



LINDEN – PETERS FIRE DISTRICT

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August 31, 2017

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

Re: Response to "*Countywide Dispatch for Fire, Two Are Not Always Better than One 2016-2017*"

Dear Honorable José L. Alva,

The Board of Directors of the Linden–Peters Fire Protection District (LPFD) discussed your letter at the regular meeting held on July 6, 2017. As a member of the Joint Radio Users Group, the Board concurs with the findings by Chief Bitters (as attached) and submits those as the response for the Linden-Peters Fire Department.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to provide input on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John E. Plotz".

John E. Plotz
President - Board of Directors

Response to Report

San Joaquin County Civil grand Jury

2016-2017 Case No. 0616

This letter serves as a response to the Findings and Recommendations as listed in the Report issued by the San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury, titled "Countywide Dispatch for Fire, *Two Are Not Always Better than One 2016-2017*" (Case No. 0616)

We appreciate the time and effort put forth by the Grand Jury in learning about Dispatch Operations in San Joaquin County. While we realize that there may be some clarifications necessary in any report of this nature, there are a few that we will address prior to our response to the formal Findings and Recommendations listed in the report.

Assignment of Dedicated Fire Dispatchers, Page 102 - VRECC does, in fact, assign dedicated dispatchers to working fires and major events. This requirement is specifically stated in the contract for dispatch services between SJCJRUG and VRECC that was provided as requested. It also must be understood that any dispatch center's ability to do this would be limited to the number of personnel it has on duty at the time of the increase in need. The staffing level at VRECC is sufficient and constantly maintained to address these peak times.

Errors in what is communicated between CAD interfaces occur daily – This is a perception held by personnel at Stockton Fire Dispatch, not an actuality. The information that is transmitted from VRECC to SFD is exactly the same on both ends. It comes from 911 reporting callers, processed per the County of San Joaquin protocols and procedures, and the resulting information is the same for both agencies. Perhaps training for SFD personnel on understanding this information would be helpful.

VRECC charges JRUG fire agencies \$23.77 per fire dispatch while Stockton Fire charges its member agencies \$49.77 per fire dispatch – While this statement is true, there are some clarifications. VRECC charges \$23.77 for fire-only incident dispatches, but the cost is cut in half for any incident having an ambulance assigned to \$11.90 per dispatch, *which is* an even larger savings as the fire agency only pays for half of the \$23.77 cost. Stockton Fire Department charges the same for all incidents, whether or not they have an ambulance assigned. Finally, all member agencies in JRUG pay the same rate. Stockton Fire has different rates for its member agencies depending on when they joined. Tracy Fire Department pays 65.00 per dispatch, fire or EMS.

Recommendation 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 task force and provide a plan to consolidate into a single countywide emergency fire dispatch center.

SJCJRUG and its members have a long-history of working in conjunction with the San Joaquin county EMSA. We will continue to work with other interested parties to explore any and all viable options.

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

As stated in the published report, SJCJRUG members already have AVL capability in place and have been utilizing it. There are two parts to deploying AVL technology, one is for the dispatch center to have the infrastructure, and the other is for the field units to have the proper equipment to send the AVL data. VRECC has the necessary infrastructure in place and has for over 12 years. The Stockton Fire Dispatch Center does not. In fact, the Tracy Fire Department and the Lathrop Manteca Fire District both abandoned the AVL data processing capability when they left VRECC for Stockton fire Department. The determination of which units each specific Agency determines to track in the system is left up to that Agency. While it is convenient to state that all units should have AVL, some such as utility or support vehicles may not benefit.