

County of Santa Clara

Office of the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
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Maria Marinos
Clerk of the Board

FILED

SEP 12 2011

DAVID H. YAMASAKI
Chief Executive Officer/Clerk,
Superior Court of CA County of Santa Clara
BY D. ALDYUKI

September 1, 2011

The Honorable Richard J. Loftus, Jr.
Presiding Judge
Santa Clara County Superior Court
191 North First Street
San Jose, CA 95113

RE: Grand Jury Report: Final Grand Jury Report: Fighting Fire or Fighting Change?
Rethinking Fire Department Response Protocol and Consolidation Opportunities

Dear Judge Loftus:

At the August 23, 2011 meeting of the County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors (Item No. 14), the Board adopted the responses from the County Administration to the Final Grand Jury Report and recommendations relating to Final Grand Jury Report: Fighting Fire or Fighting Change? Rethinking Fire Department Response Protocol and Consolidation Opportunities.

As directed by the Board of Supervisors and on behalf of the Board President, our office is forwarding to you the enclosed certified copy of the response to the Final Grand Jury Report with the cover memorandum from Mr. Graves. This response constitutes the response of the Board of Supervisors, consistent with provisions of California Penal Section 933(c).

If there are any questions concerning this issue, please contact our office at 299-5001 or by email at maria.marinos@cob.sccgov.org.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Maria Marinos".

MARIA MARINOS
Clerk, Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Clara

Enclosures

MM/mm

County of Santa Clara Office of the County Executive



CE03 082311

DATE: August 23, 2011

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM:

Gary A. Graves

Gary A. Graves
Chief Operating Officer

SUBJECT: Response to Santa Clara County Civil Grand Jury Report: Fighting Fire or Fighting Change? Rethinking Fire Department Response Protocol and Consolidation Opportunities.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Consider recommendations relating to Final Grand Jury Report relating to Fighting Fire or Fighting Change? Rethinking Fire Department Response Protocol and Consolidation Opportunities.

Possible action:

- a. Adopt response from Administration to Final Grand Jury Report relating to Fighting Fire or Fighting Change? Rethinking Fire Department Response Protocol and Consolidation Opportunities.

AND

- b. Authorize the Board President and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors to forward

department responses to Grand Jury report to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court with approval that responses constitute the response of the Board of Supervisors, consistent with provisions of California Penal Code Section 933 (c).

OR

- c. Adopt a separate or amended response to the Final Grand Jury Report relating to Fighting Fire or Fighting Change? Rethinking Fire Department Response Protocol and Consolidation Opportunities, and authorize the Board President and Clerk of the Board to forward response to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no fiscal implications associated with these Board actions.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

Attached is the Department responses to the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations enumerated in the Final Report, Fighting Fire or Fighting Change? Rethinking Fire Department Response Protocol and Consolidation Opportunities. The response has been completed pursuant to California Penal Code, Section 933 (c) and 933.05 (a).

Child Impact Statement

The recommended action will have no/neutral impact on children and youth.

BACKGROUND

The Grand Jury received complaints from taxpayers regarding the over-deployment of multiple firefighting apparatus in response to non-life-threatening medical emergencies; the Grand Jury explored possible changes to the delivery of fire services and has four findings with multiple recommendations to each finding to improve service, reduce costs and enable stations to remain open in spite of strained budgets.

The Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District's and the South Santa Clara County Fire District's responses are attached with their responses to the findings and recommendations to the Civil Grand Jury Report.

CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION

The County would not be in compliance with the law in responding to the Grand Jury's Final Report.

STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL

Following approval of the responses provided, forward all comments of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors to the Honorable Richard J. Loftus, Jr., Presiding Judge, Santa Clara County Superior Court on or before Friday, September 16, 2011.

ATTACHMENTS

- Santa Clara County Civil Grand Jury Final Report
- Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District's Response
- South Santa Clara County Fire District Response



**FIRE DEPARTMENT
SANTA CLARA COUNTY**



14700 Winchester Blvd., Los Gatos, CA 95032-1818
(408) 378-4010 • (408) 378-9342 (fax) • www.sccfd.org

July 28, 2011

Gary Graves, Chief Operating Officer
County Government Center
70 West Hedding Street, East Wing, 11th Floor
San Jose, CA 95110

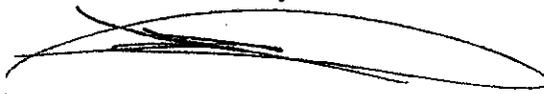
Dear Mr. Graves,

I am writing in response to your June 23, 2011 correspondence regarding the Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District's response to the Civil Grand Jury Report.

Attached you will find, as required by California Penal Code Section 933.05(a,b), the Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District's response to the Santa Clara County Civil Grand Jury's Final Report, "Fighting Fire or Fighting Change? Rethinking Fire Department Response Protocol and Consolidation Opportunities."

Should you have questions or concerns regarding the enclosed document, please feel free to call me at (408) 341-4411.

Sincerely,



Kenneth R. Kehmna
Fire Chief

KRK:jmt

Enclosure

CGJ_County Fire Response/jmt/07.28.11

Organized as the Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District

*Serving Santa Clara County and the communities of Campbell, Cupertino, Los Altos,
Los Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Morgan Hill, and Saratoga*

510 W 711 010

Adopted

Finding 1

It is extremely costly to equip a fire department for only the occasional fire response; the County and fifteen towns/cities have not been proactive in challenging fire departments to adopt changes that are more cost effective and that better serve their communities. Further, unions are more interested in job preservation than in providing the right mixture of capabilities at a reasonable cost, using scare tactics to influence the public and fostering firefighter unwillingness to collaborate with EMS.

The Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District wholly disagrees with the finding.

Since the early 1960's, the County and the fifteen towns/cities have been represented by their fire chiefs through membership in the Santa Clara County Fire Chiefs Association and its various subgroups. Since inception, the Association has worked to address a wide range of fire service issues to identify and implement changes that are more cost effective and better serve the needs of the communities throughout Santa Clara County.

Together, the fire chiefs develop and oversee programs dedicated to the continued improvement and welfare of Santa Clara County fire services to meet their stated goals and objectives. They provide a review of legislative developments and, as appropriate, provide input through their elected representatives and professional affiliations.

They serve as the executive advisory body to the Mission College Fire Science program, work with the Santa Clara County Emergency Medical Care Committee, and support and encourage uniformity in training, delivery of service, fire and hazardous materials codes and ordinances, and operational policies and practices.

They function as a chapter of California Fire Chiefs Association and elect a Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Coordinator to manage the provision of local and statewide mutual aid on behalf of all of the fire agencies in Santa Clara County.

The Association has been instrumental in the creation and continued support of specialized regional teams for response to hazardous materials incidents, technical rescues and potential terrorist attacks. The Association created and continues support of a regional incident management/support team comprised of chief officers from nearly every agency and discipline in Santa Clara County. Through its various subgroups, the Association has overseen the development of regional training opportunities for recruit firefighters, company officers and a variety of specialized positions. Most recently, the Association played a critical role in the implementation of the County's emergency medical services contract.

Accepted

While each agency and fire chief enjoy a different relationship with their labor organizations, the Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District continues to have a cooperative and collaborative relationship with Local 1165. The District's senior staff meets regularly with the union's executive board to address issues, clarify language, and propose changes to the District's Rules, Regulations and Policies. This process has been key to ensuring that issues are addressed at the earliest possible time, minimizing impacts to the District and our personnel.

Recommendation 1A

All cities that manage their own fire department—Gilroy, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale—and the County (for CCFD and SCFD) should benchmark and observe best practices from communities that have demonstrated successful changes in response protocol and consolidation efforts, such as in San Mateo County, CA; West Jordan, UT; or Scottsdale, Arizona.

The Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District has implemented the recommended action.

In 2005, the Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District became an accredited agency through the Commission on Fire Accreditation International. In July 2010, the agency was reaccredited after demonstrating continuous improvement in the quality of the fire service delivery system and the community's emergency services.

Accreditation is attained through a comprehensive self-assessment and evaluation model that enables fire and emergency service organizations to examine past, current, and future service levels and performance and compare them to industry best practices. This process leads to improved service delivery by helping fire departments:

- *Determine community risk and safety needs.*
- *Evaluate the performance of the department.*
- *Establish a method for achieving continuous organizational improvement.*

Recommendation 1B

All fifteen towns/cities—Campbell, Cupertino, Gilroy, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Morgan Hill, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Saratoga, Sunnyvale—and the County (for CCFD and SCFD) should determine the emergency response service they want to achieve, particularly as to the result, then determine how best to achieve that.

The Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District has implemented the recommended action.

As a fundamental component of the accreditation process, the Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District completed a Standards of Response Coverage.

Adopted

The Standards of Response Coverage serves as an Integrated Risk Management Plan providing a comprehensive deployment analysis, which determines the distribution and concentration of fixed and mobile resources of an organization. The document assists the agency in ensuring a safe and effective response force for fire suppression, emergency medical services and specialty response situations in addition to homeland security issues.

Creating Standards of Response Coverage requires a number of areas be researched, studied and evaluated. The report provides an overview of both the community and the agency. Following this overview, the document addresses areas such as risk assessment, critical task analysis, agency service level objectives and distribution and concentration measures. Both qualitative and quantitative assessment is displayed through reliability studies and historical performance through charts and graphs. The report concludes with policy recommendations.

Recommendation 1C

All cities that manage their own fire department—Gilroy, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale—and the County (for CCFD and SCFD) should collaborate with their fire department, union and political leadership to drive fire department change and develop consistent, joint communications messages for the public.

The Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District has implemented the recommended action.

In January 2010, the Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District, in preparation for reaccreditation through the Commission on Fire Accreditation International, facilitated a Community-Driven Strategic Planning Process resulting in a strategic plan that outlines the Department's Mission, Values, Critical Issues and Service Gaps of SCCFD. In addition, the identification of internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats, was accomplished. Goals and objectives to meet the needs as identified by the various stakeholder groups were developed and adopted as part of the 2010-2014 Strategic Plan.

Goal: Improve external and internal communications.

Objective A: Improve communications within the Department.

Objective B: Improve communications with our cognate government partners.

Objective C: Improve non-emergency communications with the public.

Finding 2

Based on SCC's fluctuating demand for emergency services, contractually based minimum staffing requirements are not warranted and hinder fire chiefs in effectively managing firefighter staffing to meet time of day, day of week, season of year demand. This wastes money and may drive station closure as budgets continue to erode.

Adopted

The Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District agrees with the finding.

The Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District deploys apparatus and personnel based upon the need for service and upon the Standards of Response Coverage. This document provides a comprehensive analysis of response resources, deployment strategies, operational elements and overall community. It establishes response time baselines for measuring the effectiveness of resources within the department and the deployment of those resources.

Analysis of Community Risk

A comprehensive analysis of risk factors specific to the communities served by the Santa Clara County Fire Department, including the physical attributes of the structures and facilities, the topography, transportation systems, water supply and geographical area served, was conducted to determine overall community risk levels.

Performance Standards

Response times for emergency incidents remain the key performance measurement for fire agencies. Total response times (known as response intervals) include two critical components: turnout times and travel times. Based upon the measurement and analysis of total response times and community risk levels, the Department has established response time baselines that indicate levels of service that can be expected by members of the community.

Compliance Methodology

The baselines established by the Department are evaluated on a regular basis by the Department on an overall basis and by each community served, typically in the form of a "report card" that is sent to the elected officials of the communities served on a monthly or quarterly basis, depending on their preference. These report cards provide information on a number of items, including the number of responses, types of responses, and how well the Department is meeting its pre-established baselines.

An annual report card is also produced and distributed.

Lastly, to ensure the Department baselines are being met and to determine what, if any, changes or modifications need to be made to this Standards of Cover Document, a recommendation has been made to Senior Staff to assign a Standards of Cover team (or manager) to evaluate and monitor baseline progress throughout the year, and recommend any necessary Policy or Operational changes.

Upon completion of the most recent Standards of Cover, it was determined that the Department has high overall performance ability. However, areas of improvement were identified and recommendations have been made relative to distribution, concentration of companies and the establishment of an effective firefighting force.

Adopted

Recommendation 2

All cities that manage their own fire department—Gilroy, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale—and the County (for CCFD and SCFD) and that also have contractual minimum staffing requirements should reopen negotiations with the unions to eliminate this term and any other term that limits a fire chief's ability to "right-size" staffing given the time of day or time of year.

This recommendation is not relevant to the Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District.

Minimum staffing requirements are not a component of the Memorandum of Agreement between The Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District and The International Association of Firefighters Local 1165.

Finding 3

Whether the emergency responder is a firefighter-paramedic or an EMS paramedic matters little to the person with the medical emergency; using firefighter-paramedics in firefighting equipment as first responders to all non-police emergencies is unnecessarily costly when less expensive paramedics on ambulances possess the skills needed to address the 96% of calls that are not fire related.

The Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District partially disagrees with the finding.

This finding lacks sufficient detail to fully address the issue to which it refers.

Table 2 in the Grand Jury report indicates that approximately 4% of calls are for fires, 70% of calls are for emergency medical service, and 26% of calls are for "Other" – a classification that includes rescues, hazardous materials responses, alarm activations, and a number of other types of calls for service. The assertion that "less expensive paramedics on ambulances possess the skills needed to address the 96% of calls that are not fire related" does not stand up to scrutiny. Paramedics on ambulances would not possess the skills, nor the equipment, to deal with the 26% of calls involving technical rescues, hazardous materials releases, or even fire alarm activations. Further, an undetermined percentage of medical emergencies would not have their emergency medical needs met by paramedics on ambulances due to the need for additional personnel for patient treatment while on scene, patient treatment while en-route to a hospital, victim extrication, patient packaging and loading.

Approximately 70% of calls answered by fire agencies involve medical emergencies. Single-role paramedics on ambulances may possess the skills needed to address some undetermined percentage of those calls.

To properly address the issue, one must weigh several factors and consider costs of any given service against the operational benefits.

Adopted

The cost effectiveness and operational efficiency of an emergency medical system which relies solely upon paramedics assigned to ambulances serving all of Santa Clara County would require a substantial amount of study.

Recommendation 3A

All fifteen towns/cities—Campbell, Cupertino, Gilroy, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Morgan Hill, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Saratoga, Sunnyvale—and the County (for CCFD and SCFD) should adopt an emergency services department mentality and staff or contract accordingly to meet demand.

The Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District has implemented the recommended action.

Though utilizing the historical nomenclature of the traditional fire department, the Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District has never been a single service, fire only provider. Since formation in 1947, a range of services, including emergency medical services has been provided. Today, the Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District is an all-risk emergency services organization providing fire suppression, basic and advanced rescue, advanced life support first response medical services, hazardous materials and technical rescue response, fire inspection, fire investigation, disaster preparedness and public education to the communities served. This mentality is evident in the organization's stated Mission, Vision, Values and Goals. Moreover, the Fire District is staffed in a manner consistent with these guiding principles in mind.

Recommendation 3B

The County should modify its approach to mandating (through direct contract or through the EMS provider contract) that fire departments serve as first-responder, reserve the use of firefighting vehicles for fire events, and enable the EMS contractor to be first-responder.

The recommended action requires further analysis.

The cost effectiveness and operational efficiency of an emergency medical system which relies solely upon paramedics assigned to ambulances serving all of Santa Clara County would require a substantial amount of study.

Recommendation 3C

In consideration of non-fire emergencies, all cities that manage their own fire department—Gilroy, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale—and the County (for CCFD and SCFD) should modify fire department protocols to authorize, incorporate and use less expensive non-firefighter paramedics and non-firefighting equipment.

Adopted

The recommended action requires further analysis.

The Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District deploys apparatus and personnel based upon the need for service and upon the Standards of Response Coverage. This document provides a comprehensive analysis of response resources, deployment strategies, operational elements and overall community. It establishes response time baselines for measuring the effectiveness of resources within the department and the deployment of those resources.

This recommendation appears to assume that fewer firefighters and less firefighting equipment would be needed if firefighters didn't respond to non-fire emergencies. This conclusion is not supported by the analysis in the Standard of Coverage.

Recommendation 3D

All cities that manage their own fire department—Gilroy, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale—and the County (for CCFD and SCFD) should consider ways to extend the service life of expensive firefighting vehicles by augmenting with ambulance vehicles—either newly purchased as fire apparatus is replaced or in collaboration with the County EMS provider.

The recommended action requires further analysis.

Further study is necessary to determine if the deployment of an additional vehicle to selected fire companies would be cost beneficial. Ambulance vehicles would be appropriate only if it were anticipated that patients would be transported, a decision that is within the control of the County Emergency Medical Services Agency. If patients are not to be transported, the use of other types of non-firefighting utility vehicles might be appropriate for response to some types of calls to reduce wear and tear on fire apparatus, thus extending service life. The cost of purchase, maintenance and replacement of such utility vehicles must be weighed against the costs avoided by extending the service life of a particular piece of fire apparatus by specific number of years.

Finding 4

Emergency callers care less about seeing their city/town name on the equipment door than receiving timely assistance when needed, and a wide variety of consolidation opportunities offer cities ways to deliver emergency response services at a reduced cost and without compromising service response times.

The Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District agrees with the finding.

The Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District exists today because of a consolidation in 1947 of the Cottage Grove Fire District and the Oakmead Farms Fire District. In 1970, the Department consolidated with the Burbank Fire District and the Alma Fire District and contracted with the Town of Los Gatos for fire protection services. The contract for service model was expanded in 1993, 1995, again in 1996 and, most recently, in 2008. Communities currently served by County Fire include Campbell, Cupertino,

Adopted

Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Morgan Hill, Saratoga, and contiguous unincorporated areas. The Department also administers fire prevention contracts with the County for the County Fire Marshal's Office and Stanford University.

The growth of the organization has been born out of a belief that there is an inherent value in regional service delivery. The District embraces a non-traditional enterprise philosophy. New markets, consolidations, contracts, customer services, regional approaches and public/private partnerships are all strategies employed to enhance fire protection services.

Recommendation 4A

All cities that manage their own fire department—Gilroy, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale—and the County (for CCFD and SCFD) should evaluate and implement cost-saving consolidations, including administration consolidation, boundary drop, department or regional consolidation, purchasing, personnel training and equipment maintenance.

The recommended action requires further analysis.

At the direction of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, the Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District is currently working with the Santa Clara County Executive's Office, the Santa Clara County Fire Chiefs Association, the Santa Clara County City Managers Association and the labor organizations representing firefighters from throughout Santa Clara County to complete a cost/benefit analysis for consolidation of all fire service delivery in Santa Clara County.

The study will explore a range of opportunities to improve operational efficiency and cost effectiveness of fire service delivery throughout Santa Clara County. The study will look at consolidation of services, contracts for service with other agencies, impacts of employee costs (health, pension, etc), placement of stations and apparatus, automatic aid, boundary drops, regional communications, fire-based advance life support, fire prevention, apparatus purchasing and maintenance, equipment purchasing and maintenance, public education and emergency preparedness.

The study will take place in several phases:

- 1. Identify opportunities to improve operational efficiency and cost effectiveness of fire service delivery throughout Santa Clara County.*
- 2. Evaluate and prioritize identified opportunities.*
- 3. Perform a cost/benefit analysis on those opportunities identified as having the greatest potential impact and possibility for success.*

A report is due to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors in November 2011.

Adopted

Recommendation 4B

All cities that manage their own fire department—Gilroy, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale—and the County (for CCFD and SCFD) should consider adopting a vehicle fleet management approach by establishing a county-wide standard for vehicles and equipment, consolidating purchases to take advantage of lowered costs, and consolidating maintenance or revisiting guaranteed maintenance contracts on new vehicle purchases.

The recommended action requires further analysis.

At the direction of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors the Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District is currently working with the County Executive's Office, the Santa Clara County Fire Chief's Association, the Santa Clara County City Managers Association and the labor organizations representing firefighters from throughout Santa Clara County to complete a cost benefit analysis for consolidation of all fire service delivery in Santa Clara County.

The study will explore a range of opportunities to improve operational efficiency and cost effectiveness of fire service delivery throughout Santa Clara County. The study will look at consolidation of services, contracts for service with other agencies, impacts of employee costs (health, pension, etc), placement of stations and apparatus, automatic aid, boundary drops, regional communications, fire based advance life support, fire prevention, apparatus purchasing and maintenance, equipment purchasing and maintenance, public education and emergency preparedness.

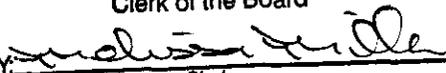
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- 2. Evaluate and prioritize identified opportunities.*
- 3. Perform a cost/benefit analysis on those opportunities identified as having the greatest potential impact and possibility for success.*

A report is due to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors in November 2011.

The foregoing instrument is a correct copy
of the original.

ATTEST: Maria Marinos
Clerk of the Board

BY: 
Deputy Clerk

Date: AUG 23 2011

Adopted



South Santa Clara County Fire District

15670 Monterey Street Morgan Hill, CA 95037 • (408) 779-2121 • www.sccfd.com
Steven F. Woodill, Fire Chief

July 26, 2011

TO: Gary Graves, Chief Operating Officer

FROM: Steven F. Woodill, Fire Chief
South Santa Clara County Fire District

SUBJECT: Santa Clara County Civil Grant Jury Report, "Fighting Fire or Fighting Change?
Rethinking Fire Department Response Protocol and Consolidation Opportunities"

This memo responds to the finding and recommendations in the Santa Clara County Civil Grand Jury Report, dated June 9, 2011, subject as above.

Overview

The Grand Jury appears to have only a partial understanding of the District's service delivery model and its efficiencies through its cooperative agreement with CALFIRE. Through its contract with CALFIRE, the District avails itself of an already existing fire administration, HR/labor relations services, legal services, dispatch/communications facilities, fleet management/repair facilities, mass purchasing opportunities, and the State's training facilities and programs. All these CALFIRE elements would continue to exist even without the SSCCFD contract. The level of service delivered by the District to its constituent population is a product of its available revenue stream, advice from CALFIRE administrative staff based on NFPA recommendations and ISO requirements, District Board of Commissioners input and examination, and District Board of Directors (the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors) final budget approval. While CALFIRE management and labor work collaboratively, labor has no contractual influence over the District's level of service.

A substantial portion of the Grand Jury Report is critical of the Fire Service role in EMS response within the County. There are two examples of errors contained within the submitted report as it applies to the SSCCFD. Both on page 6 paragraph 5 and page 10 paragraph 5, the report states that only 1 in 3 fire crew members are trained to respond to medical situations. This is incorrect. All personnel assigned to the District, are trained to at least Emergency Medical Technician I (EMT I) levels and thus are capable of responding to medical situations and rendering aid to the patient to that level of training. All four District engines are staffed with 2 EMT I's and one Paramedic. The second error contained in the report is on page 8 paragraph 3 that infers the County EMSA is requiring firefighters to be first responders. In the case of the SSCCFD this is factually incorrect. In 1998 the SSCCFD Commissioners and Board of Directors made a policy decision to provide engine based ALS (paramedic) services in South County. Such service began in 1999. This was and is not required by either the EMSA or the current or past ALS transport providers, but rather a citizen based decision through the SSCCFD Commissioners. The SSCCFD could just as easily opt out of this system and provide engine based BLS (Basic Life Support) if the District Commissioners' made such a recommendation and it was approved by the Board of Directors (BOS). The District's ALS program has been very successful in saving lives and minimizing injuries in the large suburban and rural settings in the District that stretch from Highway 152 Pacheco Pass to the Coyote Valley.

Adopted

Finally, the report uses various sources to create Table 1: Cost of Fire Service to SCC Towns and Cities (pg 2) and Table 4: Agency Costs comparison (pg 12.). A more accurate and representative example for comparison may be found in the 2010 LAFCO Fire Services report on page 139 Table 86 titled Cost Factors For Provider Agencies. (See Attachment)

Response to Findings and Recommendations

Finding 1: It is extremely costly to equip a fire department for only the occasional fire response; the County and fifteen towns/cities have not been proactive in challenging fire departments to adopt changes that are most cost effective and that better serve their communities. Further, unions are more interested in job preservation than in providing the right mix of capabilities at a reasonable cost, using scare tactics to influence the public and fostering firefighter unwillingness to collaborate with EMS.

Response: The South Santa Clara County Fire District was formed in 1980 with CALFIRE as its service provider. The District has used existing CALFIRE administration, facilities, training programs/facilities, and dispatch/communications facilities to achieve cost efficiencies. The SSCCFD covers an area of 260 square miles with a resident population of approximately 25,000 people. Apparatus are equipped to deal with wildland fires, structure fires, vehicle fires, hazardous materials incidents, auto-extrication, and other rescue calls over a large rural and suburban area. As with any progressive public or private employer, CALFIRE, uses its employees' knowledge and experience to develop innovative and efficient Fire/Rescue/EMS delivery methods. A more representative analysis of costs associated with service delivery may be found in the 2010 LAFCO report on page 139 Table 86.

Recommendation 1A: All cities that manage their own fire department – Gilroy, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale – and the County (for CCFD and SCFD) should benchmark and observe best practices from communities that have demonstrated successful changes in response protocol and consolidation efforts, such as in San Mateo County, CA; West Jordan, UT; or Scottsdale, Arizona.

Response: The SSCCFD along with the cities of Morgan Hill and Gilroy have long been engaged in talks of regionalization in the South County Area. The District continually reviews response level appropriateness based on the relative scarcity of emergency resources located in South County when compared to the rest of the County.

Recommendation 1B: All fifteen towns/ cities – Campbell, Cupertino, Gilroy, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Morgan Hill, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Saratoga, Sunnyvale – and the County (for CCFD and SCFD) should determine the emergency response service they want to achieve, particularly as to the result, then determine how best to achieve that.

Response: The SSCCFD agrees and has identified service delivery standards using NFPA, ISO, and County EMSA performance guidelines that have been adopted as District policy.

Recommendation 1C: All cities that manage their own fire department – Gilroy, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale – and the County (for CCFD and SCFD) should collaborate with their fire department, union and political leadership to drive fire department change and develop consistent, joint communications messages for the public.

Response: The District agrees with this statement

Finding 2: Based on SCC's fluctuating demand for emergency services, contractually based minimum staffing requirements are not warranted and hinder fire chiefs in effectively managing firefighter staffing to meet time of day, day of week, season of year demand. This wastes money and may drive station closure as budgets continue to erode.

Response: The District's staffing levels are set by District Policy with consideration of available revenue and standard safe practice. There are no contractually mandated minimum staffing levels.

Recommendation 1: All cities that manage their own fire department – Gilroy, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale – and the County (for

Cooperative Fire Protection Provided by CAL FIRE

Adopted

CCFD and SCFD) and that also have contractual minimum staffing requirements should reopen negotiations with the unions to eliminate this term and any other term that limits a fire chief's ability to "right-size" staffing given the time of day or time of year.

Response: The District (CALFIRE employees) does not have mandated contractual staffing levels.

Finding 3: Whether the emergency responder is a firefighter-paramedic or an EMS paramedic matters little to the person with the medical emergency; using firefighter-paramedics in firefighting equipment as first responders to all non-police emergencies is unnecessarily costly when less expensive paramedics on ambulances possess the skills needed to address the 96% of calls that are not fire related.

Response: District Fire Administration staff is unaware of any supporting data or examples of currently operating emergency service delivery systems where only ambulance based personnel respond to 96% of non-police emergencies.

Recommendation 3B: All fifteen towns/ cities – Campbell, Cupertino, Gilroy, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Morgan Hill, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Saratoga, Sunnyvale – and the County (for CCFD and SCFD) should adopt an emergency services department mentality and staff or contract accordingly to meet demand.

Response: The District is not clear on the meaning of this recommendation.

Recommendation 3B: The County should modify its approach to mandating (through direct contract or through the EMS provider contract) that fire departments serve as first-responder, reserve the use of firefighting vehicles for fire events, and enable the EMS contractor to be first responder.

Response: The District is not nor ever has been mandated to serve as a First Responder or participate in the engine based ALS program under contract with either the County EMSA or EMS contractor.

Recommendation 3C: In consideration of non-fire emergencies, all cities that manage their own fire department – Gilroy, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale – and the County (for CCFD and SCFD) should modify fire department protocols to authorize, incorporate and use less expensive non-firefighter paramedics and non-firefighting equipment.

Response: The District through its Commissioner's recommendation and approval by its Directors (the Santa Clara BOS) established its engine-based ALS program in 1999. This decision was primarily based on the 260 square mile size of the District and the relative scarcity of emergency resources available in the rural/suburban areas of South County compared to more urbanized areas of the County.

Recommendation 3D: All cities that manage their own fire department – Gilroy, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale – and the County (for CCFD and SCFD) should consider ways to extend the service life of expensive firefighting vehicles by augmenting with ambulance vehicles – either newly purchased as fire apparatus is replaced or in collaboration with the county EMS provider.

Response: Considering the 260 square miles covered by the District's 4 engines located at four stations, we do not see this as a viable alternative. Fire engine service life in the District is 15 years for front line service with an additional 5-7 years as a second line reserve.

Finding 4: Emergency callers care less about seeing their city/town name on the equipment door than receiving timely assistance when needed, and a wide variety of consolidation opportunities offer cities ways to deliver emergency response services at a reduced cost and without compromising service response times.

Adopted

Response: The District has long been involved in regional service delivery discussions in South County and has fully executed written automatic aid agreements with service providers in Gilroy and Morgan Hill. All three service providers participate in a shared Battalion Chief response agreement. While there are as yet no written boundary drop agreements, due to available resources, the South County area is virtually fire service boundary free by practice.

Recommendation 4A: All cities that manage their own fire department – Gilroy, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale – and the County (for CCFD and SCFD) should evaluate and implement cost-saving consolidations, including administration consolidation, boundary drop, department or regional consolidation, purchasing, personnel training and equipment maintenance.

Response: The District has achieved such cost-savings through its contract with CALFIRE by utilizing existing fire administration, dispatch/communications facilities, State mass purchase opportunities, equipment maintenance personnel and facilities, personnel training, HR services, existing State owned fire stations, and labor negotiation/relations/legal services.

The District also will use local mass purchase opportunities within the County where applicable. The District is a member of the SVRIA. CAL FIRE directly dispatches all District personnel and equipment. In June 2011 the CAL FIRE Dispatch Center in Morgan Hill and County Communications established a direct CAD to CAD link which is currently in Beta test. Eventually real time status and direct dispatch opportunities will be possible which will assist in developing true boundary drop responses.

Recommendations 4B: All cities that manage their own fire department – Gilroy, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale – and the County (for CCFD and SCFD) should consider adopting a vehicle fleet management approach by establishing a county-wide standard for vehicles and equipment, consolidating purchases to take advantage of lowered costs, and consolidating maintenance or revisiting guaranteed maintenance contracts on new vehicle purchases.

Response: The District currently takes advantage of many of these recommendations through its relationship with CALFIRE. The District is receptive to other local opportunities. District staff support continual improvements in standardization.

Sincerely,

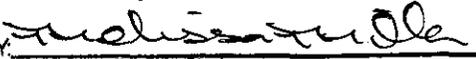


Steven F. Woodill
Fire Chief
South Santa Clara County Fire District

Attachment: Table 86 Cost Factors for Provider Agencies

The foregoing instrument is a correct copy
of the original.

ATTEST: Maria Marinos
Clerk of the Board

BY: 
Deputy Clerk

Date: AUG 23 2011

Adopted

Table 86: Cost Factors for Provider Agencies

Agency	2009 Revenue	2009 Expenditures	Number of Stations	Number of Firefighters	Number of Apparatus	Apparatus Description	Number of Engines	Capita	Daily Staffed Apparatus	Three Person Company Equivalents	Sworn Personnel	Ratio
Gilroy	49,800	56,832,205	3	36	3	3 apparatus with 3 person crews	3	\$137	\$2,177,402	\$2,277,402	\$189,783	0.72
Milpitas	60,000	\$12,258,554	4	63	4	4 apparatus with 3 person crews 1 apparatus with 4 2 person crew 1 apparatus with 1 person crew	5	\$178	\$2,043,092	\$2,451,711	\$194,580	0.91
Mountain View	72,100	516,445,640	5	70	7	1 apparatus with 2 person crew 6 apparatus with 3 person crews	7	\$228	\$2,349,377	\$2,349,377	\$234,938	0.97
Palo Alto	77,779	\$18,999,463	5	105	10.5 ¹	9 apparatus with 3 person crews 2.5 apparatus with 2 person crews	10.1	\$244	\$1,805,663	\$1,877,175	\$180,565	1.33
San Jose	1,037,567	3126,926,383	34	630	52	3 apparatus with 5 person crews 26 apparatus with 4 person crews 7 apparatus with 3 person crews 16 apparatus with 2 person crews	57.3	\$122	\$2,440,892	\$2,215,128	\$201,470	0.61
Santa Clara	114,700	\$26,791,827	10	146	13	3 apparatus with 2 person crews 7 apparatus with 3 person crews 3 apparatus with 4 person crews	13	\$234	\$2,060,910	\$2,060,910	\$181,026	1.29
CCFD	240,789	\$53,893,046	17	247	21	14 apparatus with 3 person crews 5 apparatus with 4 person crews	23	\$224	\$2,566,336	\$2,843,176	\$218,190	1.03
BCFD ²	24,533	\$3,469,170	4	29.75	4	4 apparatus with 3 person crews	4	\$141	\$864,793	\$864,793	\$116,273	1.21
Sunnyvale ³	135,200	\$12,977,192	6	82	12	12 apparatus with 2 person crews	0	\$170	\$1,914,766	\$2,872,149	\$280,210	0.61

Source: Fire agency data provided to Management Partners.

¹ ABAG Projections 2009 was used for city populations. District populations were developed by LAFCO using ABAG and other data. The population figure for the City of San Jose includes areas in the CCFD served by the SJFD through contract. The population for the CCFD includes the district population less areas served by SJFD and includes the contract cities and contract districts. Palo Alto population includes Stanford.

² Reflects the portion of the departments' budgets for emergency response operations inclusive of compensation, overtime, services and supplies and capital outlay. Does not include administration and prevention costs.

³ Reflects sworn personnel assigned to emergency response operations

⁴ Includes Truck, Engine, Rescue, Transport

⁵ Reflects the number of personnel assigned to each apparatus daily

⁶ Converts the number of sworn staffing on all apparatus into a 3-person company equivalent

⁷ The PAFD staffs 10 companies daily on 24 hour shifts. One transport company is staffed on a 12 hour shift. For four months of the year, an additional engine is staffed on a 24 hour shift.

⁸ A portion of one engine company is paid for by the State of California

⁹ The City of Sunnyvale employs a Department of Public Safety which provides emergency response through personnel assigned to fire apparatus and other personnel provide police patrol. The uniqueness of this approach make comparisons with traditionally organized fire departments difficult

Management Partners, Inc.

Information Provided by CAL FIRE

Adopted