

BULLETIN

NO: 22-109
DATE: July 13, 2022
TO: All Personnel
FROM: Dan Eddy, Deputy Fire Chief, Shift Commander, A Division
Kelly Zombro, Deputy Fire Chief, Shift Commander, B Division
David Gerboth, Deputy Fire Chief, Shift Commander, C Division
SUBJECT: Fire Season 2022 Preparations

The 2022 fire season is rapidly approaching. Over the past several years we have improved our readiness for the very real threat presented each fire season:

- Review of fire line construction methods and ensuring all vegetation fires have a fire line around them
- Placing SCBAs on as many of our type 3 engines as currently possible
- Placing wildland tools on all type 1 engines
- Placing brush bars and chains on the type 1 engines housed with a type 3 engine (E14, E12, E35, etc.)

Fortunately, larger fires are not common, but the potential continues to grow. Our skills must be maintained through training and familiarization, especially with the things we do less frequently, for example VHF radio use and fire line construction.

Please take the time to thoroughly review this document and ensure you and your crews are prepared.

Strike Teams

The type 1 and type 3 individual unit strike team rotations can be found on the Outlook schedule “SDFD Strike Team Rotation”. Individual units in the groups are assigned to a two-week period and are first up for strike team duty. It is imperative that all personnel within those groups are ready for deployment.

Example rotation calendar

	1/01 to 01/14	01/15 to 01/28	01/29 to 02/11	02/12 to 02/25	02/26 to 03/11
TYPE 1	T-1 GRP 1: E6, E9, E23, E51	T-1 GRP 2: E46, E27, E32	T-1 GRP 3: E11, E8, E21,	T-1 GRP 4: E28, E201, E31,	T-1 GRP 5: E42, E39, E38,
	E7	E17, E13, E36	E16, E30	E47, E5, E22	E20, E19
TYPE 3	T-3 GRP 1: BR12, BR24, BR44, BR34, BR43	T-3 GRP 2: BR10, BR29, BR37, BR40, BR14, BR35	T-3 GRP 1: BR44, BR34, BR43, BR12, BR24	T-3 GRP 2: BR35, BR14, BR10, BR29, BR37, BR40	T-3 GRP 1: BR43, BR12, BR24, BR44, BR34

Personnel unable to deploy on strike teams shall notify their immediate supervisor and arrange station assignment changes with personnel willing to switch and assume strike team deployment duties. The following process will take place and will be completed prior to 0900

hours. The goal of this process is to ensure that there is no delay in strike team response.

1. The supervising battalion chief will be notified via the chain-of-command regarding the conflict.
 - The notification should take place as soon as the conflict is identified.
 - Notifications prior to the actual shift are preferred.
2. The employee will switch station assignments and strike team duty with an on-duty employee of equal rank.
3. The two employees will physically exchange/switch work assignment locations (fire stations) for the entire shift. This should be done by 0900 hours.
4. Personnel staffing the strike team units (OES, type 1 and type 3) identified on the calendar rotation shall complete the rosters on the S:\!!!!Strike Team Rosters folder by 0900 hours.
5. Off-duty personnel will not be used to relieve individuals being deployed on a strike team. Exchange of work assignments is only allowed with on-duty personnel of equal rank and qualification.
6. The supervising battalion chief shall ensure that all components of this process are followed and that staffing, strike team roster updates and STEN notifications are completed.

Rosters are to be set by 0900 hrs. All personnel should be prepared to deploy without delay and be gone for up to 14 days, and even longer in some situations. It is not a prudent decision to go on a strike team assignment if you have a scheduled vacation, promotional exam, etc. Replacing personnel on strike teams already deployed is a very complicated process and should be avoided.

COVID19 Preparations

As in the past two years, COVID19 will still be a consideration. The forest agencies have been working together and have produced a document that addresses their intended best practices when engaging on these incidents. The document can be found in the S: Drive >Operations >2020 NWCG COVID19 Wildland Response. Take time to review this document again to ensure the safety of you and your crew while deployed.

Strike teams will continue to secure "COVID19" kits from Logistics prior to mobilization out of the county and/or operational area. .

The kits will have MRE's, water and COVID PPE items to ensure our personnel are supported for 72 hours.

Crew members are reminded to have a personal Strike Team bag with personal items, uniforms, medications, etc. that will support them for the duration of a 2week or more assignment.

Fire Attack Modes for Strike Teams

The Metro Zone policy outlines initial attack, immediate need, and planned need as:

A. Initial Attack (Closest units)

Generally, responses within the Metro Zone to PROTECT LIFE OR PROPERTY imminently threatened by an event. The **closest available resources** should be selected and respond to the incident as quickly as possible. Personnel can expect to be assigned and begin tactical operations upon arrival at the incident. To meet the above objectives, incident command and tactical radio channels must be assigned to any Metro Zone Strike Team/TaskForce requested for initial attack responses.

B. Immediate Need (MZ Strike Team Deployment Matrix used)

Generally requested for responses within the Operational Area, and adjacent or other Operational Areas. Resources should respond to the incident as quickly as possible and may or may not respond code. Metro Zone assigned resources will respond within five minutes of dispatch. Personnel can expect to be assigned and begin tactical operations upon arrival at the incident or within the current operational period. Incident command and tactical radio channels along with a travel channel, will be assigned to any Metro Zone strike team/task force.

The need to form up all units at a rendezvous location is at the discretion of the Metro Zone coordinator and/or STEN/TFLD. Greater travel distances increase the need for forming up resources together for safe travel and response coordination.

All out of county responses require resources to form up and respond together.

C. Planned Need (MZ Strike Team Deployment Matrix used)

Resources should form up at a rendezvous location and travel together to the incident reporting location by the requested time. The Metro Zone has agreed that assigned resources will meet at the designated rendezvous location within 60 minutes of dispatch.

Personnel can expect to be assigned to the incident and begin tactical operations at a future operational period than when the request was received.

The Metro Zone Strike Team Deployment Rotation Matrix shall be used for both immediate need and planned need responses. For initial attack strike team responses, SND will send their closest resources selected by CAD. The Mutual Aid Response Information Sheet documents incident response information for resource deployments. It is a form used by the Metro Zone Emergency Command and Data Center (ECDC) to collect and communicate valuable information received from the requesting agency for the STEN/TFLD. Some of the information includes, but is not limited to:

- Strike team/task force number
- Request number
- Units within strike team/task force
- Strike team/task force leader and trainee
- Travel radio frequency
- Rendezvous location with map page
- Incident name and reporting location with map page
- Incident command and tactical radio frequencies

Travel Channels

- In county responses: 12A
 - * Units are reminded while in route to use only the travel channel and stay off the command and tactical channels
- Out of county responses: VHF CESRSd (Group 19)

Radio Channels and Communications

Use of 10K (*SND Zone 32) on initial attack with CAL FIRE when having difficulty with assigned VHF channel:

During the first stages of an incident it is essential to get the resource needs to the incident. There are some areas in the County where VHF can be difficult to reach. RCS 800 MHz frequency 10K will be utilized for initial attack when difficulty is experienced with the assigned VHF. It will be used to communicate with CAL Fire San Diego Unit (SDU) ECC for initial size up and needs. It will only be used as a temporary communication until a working VHF frequency is identified. All units must switch to the VHF as soon as possible. VHF tactical and Air to Ground will still be assigned and utilized on ALL vegetation fires. Remember, aircraft and out of county resources do not have 800, so it is imperative that VHF is used. Sometimes units responding to the incident are out of VHF range of the frequency assigned. 10K can be used to go responding and switch when in the area of the incident. As a reminder starting March 1, 2022 CAL FIRE Monte Vista Unit ECC will change to "San Diego" when contacting the communication center.

If company officers are unable to reach SDU on 10K after three attempts, officers are to contact ECDC on 7A and have ECDC relay their status.

Many of our partner agencies throughout San Diego County utilize VHF frequencies at the time of dispatch to vegetation fires. SDFD also assigns VHF frequencies for our use. All personnel should ensure they are familiar with their assigned VHF radios, how to add and delete command and tactical frequencies, create scan groups and ensure your frequency fleet map is up to date.

The following communication procedures should be followed on ALL vegetation fires:

- Division supervisors should communicate with the IC on the command frequency.
- If the operations section (OPS) is established, division supervisors should then communicate with operations on the command frequency.
- Tactical frequencies are for division supervisors and their assigned units to communicate amongst themselves.
- IC and OPS are not required to monitor assigned tactical frequencies but must monitor both command and air to ground frequencies.
- Whenever CAL FIRE resources are requested, such as fixed wing aircraft or fire crews, all units should anticipate a transition to the VHF communications plan.
 - This transition will be communicated by IC/OPS to all units operating at the fire.
 - Captains are directed to carry both radios (800 MHz and VHF) when away from the apparatus.
 - Firefighters and engineers are also encouraged to carry both radios when

possible to ensure excellent communications between all resources.

- Incoming fixed wing aircraft will hail the IC on the assigned VHF command frequency and then switch to the air to ground frequency after contact is made.

Mutual Threat Zones

We have two Mutual Threat Zones (MTZ) with CAL FIRE, one in the San Pasqual Valley/Lake Hodges area, the other along the east side of Battalion 6. In the MTZ, VHF frequencies will be assigned at the time of dispatch. Our resources will be communicating with CAL FIRE San Diego until released from the incident. The purpose of the MTZs is to put all agencies on one communications plan, communicate with one dispatch center from the time of dispatch, and utilize one central resource ordering point.

Assigning Divisions, Groups and Branches

The use of divisions is strongly encouraged when assigning resources on incidents. As a reminder, divisions are responsible for everything occurring in the geographical division. A group is a single role group of resources assigned a specific task. When assigning divisions, typically the left flank is A and right flank is Z, but to allow for potential reversal of fire spread, considering division A for left flank and X to right flank can allow for this. Assigning division M as the head of the fire would be acceptable. Each of these assignments are logical and easily relayed to incoming companies. Keep it simple and understandable.

Branches may be assigned early on large incidents, especially when working with our partner forest agencies. For our typical incident, divisions are preferred. Remember, when assigning divisions or branches, your goal should be to make your assignments logical and easy to follow by all resources.

Strike Team Etiquette

All PPE shall be brought on strike team deployments regardless of type 1 or 3. All personnel will bring proper uniform including a **Class B uniform**.

Some good reminders from the CAL OES Strike Team Leaders Handbook:

- *REMEMBER: It may be some time before you eat and get a place to sleep. You can get wet, dirty, and cold. Be prepared to take care of your personal needs. Being properly prepared strengthens personal confidence and security.*
- *Do not bring non-fire related equipment on engines (e.g. mattresses, chairs, etc.). If it doesn't fit in the compartments, do not take it. You are responding to an emergency.*
- *Be prepared to be unsupported for the first 24-hours.*

More detailed information is contained in the SDFD drill manual in Chapter 13 starting on page 41: <http://sdfd.targetssafety.com/drillmanual/Chapter13/pdf/Chapter13.pdf>

These directives and reminders are provided to keep you safe and to provide all San Diego Fire-Rescue Department personnel with the tools and guidance to make our strike team deployments a high-level operation. Questions should be routed through the chain of command.

METRO ZONE STRIKE TEAM CODE OF CONDUCT

1. I will treat all firefighters, officers, and the public with respect.
2. I will always conduct myself in a professional manner.
3. I will maintain a state of readiness when assigned, available and unassigned.
4. I will keep my supervisor informed of any issues that may impact my operational readiness or my ability to perform duties as assigned.
5. I will carry out orders as directed.
6. I am empowered to halt any unsafe or hazardous acts in which the risks outweigh the benefits.
7. I will respect the property of the residents I am protecting.
8. I understand that my actions reflect the Metro Zone and my organization.
9. I will know which agency I am working for or providing support to.
10. I will communicate concerns, operational or otherwise, through my chain of command.
11. I will not transport or consume alcohol or illegal drugs.
12. I 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.
13. I will maintain and wear all safety clothing as appropriate.
14. I will wear clothing that reflects my agency or as determined by the incident.
15. I will use normal radio procedures and keep radio traffic to a minimum.
16. I will know and comply with proper procedures and policies when assigned to commercial lodging for off shift rest.
17. I will be prepared to function unsupported for at least 24 hours.
18. I will have full turnouts for structure fires.
19. I will have all required wildland personal protective equipment.
20. I will limit the procurement of equipment to what is needed.
21. I will return all equipment issued at the incident before I am demobilized.
22. Violation of these rules may be grounds for dismissal from the ST/TF assignment.