

LAFCO and Fire Protection Services

Synching up Spheres, Boundaries, Contracts, and Auto-Aid

CALAFCO Annual Conference
2018 | Yosemite

speakers

Gay Jones

Commissioner | Sacramento LAFCO
Chair | CALAFCO

Jeff Meston

Chief | City of South Lake Tahoe
President | CA Fire Chiefs Association

Stephen Abbott

Chief | North County FPD

Don Butz

Chief | Lakeside FPD

Keene Simonds

Executive Officer | San Diego LAFCO

Session Goals

Intended Takeaways...

Primer on Fire Services and Mutual Aid in California

Big Picture Challenges and Opportunities in Fire Services

Lessons Learned from Lakeside FPD

LAFCOs' Role in Fire Services: What Works, What Doesn't Work

Lively Discussion with the Audience...

Fire Service

big picture primer...

Climate Change and the intensity of Emergency Incidents

- It's real and we see it- Mutual aid improvements are the answer

Name	Date	Acres	Structures	Deaths
Mendocino Complex	July 2018	459,123	280	1
Thomas (Ventura/SB)	December 2017	281,893	1,063	2
Cedar (SD)	October 2003	273,246	2,820	15
Rush (Lassen)	August 2012	271,911 (+NV 43,666)	0	0
Rim (Tuolumne)	August 2013	257,314	112	0

Fire Service

big picture primer...

California Statewide Mutual Aid System

- Developed in 1950
- Concept of neighbor helping neighbor
- 4 components-Basic Emergency Plan, Peacetime Emergency Plan, Compendium of Legislation and References, War Emergency Plan
- Mutual aid- Voluntary Mutual Aid, Obligatory Mutual Aid, Master Mutual Aid agreement, California Fire Assistance Agreement

Fire Service

big picture primer...

California Statewide Mutual Aid System

- CFAA- Cal OES, CalFire, Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Fish & Wildlife, Bureau of Indian Affairs
- All counties, incorporated cities and fire protection districts are signatory to the agreement
- Local agencies have a variety of mutual aid (ask for) and automatic aid (automatically sent) agreements to provide for fire and rescue services – these are critical to consider in a LAFCO Service Review

Fire Service

big picture primer...

California Statewide Mutual Aid System

- Proposed mutual aid changes
 - Add technology to the system with predictive tools, and Automatic Vehicle Location statewide
 - Pre-position apparatus and equipment (strike teams or task forces) based on predictive tools
 - Argument dispatch and Emergency Command Centers with personnel to handle influx of calls and radio requests
 - Upgrade or replace ROSS- Resource Ordering and Status System

Fire Service

big picture primer...

California Statewide Mutual Aid System

- Complete Blue Ribbon Commission findings on enlarging the OES fleet- \$25 million allocated to purchase 100 engines
- 2018 update of California Incident Command Certification System (CICCS) focusing more on all hazard nature of CICCS.

Fire Service

challenges and
opportunities...

Fire Protection Challenges

- Service demand outpacing revenue growth
- Greater demand for mutual aid
- Greater regulatory requirements
 - Mandated training
 - Mandated inspections
- Shrinking volunteer pool
- Healthcare industry changes
 - Insufficient primary care
 - Hospital overcrowding

Fire Service

challenges and
opportunities...

Fire District Funding Challenges

- Proposition 13-special districts saw 10% decline in total revenue
- Post Prop 13 agencies' annual tax increment (ATI) limited to 2%
- Counties left to fund post-Prop. 13 agencies at their discretion (not entitled to existing TRA apportionments)
- 10% ERAF shift from cities, counties, & special districts to schools
- Proposition 172-public safety ½ cent sales tax goes primarily to L.E & courts

Fire Service

challenges and opportunities...

Funding challenges (continued)

- Propositions 62 & 218 effectively eliminate benefit assessments
- Mello-Roos fees (CFDs)-require 2/3rds approval, limited to “new” services
- State Fire Fee impact
- Fire & EMS special tax success rate less than 50% statewide
- Fire Mitigation (developer impact) fees- limited to infrastructure improvements, do not keep pace with cost of construction index
- Fee for service limited to recovery of actual costs

Fire Service

challenges and
opportunities...

Possible legislative solutions

Support legislation such as:

- SCA to reduce special tax threshold to 55%, similar to schools
- Prop 172 tax increment distribution to fire
- ERAF suspension in light of budget surplus
- Statewide developer impact fee
- Community paramedicine/mobile integrated health

Fire Service

challenges and
opportunities...

Potential regulatory solutions

- Collaboration w/ insurance industry-shift in assumption of risk
- Modification of zoning regulations/GPA amendment process
- Consolidations

Fire Service

challenges and
opportunities...

The consolidation challenge

- Proportionate service levels given disproportionate funding
- Mutual aid agreements
- Exclusive EMS operating areas (EOA “201 rights”)
- SB 239
- Protest vote-local control
- Cost containment
- Savings typically limited to upper echelons
- Does not solve core funding issue

Fire Service

LAFCOs' role...

LAFCO Commissioners and Staff You Have an Integral Role in Fire Services

State Law prescribes three key and distinct roles to LAFCOs involving fire services...

- Planning
- Regulate | Setting Boundaries
- Regulate | Authorizing Certain Contracts

Fire Service

LAFCOs' role...

Planning Role

LAFCOs establish and update spheres to demark the appropriate boundaries and service areas

What Works

- Synching spheres with the predominate land use authority
- Collecting data in the MSRs
- Identifying problems

What Needs More Work

- Synching spheres with actual service responses (auto aid...)
- Making use of the data in the MSRs
- Solving identified problems

Fire Service

LAFCOs' role...

Regulatory Role | Part One

LAFCOs form, expand, consolidate, and dissolve fire service agencies and their boundaries

What Works

- Addressing existing needs of residents and subject agencies
- Solid track record in forming and expanding
- Responding to qualitative analysis

What Needs More Work

- Addressing future needs of residents and subject agencies
- Light track record in consolidating and dissolving
- Responding to quantitative analysis

Fire Service

LAFCOs' role...

Regulatory Role | Part Two

LAFCOs are now tasked with approving certain types of outside fire service contracts under SB 239

What Works

- Requires LAFCOs to define or otherwise address what constitutes “fire services” within their jurisdiction

What Needs More Work

- Finding the right balance in LAFCOs' role to (a) ensure accountability and (b) promote efficiencies