



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 335, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101-2470

AGENDA ITEM

DATE: February 26, 2008

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT: RETAINING MEDICAL EMERGENCY RESOURCES IN THE REGION
(District: All)

SUMMARY:

Overview

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recently initiated a plan to regionalize Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) medical supply caches in southern California. Effective March 31, 2008, the cache located here in San Diego and used by our local DMAT will lose its federal funding and its supplies will be removed and relocated to Los Angeles.

After carefully assessing the consequences of this plan with our local public health and emergency medical services personnel in the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency and the disaster planning personnel in the County of San Diego Office of Emergency Services, along with the leadership of our local DMAT, it was determined that eliminating this local resource would significantly threaten our ability to respond to a local disaster and compromise the public safety of our residents.

Today, we are asking for your support in protecting this vital resource and ensure that it remains in San Diego. We urge you to approve the following recommendations.

Recommendation(s):

CHAIRMAN COX AND SUPERVISOR ROBERTS

- 1) Direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to draft a letter for the Chairman's signature to the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services to reconsider the consolidation of the DMAT's medical supply caches in southern California and immediately reinstate the funding to support the cache located in San Diego.
- 2) Direct the CAO to notify the local federal delegation of our concerns regarding the consolidation of the DMAT's medical supply caches and to request their support for the reinstatement of the funding for the cache located in San Diego.
- 3) Direct the CAO to add language to the Board's Legislative Agenda that conveys the

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County's desire to keep any and all, current and future, local disaster preparedness resources in our region.

Fiscal Impact:

There is no fiscal impact associated with approving these recommendations.

Business Impact Statement:

N/A

Advisory Board Statement:

N/A

BACKGROUND:

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Public Health Services Branch oversees the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS), which coordinates the federal response to disasters in the event that local and state resources are exceeded. NDMS is comprised of four federal agencies including: the Office of Emergency Response, Department of Defense, Department of Veterans Affairs, and Federal Emergency Management Agency.

In the event of a significant manmade or natural declared disaster, NDMS can activate individual DMATs, which are locally organized volunteer medical teams, for any mission for which they train: the establishment and staffing of a Patient Field Treatment site; a Regional Evacuation Point, where patients will be managed as they are prepared for flights to other cities when the ability of the local Emergency Medical System (EMS) cannot cope with needs; or a Patient Reception Point, where patients who have been flown to another city will be received and examined by a DMAT in the receiving city and integrated into the new local EMS. In addition, if the entire primary care system of an area is destroyed, DMATs can be activated to deliver regional primary care until the local area can restore such a critical function. When hospitals have been severely affected or damaged, DMATs can respond to perform hospital staff relief or they can assist in hospital evacuations.

DMAT San Diego CA-4 is the 4th California DMAT to have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with NDMS. It has been recognized as a local resource for disaster planning and response since it formed in 1991 by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors. Currently, the University of California San Diego (UCSD) is the sponsor of DMAT CA-4 and has successfully deployed the team to over a dozen major disasters around the country, including the Northridge Earthquake, World Trade Center Attack and Hurricane Katrina; the team also provided critical logistical support assistance during San Diego's 2007 wildfires.

In 1994, the cache of medical supplies was established in San Diego as a federal resource to support DMAT CA-4 in their responsibility of recruiting members, providing training and educational opportunities and most importantly responding to disasters. In this arrangement, the

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federal government committed to supporting the cost of storing and equipping the cache with crucial medical supplies and the DMAT was responsible for fulfilling their role as responders when called upon by the federal government.

Based on standard hazard vulnerability assessments, Emergency Medical Services experts do not advocate that vital assets be stored in one location. It was due to this premise that a policy decision was made to locate supply caches in close proximity to each D-MAT, knowing that the immediate availability of these medical supplies would be an essential component of any disaster preparedness strategy. Furthermore, this model allows the DMAT to promptly respond to a disaster elsewhere in the U.S. or to be used by another DMAT deployed to address a local or regional crisis in and around San Diego.

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After carefully assessing the consequences of this plan with our local public health and emergency medical services personnel in the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency and the disaster planning personnel in the County of San Diego Office of Emergency Services, along with the leadership of our local DMAT, it was determined that eliminating this local resource would significantly threaten our ability to respond to a local disaster and compromise the public safety of our residents.

Today, we are asking for your support in protecting this vital public safety resource by approving the recommendations in this board letter.

Respectfully submitted,

GREG COX
Chairman, First District

RON ROBERTS
Supervisor, Fourth District

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(District: All)

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET

CONCURRENCE(S)

COUNTY COUNSEL REVIEW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Written Disclosure per County Charter Section 1000.1 Required	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
GROUP/AGENCY FINANCE DIRECTOR	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Requires Four Votes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
GROUP/AGENCY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
COUNTY TECHNOLOGY OFFICE	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A

Other Concurrence(s): N/a

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: Supervisorial Districts One and Four

CONTACT PERSON(S):

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AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: _____