



SAN DIEGO OPERATIONAL AREA

DIRECTIVE # 1

Operational Area Fire and Rescue Coordinator

Purpose: Maintain a duly elected Operational Area Coordinator (OAC) for San Diego County. Operational Area Coordinators play an extremely important role in support of the Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid System. The continued success of California's unique and highly-effective Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid System demands a maximum level of understanding and cooperation by all who use and support it.

Guidance: San Diego County Fire Chiefs elect, from among themselves, an Operational Area Fire and Rescue Coordinator. The elected fire chief brings with them their respective Communication Center to fulfill the duty of Operational Area Coordination Center (OACC). Each Zone will have an elected Zone Coordinator. The Zone Coordinators will serve as alternates to the Operational Area Coordinator

Definitions: *Operational Area* – An intermediate level of the State's fire and rescue services organization, normally consisting of a county and all fire and rescue organizations within the county. (Exception: Los Angeles County and the Tahoe Basin.) Operational Area Mutual Aid Plan

Alternates – The Operational Area Coordinator will have, at a minimum, a first and second Alternate. Alternates selected should be capable of assuming all duties of the position in the event the Operational Area Coordinator is saturated with emergency activity within their own jurisdiction or time off. This, however, does not preclude the delegation of responsibility "in-house" to a qualified subordinate in the absence of the elected Coordinator.

Procedures:

Fire chiefs of each county (Operational Area) elect, from among themselves, an Operational Area Fire and Rescue Coordinator and an Alternate. The San Diego Operational Area is divided into 4 zones: North, Central, East and Metro. Each zone has an elected leader to serve as Zone Coordinator to provide span of control for the Op Area Coordinator. Each zone coordinator can serve as the alternate to the Op Area Coordinator when needed.

The election process will occur at the San Diego County Fire Chiefs Association meetings and shall be a Fire Chief or Chief Fire Officer with jurisdictional authority for fire suppression activities within the Operations Area and shall be a participative member of the California Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid System. Elections for Operational Area Fire and Rescue Coordinator must be conducted at least once each three years. Elections may be held more frequently if necessary or desirable.

Op Area Coordinator Duties and Responsibilities:

- A. Organizes and acts as chairperson of an Operational Area Fire and Rescue Coordinating Committee composed of the 4 Zone Coordinators and a representative from the OACC. The committee may include others as deemed necessary by the chairperson. This committee shall meet at least once each year and may hold additional meetings as deemed necessary by the chairperson.
- B. In cooperation with the Operational Area Fire and Rescue Coordinating Committee, will:
 - I. Organize, staff, and equip area fire and rescue dispatch centers in accordance with the principles enumerated in the California Fire and Rescue Emergency Mutual Aid Plan.
 - II. Select and submit to the Regional Fire and Rescue Coordinator the names of individuals to serve as the alternates at Operational Area Fire and Rescue Dispatch Centers.
 - III. Aid and encourage the development of uniform fire and rescue operational plans within the Area.
 - IV. Aid and encourage the development of countywide fire and rescue communication nets operation on the approved fire frequency for the county. The communication net should tie the communications facilities of the county to the Operational Area Fire and Rescue Dispatch Center and alternate dispatch centers.
 - V. Maintain an up-to-date inventory system of fire and rescue apparatus and personnel within the area for use in dispatching. Compile and forward this information to the respective Regional Fire and Rescue Coordinator annually.
 - VI. Maintains the dispatching procedure for all state-owned Cal OES fire apparatus and communication vehicles assigned within the area.
 - VII. Provide fire and rescue coordination to the Cal OES Operational Area disaster preparedness official.
- C. Responsible for assisting local, region, and state officials in planning, requesting, and utilizing mobilization centers as needed for staging strike teams and personnel where appropriate.
- D. During a "State of War Emergency", shall report to the area Emergency Operations Center to serve on the staff of the Operational Area Disaster Preparedness Director. An authorized representative may serve on this staff in place of the Operational Area Fire and Rescue Coordinator, if necessary.
- E. During a "State of Emergency" declared by the Governor, or as may be necessary, shall report to the area Emergency Operations Center or such other location as directed by the Regional Fire and Rescue Coordinator. If necessary, an authorized representative may assume this duty.

- F. Will be responsible for coordinating the dispatch of Cal OES and/or local fire and rescue resources within the operational area on major mutual aid operations.
- I. If the emergency is within the jurisdiction of the Operational Area Fire and Rescue Coordinator and overloads the communication facilities, assigns dispatching of mutual aid equipment to an alternate fire and rescue dispatch center.
 - II. Shall keep the Regional Fire and Rescue Coordinator informed of all operations.
 - III. Evaluates requests for assistance from local agencies; determines the resources from the operational area which can provide the timeliest assistance and initiates appropriate response thereof. Determines if the timeliest assistance is from an adjacent operational area and if so, requests assistance from that Operational Area Fire and Rescue Coordinator not to exceed five engine companies or individual resources and notifies the Regional Fire and Rescue Coordinator of this action. When resources are needed from more than one adjacent area, either for timely response or when the need is beyond operational area capability, the request must be made to region.
 - IV. Determines approximate time commitment and justification of resources committed to a local agency, periodically evaluates the justification and commitment to the local agency of these resources and notifies the region.
 - V. The Operational Area Fire and Rescue Coordinator will advise the requesting jurisdiction of the origin of resources responding to the request for assistance.
 - VI. Shall notify and advise the Regional Fire and Rescue Coordinator, in a timely manner, of the need to establish mobilization centers and/or staging areas.
- G. The Operational Area Fire and Rescue Coordinators are not responsible for any direct fire or other emergency operations except those which occur within the jurisdiction of its own department, agency, etc. The local official in whose jurisdiction the emergency exists shall remain in full charge of all fire and rescue resources, staffing, and equipment furnished for mutual aid operations.