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GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
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April 10, 2024

The Honorable Scott Weiner,
Chair,
Senate Committee on Budget
and Fiscal Review
1020 N Street, Room 502
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Aisha Wahab,
Chair Senate Subcommittee
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Judiciary, Labor &
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1020 N Street, Room 502
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Jesse Gabriel,
Chair
Assembly Committee on
Budget
1021 0 Street, Suite 8230
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The Honorable James Ramos,
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1021 O Street, Room 8310
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Freddie
Rodriguez, Chair
Assembly Committee on
Emergency Management
1020 N Street, Room 360B
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The Honorable Bill Dodd, Chair
Senate Committee on
Governmental Organization
1020 N Street, Room 584
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The Honorable Freddie
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The Honorable Monique
Limón, Vice Chair, Joint
Legislative Committee on
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Mr. Gabriel Petek, Legislative
Analyst
Legislative Analyst's Office
925 L Street, Suite 1000
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Subject: Report to California Legislature on the Emergency Preparedness and Planning**

Dear Senators, Assemblymembers, and Legislative Analyst:

The Governor's Office of Emergency Services is providing this report pursuant to provisional language in the Budget Acts of 2022 and 2023. This report identifies the types of risks Cal OES considers during planning and preparedness efforts, the framework utilized to identify the appropriate resource capabilities, existing

programs that support the framework, goals and objectives for emergency response, how recently approved resources support the emergency response goals and objectives, and gaps that may exist with the current resources.

Should you have any questions, please contact Legislative and External Affairs Coordinator, Chris Hacker at (916) 845-8929 or chris.hacker@caloes.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Nancy Ward

NANCY WARD
Director

cc: Ann Patterson, Cabinet Secretary, Office of the Governor

# 2024 Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning Report

March 2024

**Gavin Newsom**
**Governor**

**Nancy Ward**
**Director**
**Governor's Office of Emergency Services**

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## I. Purpose of the Report

Pursuant to Budget Act of 2022 (Chapters 43, 45, and 249, Statutes of 2022), Item 0690-001-0001, Provision 4 and updated by Budget Act of 2023 (Chapter 12, Statutes of 2023), Item 0690-001-0001, Provision 6, the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) respectfully submits the enclosed report to the Legislature and the Legislative Analyst's Office.

The intent of this report is to identify the types of risks Cal OES considers during planning and preparedness efforts, the framework utilized to identify the appropriate resource capabilities, existing programs that support the framework, goals and objectives for emergency response, how recently approved resources support the emergency response goals and objectives, and gaps that may exist with the current resources. Specifically, the language is as follows:

Pursuant to Budget Act of 2022 (Chapters 43, 45, and 249, Statutes of 2022), Item 0690-001-0001, Provision 4, the report shall outline:

- the assumed types and levels of risks that the department's emergency preparedness and response planning contemplates,
- the department's operational framework for determining the appropriate resource capabilities and capacity necessary to address the assumed risk,
- how the department's existing resources fit within that framework, and
- general areas of emergency preparedness and response that may need further development.

The report shall also include, at a minimum, the following:

(1) a description of the department's existing emergency response capacity and resources, including a description of how federal, other state, and local resources are deployed to support the state's emergency response and how those resources are considered when determining the Department's resource and capacity needs,

(2) state emergency response goals, objectives, and metrics where appropriate, including, but not limited to, response capacity for emergencies, multiple simultaneous emergencies, and prolonged emergencies,

(3) a description of the state's ability to meet the identified emergency response goals, objectives, and metrics where appropriate, including, but not limited to, regional response capabilities to handle all hazard emergency situations and for key emergency response activities,

(4) a description of any gaps in the Department's current response capacity that prevent or delay meeting its emergency response goals,

(5) an assessment of how the resources approved in the Budget Act of 2022 support the Department's ability to meet its emergency response capacity goals and gaps identified in this report, and
(6) a description of the existing programs dedicated to mitigation of disaster related risks and how they align with the core mission of OES.

Updated by Budget Act of 2023 (Chapter 12, Statutes of 2023), Item 0690-001-0001, Provision 6, the Office of Emergency Services shall also include an assessment of how the resources approved in the Budget Act of 2023 support the Department's ability to meet its emergency response capacity goals and gaps identified in this report.

## II. Introduction

The disaster landscape in California and across the nation has been changing, increasing in scale and severity. A foundation of emergency management in the state is the concept of "neighbor helping neighbor", understanding that no area will necessarily have the ability to manage large-scale disasters on their own.

Within California, scalability and surge capacity for emergencies is rooted in the California Master Mutual Aid Agreement (MMAA). The MMAA allows cities and counties across the State to share resources as needed during disaster response. All cities, counties, and operational areas (OAs) have a built-in escalation process if the response efforts exceed their capabilities. These components are among the foundational elements of the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS). SEMS unifies California's emergency management community into a single integrated system, and creates a standard, consistent organizational structure and methodology for managing disasters.

California's SEMS has been adopted nationally under the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Like SEMS, NIMS requires that all states train and operationalize staff, and use a common terminology and structure to perform emergency response activities.

The Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) further allows sharing of personnel and equipment between states. Experienced personnel from any state or territory can be plugged into the emergency response efforts of an impacted state seamlessly, to bolster needed resources.

The federal government is also a resource during times of disaster. Under certain conditions through the Federal Emergency Management Agency

(FEMA), states can request response resources from departments of the federal government when a state's capacity is exceeded.

California is constantly stress testing these systems through training, exercises, and actual events. There are multiple tools available to help evaluate system effectiveness and sustainability, as well as identify any areas where improvements could be made. These include, but are not limited to:

- OA Convenings – A forum for OAs to come together with the state to discuss recent emergency response activities, how to improve processes, and effectuate changes based on lessons learned. OAs are a key level of the SEMS structure representing County governments and their subdivisions.
- Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) – A national program with established emergency management standards that are applied in a peer review accreditation process. This accreditation is voluntary but is an important tool for continuous improvement. California is currently EMAP accredited along with most states in the nation. EMAP requires a review annually and re-accreditation every five years.
- Stakeholder Preparedness Review (SPR) – The SPR is an outcome-oriented assessment that helps communities intuitively compare their current capabilities with their targets, identify gaps, and prioritize efforts to address those gaps. This is a holistic view of emergency response within a state, not just focused on state-level considerations.
- SEMS Maintenance System – The SEMS Maintenance System addresses the need for system change. The three-tiered program encompasses an Advisory Board, Technical Group, and Mutual Aid Regional Advisory Committees (MARACs) made up of multi-disciplines and all levels of government.

History has shown that even with a standardized system and robust, organized mutual aid capability, California's resources are often heavily stress-tested. In 2020, for example, California simultaneously managed responses to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, significant civil unrest, and one of the worst fire seasons to date.

## III. Cal OES Mission Statement and Goals

### A. *Cal OES Mission Statement*

Cal OES protects lives and property, builds capabilities, and supports our communities for a resilient California. We achieve our mission by serving the public through effective and culturally responsive collaboration in preparing for, protecting against, responding to, recovering from, and mitigating the impacts of all hazards and threats.

### B. *Cal OES Goals*

Goal 1: Anticipate and enhance prevention and detection capabilities to protect our state from all hazards and threats.

Goal 2: Strengthen California's ability to plan, prepare for, and provide resources to mitigate the impacts of climate, disasters, emergencies, crimes, and security events.

Goal 3: Effectively respond to and recover from both human-caused and natural disasters.

Goal 4: Ensure and maintain fiscal and program integrity, through effective and appropriate community-based support and administration of state and federal funding allocated to our programs.

Goal 5: Develop an inclusive, united, and innovative workforce that is trained, experienced, knowledgeable, and ready to adapt and respond.

Goal 6: Strengthen capabilities in public safety communication services, technology, and cybersecurity enhancements.

Goal 7: Develop trauma-informed, victim/survivor-centered programs and support victim service providers so victims of crime in California receive the services they want and need.

## IV. Assumed Types and Levels of Risk

A hazard represents an event or physical condition that has the potential to cause risks. Risks include fatalities, injuries, property damage, infrastructure damage, agricultural losses, damage to the environment, interruption of business, or other types of harm or loss. Earthquakes, floods, wildfires, and extreme temperatures represent California's pervasive and primary events that result in disaster losses. Other hazards include levee failure, landslides, and tsunamis. For a complete list of hazards considered by Cal OES, please

refer to the table below as well as California's Enhanced State Hazard Mitigation Plan (SHMP) at www.caloes.ca.gov.

Vulnerability indicates the level of exposure of human life and property to damage from natural and human-caused hazards. California and its people are vulnerable to a wide range of hazards that threaten communities, businesses, government, and the environment.

The severity of emergencies is determined by the occurrence of natural events, which are increasing in magnitude and frequency due to climate change, and also the level of exposure and socio-economic vulnerability. Climate impacts, including extreme weather events, sea level rise, changing temperature, precipitation patterns, and severe and frequent wildfires, present new risks that impact all facets of emergency management. While the full scope, severity, and pace of future climate change impacts are difficult to predict, it is clear that impacts from climate change are stretching emergency management capabilities and increasing needs for services.

When analyzing the hazards California faces, Cal OES distinguishes between two types: natural hazards and other hazards. Each hazard is ranked into one of three categories: High-Impact, Medium-Impact, and Low-Impact. These rankings are based on impacts to State-owned or leased facilities or identified critical facilities and lifelines essential to the State's ability to respond to and recover from hazard events.

| Impact | Natural Hazards | Other Hazards |
|---|---|---|
| High | ○ Earthquake<br>○ Riverine, Stream, and Alluvial Flooding<br>○ Extreme Heat<br>○ Extreme Cold or Freeze<br>○ Wildfire<br>○ Severe Wind, Weather, and Storms<br>○ Sea-Level Rise, Coastal Flooding, and Erosion<br>○ Landslide, Debris Flow, and Other Mass Movements | ○ Urban Structural Fire<br>○ Long-Term Electrical Outage<br>○ Public Safety Power Shutoff<br>○ Terrorism<br>○ Air Pollution |

| Impact | Natural Hazards | Other Hazards |
|---|---|---|
| Medium | ○ Drought<br>○ Tsunami and Seiche<br>○ Dam Failure<br>○ Levee Failure<br>○ Snow Avalanche<br>○ Subsidence | ○ Energy Shortage<br>○ Cyber Threats<br>○ Tree Mortality<br>○ Invasive and Nuisance Species<br>○ Epidemic, Pandemic, and Vector-Borne Disease<br>○ Civil Disturbance<br>○ Natural Gas Pipeline Hazards |
| Low | ○ Volcano | ○ Hazardous Materials Release<br>○ Transportation Accidents Resulting in Explosions or Toxic Releases<br>○ Well Stimulation and Hydraulic Fracturing<br>○ Oil Spills<br>○ Electromagnetic Pulse Attack<br>○ Radiological Accidents<br>○ Geomagnetic Storm |

## V. Cal OES' Operational Framework for Determining Appropriate Response

### A. *State's Emergency Response Goals, Priorities, and Strategies*

Responding to a disaster involves anticipating and addressing short-term/immediate risks, stabilizing the situation, and transitioning to longer-term issues or needs. The California Emergency Services Act (ESA) sets forth multiple state requirements including the development of a State Emergency Plan (SEP). Led by Cal OES, the SEP describes how response to natural or human-caused emergencies occurs in California. In planning for response efforts, Cal OES utilizes the SEP to outline the projected effects of an incident or threat on impacted communities. During the response phase of an emergency incident, emergency managers follow the concepts of the SEP to drive response-related goals, priorities, and strategies.

*Operational Goals*

During the response phase of an emergency or incident, agencies charged with responding to the incident adhere to the following goals:

- Meet basic human needs.
- Address needs of individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.
- Mitigate operational hazards.
- Restore essential services.
- Support community and economic recovery.

*Operational Priorities*

Operational priorities govern resource allocation and the response strategies for California and its political subdivisions during an emergency. Below are the core operational priorities as addressed in the SEP:

- Save Lives – The preservation and sustainment of life is the top priority of emergency managers and first responders and takes precedence over all other considerations.
- Protect Health and Safety – Measures should be taken to mitigate the emergency's impact on public health and safety.
- Protect Property – All feasible efforts must be made to protect public and private property and resources, including critical infrastructure, from damage during and after an emergency.
- Preserve the Environment – All possible efforts must be made to preserve California's environment and protect it from damage during an emergency.

*Operational Strategies*

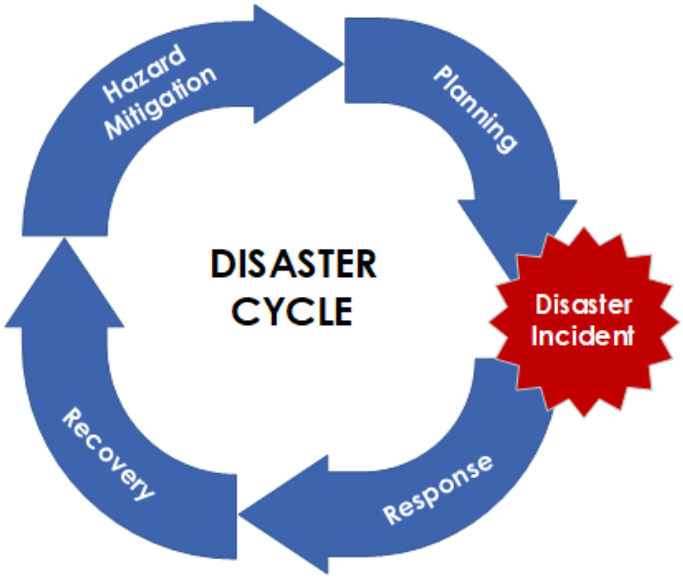
To meet the operational goals and priorities during the response phase, emergency responders use the following strategies:

- All possible efforts must be made to supply resources to meet basic human needs, including food, water, accessible shelter, medical treatment, and security.

- Individuals with access and functional needs are often disproportionally impacted by emergencies, and their unique needs must be considered before, during, and after disasters.
- As soon as practical, suppress, reduce, or eliminate hazards and/or risks to persons and property during the disaster response to lessen the actual or potential effects or consequences of future emergencies.
- Power, water, sanitation, accessible transportation, and other essential services must be restored as rapidly as possible to assist communities in returning to normal daily activities.
- All members of the community must collaborate to ensure recovery operations are conducted efficiently, effectively, and equitably, promoting expeditious recovery of the affected areas.

*B. Operational Framework*

In its role of statewide coordination, Cal OES supports local jurisdictions and communities through planning and preparedness activities, training, and the full cycle of emergencies from immediate response through long-term recovery. During this process, Cal OES coordinates the response actions of state government and serves as the State's overall coordinator to secure federal government resources through FEMA and resources from other states via EMAC.




SEMS is the cornerstone of California's emergency response system and the fundamental structure for the response phase of emergency management. The ESA outlines requirements of SEMS for managing multiagency and

multijurisdictional responses to emergencies in California. SEMS incorporates the use of the Incident Command System, the MMAA, the OA concept, and the Multi-Agency Coordination (MACs) process. State agencies are required to use SEMS, and local government is required to use SEMS to be eligible for any reimbursement of response-related costs under the State's disaster assistance programs.

A more detailed description of SEMS components can be found in Attachment I.

Large-scale events require a coordinated whole of state government effort to support local needs effectively and efficiently. The coordination of the State's response at the highest level occurs through the Unified Coordination Group (UCG), convened and led by Cal OES along with the Governor's Office, Cabinet Secretaries, Department Directors, and federal agency officials. The UCG is the highest level of state coordination for large-scale, multi-jurisdictional emergencies. Membership of the UCG is tailored according to the nature of the emergency. The UCG is the decision-making body that sets the strategy and priorities for the State's overall response and recovery to a disaster or emergency. This includes resource allocation, communications, and other critical programmatic determinations based on the priorities set by the Governor. The UCG is responsible for:

- Integrating state and federal response and recovery operations.
- Setting priorities for response and recovery activities.
- Strategic tasking of state and federal agencies and coordination among governmental and private sector organizations to support response and recovery operations.
- Ensuring unity of effort.

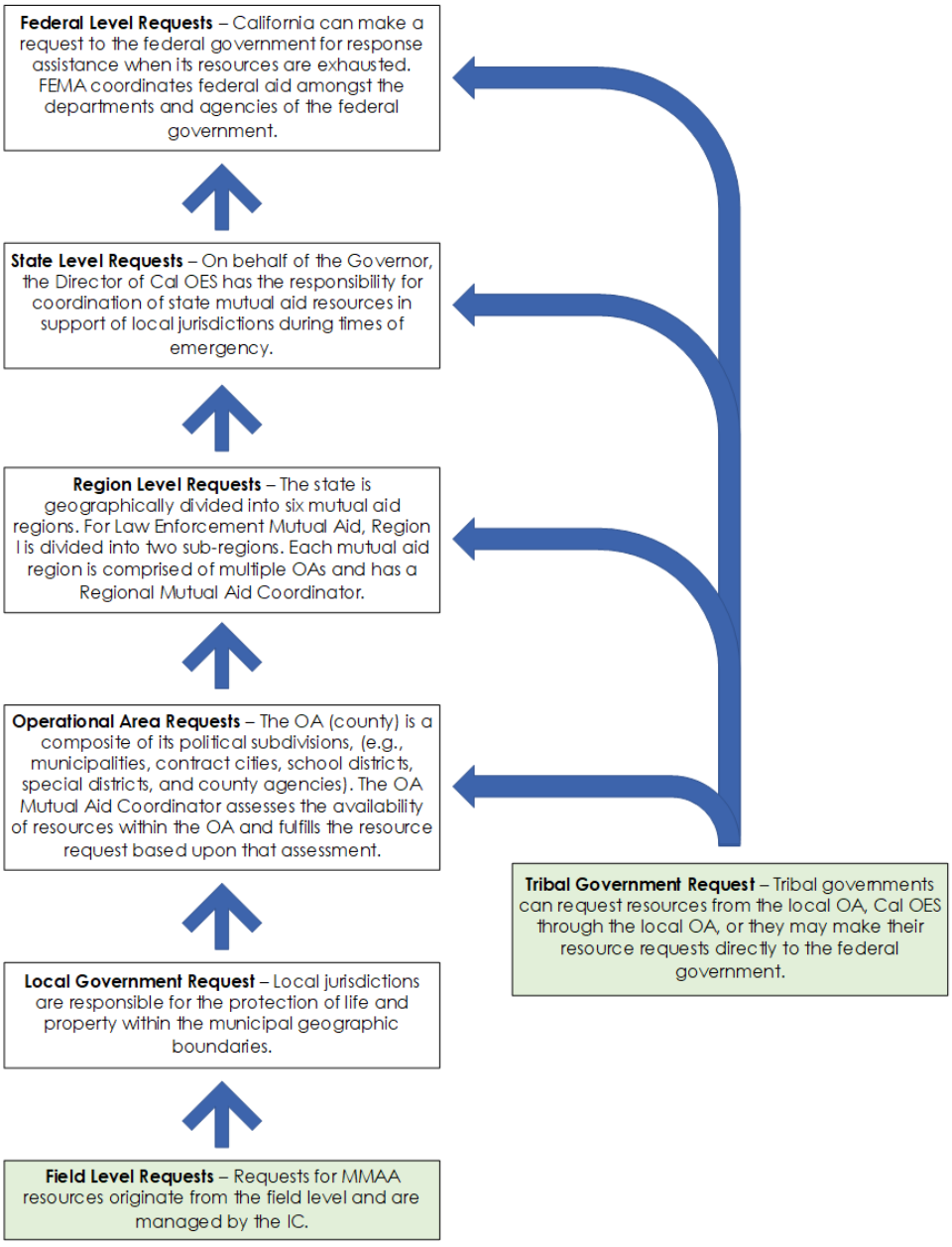
C. *Resource Determination Process*

California's statewide mutual aid system is designed to ensure resources are provided to local government when their own resources are overwhelmed or inadequate. The basis for this system is the MMAA, which is entered into by and between the State of California and its political subdivisions. Recent legislation extends participation in MMAA to Tribal Governments. The agreement obligates each signatory entity to provide aid to each other during an emergency without expectation of reimbursement.

Requests under the MMAA are processed through pre-identified regional mutual aid coordinators. Mutual aid requests follow discipline-specific chains (e.g., fire, law enforcement, and emergency management) from one level of government to the next. The mutual aid coordinator receives the mutual aid request and coordinates the provision of resources from within the coordinator's geographic area of responsibility.

In the event resources are unavailable at one level of government, the request is elevated to the next higher level of government to be filled.

## Resource Determination Process



Contracts and agreements for emergency response and disaster repair and restoration should be entered into at the lowest level of government possible. When local resources for contracting are exhausted, resource requests will follow the established process for ordering, tracking, mobilizing, and demobilizing. Depending on the scale of the emergency, limited resources may need to be rationed or controlled. For state-level disasters, the deployment and allocation of state resources is determined in the State Operations Center (SOC). Cal OES has the authority to mission task any and all state agencies to support activities to prevent, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of disasters. Under the State Emergency Plan, state agencies are pre-assigned emergency responsibilities in accordance with their authorities and expertise. Coordination of all state resources in support of disasters goes through the formal resource determination process within the SOC.

## VI. How Cal OES' Existing Resources Support the Operational Framework

### A. *California State Warning Center*

The CSWC is the official State Warning Point. The CSWC is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week to identify potential and emerging threats to California and provide alert notification to all levels of government. The CSWC operates various notification platforms, uses standardized messaging and communication techniques, and maintains 24-hour emergency points of contacts for local government, state agencies, critical infrastructure operators, and other key partners.

The CSWC receives and makes thousands of notifications annually. Upon detection of a threat, the CSWC coordinates the information needed to determine the potential impact of an event. The CSWC provides notifications, monitors progress, and provides situation updates as necessary until the event is resolved. The number of incidents and notifications managed by the CSWC, and complexity of tasks required for each, has increased significantly over time. The CSWC received resources in the Budget Act of 2022, including additional personnel, to reflect the growing demands for services including the exponential increase in emergency notifications. The CSWC also secured resources to be mobile, ensuring seamless continuity of operations in the event of a disruption or an emergency impacting the CSWC primary facilities.

*B. Permanent Incident Support Team*

Cal OES is unique in state government as it utilizes an "activation" strategy to redistribute its workforce or "surge" in response to emergencies. To staff the emergency organization structure, Cal OES requires all employees to be available to "activate" to the SOC or deploy to a local Emergency Operations Center (EOC), incident command post, recovery operation, or other disaster sites throughout the state. Under this arrangement, employees are temporarily reassigned to other response and recovery duties during emergencies. In fact, this requirement is outlined in employees' duty statements and is discussed during hiring interviews. During emergencies, Cal OES activates the SOC to coordinate the response and employees are reassigned in shifts/rotations from all program areas, including service programs and support services such as administration. Redistributed employees are assigned to Teams—dubbed the red, white, and blue teams—which rotate on-call status each month. These Teams include rank and file, supervisors, and managerial employees. Shifts are generally 12 hours over a 24-hour period, seven days per week, and for a period of two weeks.

Cal OES activates multiple specialized groups to respond to incident areas to address the complex needs of people and communities in the state. These include the Office of Access and Functional Needs (OAFN), the Office of Tribal Coordination, Office of NGO/Public Private Partnerships (including the Business Operations Center and the Utilities Operations Center), Public Safety Communications, Victim Services, Public Information, and the State Threat Assessment Center. Each of these collaborations is critical in developing Cal OES' core capabilities and to achieve shared goals. For example, the OAFN utilizes a whole community approach to address the needs of individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs during disasters. This work involves coordination with other state agencies and outreach to community organizations such as independent living centers, regional centers, and local disability providers.

To address the new normal of increased complexities and duration of activations, the Budget Act of 2021 included resources for Cal OES to establish a permanent Incident Support Team (IST) and deployable Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT). These teams are dedicated to disaster and emergency response when the SOC is activated, and ensuring lessons learned and best practices are incorporated into standard policies and procedures. While fundamental principles and processes are in place and employed in each activation, every disaster is unique and presents opportunities to hone best practices and improve for future responses.

Processes and protocols are updated continuously to better prepare for the next disaster. Strengthening California's readiness is critical to the statewide emergency management system. Other readiness actions that are important for activated staff include:

- Position training – Increased emphasis on preparing and credentialing staff in their assigned position to effectively and consistently respond to emergencies.
- Policy, plan, and procedure development, maintenance, and training – Vigilance to updating policies, planning, and procedures is key to establishing and maintaining roadmaps for response.
- Coordination with state agencies on response roles and responsibilities – Expertise varies across state agencies, and training and support ahead of emergencies ensures optimum leverage of the State's capabilities.
- Coordination with federal agencies on response roles and responsibilities – The federal government not only provides financial resources, but also the staff resources, equipment, and other federal government assets during large disasters.
- Participation in drills and exercises – These exercises are intended to test protocols and staff capabilities that will be needed during emergencies.

C. *Regional Response*

SEMS recognizes that impacts of disasters occur first and foremost at the local level. Ensuring local governments have the necessary training and adequate resources reduces the need to elevate emergency management responsibilities to the next higher level of government. Local governments have primary responsibility to respond to emergencies until their capabilities are exceeded. This approach requires strong relationships that keep the functional ties on-track to ensure preparation, response, and recovery needs are understood, facilitated, and, when appropriate, met by a state-level effort delivered locally. Under the leadership of Cal OES Northern Response and Southern Response, Cal OES has three regions (Coastal, Inland, and Southern) that work with each of the 58 Operational Areas (OAs). As the entry point for the OA to Cal OES services, Region staff maintain relationships with county emergency management day to day and during emergencies.

During a disaster, Region staff are trained and equipped to immediately deploy to local EOCs to coordinate the flow of information and resource requests to the SOC. Region staff can also help identify and address support

needs within the local EOC, such as the need for additional EOC staff or specific expertise.

Cal OES Region staff are statewide assets trained on common principles that can move around the state and support local EOCs within and beyond their primary assigned Region.

*D. Fire and Rescue*

Cal OES Fire and Rescue develops, implements, and coordinates the California Fire and Rescue Emergency Mutual Aid Plan. Additionally, Cal OES Fire and Rescue coordinates the statewide implementation of hazardous materials accident prevention and emergency response programs, administers reimbursements in accordance with the California Fire Assistance Agreement, coordinates and trains regional urban search and rescue (US&R) and swiftwater search and rescue teams, and leverages technology to anticipate and rapidly assess hazards and mitigate their impact.

*Fire Integrated Real-Time Intelligence System (FIRIS)*

The FIRIS program uses aerial resources with enhanced Incident and Assessment technology to provide the California Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid System, state agencies such as Cal OES and CAL FIRE, and other partners critical real-time information during the onset of fires and other incidents. In addition to multiple wildfire responses, FIRIS aircraft have been used for rapid assessment in all-hazard responses including large industrial fires, landslides, avalanches, dams and waterways, earthquakes, oil spills, and more.

With FIRIS, California is uniquely positioned within the state to respond to wildland fires or all-hazard missions 24/7 immediately upon first report of an emergency. Key objectives of FIRIS are:

- Provide initial attack real-time fire perimeter mapping within minutes of aircraft arrival at incidents.
- Provide ground-based incident personnel with beyond-the-horizon fire spread projection modeling or other incident situational awareness.
- Facilitate operational and tactical incident collaboration among California's first responders and provide rapid, real-time situational awareness for local, state, federal, and tribal partners.

*Swiftwater/Flood Search and Rescue*

Cal OES formed the Swiftwater/Flood Search and Rescue program in 1995 to equip the 8 California-based FEMA US&R teams with swiftwater rescue

capability. Following the significant statewide floods in 1997, Cal OES expanded the number of teams from 8 to 13. These teams have since deployed to California floods in 2003, 2004, and 2005; the Oroville Dam incident in 2017; the 2018 Montecito Mud and Debris Flow, and most recently, the multiple statewide atmospheric rivers and floods in early 2023 and 2024. California's swiftwater program is also a national asset that responded to Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

Swiftwater teams are strategically positioned across the state in advance of potential flood and mud and debris flow events. In response to the 2023 floods, 11 of the 13 teams were prepositioned across the state and were actively engaged in hundreds of rescues. Depending on the incident being responded to, Cal OES has three different levels of swiftwater teams:

- Type 1: 16 team members, including 2 team leaders, 4 boat operators, 4 boat bowmen, 2 animal rescue technicians, 1 logistics specialist, 1 communications specialist, and 2 swiftwater technicians.
- Type 2: 12 team members, including 2 team leaders, 3 boat operators, 3 boat bowmen, 1 logistics specialist, and 3 swiftwater technicians.
- Type 3: 6 team members, including 1 team leader, 2 boat operators, 2 boat bowmen, and 1 swiftwater technician.

*Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid*

Cal OES Fire and Rescue coordinates inter-regional and state agency mutual aid under the California Fire and Rescue Emergency Mutual Aid Plan. The Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Plan provides for systematic mobilization, organization, and operation of necessary fire and rescue resources to mitigate the effects of disasters. Additional mutual aid agreements related to fire and rescue include:

- US&R Mutual Aid Plan – Supports and coordinates resources in response to requests to search for, locate, and rescue victims from locations reasonably accessible from roadways. US&R task forces consist of 30 members and are configured to rapidly respond to incidents.
- California State Mutual Aid Pre-Position Program – Assists OAs and mutual aid regions to mobilize resources ahead of anticipated significant fire or other forecasted events.

Cal OES provides fire apparatus across the state to maintain surge capacity during major emergencies. This program includes nearly 300 pieces of fire apparatus (114 type 1 fire engines, 67 type 3 fire engines, 79 type 6 fire

engines, 12 water tenders, 6 incident support units, and 19 US&R trailers) purchased and maintained by the state and assigned to local and tribal government fire departments. These fire departments staff the fire apparatus with their own personnel when mobilized by Cal OES. Fire fleet resources in the Budget Act of 2022 allows Cal OES to replace aging fire apparatus and provide the necessary maintenance for the existing fleet.

E. *Law Enforcement*

Cal OES Law Enforcement coordinates with local, state, federal, and tribal law enforcement stakeholders in response to incidents and security events throughout California. Cal OES Law Enforcement plans, trains, and coordinates emergency response for Search and Rescue (SAR), Coroners' mutual aid, and other law enforcement emergency activities amongst California's 58 counties and more than 600 law enforcement agencies.

*Law Enforcement Mutual Aid*

The Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Plan describes procedures to facilitate law enforcement mutual aid during emergencies. Additional law enforcement mutual aid agreements managed by Cal OES include:

- SAR Mutual Aid Plan – Supports and coordinates responses of personnel and equipment to SAR incidents.
- Coroner Mutual Aid Plan – Describes the statewide sheriff/coroner, coroner, and medical examiner organization, mobilization, and functions, as well as other assistance available from the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, the California State Coroners Association, as well as resources from state agencies and the federal government.
- Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Fund – Designed to reimburse law enforcement agencies that respond to disasters and emergencies outside their jurisdictions for their extraordinary costs.

*F. Warehousing*

In response to major supply chain disruptions during COVID-19, California formed the Logistics Task Force to organize an efficient, all-of-government response to extraordinary demands for emergency supplies and equipment. The task force was led by Cal OES and the Department of General Services and supported by the California Military Department, California Health and Human Services, California Department of Public Health, Emergency Medical Services Authority, and others.

Informed by lessons learned from COVID as well as projected impacts of other catastrophic events, the state established a permanent warehousing capability.

The warehousing program allows for the strategic prepositioning and stockpiling of resources that are most critical to rapid response to life safety needs of communities. The warehousing program is a key readiness effort that addresses known risks such as supply chain disruption, heightened demand during emergencies, or lifeline or transportation systems outages. The warehousing program maintains fluctuating quantities of supplies, including but not limited to, masks and other personal protective equipment, cots, blankets, water, meals ready to eat. In addition, the warehousing program stores 5 medical stations (hospital equipment and supplies for 50 patients each), 2 field office kits (support for base camps, points of distribution, staging areas, and logistics support areas), 1 staging area kit, and 2 million sandbags. Cal OES has 8 trailers to facilitate the movement of supplies during incidents.

### *G. Resources Approved in the Budget Acts of 2022 and 2023 that Strengthen Cal OES' Emergency Response*

California has experienced significant changes in the threat landscape over recent years. The nature of disasters is unpredictable and ever-changing. As Cal OES looked at what could be anticipated for the future, requests were submitted for the necessary resources to address the changing needs. Included in Attachments II and III are the proposals funded over the last two years that directly strengthen Cal OES' Emergency Response and Preparedness efforts.

## VII. Current Cal OES Programs Dedicated to Mitigation of Disaster Related Risks

Disaster mitigation includes various programs within Cal OES that better prepare California, individuals, communities, and various levels of government to withstand the impacts of disasters. This includes ensuring disaster plans are implemented, disaster response training is provided consistently, and community projects that could mitigate the impact of disasters are identified and implemented. Included in this section are the various Cal OES programs that help support these efforts.

### *A. Planning*

Protecting the people of California, its resources, and critical infrastructure is a core responsibility of government. Effective emergency response requires a united effort, which is reflected in Cal OES' SEP. The SEP clearly

communicates how Cal OES and the state mobilize and respond to emergencies and disasters in coordination with partners in all levels of government, the private sector, non-profit, and community-based organizations. The SEP also outlines a robust program of emergency preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation for all hazards, whether natural or human caused. Emergency planning and preparedness is the process of systematically preparing for future events. Plans are needed for responding to the impacts of disasters and to maintain business continuity while managing the crisis. Pursuant to Government Code Section 8570.4, Cal OES is responsible for updating the SEP every five years. The SEP applies to all levels of state government and its political subdivisions.

Cal OES is directly responsible for developing and maintaining a suite of tiered, consistent, and comprehensive plans in alignment with the SEP. The largest of these are geographic or hazard-specific catastrophic incident response plans, which are developed in coordination with local, state, federal, and tribal response stakeholders. The development of these plans also gives local and tribal stakeholders the opportunity to raise any critical stresses in the system they have experienced with emergency response efforts, including identifying critical training that would enhance capabilities. These plans are also the basis for training and exercises that delineate roles and responsibilities and identify gaps in capabilities that can be filled through further coordination, training, exercise, plans, or procedures. Planning scenarios are continuously evaluated to recognize the complex lines of communication and collaboration needed to respond to the diversity of threats that California's communities face.

In addition, Cal OES is responsible for the state-level Continuity of Operations Plan and guidance to ensure critical government operations can continue through catastrophic events. Cal OES also conducts reviews of local emergency operations plans (EOPs) to incorporate best practices, protect vulnerable populations, and procedures for alerting, evacuating, and sheltering individuals during an emergency. Extra attention is given to the plan's enrollment and inclusion of culturally diverse populations and individuals with access and functional needs.

Cal OES supports emergency planning efforts of state agencies in the areas of Mass Care and Shelter, Schools, Public Health and Medical, Food and Agriculture, Donations Management and Volunteers, Transportation, and other core state emergency capabilities known as Emergency Support Functions (ESFs). For example, Cal OES co-chairs the Animals in Disaster Workgroup with the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA).

This is a statewide multidisciplinary stakeholder workgroup chartered to identify animal-related issues in disasters and provide resolution through standardized policies and processes for OAs.

*After Action Reports*

The completion of After Action Reports (AARs) are a required part of SEMS. Following a declared disaster, Cal OES gathers information and data from the various stakeholders involved. The information is then used to complete a state-level AAR that documents response activities, identifies lessons learned, best practices, areas needing improvement, and an analysis of the effectiveness of the SEMS components. Information received from state and local stakeholders is utilized to identify additional resource needs or training opportunities to address risks early and maintain disaster response at the lowest level possible. The AAR provides a vehicle for documenting system improvements and a work plan for implementing these improvements. The lessons learned through the AAR process may result in process improvement or the need for additional resources.

*B. Preparedness*

Preparedness is a shared responsibility. It calls for the involvement of everyone — not just government — in preparedness efforts. By working together, everyone can help keep California safe and resilient when disasters strike.

*Earthquake Early Warning*

Pursuant to Government Code sections 8585-8587, Cal OES leads a comprehensive program in collaboration with the California Institute of Technology, the California Geological Survey, the University of California, the United States Geological Survey, and the Seismic Safety Commission to implement earthquake early warning in California.

Government Code 8587.11 also established the California Earthquake Early Warning (CEEW) Program and the CEEW Advisory Board. The CEEW Advisory Board meets periodically to provide advice on four functional areas: system operations, research and development, finance and investment, and training and education. Now available across California, earthquake early warning rapidly analyzes seismic activity in enough time to warn the public a few seconds before the arrival of ground shaking. All Californians have access to earthquake early warning for free through the State's MyShake mobile app, Android emergency alerts, and the Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) system.

Researchers at the Berkeley Seismological Laboratory concluded that earthquake early warning when fully realized could potentially prevent billions in earthquake losses. It is estimated that earthquake early warning could prevent half of all injuries, abate millions of dollars in losses to the technology industry, avert train derailments, and prevent many of the deadly fires that commonly follow earthquakes. Today, California uses earthquake early warning to slow trains, alert hospital personnel, slow and stop elevators, alert classrooms over public announcement systems, and open fire station doors automatically.

### C. *Training and Exercises*

Training, tests, and exercises are essential to ensure emergency response personnel are operationally ready. As part of Cal OES' emergency management training curriculum, personnel with emergency responsibilities should complete emergency management courses as described in the SEMS Approved Course of Instruction and national criteria outlined in NIMS. Cal OES provides this training through its California Specialized Training Institute (CSTI). Cal OES is continually assessing its training and exercise programs to ensure responders and emergency managers maintain the necessary level of skill in an increasingly complex environment. As demographics and needs within California change, these assessments may identify a need for additional resources.

#### *Standardized Training*

CSTI takes the lead in standardizing emergency management and public safety training across various functions and disciplines. Through the development and delivery of training programs, CSTI ensures that students not only meet or exceed industry standards but also develop a shared skill set. Training is provided for all levels of governments to ensure emergency responders at all levels are using the same terminology and have the same goals during disaster response activities. This standardization alleviates gaps that can otherwise surface in complex, multi-agency responses where mutual aid is paramount.

CSTI provides training to those involved in emergency response, including emergency managers, firefighters, medical professionals, public information officers, law enforcement personnel, and more. Blending these disciplines ensures responders can collaborate seamlessly during times of crisis. CSTI offers training and exercises in multiple formats, including direct delivery, virtual instructor-led, and independent study options, to reach a wide audience across the state.

Since Fiscal Year 2020-21, CSTI has delivered 4,457 training courses with 63,118 student completions. Additionally, CSTI has issued a total of 170 specialist certificates, including 137 in Emergency Management.

*EOC Position Credentialling*

The Cal OES EOC position credentialing program tracks the progress of individual training milestones, certifications, and qualifications. Credentialing strengthens the overall emergency response framework by maintaining a pool of highly skilled, certified, and vetted professionals.

Cal OES' credentialling program was developed under the SEMS structure to identify common measures and competencies for EOC staff. California's credentialing program is also aligned with the National Qualification Standards (NQS) and fulfills NIMS requirements for resource typing. The program documents professional qualifications, certifications, training, and educational requirements that are the basic expectations of emergency services personnel.

CSTI customers are recognizing the benefits of credentialing, which include:

- Demonstrated capabilities to perform the duties of their assigned incident roles.
- Ability to move trained personnel around the state seamlessly.
- Enhanced emergency management and first responder recruitment, hiring, and professional development.

As a result, CSTI has experienced a continuous increase in demand for courses and credentialing services.

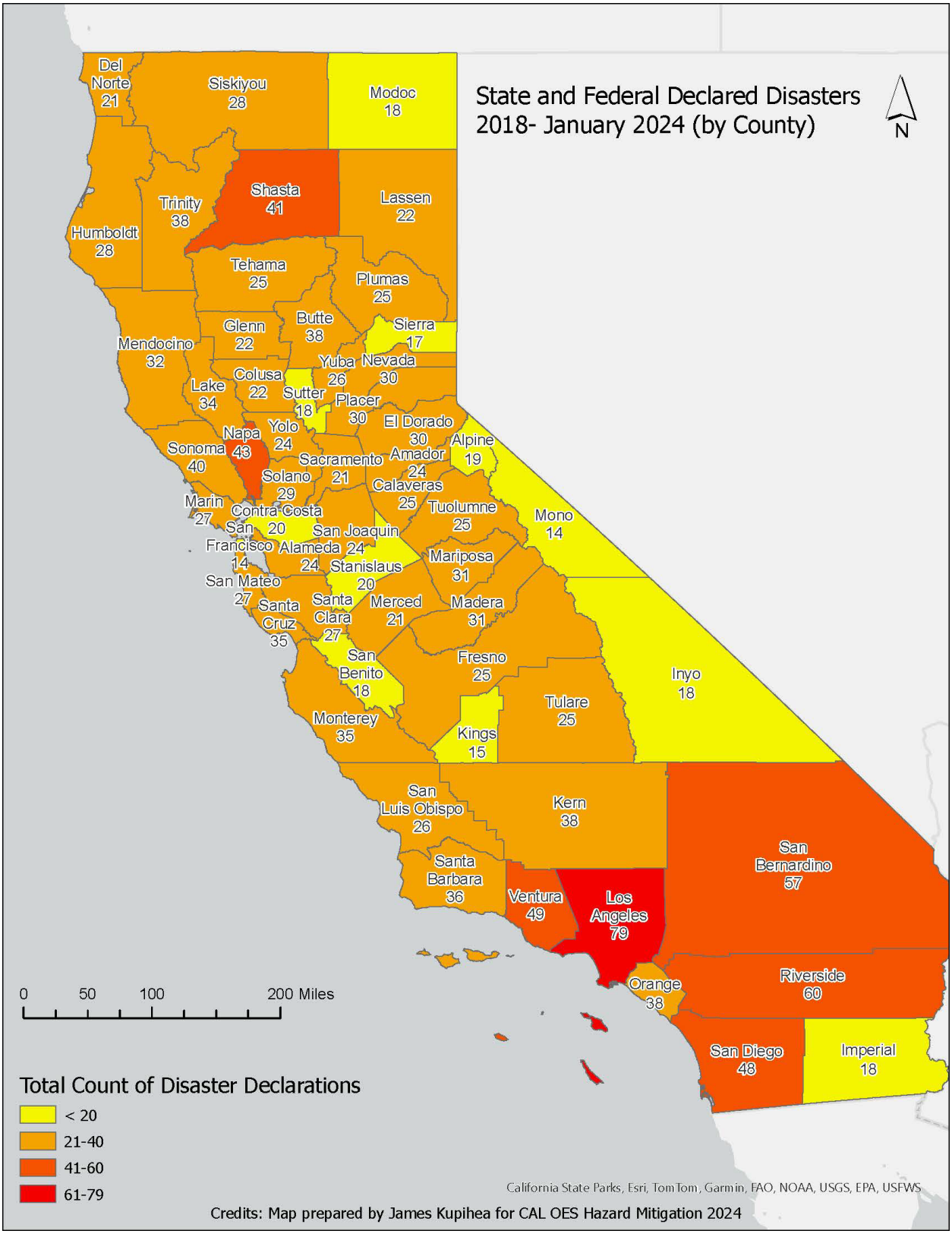
*Emergency Management Exercises*

The true litmus test of any emergency response system is its performance during real-world activations and exercises. CSTI facilitates exercises that simulate realistic scenarios, challenging responders to apply their standardized training and credentials under pressure. These exercises not only test technical skills but also emphasize the importance of communication, coordination, and decision-making.

Exercises also provide opportunity to evaluate capabilities by identifying gaps in training, credentialing, or response plans. CSTI uses these insights to refine programs and continuously improve.

D. *Hazard Mitigation*

Hazard mitigation planning and projects reduce the impacts of future disasters by breaking the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. Hazard mitigation is defined as any sustainable action that reduces or eliminates long-term risk to people, property, and the environment from future disasters. The essential steps of successful hazard mitigation include Hazard Identification, Vulnerability Analysis, Defining a Hazard Mitigation Strategy, and Implementation of Hazard Mitigation Activities and Projects. To frame the need for mitigation, the image that follows reflects State and Federal declared disasters by county from 2018 to 2022.


State and Federal Declared Disasters
2018- January 2024 (by County)
N
Del Norte 21
Siskiyou 28
Modoc 18
Trinity 38
Shasta 41
Lassen 22
Humboldt 28
Tehama 25
Plumas 25
Glenn 22
Butte 38
Sierra 17
Mendocino 32
Yuba 26
Nevada 30
Colusa 22
Lake 34
Sutter 18
Placer 30
El Dorado 30
Yolo 24
Napa 43
Alpine 19
Sonoma 40
Sacramento 21
Amador 24
Solano 29
Calaveras 25
Marin 27
Contra Costa 20
Tuolumne 25
Mono 14
San Francisco 14
San Joaquin 24
Alameda 24
Mariposa 31
Stanislaus 20
San Mateo 27
Santa Clara 27
Merced 21
Madera 31
Santa Cruz 35
San Benito 18
Fresno 25
Inyo 18
Tulare 25
Monterey 35
Kings 15
San Luis Obispo 26
Kern 38
San Bernardino 57
Santa Barbara 36
Ventura 49
Los Angeles 79
Orange 38
Riverside 60
San Diego 48
Imperial 18
0 50 100 200 Miles
Total Count of Disaster Declarations
< 20
21-40
41-60
61-79
California State Parks, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, EPA, USFWS
Credits: Map prepared by James Kupihea for CAL OES Hazard Mitigation 2024

Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) projects protect communities through infrastructure improvements, nature-based risk reduction, and whole community risk-reduction strategies. Cal OES is responsible for developing and maintaining the State Hazard Mitigation Plan (SHMP), which is the State's commitment to disaster risk reduction. The SHMP is aligned with California's Climate Adaptation Plan and guides the prioritization of projects as well as outreach and technical assistance. The SHMP is requirement by FEMA for states to be eligible for federal disaster assistance. In California, the SHMP is maintained at enhanced status. This means California receives a higher percentage of funding through FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). California's HMGP rate is 20 percent of response costs for a given federal declared disaster, versus 15 percent for states without enhanced SHMPs. This has resulted in millions of additional dollars to California under HMGP.

The California SHMP describes mitigation efforts within Cal OES' purview and those of partners across the state. The SHMP contains the following goals:

- Goal 1: Significantly reduce risk to life, community lifelines, the environment, property, and infrastructure by planning and implementing whole community risk reduction and resilience strategies.
- Goal 2: Build capacity and capabilities to increase disaster resilience among historically underserved populations, individuals with access and functional needs, and communities disproportionately impacted by disasters and climate change.
- Goal 3: Incorporate equity metrics, tools, and strategies into all mitigation planning, policy, funding, outreach, and implementation efforts.
- Goal 4: Apply the best available science and authoritative data to design, implement, and prioritize projects that enhance resilience to natural hazards and climate change impacts.
- Goal 5: Integrate mitigation principles into laws, regulations, policies, and guidance to support equitable outcomes to benefit the whole community.
- Goal 6: Significantly reduce barriers to timely, efficient, and effective hazard mitigation planning and action.

In addition to the SHMP, Cal OES' Hazard Mitigation Program assists counties, municipalities, townships, special districts, and tribal governments with the development and approval of their Local Hazard Mitigation Plans (LHMPs).

Approved LHMPs are required for local governments to access FEMA HMA grants.

Cal OES Hazard Mitigation also manages FEMA's HMA grant programs and the Prepare California Initiative. This includes technical support for local capacity building, project development, and implementation of projects through a variety of grant programs. Grant programs include:

- The California Wildfire Mitigation Program, or "home hardening initiative", supports projects to retrofit, harden, and create defensible space for homes at high risk of wildfires. The program focuses on high socially vulnerability communities by providing financial assistance to low- and moderate-income households.
- Prepare California is a state-funded program aimed at reducing long-term risks from natural disasters by investing in local capacity building and mitigation projects. Prepare California also assists high-risk California communities to meet the cost share of federal mitigation grants.
- The FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Program is an annual, nationally competitive program aimed at protecting communities from the impacts of climate change through large-scale risk-reduction projects, emphasizing nature-based solutions and whole-community resilience.
- The FEMA Flood Mitigation Assistance program, an annual nationally competitive mitigation program authorized by Section 1366 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, as amended (NFIA), 42 U.S.C. 4104c, with the goal of reducing or eliminating claims under the National Flood Insurance Program.
- The Safeguarding Tomorrow Revolving Loan Fund (RFL) is a capitalization grant program for developing RFLs for communities to access funding for mitigation projects. FEMA provides funding to a state to provide low-interest loans that fund hazard mitigation. Once communities repay those loans to the state, they can be re-loaned out.
- FEMA provides substantial funding for mitigation through HMGP. This program is triggered by major disaster declarations. As an Enhanced Plan state, California receives a total of 20 percent through HMGP. California also receives funding through the HMGP-Post Fire program after large fire events that receive a Fire Management Assistance declaration.

Cal OES Hazard Mitigation also works closely with Disaster Recovery programs to, where possible, attach mitigation directly to approved Public Assistance (PA) projects. In other words, additional PA funds can be allocated to protect disaster-damaged facilities from similar damages in the future.

Cal OES also works across state agencies to leverage state funding where possible to cover the 25 percent local cost share for FEMA mitigation programs. The difference in timeframes between the state and federal funding processes often makes this alignment challenging.

*Resilience*

The Cal OES Resilience Program, implemented in the Budget Act of 2023, builds upon California's capacity to withstand natural hazard events through state and local mitigation planning, grants administration, and specialized technical assistance.

The Resilience program provides specialized expertise across Cal OES recovery programs. This includes environmental laws and regulations, engineering related to restoring damaged public facilities, and codes and standards as they apply to the recovery process. The Program also provides outreach and technical assistance to local government in these subject areas, as well as:

- Developing equity-informed outreach and technical assistance plans and processes.
- Increasing California's competitiveness in the national mitigation funding competitions, and enhancing technical assistance to disadvantaged communities.
- Enhancing technical assistance on more complex and higher-impact projects.
- Providing compliance oversight of active projects to reduce risk of audit findings.
- Providing necessary technical capability to maintain California's Enhanced Mitigation Plan status, which provided an additional $25,000,000 in HMA funding in 2021 alone.

The Resilience program helps compensate for structural inequities, allowing Cal OES to serve as the technical expert for communities that cannot afford to hire one. Delivering detailed technical assistance is critical for disadvantaged communities to be successful in all HMA programs, and for

their projects to be awarded quickly. The Resilience program will measure its success by using the SHMP's Risk Assessment to create targeted outreach plans; identifying communities, tribes, and other eligible entities that have not received HMA funding in the past; tracking quantitative progress in reaching disadvantaged groups; and ensuring relevant indices and social vulnerability measures are used in HMGP application scoring.

## VIII. Gaps in Cal OES Current Response Capacity

California has a wide variety of disasters that it must be prepared for at any time. This scope, scale, and duration of disasters continues to grow due to climate change impacts, increased human-caused risks, and an overall expansion of the types and nature of events managed by emergency services programs across the state. The disaster landscape of California is dynamic, and the ability to adjust quickly to address needs is crucial to the ability to recover from these incidents.

Cal OES regularly collaborates with local and tribal stakeholders and partner state agencies to assess the current disaster preparedness and response core capabilities. This collaboration helps communities understand their risks and determine the capacity level needed to address them. This also helps to determine any gaps in core capabilities at the state, local, and tribal levels. While operational gaps will change depending on the risks at any given time, there are core capabilities that are needed to successfully respond to any disaster.

California's OAs overwhelmingly report to Cal OES that local resources are strained, due to frequency and duration of disasters combined with increased expectations for emergency management. At the same time, federal funding for emergency management via the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) has remained flat. A recent study by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) shows that in the last decade, inflation plus the higher cost and frequency of disasters have diminished the value of federal EMPG by nearly 25%. In other words, states and local government only yield about 75% capacity from this program at a time when requirements are on the rise.

The areas of opportunity described below are based on the current risks Cal OES has identified. Topics and priorities may shift as California's threat landscape evolves. The list below represents a point in time, given what we know now, and are not shown in any priority order.

## A. *Planning and Preparedness*

Individual emergency preparedness is vitally important to saving lives. The more severe the disaster and greater its geographical impact, the more strained emergency management resources will be. Therefore, it is incumbent on the state to ensure its communities are in a perpetual state of preparedness.

### *Community Outreach*

Broadly speaking, Cal OES is active in many forms of community engagement. Successes of the Listos California Initiative, the Preparedness Ambassadors Program, the Great Shakeout, and other partnerships, have proven to be invaluable forms of preparedness outreach and education.

The success of community preparedness relies on persistent coordination through multiple and diverse channels to meet communities and individuals where they are, and ensure the preparedness message resonates and is sustained. Continued investment in these critical programs is one component of addressing the State's resiliency to growing disaster threats.

### *Ambassador Program*

One example of sustained community preparedness is the Preparedness Ambassadors Program. This program is geared toward 4th grade students and has been implemented with over 2,800 students across 15 California counties. Cal OES has received positive feedback on the program from educators, emergency managers, fire districts, and others. Many municipalities are considering this program for their summer camps and after school programs. Increased student participation will not only prepare our schools, but by extension expand preparedness education and tools to households and families statewide.

### *Local Emergency and Mitigation Planning*

Cal OES engages with local government emergency managers to ensure local emergency and hazard mitigation plans are continuously updated and maintained. Operational Areas in California report Planning as one of their top priorities. Yet local resources to maintain a growing catalog of local plans have not necessarily kept pace. Most OAs do not have dedicated hazard mitigation/resilience or recovery officers despite the increasing criticality of these functions. Planning considerations are continually expanding, to include critical infrastructure and emerging hazards such as cyber security. State technical assistance is an important component to help ensure

consistent and sustained levels of local planning. While recent investments in Cal OES Community Planning and Resilience programs are yielding benefits in these areas, it is expected that demands for planning technical assistance will continue grow in scope and scale.

B. *Training*

All disasters are local. Ensuring local and tribal emergency managers and first responders have consistent and standardized training is critical to limiting the impacts of disasters. California has moved into a new chapter of emergency management, disaster response, and recovery. Threats, hazards, disasters, and emergencies have become more frequent, more intense, more complicated, and often more widespread, underscoring the criticality of a trained disaster workforce.

*Training for Local Partners*

Training is also reported by California OAs as one of their top priorities. Yet the cost of training can be a barrier to local and tribal participation, especially those in small or more rural communities. Also, small jurisdictions with few resources frequently cannot step away from their day-to-day responsibilities to attend training. Increasingly, emergency management responsibilities are extended to non-EM departments, such as public health. The result is an increased demand for a more flexible, distributed training model. Where possible, Cal OES has converted emergency management courses to online/remote offerings. Cal OES is evaluating current and future training requirements including the level of training needed, historic unmet needs, instructor capacity, and cost to ensure training remains relevant and effective for the evolving emergency management community.

*Training for State Partners*

CSTI offers an array of position-specific trainings to support the coordinated state emergency response. Continuous disasters in California have required the collaboration of a growing set of partners across state government. State staff designated to fill emergency response roles must attain and sustain their skill sets through various activations, trainings, and exercises over time. With more state partners included in the overarching emergency response, increased demand for state-specific emergency management training is expected.

Recovery training for state agencies is also critical. Compounding disasters over the last several years have resulted in repeated need for state guidance and support for whole community recovery. Local government and

community organizations increasingly call on the services of state agencies for their Local Assistance Centers and Disaster Recovery Centers--community-based, centralized locations for the public to receive recovery information and support. The training needs for these staff are particularly specialized and sensitive, as staff are often working directly with survivors who are in crisis, are overwhelmed, and may not know exactly what they need.

*Credentialling*

As stated earlier in this report, Cal OES' EOC position credentialling program was established statewide under SEMS in cooperation with California's emergency management community. The credentialing program is available to emergency managers at all levels of government but requires investment of time and resources. Expanded participation in the credentialling program is critical to meet growing surge capacity demands and loss of experienced personnel due to retirements and attrition. The federal government announced for 2023 a new requirement that EMPG recipients must use their funds to implement credentialing. This will further stretch shrinking federal EMPG dollars and increase demand for the training needed to credential personnel.

C. *Response*

*Public Information and Warning*

Cal OES and its partners have made significant progress toward a holistic alert and warning program, as well as actionable, reliable, and inclusive public messaging. The Cal OES Alert and Warning Guidelines help ensure a consistent statewide approach to delivery of lifesaving emergency instructions to the public. The Guidelines were recently updated to expand upon Access and Functional Needs (AFN) considerations. The updated guidelines call for the use of accessible formats, multiple languages, and plain verbiage to ensure comprehension by the whole community. The Guidelines further stress the need for earlier "pre-warning" targeted to individuals with AFN through community-based organizations and private non-profits who provide essential services to customers with disabilities, older adults, and caregivers.

The state has also adopted standardized evacuation terminology and procedures to help ensure effective and timely evacuations. Cal OES recently made available a no-cost alert and warning platform across the state to ensure that no community goes without this life-saving service. However, jurisdictions use various communication and technology platforms

to make their evacuation and other emergency notifications, and inevitably there are differences between providers in terms of service model, cost, and operating structure.

*Regional Support*

Cal OES' service delivery model for emergency response includes deployment of state staff to local EOCs, incident command posts (ICPs), and other on-scene locations to ensure rapid and seamless support. An example of Cal OES regional support includes Law Enforcement. The regions covered by Cal OES Law Enforcement coordinators are geographically diverse, ranging from densely populated urban areas to sparsely populated rural areas. The types of events requiring law enforcement coordination have grown in scale, duration, and type. Major evacuations, active shooter incidents, security incidents, and large-scale planned events are increasingly common along with natural disasters.

Cal OES' Law Enforcement regional cadre has had to adapt to this evolving environment, often prioritizing its most critical deployments and rotating staff around the state from incident to incident. Regional Coordinators work to appropriately distribute resources across the state to maintain consistency, continuity, and alignment with geographic-specific considerations.

*Search and Rescue*

Since the early 1980's, Cal OES Law Enforcement has managed the State's Search and Rescue (SAR) program, largely made up of volunteers. Management and coordination of county SAR teams generally consists of a SAR Manager, a SAR Coordinator, a minimal number of sworn Law Enforcement team members, and volunteer team members (which make up most of the team). There are approximately 3,700 SAR volunteers in California. Capabilities and equipment used by county SAR teams vary by jurisdiction, which may include, but is not limited to, various land, snow, and water vehicles; horses; aircraft; search K9s; and sonar.

To ensure all county SAR programs are standardized, Cal OES Law Enforcement annually trains approximately 900 local, county, state and federal Law Enforcement personnel and volunteers through 18 SAR classes and trainings. Like other disasters and emergencies, SAR events are increasing in frequency and duration, calling for more personnel for longer deployments. SAR classes and trainings help ensure efficiency of SAR efforts in time of need.

Technology and equipment to support SAR activities continues to improve, however not all local Law Enforcement agencies can procure these resources. A centralized system of standardized equipment maintained by Cal OES and prepositioned across the state could be considered further as one way to ensure life-saving equipment is consistently at the ready through the state Mutual Aid System.

D. *Mutual Aid*

California's Mutual Aid System connects various cities, counties, OAs, and the state to support the movement of critical resources during times of disaster. Cal OES is responsible for maintaining the overarching Mutual Aid System, and various supporting mutual aid systems. While California has a robust core system, recent disasters have revealed specific areas where additional development and expansion of mutual aid plans are needed.

One such example is related to animal care and sheltering. Recent disasters have highlighted the need to develop a formal plan to protect and care for commercial and private livestock, in addition to enhancing care for domesticated animals, during emergency response. There is a need to connect the multi-faceted, public/private animal services network, above and beyond state and university partners, to further improve and standardize surge support for both livestock and domestic animals during disasters.

*Fire and Rescue*

The modern challenges faced by the Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid System include a year-round wildfire season, complex major incidents, behavioral health issues related to extended assignments, and limited fire department staffing. These issues continue to impact the availability of fire apparatus and firefighters to be deployed to incidents throughout California. The Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid system needs organized, specialized support and expertise to anticipate and address the increasingly critical, complex, and specialized considerations of the fire service and could help sustain a robust fire mutual aid system that is a cornerstone of California's response capacity.

*E. Logistics*

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed gaps in logistics and supply chain for emergency life-saving commodities. In its extensive examination of worst-case scenarios and related planning for catastrophic events, Cal OES predicts the need to support hundreds of thousands of individuals with emergency commodities and supplies. The pandemic has shown that procuring and mobilizing resources "just-in-time" is unreliable, and that

resources from the federal government or other states likely won't arrive for several days. Recent BCPs authorized resources to sustain Disaster Logistics Warehouses in northern and southern California, bolstering the State's readiness for all-hazards events.

The program would further benefit from robust, standardized technology linking all state commodity data through an accurate, real-time information system, as well as dedicated resources to maintain critical supplies as well as training and exercise programs for warehouse personnel and other responders in this space.

*F. Local Match*

Hazard mitigation projects have proven value. A 2019 national study demonstrated a benefit of six dollars saved for every dollar invested in mitigation. Yet mitigation projects, largely provided through FEMA funding, are increasingly difficult to access or implement. Due to environmental review and other considerations the average FEMA mitigation project can take up to *5- to 9-years* to be funded. Some projects have taken much longer. Yet the destruction cycle of disasters is occurring at an increasingly rapid pace. A major barrier for communities to apply for this federal funding is often the local cost match, along with the unpredictable length of FEMA grant cycles. Cal OES has implemented one-time programs to assist with cost match for equity-priority, underserved communities who otherwise could not afford mitigation.

Investing in mitigation, particularly in disadvantaged communities, is essential to equitable climate adaptation and will save lives and property from future hazard events. Navigating the recovery and mitigation process can be complex and confusing. Increased demand for technical guidance and training, targeted at communities that historically have not participated in these programs, is anticipated to support resiliency where the greatest needs exist.

*G. Emergency Housing*

Short term, emergency sheltering is unfortunately commonplace in disaster-prone states such as California. Cal OES in collaboration with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), the California Department of General Services (DGS), and the American Red Cross routinely provide support to community disaster sheltering operations—often in congregate settings—with staffing support, facilities, supplies, feeding, and other life-sustaining aid.

After disasters, survivors all too often have no homes to return to once evacuation orders are lifted and shelters are closed. California's most destructive wildfires have all occurred in recent years, not only destroying tens of thousands of homes but also critical services and infrastructure such as schools, stores, fire stations, police stations, and other community anchors. While some Californians receive emergency housing assistance through their insurance, many are uninsured, live in multi-family situations, or otherwise lack adequate resources to safely relocate. Accessing affordable housing can exacerbate this challenge after disasters.

California has seen a significant rise in the number of disasters that do not result in a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration for Individual Assistance. In many of these events, Californians are devastated and without the financial means to adequately recover, yet there are no programs available to help them repair or replace damaged homes or personal property. Since 2017, thousands of homes have been destroyed that were not covered by a federal disaster declaration. If a community does have a local Long-Term Recovery Group, it often lacks the level of financial support to assist at the scale needed following large disasters.

The declaration factors to qualify for a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration for Individual Assistance (IA) are extraordinarily high. Under FEMA's new IA Declaration Factors, the minimum numerical threshold to qualify for federal Individual Assistance, for states such as California, is thousands of homes destroyed or damaged per event.

Even when IA does become available, many Californians are not eligible to apply, and for those who are eligible, available programs only provide partial relief.

California lacks a state program to fill federal program gaps for the most basic temporary housing and other living needs following disasters. In recent years, such as in the 2022-23 statewide floods, one-time budget resources were made available for short-term housing and other emergency needs for the most vulnerable disaster survivors. However, without improvement to federal programs or a state program to compensate for federal program gaps, Californians will continue to lack the basic assistance to begin their recovery and build future resilience.

## IX. Conclusion

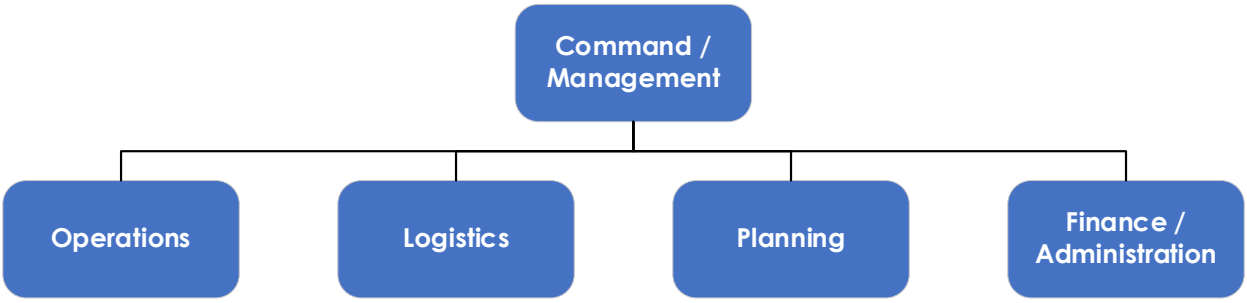
Emergency preparedness and response are dynamic activities that change based on the current risk landscape within California, the nation, and the world. California's emergency management systems are designed to be flexible and scalable for this reason. Critical components of a sustained and comprehensive emergency management program include training, community outreach and education, communication, technical assistance, robust coordination, and resource/asset distribution. As demonstrated in this report, Cal OES is responsible for coordinating all aspects of emergency preparedness, response, and recovery across the state. While this report focuses on California's current risk landscape and resource availability, the priorities and areas of opportunity will change depending on the nature of hazards faced, readiness of first responders and emergency managers, and the dynamic and evolving needs of California's people and communities.

**Operational Vision Report - Attachment I: Description of SEMS Components**

There are five SEMS organizational levels. Each level is activated as needed for an emergency. Each level, described below, supports the operational construct of handling emergencies at the lowest level possible. Emergencies are not elevated to the next organization level until all resources at the lower levels are exhausted.

- Field – The field level is where emergency response personnel and resources, under the command of responsible officials, carry out tactical decisions and activities in direct response to an incident or threat.
- Local Government – The local government level includes counties, cities, and special districts. Local governments manage and coordinate the overall emergency response and recovery activities within their jurisdiction. Local governments are required to use SEMS when their Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is activated, or a local emergency is declared or proclaimed to be eligible for state reimbursement of response-related costs.
- Operational Area – An OA is the intermediate level of the State's emergency management organization which encompasses a county's boundaries and all political subdivisions located within that county, including special districts. The OA facilitates and/or coordinates information, resources, and decisions regarding priorities among local governments within the OA. The OA serves as the coordination and communication link between the local government level and the state.
- Region – The Cal OES Regional level facilitates information and identifies resource needs among OAs within the mutual aid region. There are three Cal OES Administrative Regions– Inland, Coastal, and Southern – which are further divided into six mutual aid regions. When an incident occurs that may require Cal OES or other state support or expertise, Cal OES Regional staff deploy to OA EOCs or incident command posts to provide any necessary technical advice, support, or on-scene assistance. Regions also facilitate the Emergency Management Mutual Aid program.
- State – The state level of SEMS, through the State Operations Center (SOC), prioritizes tasks and manages state and EMAC resources in response to requests from OAs. The state level also serves as the coordination and communication link to the federal emergency response system. The SOC is also the hub where all state agencies involved in the disaster response convene under a centralized coordinated effort.

SEMS requires every emergency response involving multiple jurisdictions or multiple agencies to include the five functions identified below. These functions must be applied at each level of the SEMS organization.




- Command/Management – Has overall responsibility for directing, ordering, and/or controlling of resources, situational awareness, and emergency policy and coordination in support of the SEMS construct.
    - Command – A key concept in all emergencies is to establish command and tactical control. In the field, the Incident Commander (IC) sets incident objectives and approves the strategy and tactics to meet them.
    - Management – The EOC serves as a central location from which multiple agencies or organizations coordinate information collection and evaluation, priority setting, and resource management. Within the EOC, the Management function:
        - Facilitates decision-making in support of the incident response.
        - Implements policies established by the governing bodies.
        - Facilitates the activities of the MAC Group when activated to prioritize scarce resources.
- Operations – Responsible for coordinating and supporting all jurisdictional operations in support of the response to the emergency through implementation of Incident Action Plans (IAPs). In the EOC, the Operations Section manages functional coordinators who share information and decisions about discipline-specific operations. Operations is also responsible for tracking personnel in the field to ensure safety.

- Logistics – Responsible for providing facilities, services, personnel, equipment, and materials in support of the emergency. Unified ordering takes place through the Logistics Section to ensure control and accountability over resource requests. As needed, specialized Units are appointed to address the needs for communications, food, medical, supplies, facilities, and ground support.
- Planning – Responsible for the collection, evaluation, and dissemination of operational information related to the incident and preparation IAP. Planning also maintains information on the current and forecasted situation and on the status of resources assigned to the emergency or the EOC. As needed, the Advanced Planning function is activated to identify and plan for future threats and hazards prior to and during an event. Planning also prepares situation reports, sets geographic information system priorities, and manages technical specialists and expertise needed for an event.
- Finance/Administration – Responsible for all financial and cost analysis aspects of the emergency. Additionally, responsible for any administrative aspects not handled by the other functions, including travel coordination. As needed, specialist are appointed to record time for incident or EOC personnel and hired equipment, coordinate procurement activities, process claims, and track costs.

**Operational Vision Report - Attachment II: 2022-23 Proposal Matrix**

| Proposal Name | Focus | How Resources Strengthened Cal OES's Emergency Response and Preparedness |
|---|---|---|
| Warning & Situation Awareness | Preparedness Response | Enhances the California State Warning Center and Alert and Warning Program, providing timely awareness and status of emergency events and disasters. In coordination with the permanent state operations team, these resources lean forward to identify threats and risks early to keep the impact of the incidents small. Additionally, standardize the alerts and warnings sent out at the local level to reduce confusion during an incident. |
| Addressing Heightened Risks through Enhanced Partnerships | Preparedness Response | Enhances regional response capacity and maintain key partnerships with local government agencies. Additional Cal OES Regional staff increases the coordination for preparedness and response efforts. This increases the possibility for incidents to be resolved at the local level, reducing the number of incidents elevating to the State for response. |
| Cal OES Mather: State Operations Center Modification | Response | Modernizing the State Operations Center (SOC) increases the ability for staff to collaborate on response efforts, reducing confusion and miscommunications during response activities. The modifications will also reduce the potential for injuries that can occur when staff are working long hours and into the night. The SOC modernization project is currently moving to the Construction Phase. |
| Fire Integrated Real-Time Intelligence System | Response | Establishes and operates a state level mutual aid asset known as the Fire Integrated Real Time Intelligence System (FIRIS) – An All-Hazards Intelligence Platform, which enhances public safety by providing real-time information on disaster perimeters, movement of disaster threats, and communicating that information to first responders. This allows coordinated planning to occur across the State, ensuring all first responders and emergency managers have the most current information and response plans. |
| Enhancing the Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Fire Fleet | Response | Enhance the California State Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid System by replacing aging equipment and maintaining the existing fleet. This ensures California is not at risk by using outdated fire fighting equipment that is past its useful life. Additionally, having sufficient funds to regularly maintain the equipment reduces expensive repair costs. |

| Proposal Name | Focus | How Resources Strengthened Cal OES's Emergency Response and Preparedness |
|---|---|---|
| California Earthquake Early Warning System | Preparedness | Provide ongoing education and outreach for the California Earthquake Early Warning program. Cal OES is conducting additional education campaigns and researching additional modalities of alerting, increasing the reach of the California Earthquake Early Warning program. This allows citizens to be better prepared when an earthquake hits, potentially avoiding injuries or loss of life. |
| Increase Support for the Law Enforcement Mutual Aid | Response | Establish a 3-year pilot program for deployment support for local law enforcement agencies that are deployed by Cal OES through the Law Enforcement Mutual Aid System. Having a dedicated funding source for these activities reduces delays for local law enforcement agencies who may not have been able to respond without being assured of funding availability. This directly impacts the response efforts and potentially reduces the risk of injury to responders and citizens. |

**Operational Vision Report - Attachment III: 2023-24 Proposal Matrix**

| Proposal Name | Focus | Description |
|---|---|---|
| Southern Region: Emergency Operations Center | Response | The Southern Region Operation Center will be the focal point for mobilizing Southern California disaster response assets, providing continuity of operations should the Mather Headquarters not be operational, giving timely intelligence to headquarters in Sacramento, and serving as a liaison location for local agencies and the media, while effectively coordinating first responders' efforts. Additionally, the Southern Region Office will serve as the primary continuity site for Cal OES Headquarters, in the event a disaster incident occurs near enough to headquarters to make it inoperable, statewide coordination may be conducted from the Southern Region Operation Center. |
| Statewide Disaster Warehousing Operations | Preparedness Response | The prepositioning and stockpiling of resources creates a dynamic whereby the State Government and Cal OES are prepared to quickly respond to those least fortunate or able to take care of themselves or their families due to limited resource availability. This applies to all types of disasters or incidents where the need for positive equity outcomes must be managed. Funding was provided for 5 years, and Cal OES will need to come back to the Legislature with an ongoing proposal at that time. |
| Hazard Mitigation Staffing | Preparedness | The overall mission of the Resilience Branch is to improve alignment between the mitigation planning process with mitigation grant selection and implementation, funding application, and project design. This program targets previously underserved communities to ensure that they can compete on a national and state level for funds to enhance their resilience, particularly for nature-based projects. Additionally, Cal OES received additional funding to implement FEMA's new Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Program, which support hazard mitigation projects. |

| Proposal Name | Focus | Description |
|---|---|---|
| California Cybersecurity Integration Center | Preparedness Response | Leads state efforts to identify and mitigate current and ever-evolving cyber threats, including providing enhanced (1) threat detection, assessment, and research; (2) gap testing and remediation; and (3) incident analysis and response. Allows Cal OES to broaden its reach into underserved communities. |
| Next Generation 9-1-1 and the California Public Safety Microwave Network | Preparedness Response | Completes the buildout of and provides ongoing maintenance for the Next Generation 9-1-1 system, which ensures people within California can reach public safety answering points through phone or text messaging to get emergency first responders deployed during times of distress. Additionally, completes the buildout of and provides ongoing maintenance for the California Public Safety Microwave Network, which ensures first responders are able to communicate with each other given the varied topology of California. |