

## CHAPTER 0340 – FIRE PROTECTION POLICIES

### FIRE PROTECTION OBJECTIVES

0341

The Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, ( Board) recognizes that the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's (Department) primary fire protection responsibilities are those lands declared by the Board to be State Responsibility Areas, according to the criteria of Sections 4125-4128 of the Public Resources Code. These lands are a major source of wood, water, forage, wildlife, biological diversity, open space, recreation, and other values to the people of California. The broad public concern with wildland fires, requires that the protection of all wildland resources be considered as a state and federal responsibility. This national interest has been recognized by the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (PL 95-313) and other Federal legislation

California's expanding, highly mobile population is exerting tremendous pressure and impacts on the State's wildland resources. People are demanding more products and more space for living, working and recreating. This demand on the State's limited natural resources is growing, while the land base from which these resources are derived is declining. This decline is largely due to continuing urban and agricultural encroachments linked to California's expanding population. Protection of the basic wildland resource is thus a critical and most viable option to help meet these growing demands for the benefits which these lands provide.

Although California's wildlands once had a regime of natural fires, gross alteration of vegetation and fuel conditions coupled with an increase in population, has virtually eliminated the natural fire disturbance regime statewide. Also, with increased population pressure, more Californians are moving to wildland areas each year, resulting in an increase in structural and vegetation fire problems. As a result, fires that once burned as part of the natural process now become life-threatening catastrophes. In California's wildland State Responsibility Areas, people cause over 95% of the fires and CDF's workforce responds to over 7,500 wildfire incidents each year.

Adequate fire protection must be provided if the resource values of these lands are to be maintained now and in the future. Adequate protection is that intensity of fire protection which will, through the application of balanced and coordinated fire prevention, fire management, fire control, fire environment modification, and other fire defense efforts, hold fire damage below that level which would threaten life or seriously impair natural resource benefits, the expected yield of forest products, or other improvements upon these lands.

Adequate fire protection requires the effective coordination of state, local and federal firefighting resources to quickly suppress wildfires while small and hold resource damage to a minimum. Firefighting forces must have sufficient flexibility and depth to simultaneously combat multiple large and damaging wildfires.

Local government has the responsibility to provide fire protection in Local Responsibility Areas (LRA) and may provide structural and supplemental wildland fire protection in State Responsibility Areas (SRA). Structural fires, however, often represent threats to spread fire to wildland resources. Consequently, the prevention and control of structural

fires where they threaten wildland resources are important components of the statewide fire protection system.

The Board finds that the public interest in resource protection is best served by a centrally directed, statewide fire protection system. This system should be highly mobile, flexible and contain specialized personnel and equipment. It should be unrestricted by administrative or political boundaries which would impede suppression of single or multiple large wildland fires or other natural disasters. The Board further finds that the fire protection system shall provide for statewide command, control, and communication systems that are vital to quick, effective response to natural disasters. The Board also finds that the State is best served by having a central training facility to provide training for all departmental fire personnel to allow them to respond effectively and consistently to varying situations throughout the State.

Finally, the Board finds that the statewide fire protection system is most efficient and cost-effective when it is coordinated and integrated with local government and federal fire protection systems to protect life, property, and other fire protection requirements of mutual concern.

(Amended 1-8-03)

FIRE PROTECTION PROGRAMS AND POLICIES 0342

FIRE CONTROL OPERATIONS 0342.1

In its concern for fire control cooperation and effectiveness, the Board has adopted the following policies:

- A. Unit operational fire control plans and emergency resource directories will be prepared and reviewed annually to ensure fire control preparedness and cooperation. Such plans should inventory all fire service and private industry firefighting resources and establish means of liaison, contact, and whenever possible, utilization. Detection cooperation, initial attack and mutual aid agreements, move-up systems, and availability of other local resources of personnel, equipment, goods and services shall be included in the plan. Such plans provide for the assemblage of maximum capability when needed, and ensure, within legal and financial constraints, that the nearest available force responds to a fire, regardless of organization or boundary. Cross-communications and linkages among agencies shall be accomplished for dispatch and fire control liaison.
- B. Fire control supervisors shall become personally familiar with their respective areas of fire protection responsibility and plan accordingly for fire control needs. Plans shall provide for cooperation with landowners and adjacent agencies to meet fire defense needs. Pre-attack planning to provide fire managers with necessary information for planning fire strategy, locating fire control lines and locating available suppression forces for fast, effective and efficient perimeter control action is recommended. Pre-attack planning with cooperating agencies for life and property protection and evacuation also is recommended, if necessary.
- C. The Department, its officers, employees and contractual agents, will make direct, immediate and aggressive continuing attack on all unwanted fires originating upon or threatening State Responsibility Areas with sufficient strength to ensure rapid control. Whenever possible, the landowners should be notified of any fire burning upon their lands.

- D. On all fires, command and suppression responsibilities must be clearly delineated within and between agencies. Appropriate command posts shall be established with adequate communications to ensure liaison between agencies and with other responsible parties. When control lines have been established completely around the perimeter of any given fire, the Director, or representative fire officer may turn over patrol activity to the landowner or his agent under the supervision of a DEPARTMENT representative.
- E. When lands of industry are involved in a fire, maximum use shall be made of industry capability to aid fire control forces in suppression, scouting, support services, and performance of other functions for which its personnel may be best qualified. Industry liaison shall be established and kept informed regarding fire control operations upon or affecting its lands.
- F. Immediate review of fire control action while personnel are readily available and incidents are still fresh in mind is recommended. Private industry should participate, if involved.
- G. Continuous training in fire control methods and techniques is essential. Industry and cooperating agency participation is encouraged at local training meetings so their personnel understand problems, methods and techniques. Department recruitment and training should meet the needs of physical and professional competence required of the various fire line assignments. Advanced levels of training should be established which meet the need for fire control specialists and recognize the complexities and importance of the fire control problem.

(Sections A-D and G amended 1-8-03)

## STATE RESPONSIBILITY AREA

0342.2

Pursuant to PRC Section 4125, et seq., the Board shall classify all lands within the State for the purpose of determining areas in which the financial responsibility of preventing and suppressing wildland fires is primarily the responsibility of the State. The policy and procedures for classification of State Responsibility Areas are contained in 14 CCR 1220-1220.5.

- A. In the State Responsibility Area, fire suppression objectives are to provide aggressive initial attack on all wildfires to hold resource losses to a minimum. In addition, whenever reasonably possible, landowners should be notified of any fire burning on their land so they may take appropriate action to protect their interests.
- B. Fire protection responsibility for timber, brush, and grass-covered lands, established as State Responsibility Area within any special district, shall remain that of the State, and the special district will retain fire protection responsibility for structures in the area. In areas served by local fire protection entities, the State will respond to any reported structure, vehicle or improvement fire within the State Responsibility Area that threatens the destruction of the natural resources, under the authority of Public Resources Code 4170, where in an "Uncontrolled Fire", must be summarily abated as a hazard to the natural resources. The State may also respond to requests from local government for mutual aid or through automatic aid/closest resource agreements.
- C. The Board reaffirms the principles embodied in the Emergency Services Act, that in declared emergencies, the full resources of the State and its contractual agents shall

be utilized, together with federal and local forces, to control the fire and to mitigate the loss of life and property.

- D. When a wildland fire is encroaching on structures within the State Responsibility Area, the Department will manage that fire to minimize the adverse impacts on life and property, as well as the natural resources. The Department will respond to incidents within other jurisdictions when, in the judgment of the Department, the incident represents a substantial threat to the natural resources to be protected on State Responsibility Area.
- E. In State Responsibility Areas not served by local government fire protection entities, the Department may respond and commit State resources, under the authority of Public Resources Code 4103 or 4170, for a structure, vehicle or other improvement fire that is a potential wildland fire and a hazard to the natural resources. In these areas where the public recognizes the State as a fire department "in being" and expects the Department to respond as a fire department, the Department shall inform the public that the landowner has and retains the primary responsibility to provide structural fire protection.
- F. Good cooperation, communication, and coordination are necessary because of the overlapping responsibilities of the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and local fire protection entities. Reasonable attention should be given to all persons who may be directly affected by the Department's recommendations.

(Amended 1-8-03)

## COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL OPERATION AREAS

0342.3

The Board recognizes that commercial and industrial operations like all human activities can increase fire risk on wildlands. Commercial and industrial operations also create great opportunities for fire prevention, fire management, fire environment modification, and other fire defense efforts. The Department will cooperate with commercial and industrial landowners and operators to support these activities. In view of these opportunities and risks, commercial and industrial operators must recognize their responsibility to actively and aggressively participate in preventing and suppressing fires upon their operating areas or on fires that occur as a result of their commercial and industrial operations. The Department will make operators aware of this responsibility.

(Amended 1-8-03)

## FIRE PROTECTION PLAN

0342.4

Section 4114 of the Public Resources Code requires that the Director prepare a plan for a fire protection system for State Responsibility Areas for approval by the Board. The Board has adopted the following policy for the guidance of the Director in the preparation, maintenance, and modification of the fire protection plan.

- A. The fire protection plan for State Responsibility Areas shall encompass the needs of all State Responsibility Areas, as classified by the Board, in accordance with Sections 4125-4128, Public Resources Code. This plan will include State Responsibility Areas protected directly by the Department and areas protected by Federal agencies and certain counties under contract.

- B. The fire protection plan will state the goals and objectives of the fire protection system. It will also describe the mission, standards and criteria of the components of the system, and list the various units of the system by administrative area and location. The plan will be a balance and integration of prevention, detection, ground and air attack forces, and be supported by fire environment modification efforts. It will recognize the capability of organizational depth, the assistance of local fire protection agencies, and availability of local resources.
- C. The Plan will also recognize the need for the cooperation and assistance of local government and wildland users and occupants. In preparing and revising the plan, the Director shall give due consideration to the actions stakeholders take to improve citizen and fire fighter safety and reduce the damage and cost of wildland fire. The plan will not reduce Departmental protection in response to voluntary local improvements in the fire protection system.
- D. In preparing, maintaining, and modifying said fire protection plan, the Director shall give due consideration to the relative resource values, hazards, risks, and threats within the respective areas, including:
  - 1. Value of the land and its vegetative cover for;
    - a. Beneficial water production;
    - b. Wood products;
    - c. Livestock forage and wildlife habitat;
    - d. Recreation and aesthetics; and
    - e. Soil erosion control and flood prevention;
  - 2. Hazard and difficulty of control as determined by:
    - a. Fuels;
    - b. Topography;
    - c. Weather;
    - d. Land use and occupancy; and
    - e. Accessibility.
  - 3. Risk as determined by the chance of fire starting because of the presence and activity of causative agents, including weather and human use and occupancy of the area.
  - 4. Threat as determined by potential for State Responsibility Area fires to escape to and damage resources, life, and property that are the responsibility of other fire protection agencies.
- E. The fire protection plan shall endeavor to provide an equal degree of protection to similar lands under similar conditions and within reasonable economic limits. The plan will be reviewed annually for any modification, which may be appropriate for the proper and necessary protection of those lands, which are State Responsibility Area.
- F. The Director will continuously study the fire protection problem and the economics of wildland fire protection in cooperation with the University of California, U.S. Forest Service, and other research agencies, and propose changes in the plan that reflect increased efficiency and understanding gained through this research.

(Amended 1-8-03)

## RESPONSE TO DECREASING BUDGET ALLOCATIONS

0342.4.1

The Department will develop an approach, consistent with PRC 4131, that minimizes the reduction in intensity of fire protection through the application of balanced and coordinated fire prevention, fire management, fire control, fire environment modification, and other fire defense efforts. The long term as well as immediate effect of changes in resource allocation will be explicitly stated.

(Amended 1-8-03)

## FIRE ENVIRONMENT MODIFICATION

0342.5

In its concern for conflagration prevention, the increasing development and human use and occupancy of State Responsibility Areas, the reduction of fire loss and damage from encroaching wildfire to these intermingled life and property exposures, and their threat to the adjacent vegetation resources, the Board has adopted the following findings:

- A. Despite improved technology and increased coordination of firefighting resources from all agencies, conflagrations persist, causing severe damage and loss to natural resources, life and property. While fire control forces can stop fires reasonably quickly under many conditions, there is little evidence that a given area can be prevented from eventually burning. Prevention and control efforts have delayed, and in some cases, reduced, the frequency of burning. The outcome of a vigorous prevention and control program is a continual accumulation of fuels and eventual, inevitable series of conflagrations.
- B. The wildland fire environment consists of topography, fuels, air mass (weather), people and their improvements, and other human influences within which a fire may burn. Ignition susceptibility and fire behavior at any given time and place are determined by the integration of these elements. In California, this interaction periodically produces a conflagration threat.
- C. The Board has found that the most effective long-term method of reducing this conflagration threat, damage to natural resources, and life and property is a program of fire environment modification. These are actions and efforts that can be taken in advance of fire ignition to modify the fire environment, reducing fire damage and the need for other, more costly alternatives in the fire protection system. Fire environment modification includes programs of fuel reduction, installation of fire defense improvements, and fire safety control of life and property exposures. The intent is to provide built-in fire protection to minimize conflagration potentials, to enable the initial attack forces to control a greater number of fire starts at a smaller size class, and to reduce the fire threat and damage potential to intermingled life and property exposures.

(Amended 1-8-03)

## FUEL REDUCTION

0342.5.1

Fuel reduction involves the achievement of fire protection and land management objectives by reducing fuel loading, fire intensity, and resistance to control, while at the same time preserving and enhancing environmental quality.

(Amended 1-8-03)

## FIRE DEFENSE IMPROVEMENT

03425.2

Fire defense improvements are units of "built-in" fire protection, constructed as a part of fire control preparedness, to break up large expanses of flammable fuels through land and fuel treatment. These include planned and existing access roads, trails, fuelbreaks and firebreaks, water supplies, and helispots.

## FIRE SAFETY IN LAND USE PLANNING

0342.5.3

Fire safety in land use planning combines fire protection planning with land use planning and development, establishing fire safety controls and standards for the improvements accompanying the increasing use and occupancy of State Responsibility Area. Rugged terrain and highly flammable vegetation make the foothills and mountains of California especially unsafe for residential development unless adequate fire safety measures are taken. However, fire safety measures can reduce the exposure of life, property, and resources to an "acceptable level of risk" and provide "defensible space" that could protect residents and enable firefighting equipment and personnel to operate during a wildfire as follows:

- A. Through subdivision and land development review, and working with county boards of supervisors, county planners and land developers, the purpose is to minimize the fire threat to intermingled life and property exposures from an encroaching wildfire and maximize the occupant's ability for self-protection, also reducing the risk of a structural fire escaping into the adjacent wildland fuels. Fire safety controls and standards required are based on the degree of fire hazard severity.
- B. Individual occupants or users of the wildland areas should recognize their responsibility for fire protection. Basic to the concept of adequate fire safety is the recognition that fire protection is both a public and private concern and that adequate fire protection is a unique combination of private property protection, reinforced by an emergency service delivery system. Local governments and the users and occupants of State Responsibility Areas must share the fire protection responsibility for their lives and property, and accept the risks associated with the development of wildland areas.
- C. Those people who create a fire risk or hazard should take the necessary steps to protect themselves and to alleviate the probability of fires starting and causing damage to natural resources and to adjacent land and property.
- D. The Board has found:
  1. The various vegetation types of California that are subject to wildfires have been generally mapped and described regarding their degree of fire hazard severity.
  2. Structural development in State Responsibility Areas:
    - a. Severely complicates and handicaps the ability of a fire protection agency to control the spread of wildfires, while at the same time trying to protect values of exposed life and property;
    - b. Substantially restricts the ability of fire protection agencies to use certain techniques such as prescribed burning to reduce and control the large volume of flammable vegetation intermingled with the property values;

- c. Increases the State's expenditure of public funds for fighting wildfires because of the greater number of fire starts and the requirement for more fire protection resources and fire prevention inspections;
  - d. Results in more state involvement in structural fire protection;
  - e. Can result in damage to watersheds from grading of residential and industrial sites and road building, as well as from increased fire incidence;
  - f. Frequently includes a citizenry who does not appreciate or understand the risks from wildfires to themselves and to their property. This lack of awareness in wildland and suburban communities can drastically restrict the ability of fire protection agencies to implement necessary programs risk and hazard reduction;
  - g. Historically, has resulted in the loss of thousands of homes located in and adjacent to these areas by fires originating in the wildlands and spreading into inhabited areas and from fire which originated in urbanized areas and spread into the adjacent wildlands;
  - h. Generally brings an increase in locally supported fire protection resources to protect life and property.
- E. In light of these findings, the Board urges cities and counties of California to carefully consider the placement of any developments and individual structures in wildlands designated as having a high fire hazard severity on maps prepared by the various counties as part of the safety element of their general plans. Clustered development which reserves substantial open space to be managed through fire environment modification is preferred to dispersed development.
- F. The Board also urges that the standards described in "Fire Safe Guides for Residential Development in California" be adopted in the safety element of general plans in the cities and counties of California. In addition, the Director shall pursue an aggressive program for the adoption of fire hazard severity zoning and for fire safe standards, ordinances and programs at a local level that are consistent with such fire hazard severity zoning. The program should encourage improved land use planning to achieve an acceptable level of risk of destruction by fire of natural resources and life and property.
- G. The Department of Forestry and Fire Protection shall encourage and work closely with local fire agencies that have primary responsibility for life and property protection, for the implementation of effective fire safe standards and programs.

(Amended 1-8-03)

## FIRE PREVENTION

0342.6

The Board, in recognition of its duty to maintain an adequate forest policy, which includes the effective protection of the state's natural resources under its jurisdiction from destruction by fires, has adopted the following policy;

To assure maximum effectiveness, the Director will keep informed of the activities of other fire prevention programs in the State and develop the Department's program with a cooperative approach toward the common goal of reducing fire damage to our natural resources, property and life.



## FIRE PREVENTION EDUCATION

0342.6.1

- A. The Director will conduct a cooperative program of fire prevention education directed toward all persons within the borders of California, who, through ignorance, inadvertent acts, carelessness, negligence, unlawful acts or otherwise, may cause wildland fires.
- B. Fire prevention education will include, but not be limited to, a statewide educational effort directed to all persons in metropolitan, urban, and rural areas with emphasis on local residents, users, and visitors of wildland areas. All reasonable methods and available facilities will be employed to inform the public of:
  - 1. The laws pertaining to wildland fires;
  - 2. Responsibilities for the prevention of the start and spread of wildfires;
  - 3. Lawful and safe practices in the use of fire and fire-causing agents;
  - 4. The risks and hazards which create wildfires;
  - 5. Fuels management techniques; and
  - 6. The value of the natural resources, property, and human life subjected to waste and destruction by wildfires.

(Amended 1-8-03)

## FIRE PREVENTION RESEARCH

0342.6.2

The Director will maintain and aggressively pursue a program of wildland fire prevention research to improve the methods, cost effectiveness, and results of fire prevention efforts.

(Amended 1-8-03)

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

0342.6.3

The Director will maintain an aggressive program of fire law enforcement, in accordance with legal principles and authority, to require compliance with the fire laws, to pursue violators through applicable judicial systems and, as appropriate, to report violations of fire laws.

The Department will coordinate and cooperate with local agencies on, or adjacent to, State Responsibility Areas. The Department shall encourage and assist capable and willing local fire agencies, to actively pursue and enforce the forest and fire laws with particular emphasis on those that pertain to fire safe regulations. The Department shall provide an incentive for willing local fire agencies that provide a program of inspection and advice to SRA residents designed to improve compliance with fire safe regulations.

(Amended 1-8-03)

## BURNING PERMITS

0342.6.4

The Director will take all authorized, reasonable and necessary measures in the administration of permits to burn, blast, weld or discharge fireworks and will prevent the exercise of such permits, in time of hazardous fire conditions. The Department, where appropriate, is encouraged to develop agreements with capable and willing fire agencies for the issuance of backyard burning permits.

(Amended 1-8-03)

## FIRE RESPONSE POLICY "NONFOREST FIRES" - SCHEDULE B

0342.7

### FINDINGS

0342.7.1

Pursuant to its responsibilities under PRC 4111 "to make and enforce such regulations as are necessary and proper for the organization, maintenance, government, and direction of the fire protection system for prevention and suppression of forest fires" on State Responsibility Areas (SRA), the Board finds that:

- A. PRC 4125-26 sets forth the criteria for the classification of land where the primary financial responsibility for fire protection rests with the State.
- B. The construction of structures on land classified as SRA has increased the threat of fire to life, property and resource values. Population increases are usually characterized by an increase of fire occurrence involving man's improvements and a corresponding increased risk to the natural vegetation as uncontrolled fires occurring in structures and vehicles, etc. will tend to spread beyond their origin. The increased structural buildups have, however, reduced the reporting time of fires to the protection agencies, improved access to such fire starts and generally supported an increase of local fire protection forces that take action on wildland fires in and adjacent to developed areas.

- C. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's (Department) primary mission is wildland fire protection on SRA. The Department responds to structural, vehicle and improvement fires, in and adjacent to its direct protection areas where there is a threat of wildland fire. In these instances, The Department's forces are expected to either abate such fires or be assured that the threat of such fires or emergencies to the wildlands will be controlled by other forces.
- D. The Department's fire protection system has given consideration to the difficulty of wildland fire control operations created by structural build-ups. Fire control agencies have fewer options in selecting the time and place for controlling a wildfire due to the threat to structures. When structures are threatened, the Department must take appropriate actions to protect life and property from encroaching wildland fires.
- E. The Department is a partner in the statewide mutual aid system and responds to requests for assistance from other fire agencies if personnel and equipment are available.
- F. PRC 4143-44 (Amador Plan) authorizes the Department, in accordance with the policy and standards established by the Board, to enter into cooperative structural fire protection agreements with counties during the "non-emergency response period" (non-fire season).
- G. Such areas, like all other areas in the State, may receive only intermittent structural protection during the "emergency response period". There is no guarantee that Department forces will be on base in any area at any time to supply structural protection. Life and property protection is primarily the responsibility of the local citizens and their local government agencies. They must ultimately develop their own capabilities to provide year-round life and property protection.
- H. The Department may enter into cooperative agreements with any county, city, or district, to increase the level of wildland fire protection or provide life or property fire protection (PRC 4142).
- I. Where local government fire protection forces exist, they may respond to wildland fires as well as other fire on SRA. They are primarily responsible for life and property protection. The Public Resources Code (PRC 4170 and 4170.5) provides CDF and a local government the same authority to abate uncontrolled fires.
- J. The Department and local fire protection organizations on SRA have overlapping fire protection responsibilities. Good cooperation, communication, coordination, and policy direction are required to avoid unnecessary duplication of services as well as maximize administrative efficiency during fire control operations.

In view of the above findings, the Board establishes the following two policies for "non-forest fire" protection by CDF:

(Amended 1-8-03)

#### WHERE NO LOCAL FIRE PROTECTION FORCES EXIST

0342.7.2

- A. CDF will respond during the "emergency response period" to structural fires, vehicle fires, and other potential fire incidents where uncontrolled fire is a threat to SRA lands, as the availability of fire protection resources permits. Department management should not only apprise citizens and local government that life and property fire protection is their basic responsibility, but Department management

should provide leadership and assistance in developing local protection forces designed to meet local protection problems.

- B. Life and property protection in rural areas during the "non-emergency response period" under PRC 4143-44 is a viable option to counties. Where local fire organizations exist or where they develop and are able to provide service that equals or exceeds existing service, the Amador Plan agreements should be reviewed and terminated in accordance with PRC 4143-44.
- C. During the "non-emergency response period", the Department may respond to local requests for fire protection services if personnel and equipment are available during normal duty hours. In addition to local requests, the Department will respond to declared disasters and to mutual aid requests as the availability of personnel and equipment permit. The availability of personnel and equipment will be commensurate with the actual need to meet the Department's primary mission of wildlands fire protection. Department fire stations will not be staffed to provide emergency protection on an initial response basis unless under contract in accordance with PRC 4143-44.

(Amended 1-8-03)

#### WHERE LOCAL PROTECTION FORCES EXIST

0342.7.3

- A. The Department will respond as necessary during the "emergency response period" to structural fires, vehicle fires, and other potential fire emergencies, where there is a threat of fire to natural resources. Local government agencies are primarily responsible for life and property protection; the Department will assist the local agency if there is no threat to the natural resources.
- B. The Department should develop mutual aid and automatic aid agreements with local fire protection organizations operating on and adjacent to SRA to:
  - 1. Maximize coordination and cooperation;
  - 2. Avoid unnecessary duplication of forces sent to an incident;
  - 3. Promote a better understanding of the Department's role in providing fire protection services to SRA.

(Amended 1-8-03)

#### EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS)

0342.8

#### FINDINGS

0342.8.1

Pursuant to its responsibilities under PRC 4111 "to make and enforce such regulations as are necessary and proper for the organization, maintenance, government, and direction of the fire protection system for prevention and suppression of forest fires" on SRA, the Board finds that:

- 1. The Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's (Department) state funded resources are only staffed for immediate response, 24 hours per day during the declared fire season. During fire season, Department resources may be dispatched anywhere in the State. A community cannot expect Department resources to always be available for response to medical emergencies.

2. The increasing movement of people to SRA lands brings with it an inevitable increase in medical emergencies. These incidents typically include vehicle accidents, heart attacks, burns, and other rescue related emergencies. Both the Department and all other fire agencies in SRA are experiencing increased numbers of emergency medical services (EMS) incidents.
3. Generally, citizens and local government play the key role in organizing and providing emergency medical services in their communities. Most resources committed to EMS are funded by either local government or by local contract with the private health care industry.
4. Department resources respond to structure fires and to other emergencies in SRA where the potential of a fire damaging natural resources exists. They supply emergency medical services at these incidents as required and within the limits of their training and experience.
5. Department resources operating under a non-fire season Amador Plan contract respond to both fire and non-fire emergencies. PRC 4143-4144 provides that Amador Plan services cannot impair the Department's wildland fire protection mission. The Board and the Director have established regulations and policies governing this program.
6. In many areas of California, the Department contracts with local government to provide life and property protection within and outside of SRA on a year-round basis. All such contracts provide for some level of emergency medical response.
7. Over 60% of all SRA statewide has some degree of life and property fire protection provided by local government. In most cases, local fire agencies routinely respond to the EMS incidents on a first responder basis.
8. PRC 4144 authorizes that the Department may provide, when available and to the extent that it does not require additional funds, rescue, first responder, and other emergency services to the public in state responsibility areas.
9. The minimum level of emergency training required by law for firefighters is basic first responder and cardiopulmonary resuscitation. All Department firefighters are provided qualified immunity from civil action when rendering emergency medical services within the scope of their training.

In light of the above findings, the Board establishes the following three policies for emergency medical services provided by the Department:

(Amend 1-8-03)

#### STATE FUNDED APPARATUS AND PERSONNEL - SCHEDULE B 0342.8.2

- A. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) calls are not a primary responsibility of the Department. Department personnel will respond to emergency medical services within their capabilities if personnel and equipment are available. If qualified local agency forces arrive at the scene and the incident is within their jurisdiction, the emergency medical services should normally be transferred to them.
- B. Where the frequency of EMS responses adversely affects the prime mission of wildland fire control, the Department will actively encourage alternative means for the community to supply emergency medical services.

- C. Department crews may supply mutual aid emergency medical services upon request when personnel and equipment are available or when local forces cannot cope with the size of the emergency.
- D. The Department should not schedule, locate, or budget personnel and equipment for the sole purpose of providing emergency medical response.

(Amended 1-8-03)

#### LOCALLY FUNDED APPARATUS AND PERSONNEL - SCHEDULE A 0342.8.3

The Department may contract to supply emergency medical services to local agencies.

(Amended 1-8-03)

#### TRAINING STANDARDS 0342.8.4

The Department shall train and equip its personnel to provide a level of emergency medical services commensurate with its wildland fire protection and local government contract missions. This level of service should guarantee that injured Department employees are provided an adequate level of emergency medical service in order to reduce the extent of injury. As a goal, Department should train and equip its permanent firefighting employees to the EMT-1 level.

(Amended 1-8-03)

#### COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR FIRE PROTECTION 0343

##### WITH U.S. FOREST SERVICE 0343.1

In order to provide economical fire protection to scattered and intermingled parcels of State Responsibility Area found within and adjacent to National Forest boundaries, Public Resources Code 4141 allows the Department to contract with the U.S. Forest Service to protect these lands. Subject to available appropriations, the Director shall consider the following principles when entering into fire protection agreements with the U.S. Forest Service

- A. The plan for the protection of these lands will be included in the fire plan of the Director in the same manner as for other State Responsibility Area lands.
- B. In establishing and reviewing the fire protection boundary between the agencies, the following shall be considered:
  - 1. Protection capabilities of each agency;
  - 2. Convenient topographic or physical features for boundaries;
  - 3. Land ownership patterns and management responsibilities; and
  - 4. Pertinent statutes and regulations.
- C. The plan for protection should-consider:
  - 1. Using existing facilities to provide complete protection to their initial attack area regardless of land ownership;
  - 2. The sharing of facilities where appropriate;

3. Maximizing use of State-financed protection resources to protect National Forest lands in order to offset the imbalance of State Responsibility Area protected by the U.S. Forest Service;
  4. Identification of U.S. Forest Service protection forces specifically funded by the State to protect State Responsibility Area.
- D. State Responsibility Area which can reasonably be protected by State fire protection forces shall not be contracted to the U.S. Forest Service for protection.
  - E. The Director will require that fire protection services provided to State Responsibility Area by the U.S. Forest Service be at least equivalent to those provided directly by the State to comparable areas.
  - F. It is the policy of the Board that whenever the budget for fire protection upon State Responsibility Areas protected by the Department is adjusted, the budget request for fire protection provided by the U.S. Forest Service to State Responsibility Area should be adjusted proportionately.

#### WITH OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES

0343.2

The Director shall consider the following principles when entering into cooperative fire protection agreements with Federal agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Park Service, and the Bureau of Reclamation:

- A. The plan for the protection of State Responsibility Area lands being provided by another Federal agency shall be included in the Director's Fire Protection Plan in the same manner as for other State Responsibility Area lands;
- B. State Responsibility Area which can reasonably be protected and administered by State fire protection forces should not be contracted with Federal agencies for protection;
- C. Protection by the Department of Federal lands intermingled with or adjacent to State direct protection area is encouraged, provided that the State is compensated for this service. The level of service provided to these Federal lands should be equivalent to that provided to adjacent State responsibility lands;
- D. In determining which agency should provide protection, consideration shall be given to existing facility locations and their initial attack areas. The establishment of duplicate or overlapping facilities is discouraged.

#### WITH COUNTIES FOR STATE RESPONSIBILITY AREA

0343.3

PRC 4129-4135 provides that a county may, with the concurrence of the Director, assume the responsibility for protection of SRA within the county. Counties assuming this responsibility pursuant to Board policy found in Title 14, California Code of Regulations (14CCR), are known as "Contract Counties".

The Director shall consider the following principles, when entering into such a contract with a county:

- A. The Director shall require that fire protection services provided to SRA by a contract county be at least equivalent to service provided directly by the State in comparable areas;
- B. The State shall fund the annual operation of contract county fire protection pursuant to PRC 4132; and
- C. Whenever the budget for fire protection upon SRA directly protected by the Department is adjusted, the budget levels for fire protection provided by the Contract County for SRA shall be adjusted proportionately.

(Amended 1-8-03)

#### WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT FOR FIRE PROTECTION

0343.4

Section 4142 of the Public Resources Code states "The Department may, with the approval of the Department of General Services, enter into a cooperative agreement upon such terms and under such conditions as it deems wise for the purpose of preventing and suppressing forest fires or other fires in any lands within any county, city or district which makes an appropriation for such purpose."

Section 55640 of the Government Code allows counties to contract with the Department to provide rescue and resuscitator services. Local government has the authority to provide fire protection in Local Responsibility Areas and may provide protection to structure and improvements in State Responsibility Area. Local government fire protection services also may include emergency medical services and response to hazardous materials incidents.

The Director shall consider the following principles in relation to local government fire protection: (See Manual of Instructions)

- A. Because it has an established fire protection organization that can benefit local government, the Department is encouraged to enter into cooperative agreements where substantial benefits may accrue to the Department's performance of its primary mission. These benefits may include economies of scale, unity of command, efficiency of administration, and depth of local government resources which become available statewide during major conflagrations;
- B. Structural fires and other fires within State Responsibility area are potential wildland fires and will be attacked by Department forces to the extent they are available. Uncontrolled fires occurring within Local Responsibility Areas which threaten State Responsibility Area will be attacked by Department forces. Such assistance may be rendered by mutual aid to local agencies;
- C. Local government should be encouraged to provide mutual aid response, using local government resources, to wildland fires in areas of state responsibility. When appropriate, local government may supplement wildland fire protection provided by the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection by entering into a cooperative agreement with the Director;
- D. Whenever local government requests that the Department evaluate existing and potential fire protection systems for a given area, the Department will provide technical assistance including a professional state-of-the-art fire protection plan; and
- E. Whenever local government requests that the Department provide local government fire protection services, the Director will first evaluate the appropriateness of such



potential agreement, giving consideration to the compatibility of the proposed agreement with the Department's primary missions.

(Amended 1-8-03)

WITH COUNTIES FOR NON-FIRE SEASON FIRE PROTECTION (AMADOR PLAN)

0343.5

Sections 4143 and 4144 of the Public Resources Code authorize the Department, in accordance with policy and standards established by the Board, to enter into cooperative fire protection agreements during the "nonfire season" with certain counties wherein sparsely populated rural communities lack the tax base to provide year-round fire prevention and suppression. These "Amador Plan" agreements are terminated when those communities have adequate revenues to permanently or continuously support their own full-time prevention and suppression organization. When administering these agreements, the Director shall follow the policies and procedures contained in 14 CCR, sections 1260-1262, inclusive.

(Amended 1-8-03)