

## **PURPOSE**

The primary purpose of each Zone within the San Diego Operational Area is to assure a readily accessible pool of resources, apparatus and equipment that meets common standards to fill mutual aid requests from all agencies.

The Strike Team/Task Force has become an effective tool in the emergency management of incidents of all types. The use of Strike Teams/Task Forces enables the responsible jurisdiction to make incident assignments on a team basis.

## **DEFINITIONS**

Cal OES - California Office of Emergency Services

CICCS - California Incident Command Certification System

FOG – Field Operations Guide

ICS – Incident Command System

STEN – Strike Team Leader Engine

TFLD – Task Force Leader

## **Engine Strike Team Response Mode Definitions**

### **Initial Attack**

Life and property is imminently threatened by an event. The closest available resources shall be selected and will respond directly to the incident. Personnel can expect to be assigned and begin tactical operations immediately upon arrival at the incident. Resource should respond as if they are on the initial attack with a code 3 response. The STEN shall be responsible to make contact with his/her respective resource(s) upon the STEN's arrival. The incident communication plan must be provided to units assigned.

### **Immediate Need**

Strike Teams that are needed for the protection of life and property that is imminently threatened by an event. The resources may or may not be coming from your operational or adjacent operational areas. Resources shall respond as expeditiously as possible. Personnel can expect to be immediately assigned and begin tactical operations upon arrival at the incident or within the current operational period. The STEN/TFLD shall be responsible to make contact with his/her respective resource(s) upon arrival. The incident communication plan must be provided to units assigned.

### **Planned Need**

Planned need is utilized when resources are needed for the next operational period. Planned need is a non-code three response. Planned incident reporting time should determine the departure time. Planned need strike team/task force units should travel together and plan to arrive at least one hour prior to briefing for the next operational period (for which they are likely to be assigned). Mutual aid resources may respond within the operational area, adjacent operational area, region or state, as needed for the next operational period or as determined by the requesting agency.

## **PROCEDURE**

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

Each Zone is responsible for selecting their personnel for the various ICS positions. Each agency retains responsibility for assuring the proper training/certification has been met, maintained, and the individual has the appropriate field experience.

All agencies within each Zone shall follow the CICCIS as established by Cal OES, the State Board of Fire Services and the California State Fire Marshal's office.

Each Zone must assure their personnel are trained, prepared and truly qualified for their assignment. This is imperative when the ICS position is expected to provide supervision over personnel from any other agency.

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Personnel must possess CICCIS certification in order to fill ICS positions requested at the Area, Regional, State and National level.

The STEN/TFLD selected to command the strike team/task force should be an experienced Fire Officer, knowledgeable in both structural and wild land fire control. Personnel responding to a Forest Agency, Master Mutual Aid and/or to California Fire Assistance Act Agreement request for overhead positions shall meet the training requirements established for the ICS position to be filled (STEN/TFLD).

Operational Area fire and rescue coordinator center will maintain the most current list of STEN/TFLD.

The STEN/TFLD must have the capability and experience for managing, coordinating and directing the actions of fire companies at a wide variety of emergency situations. This includes maintaining all required records, and ensuring the logistical needs of all personnel are met during the entire activation of the STEN/TFLD

A STEN/TFLD should include a STEN/TFLD Trainee whenever possible.

### **Strike Team/Task Force Requests**

Each Zone will maintain a list of resources to be considered for deployment when assembled into strike teams. Requests for Task Forces will be assembled based on the specific information received and approved by the Zone Coordinator or Zone Duty Chief.

Planned Need Strike Team deployment rotation matrixes have been developed to distribute response requests among agencies while ensuring a safe, expedient arrival at the incident of the requesting agency; while also providing balanced coverage to the zone until backfill and/or move-ups are accomplished. Agencies should send 4 personnel per apparatus on Planned Need Strike Team requests.

### **Strike Team Requirements**

**Personnel:** Proper safety equipment is required for all members of any strike team. This consists of full structural and wild land safety clothing.

**All Apparatus and Vehicles:** Per FOG, Radio Communications Guidelines (Appendix A); there are eighty six (86) specific VHF high band channels that should be preprogrammed into all VHF radios utilized by fire service agencies providing mutual aid in California (see the FIRESCOPE STATEWIDE CHANNEL PLAN).

All apparatus and vehicles assigned to a Strike Team/Task Force shall possess the following minimum in-county local VHF frequencies: XSD CMD 1 (White Net), XSD TAC1 (Red Net), Border Command, and VFIRE 21. A cellular phone is recommended. In addition, full code 3 equipment is required.

**Strike Team/Task Force Leader Vehicle:** The vehicle should be separate from engines assigned. STEN/TFLD vehicle shall have portable and mobile radio capability to talk with all state agencies.

**Engines:** The engines should meet the equipment and criteria requirements for the configuration of the strike team each engine is part of. It is recommended the engines be configured also of same fuel type. Engines should meet typing requirements for configuration of strike team assignments as described in the FOG.

### **Pre-Incident Checklist**

Prior to a deployment, each unit shall assemble all equipment, documents and reference material required to participate in a Strike Team/Task Force response:

- State and local Maps
  - Financial documents, purchase orders, credit cards
  - Portable radio(s) with spare batteries
  - FOG
  - NWCG Incident Response Pocket Guide
  - ICS forms (Minimum of ICS 214, ICS 225, OES F-42)
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- Strike Team Apparatus Inventory Record
- Strike Team identification cards and/or white shoe polish
- Appropriate stationary supplies
- Agency specific forms
- Personal items to support deployment for a minimum of 7 days, excluding travel, per Cal OES guidelines and agreements in effect.

### **Strike Team/Task Force Assembly and Travel**

All units must contact their communication/command center on the assigned frequency.

STEN/TFLD shall obtain response information including:

- Strike Team Number (do not change or alter this number)
- Order number and request number
- Incident Name and Type
- Units within STEN/TFLD, including Leader and Trainee
- Reporting location and travel route; restrictions
- Radio frequencies (including travel channel if applicable)
- Check-in location and time
- Incident contact phone numbers
- Rendezvous location with map page (if applicable)

In addition, STEN/TFLD will coordinate the following if applicable:

- Rendezvous with responding units and STEN/TFLD
  - Complete Strike Team Apparatus Inventory Records: sign/review Code of Conduct
  - Discuss deployment information
  - Discuss travel and communications plan
  - Ensure apparatus and personnel are ready for response including all personal protective equipment
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- Discuss expectation of personnel assigned to the Strike Team and provide a strike team safety briefing.
  - Begin ICS 214 Unit Log
  - Brief strike team on Incident Action Plan for each operational period and prior to reengagement or change in assignment.

### **Expectations**

Each STEN/TFLD or the agency supplying the resource must provide for its personnel needs (i.e. personal gear bag, feeding, fuel, repairs, financial or injury documents)

Each apparatus shall keep a unit log of their assignment, actions and major events in addition to all reports required for normal activity (ICS 214). A copy shall be supplied to their STEN/TFLD upon completion of each Operational period.

Forms necessary for reimbursement shall be filled out and submitted through proper channels before demobilization.

Notwithstanding specific Memorandum of Understanding practices, relief of committed strike team crews are encouraged to adhere to the following:

- Personnel responding to a Strike Team/Task Force, in or out of County, should be prepared to work a minimum of seven (7) and up to fourteen (14) days without relief excluding travel time. The assignment can be extended to twenty-one (21) days. All reliefs that take place on the Strike Team/Task Force will be coordinated through the STEN/TFLD who will directly coordinate with the Cal OES representative. The STEN/TFLD can request early relief through the Incident Commander. However, relief without written permission of the Incident Commander is not reimbursable.
- The replacement of engine personnel is the responsibility of the individual agency and will be coordinated by the STEN/TFLD through their Zone Coordinator with notification to the Cal OES representative, if available.

- Those persons requiring relief before the above criteria (i.e. volunteers, scheduled vacations, etc.) are required to notify their agency prior to responding on a strike team.
- STEN/TFLD's is responsible to see that all drivers/operators are adequately rested to ensure safe vehicle operation. Drivers that have been awake for more than sixteen (16) hours, including work and travel time, and the travel time upon release from the incident is more than thirty (30) minutes, will not be allowed to drive until they have obtained eight (8) hours rest.

### **Demobilization**

Upon notification of pending demobilization, the STEN/TFLD will report to the Demobilization Unit and complete the ICS 221 form.

- Return loaned equipment to the Supply Unit and obtain replacements for damaged or consumed equipment and supplies.
- Return loaned portable radios to the Communications Unit.
- Report any damaged or lost equipment that is attributable to the incident to Comps/Claims.
- Ensure all Strike Team/Task Force apparatus complete a mechanical inspection by Ground Support Unit and ensure repairs are made as necessary.
- Turn in all documents (ICS 213, ICS 214, ICS 225, etc.) completed during the incident to the Documentation Unit. Retain a copy of all documents for your records.
- Turn in time records (F-42, FC-33) to the Time Unit or Cal OES representative. Provide a reasonable estimated time of arrival back to your zone.
- Reimbursement for Emergency Apparatus refurbishment and rehab may be approved by the Incident Command, up to a maximum of 2 hours, as appropriate.

## **Injuries**

If an injury occurs to anyone assigned to the Strike Team/Task Force, notification to all appropriate personnel through the incident command organization shall be completed. STEN/TFLD shall;

- Obtain the necessary medical treatment/transport, follow medical plan
- Document on an ICS 214
- Notification of agency from STEN/TFLD
- Any/all follow up shall be documented

## **Out-Of-Service**

Strike Team/Task Forces may be out-of-service due to mechanical breakdown or during rest periods. While off shift, the strike team is subject to recall and shall remain together. The STEN/TFLD will provide the Strike Team/Task Force's planned location and contact information to the Resource Unit and the Cal OES representative. All Strike Team/Task Force personnel who are off shift remain on duty and subject to their agencies rules and regulations, as well as the Strike Team/Task Force Code of Conduct. All personnel assigned to any/all strike Team/Task Force in-county or out-county will follow their agencies uniform policies.

When going off shift, the following shall be completed:

- Ensure apparatus is response ready, including water and fuel
- Fuel shall be obtained through the incident when available. If vehicles are fueled using agency credit cards, retain receipts and contact the Finance Section as soon as possible.
- Obtain necessary repairs through Ground Support. Repairs that are not a result of incident activity are the responsibility of each agency. In each situation proper documentation shall be completed.



- Obtain medical attention for personnel as needed through the Medical Unit.
- Complete necessary incident claim forms for incident related damaged or lost equipment.
- Obtain necessary supplies through the Supply Unit.

### **Reimbursement – Mobilization and Demobilization**

Agencies shall assume operational costs, including necessary motor fuels and lubricants used in its emergency apparatus while responding to and returning from the State of California or Federal Fire Agency Incidents. It shall be the responsibility of the responding jurisdiction to provide the necessary means of payment for such costs.

At no time will the agencies be eligible for reimbursement for travel expenses such as fuel, food and lodging while responding unless approved in writing at the incident. If in transit to or from an incident and the STEN/TFLD determines that the safety and welfare of the strike team members requires the strike team leader to secure lodging, a call will be made in advance to the 24-hour OES Warning Center for Cal OES approval (916-845-8911). If approval is not given, the cost of the lodging will be borne by each individual agency that has personnel assigned to the strike team.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

When assigned as a member of a Strike Team or Task Force:

1. All personnel will conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times.
2. Maintain a state of readiness when assigned or in staging. Maintain a professional demeanor when in unassigned status.
3. Maintain and wear all safety clothing while on line assignments. Wear the proper clothing while at the Incident Base.
4. Wear appropriate clothing that reflects your Agency as determined by the incident.
5. Radio discipline will be utilized. Radio traffic between units will be kept to a minimum and on a professional level.
6. Limit the procurement of equipment to what is needed.
7. All equipment issued at the incident must be returned before you are demobilization.
8. Be prepared to function unsupported for at least twenty-four (24) hours.
9. Your actions are a reflection on not only your Agency but on your Zone as a whole.
10. No alcohol or illegal drugs will be transported or consumed while assigned to a strike team.
11. Know whom you are working for.
12. Personnel will not enter any residence without the owner's permission except to search or defend the structure or seek refuge when necessary. Unit leaders will leave a note at the residence detailing their actions and communicate their unit's activity through their chain of command as well as document on ICS 214.
13. If assigned to commercial lodging for off-shift rest, know and comply with the proper procedures and policies.
14. Violation of these rules of conduct can be grounds for dismissal from the Strike Team assignment.