



**DIANNE JACOB**  
**CHAIRWOMAN**  
**SUPERVISOR, SECOND DISTRICT**  
**SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**AGENDA ITEM**

**DATE:** April 7, 2009

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**SUBJECT:** INITIATING A DEPLOYMENT STUDY TO ASSESS THE DELIVERY OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY (District: ALL)

**SUMMARY:**

**Overview**

San Diego County is no stranger to catastrophic wildfires. Over the past decade, this region has been engulfed by two major firestorms and battled more than 50 additional fires that have each totaled 100-plus acres. These fires have resulted in the destruction of thousands of homes, the devastation of nearly one million acres and the tragic loss of innocent lives.

In addition, local agencies continue to stretch resources to maintain adequate levels of service when it comes to day-to-day operations such as responding to emergency medical calls and other urgent incidents.

In an effort to strive for improved fire protection and emergency medical services countywide, today's action will direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to retain an experienced fire planning consultant for the development of a deployment study. This comprehensive study will be the blueprint for improving San Diego County's regional fire protection and emergency medical system. At minimum, the study will assess current levels of service, identify future needs, provide options for a regional governance structure and develop cost-feasible proposals that would significantly improve our region's ability to fight future wildfires, significantly bolster day-to-day operations for local agencies and dramatically enhance the delivery of fire and emergency medical services in San Diego County.

**Recommendation(s)**

**CHAIRWOMAN JACOB**

1. Direct the CAO to retain a consultant for the development of a comprehensive deployment study to assess the delivery of fire and emergency medical services in

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San Diego County. The study should assess current levels of service; identify future needs; provide options for a regional governance structure; and develop cost-feasible proposals that would significantly improve our region's ability to fight future wildfires, significantly bolster day-to-day operations for local agencies and dramatically enhance the delivery of fire and emergency medical services in San Diego County.

2. Direct staff to report back to the Board on a quarterly basis with a status update, and return to the Board after the completion of the deployment study with recommendations of how to best utilize the information.
3. In accordance with Article XXIII, Section 401, et seq. of the County Administrative Code, authorize the Director, Department of Purchasing and Contracting, to issue a Competitive Solicitation and award a contract for up to 12 months for consultant services and take any other actions as necessary.
4. Establish appropriations in the amount of \$300,000 in the Office of Emergency Services, services and supplies, for a consultant for the development of a comprehensive deployment study, based on General Fund Balance.

**(4 VOTES)**

**Fiscal Impact**

These funds are not included in the Fiscal Year 2008-09 Adopted Operational Plan. If approved, this request will result in up to \$300,000 of additional costs in Fiscal Year 2008-09 with the actual amount of funding to be determined at the completion of the competitive solicitation. It is anticipated that the cost of the study will be approximately \$200,000 to \$250,000. The funding source is County General Fund Balance. This request will not result in any additional staff years.

**Business Impact Statement**

N/A

**Advisory Board Statement**

N/A

**BACKGROUND:**

San Diego County is no stranger to catastrophic wildfires. Over the past decade, this region has been engulfed by two major firestorms and battled more than 50 additional fires that have each totaled 100-plus acres. These fires have resulted in the destruction of thousands of homes, the devastation of nearly one million acres and the tragic loss of innocent lives.

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Major fires have no boundaries and have been threatening urban areas with greater frequency. In addition, local agencies stretch resources to maintain adequate levels of service when it comes to day-to-day operations such as responding to emergency medical calls and other urgent incidents. It is essential that agencies countywide work collectively to address future fire and emergency medical needs from a regional perspective.

The County of San Diego has made a significant commitment to fire protection by providing \$15.5 million per year to augment rural fire protection in our most vulnerable areas. This has resulted in enhanced fire protection services at more than 50 stations throughout the entire unincorporated area of San Diego County. In addition, more than 900,000 acres now fall under the newly formed San Diego County Fire Authority (CSA 135). Ultimately, 1.5 million acres will be under the CSA 135 umbrella of fire protection.

Despite CSA 135 and a number of improvements to fire protection and emergency medical services over recent years, more needs to be done to improve response times, coordination, communications, training and fire protection across the County. It is no secret that it's not a matter of if, but when, another major fire will wreck havoc to the San Diego region.

We live in a region that demands year-round preparedness to fires. Therefore, last November, the County Board of Supervisors placed a measure on the ballot that would have established a regional fire protection parcel tax. Ultimately, the revenues generated would have improved and enhanced firefighting resources and services for regional and local purposes. Although this measure failed to reach the required two-thirds benchmark, 63.5% of the voters did cast a vote of support. This percentage indicated that an overwhelming majority of voters in the San Diego region support paying more to increase resources to combat wildfires and enhance firefighting and emergency medical service capabilities at local and regional levels.

In an effort to strive for improved fire protection and emergency medical services countywide, today's action will direct the Chief Administrative Officer to retain an experienced fire planning consultant for the development of a deployment study. This comprehensive study will be the blueprint for improving San Diego County's regional fire protection and emergency medical system. At minimum, the study will assess current levels of service, identify future needs, provide options for a regional governance structure and develop cost-feasible proposals that would significantly improve our region's ability to fight future wildfires, significantly bolster day-to-day operations for local agencies and dramatically enhance the delivery of fire and emergency medical services in San Diego County.

I urge your support!

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**Linkage to the County of San Diego Strategic Plan**

N/A

Respectfully submitted,

DIANNE JACOB  
VICE-CHAIRWOMAN  
Supervisor, Second District

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**AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET**

**CONCURRENCE(S)**

<b>COUNTY COUNSEL REVIEW</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Written Disclosure per County Charter Section 1000.1 Required	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>GROUP/AGENCY FINANCE DIRECTOR</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
<b>CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
Requires Four Votes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>GROUP/AGENCY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
<b>COUNTY TECHNOLOGY OFFICE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
<b>DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A

**Other Concurrence(s):** N/A

**ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT:** District 2, Board of Supervisors

**CONTACT PERSON(S):**

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**AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:** \_\_\_\_\_