



## Legislation Text

**File #:** 19-387, **Version:** 1

Approve the Solano Operational Area Mutual Aid Agreement between Solano County, the Cities and Fire Districts for hazard emergency response; and Authorize the Chair of the Board to sign the agreement

Published Notice Required? Yes ☐ No ☒  
Public Hearing Required? Yes ☐ No ☒

### **DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:**

The Sheriff recommends that the Board of Supervisors approve the Solano Operational Area Mutual Aid Agreement between Solano County, the Cities and Fire Districts for hazard emergency response and authorize the Chair of the Board to sign the agreement.

### **SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:**

The current fire and rescue mutual aid agreement for fire suppression services in Solano County was executed in 1996. The participants included agencies within Solano County and a few fire districts from Napa County, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the California Medical Facility Fire Department, Travis Air Force Base Fire Department, and the Exxon Benicia Refinery Fire Department. This agreement needs to be updated to properly reflect the current times and meet the needs of the fire agencies within Solano County.

The Solano Fire Chiefs Association (Association) has prepared a new Mutual Aid Agreement for hazard emergency response (Agreement). As a member of the Association, the Sheriff's Emergency Services Manager worked with the Fire Chiefs and County Counsel to draft the recommended Agreement. The new Agreement supersedes the 1996 agreement and the participants are limited to the agencies within the Solano Operational Area. At this time, the California Medical Facility Fire Department and the Valero Refinery Fire Department are reviewing the Agreement and may be added through an amendment to this Agreement. Also, Travis Air Force Base Fire Department entered into a separate agreement with the cities and fire districts as required by federal statute. The remaining participants are those agencies represented in the Association.

The Agreement covers mutual aid response to emergency incidents, including but not limited to, the control of fire, fire prevention, fire investigation, emergency medical services, hazardous materials control, water rescue, technical rescue, and emergency support. An agency's response may include trained personnel, volunteers and/or equipment. The response is determined and supported by the Solano County Mutual Aid Matrix (Matrix) developed to systematically deploy an agency's resources and request the aid of other agencies within the Solano Operational Area. Agencies shall follow protocols in accordance with the Incident Command System and California's Standardized Emergency Management System procedures. The Agreement also includes a provision for response limitations contingent upon staffing and equipment availability and financial condition.

With the new County consolidated fire dispatch center (Center), the Agreement calls for all communications to be made through the Center. The Center is the focal point for fire asset reporting and major fire response in the operational area. The requesting agency shall describe the nature of the emergency and the anticipated personnel and equipment necessary for response. Solano County dispatchers use the Matrix to coordinate responses to three alarm and greater fires in the Solano Operational Area and play a crucial role in providing fire mutual aid outside the county. Solano County plays a critical role in communications, emergency medical

response, and dispatch and fire agency consolidation projects.

Mutual aid agreements are critical in emergency preparedness and planning, especially during fire season when agency assets can be quickly overwhelmed. Agreements in advance reduce response times and aid in post-disaster recovery. All city mayors and fire district board chairs have signed the Agreement. The Sheriff's Office is requesting the Board approve the Agreement and authorize the Chair of the Board to sign the Agreement.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

Similar to the California State Mutual Aid Fire Agreement, under which Solano County participates, the proposed agreement includes a provision for agencies to request reimbursement for expenses when the mutual aid response exceeds 12 hours. Should a fire occur within the Solano Operational Area, agencies could request reimbursement from the applicable cities or fire districts only. The County could not be held financially responsible for these costs. Therefore, Board action will not impact the County General Fund.

The cost associated with preparing the agenda item is nominal and absorbed by the department's FY2018/19 Working Budget.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

The Board can choose not to approve the Agreement; however, this alternative is not recommended as Solano County already participates in mutual aid response under California law. Moreover, rejecting the Agreement already approved by the cities and fire districts would show a lack of support for unincorporated area residents dependent upon the districts and the cities for fire and emergency medical services.

**OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:**

The Solano Fire Chiefs Association drafted the Agreement.

**CAO RECOMMENDATION:**

APPROVE DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION