



**RON ROBERTS**  
SUPERVISOR, FOURTH DISTRICT  
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

**AGENDA ITEM**

**DATE:** November 4, 2003  
**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**SUBJECT:** Creation of a Regional Fire-Fighting Helicopter Fleet (District: All)

**SUMMARY:**

**Overview**

In response to the devastating wildfires that have ravaged much of the San Diego region, there is a need to provide a more effective way to combat fire emergencies in San Diego. It was made painfully clear that the San Diego region is under-equipped to deal with a major fire emergency. A countywide approach to preparedness is what is needed to solve the myriad of problems that face fire service agencies in San Diego County. Obviously, the best way to protect our residents from another catastrophe is by increasing our fire fighting capabilities.

The recommendation is for the Board of Supervisors to direct the Chief Administrative Officer and County Counsel to analyze the possibility of creating a regional fire protection district under the current Fire Protection District Law or, in the alternative, to seek legislation that would authorize the County to create a regional fire protection authority or district that would then use funds to purchase and operate fire-fighting helicopters. The Chief Administrative Officer and County Counsel would report back to the Board on December 2, 2003.

**Recommendation(s)**

**SUPERVISOR ROBERTS:**

1. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer and County Counsel to analyze the possibility of creating a regional fire protection district under current Fire Protection District Law or, in the alternative, to seek legislation that would authorize the County to create a regional fire services authority or district that would then use funds to purchase and operate fire-fighting helicopters.
2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer and County Counsel to report back to the Board on December 2, 2003 on the advisability of forming a regional fire protection district under current law or seeking legislation that would authorize the County to create a regional fire services authority or district.

**SUBJECT:**

**Fiscal Impact**

There is no fiscal impact from the proposed action.

**Business Impact Statement**

N/A

**Advisory Board Statement**

N/A

**BACKGROUND:**

It was made painfully clear by the recent wildfires that the San Diego region is under-equipped to deal with a major fire emergency. It has been my long standing opinion that the best way to administer fire services and equipment is through the coordination of services for all jurisdictions. As a result of the recent tragedy, it has become imperative to find a more effective way to provide fire services to the residents of this County.

The devastation that these fires have caused is almost incomprehensible. To date, 16 people have lost their lives and a total of 382,284 acres in San Diego County have been burned. Countywide, over 1800 single-family dwellings have been destroyed, and these numbers will, unfortunately, rise in the coming days.

In the past, this Board of Supervisors has been very supportive of acquiring aerial fire-fighting support. This Board has approved the allocation of significant funding for a fire-rescue helicopter that has been a major addition to the fire protection of our county. Securing additional fire-fighting helicopters is essential to the safety of our residents and will ensure that San Diego County will be better equipped to deal with an emergency of this magnitude in the future.

Many of the services that the different fire agencies currently provide, and some that they need to provide, could be better planned, provided and managed using a regional approach. Therefore, the recommended action would be for the Chief Administrative Officer and County Counsel to analyze the possibility of creating a regional fire protection district under current law or, in the alternative, seeking legislation that would authorize the County to create a regional fire services authority or district that would then use funds to purchase and operate fire-fighting helicopters.

Once created, the regional fire services district or authority could propose a property assessment on every parcel of land in the agency's territory. A two-thirds vote of the public would be needed to approve this assessment. If the property assessment were approved, the proceeds would be used to purchase and operate fire-fighting helicopters. The primary goal is to provide all of San Diego County with the highest level of protection possible and prevent future catastrophes. A countywide approach to acquiring and operating fire fighting helicopters, planning and prevention efforts is the best way to achieve this goal and should be the real focus.

**SUBJECT:**

Respectfully Submitted,

RON ROBERTS  
Supervisor, Fourth District

**SUBJECT:**

**AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET**

**CONCURRENCE(S)**

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

**Other Concurrence(s):** N/A

**ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT:** Ron Roberts  
Supervisor, District Four

**CONTACT PERSON(S):**

Jacques Ballard	_____
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E-mail	E-mail

**AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SUBJECT:**

**AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET**  
(continued)

**PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:**

[Click **here** and type action(s), or type N/A if not applicable]

**BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:**

[Click **here** and type applicable policies, or type N/A if not applicable]

**BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:**

[Click **here** and type required statement(s), or type N/A if not applicable]

**CONTRACT NUMBER(S):**

[Click **here** and type numbers, or type N/A if not applicable]

**SUBJECT:**

**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**DEPARTMENT:** [Click here and type]

**PROGRAM:** [Click here and type]

**PROPOSAL:** [Click here and type]

FUTURE YEARS ESTIMATED  
BUDGET OF PROPOSAL  
IF ADOPTED

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
Budgeted Amount For Proposal	Proposed Change in Budgeted Amount	Proposed Revised Current Year Budget (a+b)	1st Subsequent Year	2nd Subsequent Year

Direct Cost

Revenue/Other Offset

**NET GENERAL  
FUND COST**

Staff Years

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Sources of Revenue/Other Offset for Proposed Change and Subsequent Years:

**Space-Related Impacts:** Will this proposal result in any additional space requirements?  Yes  N/A

**Support/Other Departmental Impacts:**  Yes  N/A

**Remarks:**  Yes  N/A