



Chairman

August 10, 2007

Andrew L. Vanderlaan
Public Member

Vice Chairman

TO: Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Service
Organizations Serving Unincorporated San Diego County

Bill Horn
County Board of
Supervisors

FROM: Executive Officer
Chief of Policy Research

Members

SUBJECT: Update on Reorganization of Structural Fire Protection and
Emergency Medical Services in Unincorporated San Diego
County

Toni Atkins
Councilmember
City of San Diego

Dianne Jacob
County Board of
Supervisors

Andrew J. Menshek
Padre Dam
Municipal Water District

Carl Hilliard
Mayor
City of Del Mar

Bud Pocklington
South Bay Irrigation District

Betty Rexford
Councilmember
City of Poway

The opportunity to join Phase I of the Reorganization of Structural Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services in Unincorporated San Diego County closed on July 13, 2007. On August 6, the LAFCO reorganization sub-committee (Supervisors Dianne Jacob and Bill Horn and LAFCO Commissioners Andy Vanderlaan and Andy Menshek) accepted a request from County Service Area (CSA) 113 (San Pasqual) to be included in Phase I. The sub-committee also selected *San Diego County Regional Fire Authority* as the agency's name.

Alternate Members

The final boundary of Phase I includes approximately 1.425 million acres of unincorporated territory. Local Agencies that will be reorganized and absorbed by the Fire Authority are: East County Fire Protection District (FPD), Pine Valley FPD, San Diego Rural FPD, CSA 109 (Mt. Laguna), CSA 111 (Boulevard), CSA 112 (Campo), and CSA 113 (San Pasqual), plus a significant amount of unincorporated territory served by volunteer fire protection companies. Tribal reservation lands (126,658 acres) have been excluded from the reorganization per the Commission's May 7, 2007 conditional approval. A map illustrating the final service area is enclosed.

Mark Lewis
Mayor
City of El Cajon

Greg Cox
County Board of
Supervisors

John S. Ingalls
Santa Fe
Irrigation District

Harry Mathis
Public Member

Kevin Faulconer
City of San Diego
Representative

The seven Phase I districts will be dissolved and district assets and responsibilities transferred to the regional fire authority operating within a defined service zone of CSA 135 (San Diego Regional Communications). The county-dependent CSA 135 will be authorized to provide structural fire protection and emergency medical services within the service zone. County staff has been charged with the responsibility of developing a transition plan to position regional fire protection responsibility with the County of San Diego. LAFCO staff has had preliminary meetings with Deputy CAO, Chandra Waller, and staff from the Department of Planning and Land Use (DPLU) to discuss the transition. LAFCO will be facilitating meetings between county staff and representatives from Phase I.

Executive Officer

Michael D. Ott

Counsel

William D. Smith

The Commission requested LAFCO staff to refine and update the cost estimates for providing fire protection services within Phase I at three levels: 3 on-duty BLS; 3 on-duty ALS; and 4 on-duty ALS. With the service area identified, initial cost estimates are being revised to reflect the final service area and current CAL Fire labor costs. We are also reevaluating overhead expenses and overall cost assumptions. Estimates of revenue that would be required to fund the regional agency—beyond the property tax and special assessment revenue that would transfer from dissolved district to the Regional agency—are being developed.

Preliminarily, about \$2.9 million in FY 06-07 revenues would transfer from the seven dissolved districts to the regional fire protection agency. In the upcoming months, a request will be made to the Board of Supervisors to fund the gap between local revenues and the cost for providing regional services. It is anticipated that an appropriation of county general funds would be processed as an adjustment in the ratio of County and CSA 135 property tax revenue within tax rate areas (TRAs) that include the regional fire protection authority. The adjustment of property tax revenue would also include an increment of annual property tax growth.

Terms and conditions are being developed to guide the transition from multiple service providers to a unified agency and to dictate certain characteristics of on-going operations. In addition to technical terms and conditions for reorganizing special districts and authorizing CSA 135 to provide structural fire protection and emergency medical services, terms and conditions will: (1) stipulate that levels of service in jurisdictions, which currently provide enhanced services, must be maintained; (2) require existing voter-approved special assessments to be restricted to funding programs within areas where assessments are levied and expended only for purposes directly related to activities authorized by voters; (3) retain existing EOA contracts and transfer administration to the regional agency; (4) transfer contracts between the County and 501(C)(3) corporations to the regional fire protection authority; (5) reassign district employees to the fire authority; (6) integrate volunteer fire company operations into regional operations; (7) establish a Regional Advisory Board and community advisory and fiscal oversight councils; and (8) require the regional fire authority to award contracts through a competitive process that encourages local agencies and volunteer companies to submit bids to provide services with local services.

Future updates will be prepared as the LAFCO sub-committee approves components of the conditionally approved reorganization. Please contact Shirley Anderson at (619) 531-5400 if you have questions concerning the status of this project.



MICHAEL OTT
Executive Officer



SHIRLEY ANDERSON
Chief, Policy Research

MDO:SA:tjc

Enclosure

Distribution list:

Local Agency Formation Commission; Fire Protection Agencies: Alpine FPD; Bonita-Sunnyside FPD; Borrego Springs FPD; Deer Springs FPD; East County FPD; Julian-Cuyamaca FPD; Lakeside FPD; Lower Sweetwater FPD; San Marcos FPD; North County FPD; Pine Valley FPD; Rancho Santa Fe FPD; San Diego Rural FPD; San Miguel Consolidated FPD; Valley Center FPD; Vista FPD; CSA 107 (Elfin Forest); CSA 109 (Mt. Laguna); CSA 110 (Palomar Mtn); CSA 111 (Boulevard); CSA 112 (Campo); CSA 113 (San Pasqual); CSA 115 (Pepper Drive); Mootamai MWD; Pauma MWD; Ramona MWD; Rincon del Diablo MWD; Yuima MWD **Volunteer Fire Companies:** De Luz Heights VFD; Inter-Mountain Fire-Rescue; Ocotillo Wells VFD; Ranchita Fire-Rescue; Shelter Valley VFD; Sunshine Summit VFD **LAFCO Reorganization Sub-Committee:** Supervisor Bill Horn; Supervisor Dianne Jacob; Commissioner Andrew Vanderlaan; Commissioner Andrew Menshek **County of San Diego:** Walter F. Ekard, CAO; Chandra L. Waller, Deputy CAO; Chantal Saipe, CAO Staff Officer; Eric Gibson, Acting Planning Director; Kenneth Miller, Fire Services Coordinator; Ralph Steinhoff, Fire Services Coordinator; Bruce Haynes, Emergency Medical Services Director; Rick Henson, CALFIRE Director; **Indian Reservation Fire Protection Districts:** Chief Chris Sandoval (Barona FPD); Chief Steven Curee (Campo Reservation FD); Chief Howard Mackey (Mesa Grande FD); Chief Anthony Ravago Sr. (Pala FD); Chief Ed McOrmond (Pechanga FD); Chief Jason Kneeling (San Pasqual FD); Chief Hank Murphy (Sycuan FD); Chief Wes Ruise, Jr. (La Jolla Station); Chief Wesley Ruise (Pauma Indian Res. VFD); Chief John Currier (Rincon Reservation); Chief David Osuna (Santa Ysabel Station); Chief Ben Scerato (Santa Ysabel Reservation); **Tribal Authorities:** Clifford M. La Chappa, Sr. (Barona Band of Mission Indians); H. Paul Cuero, Jr. (Campo Band of Mission Indians); Harlan Pinto, Sr. (Ewiaapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians); Rebecca Maxcy (Naja Band of Mission Indians); Leon Acebedo (Jamul Indian Village); Tracy Lee Nelson (La Jolla Band of Luiseno Indians); Leroy J. Elliott (Manzanita Band of the Kumeyaay Nation); Gwendolyn Parada (La Posta Band of Mission Indians); Catherine Saubel (Los Coyotes Band of Chauilla and Cupeno Indians); Christobal C. Devers, Sr. (Pauma Band of Luiseno Mission Indians of the Pauma & Yuima Reservation); Charlene Siford (Mesa Grande Band of Mission Indians); Robert Smith (Pala Band of Mission Indians); Johnny M. Hernandez (Santa Ysabel Band of Diegueno Indians); John Currier (Rincon San Luiseno Band of Mission Indians); Allen E. Lawson, Jr. (San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians); Daniel Tucker (Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation); Anthony Pico (Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians); **San Diego County Fire Chiefs' Association; San Diego County Fire Districts Association.**

