

LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT



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FIRE CHIEF

February 5, 2025

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
FILE NO. 25-008

TO: Board of Fire Commissioners

FROM:  Kristin M. Crowley, Fire Chief

SUBJECT: LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT DEPLOYMENT AND
AUGMENTATION OF RESOURCES DURING INCLEMENT WEATHER

| | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| FINAL ACTION: | <input type="checkbox"/> Approved | <input type="checkbox"/> Approved w/Corrections | <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Denied | <input type="checkbox"/> Received & Filed | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

SUMMARY

The Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) continuously monitors and prepares for inclement weather events to mitigate risks to life and property. Given the recent wildland fires in the Los Angeles area, the potential for mudslides, debris flows, and flash flooding has increased due to burned vegetation and hydrophobic soil conditions. This document outlines LAFD’s pre-planning and resource deployment strategies ahead of an anticipated rain event, ensuring operational readiness in any of the affected burn-scar areas.

In addition to LAFD’s standard inclement weather preparations, this report highlights specific actions taken to address post-fire hazards, including pre-deployment of swiftwater rescue teams, increased staffing in high-risk zones, and coordination with allied agencies such as California Office of Emergency Services (CAL-OES), Los Angeles Emergency Management Department (EMD) and Public Works. These efforts ensure a proactive, multi-agency approach to protecting fire impacted communities.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board:
Receive and File.

DISCUSSION

This report outlines LAFD’s standard pre-planning and resource deployment strategies, along with enhanced measures specific to post-fire hazards. Key actions include pre-positioning swiftwater rescue teams, increasing staffing in high-risk areas, and coordinating with allied agencies such as California Office of Emergency Services (CAL-OES), LA Emergency Management Department (EMD) and Public Works to mitigate risks and ensure a unified response.

CONSIDERATIONS

Standard Pre-Planning & Resource Deployment for Rain Events

A. Weather Monitoring & Forecasting

- **Data Sources:** LAFD monitors National Weather Service (NWS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and Los Angeles County Public Works updates.
- **Triggering Conditions:** Anticipated rainfall advisories, flash flood watches, and soil saturation levels guide pre-planning decisions.
- **Incident Coordination:** Early coordination with LA Emergency Management Department (EMD) and allied agencies.
- **LAFD Internal Procedures:** Referring to the LAFD Fire Weather/Swift Water Pre-deployment and Augmentation Decision Matrix. (attachment #2)
- **Region Partners:** Discussion with area partners about weather concerns and resource availability.

B. Pre-Deployment of Resources

- **Swiftwater & Urban Search & Rescue (USAR) Teams**
 - Pre-positioned in flood-prone or impacted areas.
 - Collaboration with Cal-OES to secure funding for pre-positioning selected resources, serving as a force multiplier throughout the region by strategically deploying assets to enhance response capabilities.
 - Additional swiftwater personnel strategically staged near key locations with additional helicopter and staffing to support rescue missions.
- **Fire Suppression & EMS Resources**
 - Increased staffing at fire stations serving hillside communities.
 - EMS units positioned to respond to anticipated traffic and roadway impacts.
- **Public Works & Infrastructure Coordination**
 - Collaborate with Bureau of Street Services and LA Department of Water & Power (LADWP) for potential roadway flooding, storm drain maintenance, or power issues.

III. Enhanced Considerations for Areas Affected by Wildland Fires

A. Post-Wildfire Rainfall Impacts

- **Hydrophobic Soil & Debris Flow Risks**
 - Burned areas have reduced water absorption, increasing runoff and mudflow potential.
 - LAFD coordinates with LA County Public Works for watershed and debris basin assessments.
- **Evacuation & Shelter Planning**

- Early notification to at-risk residents in hillside communities.
- Pre-identification of temporary shelters with Recreation & Parks, if evacuations are necessary.

B. Community Notifications & Public Messaging

- **ReadyLA & NotifyLA Systems:** LAFD partners with EMD to send out early alerts and warnings.
- **Public Safety Announcements:** Focused on flood safety, road closures, and emergency preparedness for affected residents.

IV. Internal Briefing & Coordination

- **Daily Operations Briefings:** Enhanced staffing and readiness levels communicated to all on-duty Battalion Chiefs.
- **Multi-Agency Coordination Calls:** Facilitated by LAFD with EMD, Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), Los Angeles County Fire Department, and Public Works to align strategies.

V. Summary & Next Steps

This framework ensures proactive readiness, minimizing risk to life and property. The LAFD will continue to adjust strategies as updated forecasts and assessments are received.

CONCLUSION

The LAFD remains committed to safeguarding communities through proactive emergency preparedness and strategic resource deployment. By closely monitoring evolving weather conditions, coordinating with allied agencies, and implementing targeted response measures in fire-affected areas, the department enhances its ability to mitigate risks associated with post-fire rainfall hazards. Moving forward, LAFD will continue refining its strategies based on real-time assessments and operational needs, ensuring a swift and effective response to protect lives and property.

Attachments

Date: _____ DDC: _____
 RH= _____ Wind= _____ BI= _____ Rating= _____ Red Flag Y/N
 Swift Water Matrix Point Value= _____



FIRE WEATHER/SWIFT WATER PRE-DEPLOYMENT & AUGMENTATION DECISIONS

| | | EXTREME BI 162+ | EXTREME BI 212+ | RED FLAG | DAY OF STATUS |
|-----|--|--------------------|--------------------|----------|------------------|
| 1. | Assistant Chief Command Team(s) AC 722, 742 To: | No | No | Consider | |
| 2. | Battalion Command Team(s) BC 701, 705, 706, 712, 715, 717 To: | Consider | Consider | Consider | |
| 3. | Staff 200 Series Engine(s) | No | No | Consider | |
| 4. | Ready Reserve Engines E 443, 447, 450, 458, 462, 472, 474(out of 77), 482, 496 | Consider | Consider | Consider | |
| 5. | Pre-Deploy Engine(s) To: Time: | Consider | Consider | Consider | |
| 6. | Pre-Deploy 3 Engine Task Force(s) To: Time: | Consider | Consider | Consider | |
| 7. | Brush Patrols BP 8, 19, 23, 28, 41, 44, 47, 74, 78, 82, 84, 99, 109 | Consider | Consider | Consider | |
| 8. | Type III Strike Team & STEN (1880C) or Type III Engine(s) E8136 (35), E8137 (87), E8138 (88), E8139 (89) E8140 (98), E82C (82) | Consider | Consider | Yes | |
| 9. | Water Tender(s) (77, 88) | Consider | Yes | Yes | |
| 10. | HLCO Officer & Pilot + (3) Helitac Members | Yes | Yes | Yes | |
| 11. | Dozer ST 1000K (HEO & Operator) or Dozer(s) (D8) | Consider | Consider | Consider | |
| 12. | US&R (Fully Staff) 3, 5, 27, 89, 85, 88, HR703 | | | | |
| 13. | Swift Water Rescue Team(s) & SC1: (5, 44, 88, 89) and/or OES SFS&R1 Type II Team w/SW724 | | | | |
| 14. | Dispatcher (1) for IROC Orders at MFC | Consider | Yes | Yes | |
| 15. | Dispatcher (1) at MFC | Consider | Yes | Yes | |
| 16. | Floor Captain (1) at MFC for DOC Liaison | No | Consider | Consider | |
| 17. | CERT Hydration Unit(s) (Notify CERT Unit Commander) | Consider | Consider | Yes | |
| 18. | CERT to Staff Alert Wildfire Cameras (Notify CERT Unit Commander) | Consider | Consider | Yes | |
| 19. | UHRC Officer for PEH Phase II Patrols (Notify DOC Coordinator) | No | Consider | Yes | |
| 20. | Red Flag Parking Enforcement Program (Notify Chief of Staff, 24-hours) | No | No | Yes | |
| 21. | Cancel On-Duty Training (Notify ISTS) | Consider | Consider | Yes | |
| 22. | Cancel EMT Recertification Training (Notify EMSB/ISTS) | Consider | Consider | Yes | |
| 23. | Pre-determine Type 1 Strike Team(s) (MFC) | Yes | Yes | Yes | |
| 24. | Cal OES Pre-Positioning Matrix Submission (MFC) | Consider | Consider | Consider | |

*** This document is to be used as a guidance tool and does not necessarily account for numerous factors that can impact the final decision. All decisions are subject to change based on the discretion of the Deputy Department Commander (DDC) in consultation with EOPS.

Cal OES PREPOSITION GUIDE

| Equipment/Crews/ Overhead/Aircraft | <input type="checkbox"/> | Moderate Event 1.6 – 1.9 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Severe Event 1.9 – 2.2 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Extreme Event 2.2 – 3.0 |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--|
| Engines | <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) OES or Local Government Engine Strike Team of any type OR One (1) Task Force | <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to two (2) OES or Local Government Engine Strike Teams OR Task Forces OR combination thereof | <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to three (3) OES or Local Government Engine Strike Teams OR Task Forces OR combination thereof |
| Dozers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A | <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) Local Government Dozer Strike Team | <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) Local Government Dozer Strike Team |
| Water Tenders | <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to (1) OES or Local Government | <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to two (2) OES or Local Government | <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to two (2) OES or Local Government |
| Aircraft | <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) Local Government Copter | <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two (2) Local Government Copters | <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three (3) Local Government Copters |
| Hand Crews | <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) Local Government Hand Crew | <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two (2) Local Government Hand Crews | <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three (3) Local Government Hand Crews |
| Overhead, LOGS, intel, Support Staff* | <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) Local Government Dispatcher | <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two (2) Local Government Dispatchers One (1) Local Government Type 3 Incident Management Team (Command & General Staff) (up to 14 personnel) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to four (4) Local Government Dispatchers One (1) Local Government Type 3 Incident Management Team (Command & General Staff) (up to 14 personnel) |

SWIFT WATER DEPLOYMENT MATRIX (01/29/2024)

| CRITERIA | FACTORS | POINTS |
|---|------------------------------|--------|
| Day of Week | Monday – Friday | 2 |
| | Saturday, Sunday, & Holidays | 4 |
| Time of Day (Anticipation of Water in Channels) | 0700 – 1700 Hours | 4 |
| | 1700 – 2000 Hours | 2 |
| | 2000 – 0700 Hours | 1 |
| Amount of Rain (Based on average from amount at Pacoima Dam & Downtown LA) | ¼" – ½" in 12 Hours | 2 |
| | ½" – ¾" in 12 Hours | 4 |
| | ¾" – 1"+ in 12 Hours | 6 |
| Saturation Level | 0 – 40% | 1 |
| | 40 – 60% | 2 |
| | 60 – 100%^ | 5 |
| Special Circumstances | Controlled Release | 0 – 5 |
| | Uncontrolled Release | 0 – 5 |
| | Other: | 0 – 5 |
| Rain Forecast (Based on National Weather Service Prediction) | 30 – 50% Chance | 1 |
| | 50 – 70% Chance | 2 |
| | 70 – 100% Chance | 4 |

^ Consider HEO staffing for mud and debris flow given saturation levels

LEVEL OF DEPLOYMENT

| POINTS | GROUND RESOURCES | AVIATION RESOURCES |
|--------------|---|---|
| 10 and Lower | No Deployment | No Deployment |
| 11 – 12 | Consider 1 SWR Team (RIVER II Dispatch) | Hire (1) Additional Full Air Crew ^{^^^} Hire (1) Extra Pilot III or IV Hire HLCO Officer |
| 13 – 16 | 2 – SWR Teams Deployed ^{^^} (RIVER Dispatch) | |
| 17 – 24 | 3 – SWR Teams Deployed ^{^^} (RIVER Dispatch) | |
| More than 24 | 4 – SWR Teams Deployed ^{^^} (RIVER Dispatch) | |

^{^^} Consider adding 1 SWR Team for Mud & Debris flow incidents in Burn Areas.

^{^^^} (1) Full Air Crew consists of (2) Paramedics & (1) Certified Level I Helitac.



OFFICIAL NOTICES

STAFFING AUGMENTATION FOR INCLIMENT WEATHER 1-25-25 THRU 1-28-25 OES PREPOSITION APPROVAL

Friday, January 24, 2025 - 18:15:00

Due to our continued commitment to the LFD-PALISADES incident and obligation to support the ongoing disaster recovery effort the LAFD and Area A partners will be augmenting staffing. The augmentation is for a potential mud/debris flow and the period will be for 72 hours starting tomorrow morning at 0800 hours and continuing until Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 0800 hours.

All resources will be hired under a CAL OES preposition order. Responsible members will need to complete OES 42s and F-101s using code 03BW pin PS27. Currently the program to populate hires is down so responsible officers will have to insert all hires manually.

The resources below will be placed at the following locations:

One OES Strike Team 1880C staged at LFD Station 59

One XLA Task Force 1075 comprised of 3 Type 6 apparatus with leader OES 1617 (Beverly Hills FD), LFD Brush Patrol 19, and LFD Brush Patrol 23 staged at LFD Station 59

One LFD Type 1 Dozer staged at LFD Station 88

One LFD Type 2 Dozer staged at LFD Station 88

One LFD Loader staged at LFD Station 88

One LFD Type 2 Helicopter with crew staged at LFD Station 114

One LFD dispatcher at LFD Metro Fire Communications

One LFD Type 3 Swift Water Company staged at LFD Station 88

4 LFD Type 1 Heavy USAR Apparatus staged at:

- LFD Station 59 (USAR 3)
- LFD Station 27
- LFD Station 88
- LFD Station 89

Additionally, the LAFD still has 15 engines committed to the LFD-PALISADES incident.

Please direct any questions to your administrative battalion chief.

MFC