



CITY OF MANTECA

CITY COUNCIL

September 5, 2017

Honorable Jose L. Alva, Presiding Judge
San Joaquin County Superior Court
180 West Weber Avenue, Suite 1306
Stockton CA 95202

RE: City of Manteca Response to Grand Jury Report-County Wide Dispatch for Fire.

Honorable Judge Jose L. Alva, Presiding:

The City of Manteca has reviewed the San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury Report, *Countywide Dispatch for Fire: Two are Not Always Better than One 2016-17, Case No. 0616*. The City of Manteca agrees that Countywide Dispatch should be consolidated into a single emergency service dispatch center. A detailed response to each finding and recommendation is attached. The City of Manteca has been dispatched by Stockton Fire for over 20 years. The City is also a founding member of the San Joaquin County Regional Fire Dispatch (SJCRFDA) and is dispatched by the Regional Center.

It is our experience that services provided by SJCRFDA is superior to those provided by VRECC for fire dispatch. We find this to be the case based on years of interaction with VRECC, specifically while our neighboring agency, Lathrop-Manteca Fire District was dispatched by VRECC and the findings of the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) in the Municipal Service Review for Rural Fire Protection Districts conducted in 2011-12.

The dispatch, turnout, and travel times were considerably less for districts which contract for services with the City of Stockton. Apparently, due to different practices, the average dispatch time is two minutes less (0:35 minutes vs. 2:35 minutes) and nearly three minutes less for the 90 percentile (1:08 minutes vs. 4:07 minutes).

We recognize this report is nearly six years old, however, we have not seen any indication that VRECC has made significant improvements to dispatch times. Unfortunately, we cannot conduct a current side-by-side comparison of dispatch times because the data from VRECC is not available to us, or any other member of the SJCRFDA.

The City of Manteca is dedicated to the protection of our citizens. We value an accurate, timely and flexible dispatch system that can meet the evolving needs of our community. At this time we feel that SJCRFDA provides a superior dispatch service and therefore we will continue to contract with SJCRFDA for dispatch services for the foreseeable future.

Response to Findings:

F1.2 The vast majority of fire agencies are in favor of a single countywide emergency fire dispatch center; they agree it would be in the best interest of the citizens and the County of San Joaquin.

The City of Manteca is in agreement that a single countywide emergency fire dispatch center is in the best interest of the Citizens and the County. The SJCRFDA currently dispatches for fire departments that protect 77% of the County's population. SJCRFDA is best suited to be the single dispatch agency.

F1.3 There is disagreement as how to organize, operate and fund a single countywide fire dispatch capability. This has led to a failure to pursue creation of a single countywide fire dispatch center.

The City of Manteca acknowledges the differences of opinion regarding how to organize, operate and fund a single countywide dispatch center. The City supports a single dispatch center operated by SJCRFDA.

F2.1 Automatic aid agreements between neighboring fire agencies can reduce response times.

The City of Manteca has Automatic Aid Agreements with Lathrop-Manteca Fire District, City of Tracy, Ripon Fire District and the City of Stockton. It is our opinion that these Automatic Aid agreements reduce response times, particularly during large scale events.

F2.2 AVL on all fire vehicles and AVL capability at dispatch centers can reduce response times.

The City of Manteca agrees with finding F2.2

F3.1 There is disagreement among San Joaquin County Fire Chiefs regarding EMS Policy 3202. Some believe EMS Policy 3202 does not allow responders to provide the level of service expected in their communities.

The Revisions to EMS Policy 3202 restricted The City of Manteca Fire Department from providing the expected level of service in Manteca.

Response to Recommendations:


R1.3 By December 31, 2017 County EMS in collaboration with the City of Stockton, the Joint Radio Users Group and the San Joaquin County Regional Fire Dispatch Authority develop a taskforce and provide a plan to consolidate into a single countywide emergency fire dispatch center.

The City of Manteca is willing to participate in this Taskforce.

R2.2 By December 31, 2017 all county fire agencies, develop a plan to fund, purchase and implement AVL on all emergency fire vehicles.

The City of Manteca will have AVL in all emergency fire apparatus by December 31, 2017.
The City of Manteca appreciates the opportunity to respond and welcomes your feedback.

Respectfully,


Stephen DeBrum,
Mayor, City of Manteca