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**Fire & Rescue Division
 Hazardous Materials Section**

BULLETIN # 29
 (Version 1.0)

**HOW TO REQUEST A HAZ-MAT MUTUAL AID USING THE
 Cal OES FIRE & RESCUE STATE MUTUAL AID SYSTEM**

DEFINITIONS:	
Automatic Aid: (Auto-Aid)	Written agreements between and among agencies and/or jurisdictions that provide a mechanism to automatically send the closest available emergency response resource to a reported incident on a routine basis, without regard to agency boundaries, and eliminates the need for initiating a specific request for mutual aid.
Boundary Drop: (Mutual Aid)	A more sophisticated form of Automatic Aid, where through written agreements between and among some or all agencies and/or jurisdictions in the entire Operational Area to automatically send the closest available emergency response resource to any reported incident on a routine bases, without regard to all agency boundaries, and all dispatches usually emanate from one dispatch center.
Local Agency:	The term <i>Local Agency</i> as used in this document refers to any metropolitan, governmental, or private entity that provides emergency response services to a local geographical area (i.e. city, county, district, and other assets such as industrial property, military base).
Mutual Aid:	Written agreements between and among agencies and/or jurisdictions that provide a mechanism to quickly obtain emergency assistance in the form of personnel, equipment, materials and other associated services when local resources have been temporarily depleted or seriously impacted.
Operational Area: (Mutual Aid)	An <i>Operational Area</i> consists of a County and all political subdivisions within the geographical boundaries of the county, with two exceptions – Los Angeles County is divided into six smaller <i>Operational Areas</i> , and the Lake Tahoe Basin is its own <i>Operational Area</i> . Each <i>Operational Area</i> is assigned a three-letter ID (Identifier) beginning with the letter "X".
Operational Area Coordinator:	Fire Chiefs of each county (Operational Area) elect, from among themselves, an Operational Area Fire and Rescue Coordinator. Operational Area Fire Coordinators are responsible for maintaining fire defense resource inventories, area mutual aid plan, and the dispatch of fire and rescue mutual aid resources.
Operational Area Dispatch Center:	A Fire Department dispatch center that has accepted the responsibility to also function as the identified dispatch center for a specified Operational Area; Receives from the respective Operational Area Coordinator requests for mutual aid and forwards these requests to the respective local dispatch center(s) or Region Dispatch Center for processing. The processing of requests should be in accordance with the Fire & Rescue Operational Area Plan which includes the use of closest resources.

Resource:	An individual piece of equipment and its personnel complement, or an established crew or team of individuals with an identified work supervisor that can be assigned to an incident.
Region: (Mutual Aid)	The California Fire & Rescue Mutual Aid System has divided the State into six (6) Mutual Aid <i>Regions</i> , numbered I through VI, and assist in the coordination of mutual aid within a geographical area of the state. Each <i>Region</i> consists of several Operational Areas (Counties).
Region Coordinator:	Operational Area Coordinators elect, from among themselves, a Region Fire & Rescue Coordinator. Region Coordinators are responsible for maintaining fire defense resource inventories from the Operational Areas, Region mutual aid plan, and the dispatch of fire and rescue mutual aid resources.
Region Dispatch Center: (Mutual Aid)	A Fire Department dispatch center that has accepted the responsibility to also function as the identified dispatch center for a specified Region; Receives from the respective Region Coordinator requests for mutual aid from the respective Operational Areas and forwards these requests to other Operational Areas, Regions and State for processing. The processing of requests should be in accordance with the Region Fire & Rescue Plan which includes the use of closest resources.

MUTUAL AID

1. WITHIN SAME OPERATIONAL AREA – LOCAL AGREEMENTS APPLIED:

Per local mutual aid agreements, any local agency can request assistance on a day-to-day basis directly from another adjacent agency if within the same Operational Area, and can request assistance directly from any other agency if within the same Operational Area, IF:

- a. There is appropriate “Mutual Aid”, “Auto-Aid”, “Boundary Drop” or other forms of written aid plans that is pre-planned and negotiated between the participating adjacent agencies.
- b. Dispatch and movement of other resources from neighboring agencies to assist the requesting agency is automatic, and is administered through local dispatch centers in accordance to procedures as outlined in the mutual aid plans.
- c. Local requests for mutual aid continue automatically until local resources are depleted.

2. WITHIN SAME OPERATIONAL AREA – LOCAL RESOURCES DEPLETED:

Local and neighboring agency resources (within same county) are depleted as a result of implementation of local mutual aid procedures and additional assistance is needed from adjacent agencies (within same county) not signatory to a written mutual aid agreement.

- a. When a local agency and/or several adjacent agencies resources are depleted or there is a need for a special resource not normally maintained by the requesting (affected) agency but is available from another agency within the county (i.e. a Hazardous Materials Response Team), the affected agency can then make a request for additional resources or a special resource directly to the appropriate Operational Area Coordinator (County) within which the local agency resides.
- b. The Operational Area Coordinator who receives a request from a local agency for additional resources or requests for special resources, can forward the request to other agencies within the same Operational Area to see if the request can be filled.
- c. This procedure continues until Operational Area resources are depleted.

3. FROM DIFFERENT OPERATIONAL AREAS – WITHIN SAME REGION:

All resources within the affected Operational Area are now depleted. The Operational Area Coordinator receives request(s) for more resources. The Operational Area Coordinator determines if the timeliest assistance is from one adjacent operational area, and if so, requests assistance from that Operational Area Fire Coordinator, not to exceed five single resources, five task forces, or five strike teams. Requests must be specific regarding type of resource desired (i.e. Type 2 single resource Haz-Mat Company, or Type 2 Task Force). See Haz-Mat Bulletin #20 for more information explaining resources.

- a. Requests must be within same Region.
- b. Request must be processed through the Operational Area Coordinator of the area affected, to the Area Coordinator of one adjacent Operational Area.
- c. Request for haz-mat mutual aid from one adjacent Operational Area can include up to five (5) resources. A resource is a single haz-mat company or a haz-mat task force. The request is filled on an "immediate need" basis and is based upon closest resource concept.
- d. The Operational Area Coordinator that is recipient of the call for mutual aid from another Operational Area (whose resources are now depleted) then forwards the request down to local the agency(s) in the respective County to ascertain if any agency can provide the needed resource and that the resource matches the request.
- e. The Operational Area Coordinator that is initiating the call for additional mutual aid (from one adjacent Operational Area) then contacts the appropriate Region Coordinator to inform that resources are being requested outside of the Operational Area within which the emergency is located.
- f. If the requests for mutual aid or special resources continue and/or resources are drawn down within the Operational Area affected and from one adjacent Operational Area within the Region, or if the request for resources now will exceed the five maximum total from one adjoining Operational Area, then the Operational Area Coordinator of the County being affected forwards these requests up to the Region Coordinator for processing.

4. FROM DIFFERENT OPERATIONAL AREAS - FROM DIFFERENT REGIONS:

When the request originates from one Operational Area for resources from other adjacent Operational Areas within a Region exceeds the five as noted above, then all additional requests for more resources are now forwarded to the appropriate Region Coordinator.

- a. The Region Coordinator receives additional requests for mutual aid and directs them to other Operational Areas within the same Region.
- b. When all resources within the Region have been drawn down, the Region Coordinator can forward requests for additional resources (also not to exceed five single companies or five task forces) to one adjacent Region. This can be done one time.
- c. The Region Coordinator making the request for additional resources contacts State Cal OES Fire & Rescue Division and informs that mutual aid resources are now being requested across Region boundaries.
- d. If the requests for mutual aid or special resources continue and/or resources are drawn down within all Operational Areas within the Region, or if the Region request for resources now will exceed the five maximum total, then the Region Coordinator forwards these requests up to the Cal OES Fire & Rescue for processing.
- e. Requests must be consistent with the ***Fire and Rescue Division's OPERATIONS BULLETIN #1*** (see attached at end of this Bulletin).

5. REQUESTS ARE FINALLY UPGRADED TO Cal OES FIRE & RESCUE:

When the request for resources from neighboring Regions exceeds the five maximum, all further requests must be handled by the Fire & Rescue Division of Cal OES.

- a. The Region Coordinator contacts Fire & Rescue Division, and informs of the need for yet more resources.
- b. Explains that the option to request resources five times across Region boundaries has been initiated and met.
- c. Fire & Rescue Division now disseminates all further requests for resources to all Regions (in accordance to a planned methodology) in the State to see if any local agencies can provide the requested resources.

OPERATIONS BULLETIN # 1

Subject: *Closest Resources Concept – Requesting Mutual Aid From Adjoining Operational Areas and Regions*

HISTORY

On October 11, 2007, the Cal EMA Fire and Rescue Services Advisory Committee/ FIRESCOPE Board of Directors voted to authorize the following changes to the California Fire and Rescue Emergency Mutual Aid Plan as part of a pilot project.

PURPOSE

To provide guidance regarding closest resources concept to Operational Area Fire and Rescue Coordinators and the Regional Fire and Rescue Coordinators when requesting mutual aid from adjoining operational areas or regions when appropriate.

GUIDANCE

Effective immediately, the Cal EMA Fire and Rescue Operational Areas and Cal EMA Fire and Rescue Regions are authorized to directly order/fill initial attack/immediate need engine requests with up to 5 strike teams or task forces from one adjacent Cal EMA Operational Area/ Region based on the closest resource concept.

The Operational Area Fire and Rescue Coordinator:

Evaluates request for assistance from local agency; determines if the timeliest assistance is from one adjacent operational area and if so, request assistance from that Operational Area Fire and Rescue Coordinator, not to exceed five strike teams or task forces. The Operational Area Fire and Rescue Coordinator shall immediately notify the Cal EMA Regional Fire and Rescue Coordinator and the Regional Fire and Rescue Coordinator shall immediately notify the State Fire and Rescue Coordinator of this action to ensure the necessary resource tracking, notifications, and coordination matters are appropriately addressed. 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 the region.

The Regional Fire and Rescue Coordinator:

Evaluates requests for assistance from Area; determines the region resources from that region which can provide the timeliest assistance, and initiates appropriate response thereof. Determines if the timeliest and closest assistance is from an adjacent region and if so, requests assistance from that Region Fire and Rescue Coordinator not to exceed five strike teams or task forces. The Region Fire and Rescue Coordinator shall immediately notify the State Fire and Rescue Coordinator of this action. When resources are needed from more than one adjacent region, either for timely response or when the need is beyond region capability, the request must be made to the State.