

# **Part III. Supporting Documents**

## **Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) Guidelines**

### **SEMS Maintenance System**

#### **A System Description for the Ongoing Development, Maintenance, and Operations of SEMS**

**January 2019**

The contents of this guideline have not been changed from the original document, however, the guideline has been reformatted to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 508 standards.

## **I. Purpose of the SEMS Maintenance System**

To establish, formalize, and institutionalize a process for supporting the ongoing improvement and maintenance of California's overall system for emergency management, including the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS).

## **II. Background**

SEMS was established by State legislation, Senate Bill (SB) 1841, Chapter 1069, Statutes of 1992, which went into effect January 1, 1993 (California Government Code Section 8607). Paragraph 2425 of the SEMS Regulations states that, "...The Director, California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), shall establish the SEMS Advisory Board consisting of representatives from emergency response agencies to provide advice on all aspects of this Chapter." Paragraph 2443 of the regulation states that, "...On or before December 1, 1995, Cal OES shall develop standards for compliance that will include a method of evaluation regarding planning, training, exercises, and performance.

Initially an Advisory Committee was formed by the Director of Cal OES in 1993 following the passing of SB 1841. The Committee was instrumental in the development of the SEMS Regulations. A Training Working Group was also formed in 1993 to assist and advise the Advisory Committee on the development of a SEMS Training Curriculum. The Training Working Group was expanded in 1994 to oversee the development of both Guidance and Training materials.

By the end of 1997 the statewide implementation of SEMS was completed. This included the development of the SEMS Advisory Board, the SEMS Technical Group, SEMS Specialist Committees, and the Mutual Aid Regional Advisory Committees (MARAC), collectively serving as the SEMS Maintenance System. From 1998 to 2000, the Maintenance System was modified to meet the challenges of Y2K. From 2001 until 2004 SEMS Specialist Committees did not meet due to budget shortages and the major

changes that occurred at the federal level due to the September 11, 2001 terrorist event.

In 2004, with the federal initiation of the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the SEMS Maintenance System was reactivated to determine how state and local agencies could both operate within SEMS and be compliant with NIMS.

The experiences of Hurricane Katrina in 2005 identified emergency management issues and resulted in policy changes at both the federal and state level. The role of emergency management at the federal level has become increasingly important. Accordingly, the National Response Plan (NRP) and the NIMS are undergoing further changes. State laws, Executive Orders, and plans have been adopted that directly enhance the make up and mission of the SEMS Maintenance System. Further, to comply with NIMS, the state formally adopted the federal system and integrated it into the California Emergency Management System (Governor's Executive Order S-02-05).

### **Change in Scope of SEMS**

While SEMS addresses response operations, the scope of the SEMS Maintenance System has been broadened to include all aspects of emergency management: response, recovery, hazard mitigation, preparedness, planning, training, exercising, and resource tracking as required by NIMS.

As a result of the passage of SB 1451, Chapter 600, Statutes of 2006, the SEMS Advisory Board has been expanded to better represent participants in California's emergency management system. SEMS Specialist Committees have a broader array of subject areas to consider and more flexibility in their duration with some committees having an almost permanent status.

## **III. SEMS Maintenance System Requirements**

1. All emergency response levels, i.e., field, local government, operational area, region, state, and federal, will require representation in any ongoing SEMS Maintenance System.
2. SEMS will be used by emergency response and emergency management personnel from a variety of agencies and disciplines, including public, private, and volunteer entities throughout the state; therefore, multi-agency, and multi-discipline representation is required in any SEMS Maintenance System.
3. Statutory responsibility for SEMS rests with the Director of Cal OES. The SEMS Maintenance System provides for an orderly process to assist the Director in implementing and maintaining SEMS, and for improving California's emergency management system as a whole.
4. The SEMS Maintenance System will be used to address the NIMS, the NRP, and any other federal emergency management or homeland security effort that requires the state to modify SEMS or comply with federal guidance.
5. Planning, activation, implementation, modifications, after-action/corrective action reporting, document control, training and compliance are all elements that may require development of specific procedures, on-going guidance, and maintenance activities as a part of the SEMS Maintenance System.
6. A well-documented process is needed to ensure that SEMS is maintained and operated effectively on a long-term basis.
7. Because of the need to maintain a standardized national fire services Incident Command System (ICS), all SEMS recommended modifications to ICS must be coordinated with the FIRESCOPE Program prior to implementation.
8. Many efforts to enhance California's Standardized Emergency Management System can be implemented through the use of the SEMS Specialist Committees. However, broadening of the System does not prevent the Governor

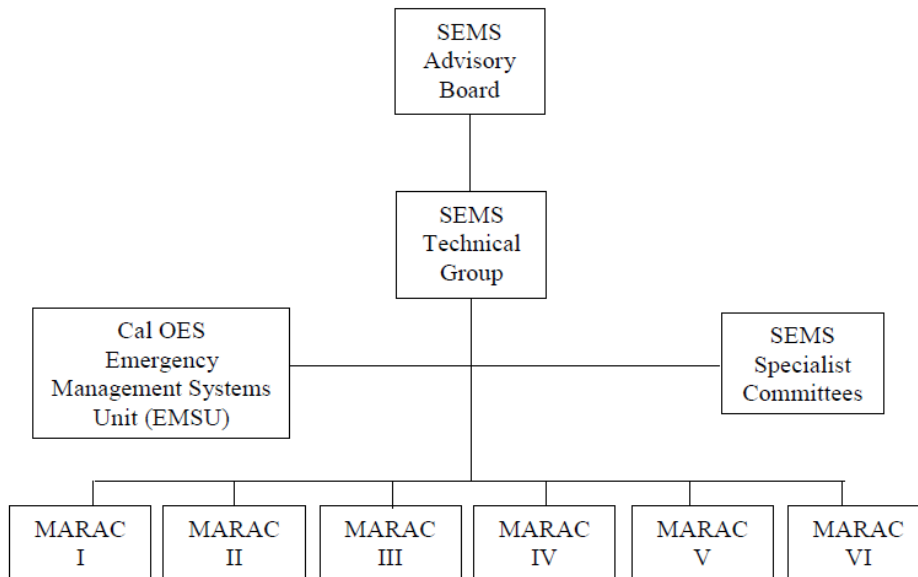
from creating advisory committees outside of the System as needed. But, by creating Specialist Committees to address emergency management issues within the SEMS Maintenance System, the Governor can be assured that the work of these committees will be properly vetted and processed through a proven system that has demonstrated its effectiveness and is accepted by the California Emergency Organization.

#### **IV. SEMS Maintenance System Description**

The SEMS Maintenance System consists of three levels of operation. Each level is described in terms of responsibilities, membership, operating procedures and information flow. The three levels in the SEMS Maintenance System are:

1. SEMS Advisory Board
2. SEMS Technical Group (supported by)
  - SEMS Specialist Committees, as needed
  - Cal OES Emergency Management Systems Unit (EMSU)
3. SEMS Mutual Aid Regional Advisory Committees (MARAC)

The overall organization is depicted in the figure below:



MARAC - Mutual Aid Regional Advisory Committee

## SEMS Advisory Board

The SEMS Advisory Board (hereafter referred to as the Board) develops and recommends policy to the Cal OES Agency Director. The SEMS Advisory Board shall consist of the following members or their designee:

### Membership

- Cal OES Director, Board Chairperson
- Adjutant General, California National Guard
- Chairperson, California Utilities Emergency Association
- Chairperson, FIRESCOPE Board of Directors
- Cal OES Regional Administrators (3)
- Representatives from each of the six (6) Mutual Aid Regional Advisory Committees
- Secretary, Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency
- Secretary, California Department of Food and Agriculture
- Secretary, California Health and Human Services Agency

- Secretary, California Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Secretary, California Natural Resources Agency
- Secretary, California State Transportation Agency
- Chief Service Officer, California Volunteers
- President, California Public Utilities Commission
- President, California Emergency Services Association
- President, California State Sheriffs Association
- President, California Fire Chiefs Association
- President, California Police Chiefs Association
- Administrator, FEMA Region IX
- Chairperson of the SEMS Technical Group (non-voting)
- Cal OES Tribal Liaison (non-voting)
- Chief, Cal OES Office of Access and Functional Needs (non-voting)

## Responsibilities

The primary purpose of the Board is to give advice to and make recommendations to the Director of Cal OES related to the administration and coordination of California's Standardized Emergency Management System and the SEMS regulations. The responsibilities of the Board are:

1. Oversee the functioning of the California Standardized Emergency Management System and the SEMS Maintenance System.
2. Provide policy guidance and direction to the SEMS Technical Group.
3. Review, arbitrate and make final recommendations regarding unresolved issues on guidance, training and compliance.

## Operating Procedures

1. The SEMS Advisory Board shall meet bi-annually or more often based on activity.

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2. Special meetings of the Board can be called by the Director of Cal OES as required.
3. All meetings will be held at the Cal OES Headquarters, unless circumstances warrant a change in location.
4. The Director of Cal OES can modify the Board membership.
5. Each Board member will have a designated alternate who must have the delegated authority to commit the agency in decision matters before SEMS Advisory Board. The Chairperson of the SEMS Technical Group, or the Chair designee, will be a non-voting member of the Board. This will ensure a close coordination and information transfer process between the two levels.
6. Decision issues brought before the Board from the SEMS Technical Group will be presented by the Chairperson of the SEMS Technical Group, or the Chair designee, along with prior staff work, which will include recommendations of the SEMS Technical Group or Specialist Committees as appropriate.
7. The Board will provide timely resolution on all issues presented. Where consensus cannot be achieved, the Board may require further staff action on the part of the SEMS Technical Group or Specialist Committees or refer the matter to the Director of Cal OES for decision.
8. The Board may task the SEMS Technical Group and/or Specialist Committees with specific issues for analysis and recommendations.

## **SEMS Technical Group**

### **Membership**

The SEMS Technical Group shall consist of the following members or their designee:

- Cal OES Chief Deputy Director, Group Chairperson

- Chairpersons of the Specialist Committees
- Representative from each of the six (6) MARACs
- Cal OES Branches, including Regional Administrators (3)
- Representative of the Disabled Community (SB 1451)

## Responsibilities

1. Responds to the needs and directives of the SEMS Advisory Board.
2. Recommends policy changes to the Board.
3. Ensures necessary staff work (SEMS Technical Group or Specialist Committees) is done on issues presented to the SEMS Technical Group by the Board.
4. Reviews and coordinates proposals/recommendations submitted by Specialist Committees, the MARACs and the Cal OES Emergency Management Systems Unit (EMSU).
5. Makes consensus decisions on all SEMS matters brought to the SEMS Technical Group unless those matters must be decided at the Advisory Board level.
6. Completes necessary staff work on issue related matters to insure that the Board has sufficient information to make policy decisions.
7. Oversees the establishment and functioning of the SEMS Specialist Committees. Provides direction to these committees, and analyzes and evaluates their recommendations.
8. Keeps the Board informed of the progress of SEMS development, implementation, operations, and training.
9. Advises the Board on the effectiveness of the SEMS Maintenance System, the work of Specialist Committees, and the MARACs.

10. Reports on and monitors implementation of the Statewide Emergency Management Strategic Plan.
11. Approves Specialist Committee Charters.

### **Operating Procedures**

1. The SEMS Technical Group will meet two weeks prior to the SEMS Advisory Board meeting.
2. Special meetings of the group can be called by the chairperson as required.
3. All meetings will be held at the Cal OES Headquarters.
4. The Chairperson of the SEMS Technical Group shall establish meeting agendas, and ensure that the Cal OES Emergency Management Systems Unit (EMSU) provides meeting announcements, agendas, and working documents for review to all members at least one week prior to SEMS Technical Group meetings.
5. The SEMS Technical Group will make consensus decisions on issues presented to the group whenever possible.
6. The Chair of the SEMS Technical Group will be a non-voting member of the SEMS Advisory Board, and will attend Board meetings.

### **Specialist Committees**

Specialist Committees may be formed under the direction of the SEMS Technical Group as necessary, through legislation, at the direction of the SEMS Advisory Board, or at the direction of the Cal OES Director. The SEMS Technical Group will approve the membership of Specialist Committees.

Specialist Committee membership will be kept to the minimum necessary to represent the functional area and provide the necessary expertise to staff out the issue.

Specialist Committees can function on an issue-by-issue basis or they can be semi-permanent committees. Each Specialist Committee will prepare a Charter for review and approval by the SEMS Technical Group.

The Chairperson(s) of each Specialist Committee will be responsible for scheduling meetings, developing agendas, identifying staff support, producing progress reports, work products, and coordinating the work of the committee.

### **Cal OES Emergency Management Systems Unit (EMSU)**

Ongoing SEMS technical support will be required for the SEMS Maintenance System to function properly. Activities to be performed may include: document control, printing, preparation of meeting agendas and minutes, announcements, etc., for the SEMS Advisory Board and the SEMS Technical Group.

### **Responsibilities**

1. Prepare and distribute meeting announcements and agendas for SEMS Technical Group and SEMS Advisory Board meetings.
2. Prepare and distribute (postal mail or email) material for SEMS Technical Group and SEMS Advisory Board meetings.
3. Prepare, maintain, and distribute rosters of SEMS Advisory Board, Technical Group, and Specialist Committees.
4. Provide minutes of the SEMS Technical Group and SEMS Advisory Board meetings.
5. Provide other technical support as directed.

### **Mutual Aid Regional Advisory Committees**

Six mutual aid regions (I-VI) are in existence, with several discipline specific mutual aid systems functioning within the mutual aid region framework. (Note: Law Enforcement has seven mutual aid regions.) Each mutual aid system works within a defined set of counties and with its own procedures, communications, and personnel structure. Cal OES has established three Administrative Regions (Coastal, Inland, and Southern). The Administrative Region functions in a general coordinative and information exchange role with regard to the mutual aid regions and systems that operate within the Administrative Region.

To provide a broad base for local government participation in the SEMS Maintenance System the MARACs were established within the existing six mutual aid regions. The result of this is as follows:

Cal OES Southern Region

- MARAC I
- MARAC VI

Cal OES Inland Region

- MARAC III
- MARAC IV

Cal OES Coastal Region

- MARAC II

- MARAC V

MARACs are a principal source of input and information in the SEMS Maintenance System. Recommendations from these committees to the SEMS Technical Group provide a means by which SEMS is maintained and improved.

## Membership

Each MARAC consists of:

- The Cal OES Regional Administrator, or deputy, for the Administrative Region encompassing the mutual aid region(s)
- Regional Mutual Aid Coordinators (fire, law enforcement, disaster medical and other established mutual aid systems)
- A representative from each Operational Area located within the mutual aid region
- Representatives from two municipalities (small/large and rotates bi-annually)
- Regional Public Utility Representative
- Private utility representative (rotates bi-annually)
- Special District Representative
- Other designee as appointed by an individual MARAC

## Responsibilities

1. Adopts regional goals and objectives that support the development, and implementation of SEMS.
2. Ensures that local governments, operational areas, special districts, and other organizations, including the private sector and non-governmental organizations, are kept informed of the latest information on emergency management and on SEMS.
3. Recommend changes or modifications to SEMS to the SEMS Technical Group.
4. Provide personnel and/or technical support to SEMS Specialist Committees as appropriate.
5. Ensure that local agencies and jurisdictions are provided the opportunity for ongoing comment and suggestions for system improvements.

## Operating Procedures

1. MARACs will meet on a bi-monthly or quarterly basis as needed.
2. The Regional Administrator, or the designee, will chair MARAC meetings.
3. Formal MARAC membership will be specified by State Cal OES and be representative of the emergency management community within the Cal OES Regions and be consistent with membership categories of the SEMS Technical Group and SEMS Advisory Board.
4. The Regional Administrator in consultation with the MARAC members will designate an Operational Area representative to serve on the SEMS Technical Group and SEMS Advisory Board from each Mutual Aid Region. This appointment may be reviewed annually, or as needed. The selected representative of each MARAC will attend SEMS Advisory Board meetings as a voting member.
5. Each issue presented to, or generated by, the MARAC will be reviewed and discussed by the full MARAC at regularly scheduled meetings, or in special meetings of the OA membership as called by the Regional Administrator. If

deemed appropriate, recommendations relative to the issues presented will be forwarded to the SEMS Technical Group for action at their next scheduled meeting.

6. For purposes of voting on SEMS-related MARAC business, the Regional Administrator or designated representative and a majority of members or their designees from county Operational Areas must be in attendance before an official vote can be taken. Only formal members of the MARAC may vote. On issues requiring a vote, business under the quorum should be conducted according to Roberts Rules of Order.
7. Staff support to MARACs will be provided through the associated Cal OES Administrative Region.
8. The Regional Administrator or designated representative is not a voting member unless required to break a tie.
9. MARAC members may request the Regional Administrator to place a SEMS maintenance issue item on the agenda of the next meeting. The sponsoring member may facilitate the discussion or appoint a designated representative from within their Operational Area to present the issue and participate in the discussion of the issue with the MARAC members.
10. The Regional Administrator may amend the MARAC operating procedures, and forward them for approval by the SEMS Advisory Board.

## **V. Information Flow within the SEMS Maintenance System**

Organizational elements of the SEMS Maintenance System may at any time be involved in:

- Providing general information to all levels of the SEMS Maintenance System.
- Resolving technical issues related to ongoing SEMS implementation, operation, or training.
- Resolving issues regarding problems that require additional guidance or training

materials.

- Developing, approving, implementing new guidance, or training material.
- Resolving issues of compliance.

All levels of the SEMS Maintenance System are considered appropriate points of entry for issues to be resolved. Any person or agency can bring an issue to the attention of any level of the SEMS Maintenance System. This includes SEMS Specialist Committees and the Cal OES Emergency Management Systems Unit (EMSU).

Issues will be forwarded to, and resolved at the lowest level possible within the organization. Issues that cannot be successfully resolved at a lower level will be elevated to the next higher level.