehicles.

Joint Powers Authority (JPA)

Recommendation 15-5 of the Fire Deployment Study urges the County to assume the coordination of a regional JPA or multi-agency Memorandum of Understanding to develop regional plans and implementation steps of region-wide fire protection issues. RFAC recommends a phased approach to implementing this recommendation. The envisioned phased approach begins with a small JPA between SDCRFA, CAL FIRE and one or more regional fire protection agencies. This JPA would address administration, management, and operational issues such as: emergency management; weed abatement; equipment maintenance; training; communication and technology; fire code consolidation and enforcement; and other fire protection related issues. The benefits of the JPA arrangement would provide for shared resources, pooling costs, and developing a common understanding of fire related issues and a decision making process to address issues. Details of the JPA, such as how it will be staffed and funded, specific functions, creation of by-laws and other details will need to be addressed. Once this JPA is formed and has operated successfully for a period of time, the JPA could potentially

develop into a larger regional JPA, which would be the second phase. Other fire agencies in the region could opt-in to the JPA and the JPA could potentially expand its scope due to the larger membership group. If approved by your Board, today's action will allow the SDCRFA to work with regional fire protection districts to begin discussions of the formation of the JPA. Staff will return to your Board for authorization to enter into the JPA when the aforementioned details have been resolved.

Planning

Recommendation 5-1 relates to land use planning agencies adopting fire unit deployment performance measures based on population density zones. The implementation plan for this recommendation is to have the jurisdictions in the region assume this responsibility at their own discretion. The Department of Planning and Land Use is considering these recommendations as part of the General Plan Update that will be brought to your Board this fall.

Recommendations 9-1 and 9-2 relate to consolidating fire prevention activities such as plan checking and fire code enforcement. Code consistency is a regional goal of the County Fire Chiefs' Association Fire Marshals Committee. The implementation plan for this recommendation is to continue discussions with the County Fire Chiefs' Association Fire Marshals Committee with the development of an updated Consolidated Fire Code for the unincorporated area. Additionally, consolidation of plan checking and enforcement will be explored as part of a JPA between SDCRFA and fire protection districts.

Staffing

Recommendation 5-2 refers to increasing the number of career firefighters at the volunteer fire departments or developing a study to assess the costs and benefits of recruitment, training and equipment for additional volunteer firefighters. The implementation plan for this recommendation is for SDCRFA to develop a study to assess the costs and benefits of recruiting, training and equipping additional volunteer firefighters, in lieu of career firefighters, after the current stipend program has been in operation for two years. The stipend program, which provides a reimbursement stipend of \$95 to \$110 per 24 hour shift, depending on classification, to volunteer firefighters for education, training, fuel, uniform, boots, food and other fire related personal costs, has only been in place for eight months. Allowing the program to evolve over a two-year period will provide a more representative sample of the costs and benefits of continuing to expand the volunteer program.

Recommendations 5-7 and 6-2 address maintaining CAL FIRE firefighter staffing levels. RFAC recommends that maintaining current regional firefighter staffing levels, and preferably adding more firefighters, should be the region's top priority, even above adding another twin engine helicopter to the region, if funding issues can be addressed.

Recommendation 5-3 deals solely with city run fire agencies in the western portion of the county. The implementation plan is for these cities to assume responsibility of this recommendation at their own discretion.

Recommendation 15-2 of the Fire Deployment Study calls for SDCRFA to be transferred from the Land Use and Environment Group (LUEG) to the Public Safety Group. If approved by your Board, today's action will authorize SDCRFA staff and functions to be transferred from LUEG to PSG. The DCAO of PSG will be designated as the Fire Warden and act as a liaison between local fire marshals/chiefs and County land use officials and execute mutual aid and automatic aid agreements, as well as remedy code interpretation differences.

Recommendation 15-3 proposes that the County hire a Fire Services Director to be the manager of the County Fire Authority, provide leadership in the unincorporated area and manage the County's fire service functions. In recognition of changes which have occurred since 2008 in the governance of the County Fire Authority, RFAC recommends that a "fire chief" not a "director" assume management responsibility of the County Fire Authority. This year, the County Fire Chiefs' Association worked with all volunteer fire agencies to consolidate dispatch, management and training under CAL FIRE. The County contracts with CAL FIRE and the CAL FIRE San Diego Unit Chief provides leadership in the unincorporated area and operational responsibility of the County's fire service functions. Continuing to contract with CAL FIRE will maintain continuity of operations in the unincorporated area and avoid the salary, benefit and retirement costs of adding a County staff member to assume responsibility of a function that is already well managed by CAL FIRE.

As a result, the implementation plan for this recommendation will be to continue to contract with CAL FIRE for leadership, administration and operational control in the unincorporated area and operational management of SDCRFA. The CAL FIRE San Diego Unit Chief will work closely with the DCAO of PSG and SDCRFA staff to meet administrative and operational needs. As allowed by the County's existing contract with CAL FIRE, in today's action it is requested that your Board appoint the CAL FIRE San Diego Unit Chief as the "Fire Chief" of SDCRFA. This action formally integrates SDCRFA into the CAL FIRE fire protection service delivery model, providing consistent administrative and operational leadership of the County's fire protection services. The Appointing Authority, with hiring, firing and civil service authority over the County employees within SDCRFA, will remain with the DCAO of PSG.

Training

Recommendations 10-1, 10-2, 10-3 and 10-4 relate to developing and operating within regional training standards, developing training sites on the east side of the county and creating a mechanism for sharing training costs, identifying funding sources to support training costs, and determining regional training needs. The County Fire Chiefs' Association is currently in the process of regionalizing and sub-regionalizing training efforts. Additionally, the County Fire Chiefs' Association developed a strategic plan that encompasses a training element which seeks to establish standardized core competencies for fire fighters, explore grant opportunities to offset training costs and determine regional training needs. SDCRFA is exploring the feasibility of using satellite training sites and mobile facilities to develop training opportunities in the eastern portion of the county. The implementation plan for these recommendations is to continue to let the County Fire Chiefs' Association develop standardized training competencies, seek funding sources to offset training costs and allow SDCRFA to continue to develop satellite and mobile facilities for training opportunities. Additionally, if approved by your Board, today's action will

allow the use of one-time funds to support the development of regional training facilities in the northeast, southeast and southwest portions of the county.

Other

Recommendations 11-1, 11-2, 12-1, 12-2, 15-1 and 15-4 of the Fire Deployment Study do not fit into the categories above. As a result, these recommendations have been grouped into the "other" category.

Recommendation 11-1 urges the County Fire Chiefs' Association and the Indigenous Fire Chiefs' Association to further enhance the shared understanding of their operations. This recommendation has been implemented. The County Fire Chiefs' Association and the Indigenous Fire Chiefs' Association will continue to work together to forge a collaborative relationship.

Recommendation 11-2 is in the process of being implemented. SDCRFA and CAL FIRE are currently working on a draft Master Mutual Aid Agreement, which will also include a tribal fire department component. The agreement is expected to be completed by the end of the calendar year.

Recommendation 12-1 pertains only to the Unified Port of San Diego and implementation will be left to its discretion.

SDCRFA and Department of Public Works Airport staff have initiated discussions exploring options to develop potential revenue for enhanced firefighting and EMS patient rescue, pursuant to recommendation 12-2. Staff will explore legal limitations including those imposed by Federal Aviation Administration grant assurances and regulations restricting imposing fee structures beyond the current available fee-for-service reimbursement of fire and emergency medical related flights. If a concept for revenue generation is developed, staff will return to your Board outlining available options.

In August 2010, SDCRFA became a member of the operations committee of the Unified Disaster Council, completing recommendation 15-1.

Recommendation 15-4 calls for the continued implementation of the Hybrid Plan, which established a phased approach to reorganizing fire service in the unincorporated area. The implementation of this recommendation is in progress. Staff plans to bring forward the initial recommendations to your Board in December 2010 or January 2011 to reduce the total number of CSAs from seven to three per Step II of the Hybrid Plan. The process of implementing Step II involves Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) consideration and approval. Staff is currently in the process of preparing the LAFCO application to implement Step II. Step I of the Hybrid Plan, which consolidated volunteer fire companies not associated with a County Service Area under County Service Area 135, was completed in June 2008.

One Time Resources for Implementation of the Fire Deployment Study

On June 29, 2010 (11), as part of Budget Deliberations, your Board approved the inclusion of \$5.0 million in one-time resources in the Fiscal Year 2010-11 budget for implementation of the Fire Deployment Study. Many of the Fire Deployment Study's recommendations require an ongoing and sustainable funding source. As a result, these one-time funds are recommended to be used only for certain one-time expenditures, focusing on the development of facilities to support fire-fighting operations and training needs in the unincorporated area. Proposed uses of the funds include:

- \$3.385 million for volunteer and fire protection district facility improvements such as sleeping quarters, kitchens, apparatus bays or new facilities, including necessary planning and entitlement services.
- \$1.315 million to develop regional and satellite training facilities to be located in the Warner Springs, Pine Valley-Lake Morena and El Cajon areas.
- \$200,000 for various day-to-day volunteer firefighter fire equipment.
- \$100,000 for GIS mapping technology needs.

SDCRFA will work with the Department of General Services to scope and prioritize specific projects in the Fiscal Year 2011-16 Capital Improvement Needs Assessment (CINA), and will return to your Board with specific project recommendations for necessary authorizations.

Transfer of San Diego County Regional Fire Authority to the Public Safety Group

If your Board approves the transfer of responsibility of SDCRFA from LUEG to PSG unexpended appropriations of up to \$30.6 million and related revenue of up to \$7.1 million will be transferred to cover operations for the remainder of the year. Additionally, if approved, today's action will transfer the responsibility for the following County Service Areas (CSAs) and associated Fire Mitigation Funds from DPLU to the PSG: Elfin Forest (CSA 107), Mt. Laguna (CSA 109), Mt. Palomar (CSA 110), Boulevard (CSA 111), Campo (CSA 112), San Pasqual (CSA 113), Pepper Drive (CSA 115) and San Diego County Regional Fire Authority (CSA 135) and the transfer of administrative responsibility for trust funds. The responsibility of the following trust funds will also be transferred from LUEG to PSG: 44684 Indian Gaming SDF-PLU Fire WT, 44685 Indian Gaming SDF-PLU Intermtn, 44686 Indian Gaming SDF-PLU Campo Fe and 44687 Indian Gaming SDF-PLU Sn Miguel.

Environmental Statement

It is too early in the process to prepare meaningful environmental review for the proposed fire facilities identified in the implementation plan. CEQA Guidelines, section 15004(b). No design or development plans have been prepared for any of the proposed fire facilities identified in the implementation plan. Consequently, there is nothing to review at this stage. Once the plans for these facilities have been prepared, environmental review can be done.

Linkage to the County of San Diego Strategic Plan

This request supports the Safe and Livable Communities Initiative of the County's Strategic Plan by enhancing region's ability to plan for and respond to wildfires.

Respectfully submitted,

Guyuand A Gewanslez WALTER F. EKARD

Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

Fire Deployment Study Executive Summary

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET

REQU	IRES	FOUR	VOTES	S:	[]	Y	es	[X]	No			
		DISCLO [X]		PER	COUN	ГҮ	CHA	RTER	SECTION	1000.1	REQUII	RED

PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:

June 29, 2010 (10) BOARD BUDGET DELIBERATIONS

May 19, 2010 (1) ACCEPT THE DEPLOYMENT STUDY ASSESSING THE DELIVERY OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY

April 7, 2009 (8) INITIATING A DEPLOYMENT STUDY TO ASSESS THE DELIVERY OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY

BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:

N/A

BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:

N/A

MANDATORY COMPLIANCE:

N/A

ORACLE AWARD NUMBER(S) AND CONTRACT AND/OR REQUISITION NUMBER(S):

126634; 126744; 450052; 501858; 501861; 100129; 100131; 100134; 100136; 100138; 100141; 100142; 100130; 100132; 100135; 100137; 100139; 100140

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: Public Safety Group

OTHER CONCURRENCE(S): Department of General Services

Department of Human Resources Department of Planning and Land Use Land Use and Environment Group

Office of Strategy & Intergovernmental Affairs

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