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I. PURPOSE

Mutual Aid Plans are established to furnish fire protection personnel, resources, facilities, and rescue services as may be necessary to combat any type of disaster of a lesser nature than that which requires a declaration of a state of extreme emergency.

The policy is designed to provide guidelines and to identify operating procedures to be followed by San Diego Fire-Rescue Department (SDFD) personnel and resources during emergencies involving mutual aid.

II. SCOPE

This policy will apply to all SDFD personnel assigned to any mutual aid emergency, in any capacity, including Agency Representative, Strike Team Leader Engine (STEN), Task Force Leader (TFL), Strike Team member, Task Force member, Single Resource and/or any other ICS assignment.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. CICCS

1. The California Incident Command Certification System (CICCS) as established by the California Emergency Management Agency (CAL EMA, previously OES), the State Board of Fire Services (SBFS) and the office of the California State Fire Marshal (CSFM).
2. This certification system utilizes a combination of prerequisites, minimum training standards, experience requirements, physical fitness requirements, currency requirements and Position Task Books to identify the skills necessary to perform in all ICS positions.
3. Metro Zone has adopted this certification system as the certification standard for the position of Strike Team Leader.

B. Immediate Need

1. A strike team designation which is based upon requested arrival time and work objective.
2. Resources assigned to an Immediate Need strike team should respond to the incident as quickly as possible.
3. Personnel can expect to be assigned and begin tactical operations upon arrival at the incident.
4. In order to meet the above objectives, CMD and TAC radio channels, along with a travel channel, will be assigned to any Metro Zone strike team requested for "In County" immediate need responses.
5. The need to form up all units at a rendezvous location is at the discretion of the Zone Coordinator and/or the STEN.

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- a. Longer travel distances increase the need to meet with strike team units to formulate: route of response, safe travel instructions and incident coordination.
 - b. All Out of County responses require the resources to form up and respond together.
- C. “In County”
Any strike team request for incidents *not within the jurisdiction of Metro Zone but within San Diego County* will be considered “In County”
- D. “In Zone”
Any strike team request for incidents within the jurisdiction of Metro Zone will be considered “In Zone”
- E. Mutual Aid Request
1. Mutual Aid Requests are agency requests for single resources and strike teams.
 2. Mutual Aid Requests are initiated by the jurisdiction in need of assistance, through the Area Fire Coordinator at the CAL Fire Monte Vista Dispatch Center.
 3. Mutual Aid Requests for “Immediate Need” will be filled with units that can meet the Immediate Need criteria.
 4. For an “In County” or a “Planned Need” strike team request, a pre-determined unit deployment guide will be maintained at FCC.
- F. Mutual Aid Response Information Sheet
1. An information sheet used to document incident response information for resource deployments.
 2. This sheet is used by the Fire Communications Center (FCC) to collect and communicate information received from the requesting agency and also provides valuable information to the STEN.
- G. “Out of County”
Any strike team request for incidents not within the jurisdiction of San Diego County but within the State of California will be considered “Out of County”.
- H. “Planned Need”
1. Strike teams requested for a projected future operational period.
 2. Assigned units are to rendezvous and meet up with the STEN at a pre-designated time and location.
 3. Planned need strike teams do not normally respond Code 3.
- I. Strike Team Deployment Guide

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1. A guide consisting of pre-determined apparatus resources within Metro Zone which have been identified to be used when filling requests for “In County” and “Out of County” strike teams
2. The Strike Team Deployment Guide shall be used for both Immediate Need and Planned Need responses outside the jurisdictions of the Metro Zone

J. Strike Team Leader Selection Guide

A guide consisting of a pre-determined selection rotation among participating Metro Zone agencies, to be used by FCC when filling the position of STEN and STEN Trainee

K. Zone

1. For the purposes of mutual aid, San Diego County is divided into four (4) zones: SDFD is assigned to Metro Zone
2. Metro Zone consists of the following San Diego County fire agencies:
 - a. SDFD
 - b. Chula Vista Fire Department
 - c. Poway Fire Department
 - d. Miramar Fire Department
 - e. Federal Fire Department
 - f. National City Fire Department
 - g. Imperial Beach Fire Department
 - h. Coronado Fire Department
 - i. San Pasqual Volunteer Fire Department

IV. DEPOLYMENT

SDFD is committed to honor all established Metro Zone mutual aid agreements in place, however, will *at all times* maintain its primary mission to protect life and property within the City of San Diego. Factors determined by the daily burn index, availability of reserve apparatus and personnel availability (TeleStaff pick list) must be evaluated before filling any mutual aid request from the Area Fire Coordinator, Cal Fire or U.S. Forest Service (USFS).

A. Strike Team Requests

1. Strike Team requests are initiated by the jurisdiction in need, through the Area Fire Coordinator at CAL Fire’s Monte Vista Dispatch Center.
2. The San Diego County Fire Chief’s Association has agreed on the definitions of Immediate Need and Planned Need previously listed in this document.

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3. SDFD policy is to interpret Immediate Need strike team requests based on the definitions previously listed in this document.
4. All requests from outside the San Diego Operational Area will be treated as Planned Need.

B. Strike Team Unit Selection – “In Zone”

All “In Zone” deployments of strike teams shall be determined by the Metro Zone Coordinator. Determining factors are, but not limited to: local response agreements, resource status, availability of reserve apparatus and the established Metro Zone response matrix. Although San Pasqual Volunteer Fire Department is a partner of the Metro Zone they will not be part of the strike team make up or selection.

C. Strike Team Unit Selection – “In County” or “Out of County”

The following strike team unit selection procedures shall be used for all “In County” or “Out of County” deployments:

1. After receipt of a mutual aid request, the Duty Deputy Chief will be notified by FCC
2. FCC will gather information from the requesting agency, usually CAL Fire Monte Vista Dispatch Center
3. The request will be categorized according to:
 - a. Resource Type
 - 1) Strike Team
 - 2) Task Force
 - 3) Single Resource
 - 4) Agency Representative
 - b. Location of Incident
 - 1) “In Zone”
 - 2) “In County”
 - 3) “Out of County”
 - c. Reporting Time
 - 1) Immediate Need
 - 2) Planned Need
4. FCC will select apparatus resources from the *Strike Team Deployment Guide* based on gathered information

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- a. Selection of apparatus resources shall always begin at the top of the list
 - b. Any apparatus resource that is incapable of responding immediately on an Immediate Need request will be bypassed
 5. FCC will select a STEN and STEN Trainee using the *Strike Team Leader Selection Guide*
 6. FCC will dispatch the response
 7. FCC will forward the information from the *Mutual Aid Response Information Sheet* to the STEN
 - a. Location of Incident by Thomas Brothers Map coordinates
 - b. Radio frequency and procedures to communications procedures to be used
 - c. Requesting Agency
 - d. Any other pertinent information
- D. Strike Team Leader Selection
1. Within Metro Zone, the selection of STEN shall follow the Strike Team Leader Selection Guide maintained at FCC
 - a. The first deployed STEN shall be from the agency listed as 1st, the second deployment shall be from the agency listed 2nd, the third deployment shall be from the agency listed 3rd, etc.
 2. The assignment process for STEN from SDFD will be the same for all strike team leader assignments, Type I, Type III, Mixed or CAL EMA.
 - a. The on-duty Battalion Chief will be selected from the matrix kept on file at FCC.
 3. SDFD STEN selection will require that the on-duty battalion chief selected for the assignment is CICCS certified.
 4. FCC will determine which CICCS certified battalion chiefs are available and coordinate the selection process with the Shift Commander.
 5. The battalion chief that is on-duty at the battalion that is identified in the matrix will be responsible to take the STEN assignment.
 - a. If the BC identified in the matrix is unable to deploy e.g.: not CICCS certified, or assigned to another response, the next day's assignment on the matrix shall be used to fill the assignment.
 - b. In the case that the on-duty battalion chief identified in the matrix will be unable to fulfill that responsibility, they will be responsible for the following:

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- 1) At the beginning of the shift, locate a qualified on-duty battalion chief or a Staff battalion chief that is willing to take the assignment for the day
- 2) Make contact with the Duty Emergency Response Officer (ERO) and Duty Shift Commander and have the replacement noted on the daily information maintained at FCC

E. Strike Team Leader Trainee Selection

1. The assignment of the STEN trainee position will first be selected from on-duty battalion chiefs that are qualified for the STEN trainee position.
2. The selection of STEN Trainee will be limited to current battalion chiefs not yet CICCIS qualified.
3. In the event there are no non-CICCIS qualified battalion chiefs available, the STEN Trainee position may be selected from an outside agency (within the Metro Zone) Trainee list. If no outside agency Trainees are available then a current list of the first five (5) SDFD captains on the battalion chief promotion list.
 - a. All other STEN trainee assignments will be coordinated by the on-duty Shift Commander.

F. Agency Representatives

1. A SDFD Shift Commander or battalion chief may be assigned to an incident as an Agency Representative for incidents within Metro Zone or the Operational Area (San Diego County).
2. The Assistant Chief of Operations must authorize the deployment of an Agency Representative with the following considerations:
 - a. If two or more strike teams comprised of all SDFD units are deployed, a SDFD battalion chief may be sent (FCC can assist with coordinating the selection of the Agency Representative).
 - b. If two or more mixed zone strike teams are deployed a Metro Zone chief officer may be selected from the Metro Zone Matrix.
 - c. If two or more strike teams from different zones within San Diego County are sent, the Area Fire Coordinator may request a chief officer from one of the zones within the county based on the published rotational Matrix.
 - d. The Agency Representatives may take a trainee with approval. Agency Representatives and trainees are not reimbursable unless they are requested by the incident management.

G. CAL EMA Strike Teams

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Strike teams / task forces comprised of CAL EMA-owned apparatus shall be chosen from Metro Zone agencies that are assigned a CAL EMA apparatus (Type I or Type III).

1. Type I apparatus
 - a. Currently, within Metro Zone, only SDFD and the Poway Fire Department may be considered for this role.
 - b. SDFD will provide the STEN/TFL per the current agreement with CAL EMA.

H. Type III apparatus

Currently SDFD is the only agency in Metro Zone with a Type III CAL EMA Engine

I. Authorization

1. FCC is authorized to dispatch three (3) Strike Teams from Metro Zone without pre-approval by the Shift Commander. These strike teams can be comprised of Type I or Type III apparatus (with a maximum of two Type III strike teams).
2. The on-duty Shift Commander shall be notified prior to and must authorize the use of additional resources being considered for strike team assignments
3. Additional "In County" or "Out of County" strike team requests require the approval of the Assistant Chief of Operations

V. **RESPONSE PROCEDURES**

FCC will utilize the Mutual Aid Response Information Sheet to document all required strike team request information and then forward the completed sheet to the STEN and Shift Commander prior to dispatching any suppression units.

A. STEN Vehicles

1. STENs will utilize their front line battalion chief vehicle for Immediate Need responses.
2. If deployment is expected to go beyond one operational period, the STEN shall immediately notify the Shift Commander.
 - a. The Shift Commander will arrange to deliver a ST/BC vehicle at later operational period.
3. A STEN/ will utilized a reserve vehicle for all planned need strike team responses.
 - a. ST/BC vehicles will be maintained at Fire Stations.
 - b. Battalion Chiefs should initially respond in the ST/BC vehicle, when they are available at their station.

B. STEN Pre-Travel Duties

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1. For strike teams other than immediate need, the STEN will report to FCC to obtain the following:
 - a. STEN bag
 - b. Credit card (Pcard if not already previously issued)
 - c. Cash
 - d. Satellite Phone
2. In the event of a SDFD unit being assigned to a STEN from an outside agency, the Captain from that apparatus shall report to FCC. The Captain will obtain the items outlined in #1 of this section. The resources are to support any SDFD unit assigned to that strike team.
3. The STEN shall be responsible for maintaining receipts, cash and Pcards and will immediately report any loss or theft to FCC.
 - a. FCC will notify the Shift Commander of any such occurrence and be guided by their direction.
4. The STEN shall maintain a list of all personnel assigned to the strike team and communicate this list to FCC as soon as reasonably possible.
 - a. Any changes to strike team personnel should also be communicated to FCC as soon as possible.
 - b. The STEN shall also insure all personnel are properly logged onto their apparatus MDC prior to leaving the City of San Diego.
5. All information received by Fire Communications from the requesting agency will be related to the Strike Team Leader.
 - a. Location of incident by Thomas Brothers Map coordinates.
 - b. Radio frequency and procedures to be used.
 - c. Agency requesting aid.
 - d. Strike Team number.
 - e. The request number.
 - f. Any other information that could prove helpful.
6. To assist Strike Team members during their initial 24 hours assigned to an out-of-county incident, a Strike Team Cash Advance Fund has been established. This fund is located in the Strike Team Leader Bag. Disbursement of Strike Team Cash Advance Funds shall be as follows:
 - a. Emergency Response Officer (ERO) shall be responsible for control, disbursement, and reimbursement of Strike Team Cash Advance Fund.

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- b. The on-duty Shift Commander will determine if a cash advance will be required during any strike team response. However, under no circumstances shall more than \$2000.00 be advanced to any STEN or Captain assigned to a strike team without a SDFD STEN.
 - c. The ERO shall complete a "Strike Team Petty Cash Advance" form (sample attached). STEN shall review the form for accuracy, print name, date, time and sign form where indicated. ERO shall also sign form where indicated.
 - d. STEN receiving funds shall obtain receipts for all reimbursable expenditures incurred during the incident. Reimbursement shall not be made for any expenditure without appropriate, valid receipts. Each individual receipt shall be attached to a "Petty Cash Receipt" form (sample attached). All receipts and remaining cash shall be given to Communications Officer within 24 hours of return of STEN to San Diego. Communications Officer, after receiving all receipts with petty cash receipt forms and remaining cash from Strike Team Leader, shall acknowledge by completing bottom section of "Strike Team Petty Cash Advance" form. STEN shall retain bottom section of cash advance form.
 - e. Communications Officer shall obtain an "Office Fund Voucher Envelope" (sample attached) insert all receipts, and complete face of envelope. Completed envelope shall be sent to Office Services Supervisor. Office Services Supervisor shall review face of envelope for arithmetic accuracy and process request for Direct Payment to reimburse Strike Team Petty Cash Fund.
 - f. The Strike Team Cash Advance Fund balance shall be verified by the Administrative Services section on at least a quarterly basis.
 - g. This section of this policy will also apply to Cal EMA units assigned to strike teams with a STEN that is not from SDFD.
7. STENs are responsible to coordinate with the Incident Commander. STENs are responsible for the conduct of their strike team. This shall include professional behavior and adherence to the Strike Team Code of Conduct.
8. STENs will keep a log of events (ICS 214).
 - a. Apparatus responding
 - b. Crew members
 - c. Staffing hours
 - d. Equipment lost or destroyed
 - e. Chronological log of events

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- f. Injuries
- g. Receipts for food and drink
- h. Any other data deemed necessary

C. Responding to an incident while assigned to a strike team

1. If an emergency situation arises that would cause a strike team to be delayed in reaching their final destination by the time stated in deployment paperwork, the strike team leader must notify the CAL EMA representative at the incident.
 - a. If the CAL EMA representative is unavailable or unassigned and the strike team is in transit, the strike team leader shall immediately contact the CAL EMA 24-hour Warning Center at 916-845-8911.
 - b. To ensure reimbursement, in **ALL** cases, the CAL EMA representative at the incident and the CAL EMA Warning Center should be contacted in advance of the lodging being provided.
 - c. If the CAL EMA representative is unavailable, unassigned or unreachable and the strike team is in transit to or from an incident, the strike team leader should contact the CAL EMA 24-hour Warning Center at 916-845-8911 prior to securing lodging for SDFD strike team personnel.
 - d. Approval for off-site lodging by the incident generally only takes place when the incident has not provided accommodations. In some cases predetermined staging areas will be utilized for strike teams.
 - e. CAL EMS's policy on sleeping accommodations is:

NOTE: Per the California Fire Assistance Agreement (CFAA), Page A-7, Section A-24, Incident Off-Shift Rest and Sleeping Accommodations, *"the responsible Forest Agency will provide, when practical, shaded and/or climatically maintained accommodations for off shift sleeping, rest, and recuperation for local jurisdiction resources confined to the incident base. If the incident command finds it operationally feasible (i.e. Strike team remains available), to place local jurisdiction resources in a commercial sleeping accommodation, it may be provided by the forest agency"*.

D. Single Resource Requests

1. Staffing: Senior Staff has recommended that a total of fifteen (15) SDFD personnel may be deployed (without prior approval from the Fire Chief) for single resource requests. Other Metro Zone partners are not included in this number.

For SDFD, the fifteen (15) fire personnel will be distributed by the following rates: A maximum has been established for each rate with an overall total of fifteen (15) SDFD personnel that may be authorized by the on duty Shift Commander without prior approval from the Fire Chief.

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Additional requests may be filled with the Fire Chief's approval based on personnel availability (will work list) and fire activity in the City/County. FCC will not fill any single resource request for SDFD personnel unless authorized by the on duty Shift Commander, Fire Chief or the Fire Chief's designee.

Note: Authorization will be based on personnel availability, the daily burn index and this department's commitment to local and state fire responses.

2. Deployment: Team management positions and single resource requests will be out up to 14 days versus 21 days from previous years. SDFD personnel may be extended another 7-14 days with department approval by the Fire Chief or on duty Shift Commander. Strike Teams will also be deployed for up to 14 days and may be extended with approval.
3. Single resource participants may be considered undeployable if they do not meet the minimum requirements set forth by "Single Resource SOPS" SI 02, Section 01, Subsection A.
4. Fire Management Teams: There are SDFD personnel who are eligible to respond on one of two authorized teams. Those two authorized teams include Federal IMT and Dispatch Teams.

E. Returning from a Strike Team

1. A home unit inspection will occur once the apparatus is released from its strike team assignment, before it returns to its normal operational status
2. The following parameters will dictate whether a vehicle requires a home unit inspection
 - a. Deployment for greater than 24 hours on a specific incident
 - b. Deployment out-of-county and assigned for at least one operational period
3. The following process will occur upon the return of deployed strike team apparatus
 - c. Shall be placed out of service with FCC once strike team is disbanded
 - d. Arrange for delivery of strike team apparatus to Fleet facility in a timely manner (within 2 hours of return to quarters)
 - e. Retain reserve apparatus in service at assigned location
4. Under specific conditions, this inspection may be temporarily waived or abbreviated
5. Crews may be required to change into their front line apparatus at non-traditional times of the day to increase the reserve apparatus count, possibly with non-essential repairs uncompleted

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6. Crews will have additional responsibilities including the return of issued communications equipment to FCC and medical aid equipment and/or narcotics to Storeroom 42A

VI. MUTUAL OR AUTOMATIC AID

A. Emergency Discovered Outside City Limits

If the first arriving Company on the scene discovers that the emergency is located outside the City limits, the Fire Communications Center shall be notified immediately with the following information:

1. District under whose responsibility the emergency has occurred.
2. If life hazard is involved
3. If there is a property hazard to the City of San Diego, the unit shall then be guided by further instructions from Fire Communications Center or a Battalion Chief.

B. Fire Outside of Mutual Aid Areas

The Chief of the Department, with the permission of the Mayor (or his/her designee), may authorize the dispatching of certain units at the request of a responsible officer of a jurisdiction outside a "Mutual Aid" area. All San Diego Fire-Rescue Department officers shall retain command of their apparatus and personnel. When differences of opinion exist between officers of this Department and those of other jurisdictions, the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department officer shall inform his/her Battalion Chief and be guided by his/her instructions.

C. Numbering for Units Assigned to Strike Teams and During Disaster Situations

SDFD has developed a numbering system for fire units assigned to Strike Teams and additional units placed in service during Disaster Situations.

1. Units assigned to Strike Teams will receive designators in increments of one hundred (100). The reserve apparatus placed in service to cover that unit will retain their usual designation.

Example: E42 on the Strike Team will become E142, the reserve apparatus which takes E42's place will be E42, subsequent engines from that station that are sent on strike teams would be designated E242, E342, E442 etc...

2. Additional units placed in service during disaster situations will utilize the same numbering system as used for Strike Team assignments.

D. Requests for Emergency Aid from Tijuana

1. With the approval of the Mayor of San Diego, SDFD may assist with requests of aid from the City of Tijuana.

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2. Resources provided upon initial request for aid will be limited to a Task Force composed of one Battalion Chief, one brush apparatus (crew of two), and two water tenders (drivers only).
3. After they are informed, the Task Force will respond from the border with escort and report to the Fire Commandant.
4. On-duty certified bi-lingual (Spanish speaking) personnel may be requested to accompany SFD resources.
5. Any request for additional resources is limited to two brush apparatus, each with a crew of two. This additional request shall be approved by the on duty Shift Commander.

All San Diego Fire-Rescue Department units shall remain outside all structure fires, in the defensive posture, and are under the direct command of the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department Task Force Leader.