



Fire Department

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HEADQUARTERS

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TO: Partner Agencies

FROM: Garrett Huff

DATE: August 12, 2025

SUBJECT: Summary of Changes – Second Amendment to Cooperative Dispatch Agreement (Including Updated Appendices A, B, and C)

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a summary of changes incorporated in the Second Amendment to the Agreement for Cooperative Dispatch Services between the Santa Barbara County Fire Protection District and each Partner agency, including updates to Appendix A (Financial Calculations), Appendix B (Communications), and Appendix C (Call Distribution Variances).

GENERAL KEY CHANGES:

1. Terminology Update

- All references to the “Regional Fire Communications Facility (RFCF)” have been updated to “Regional Fire Communications Center (RFCC).”

2. RFCC Operational Start Date

- The RFCC officially began operations on May 13, 2025. Each Partner’s agreement reflects the date the RFCC began dispatch services for that agency, which now serves as the effective start date for the five-year term of the agreement.

3. Appendices Revised and Reorganized

- Appendix A: Replaced with a new financial model and cost allocation structure.
- Appendix B: Updated to reflect current FCC frequency licensing, equipment standards, and infrastructure responsibilities. The Original Appendix B and C were merged.
- Appendix C: A new appendix was added at the request of the County Fire Chiefs to address Call Distribution Variances.

4. Contract Language Amendments

Section IV – Term

- Establishes the date dispatch services began for each agency, as the official start of the five-year contract period.

Section VIII – Operating Systems

- Alerting (A-4): The Partner is responsible for ensuring all stations can receive assigned tone pairs prior to go-live.
- Mobile/Portable Radios (A-5): Partner must purchase and maintain radios compatible with the District’s system.
- CAD System (B): DISTRICT provides 24/7 support and disaster recovery. Partner-specific integrations are at the Partner’s cost.

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- Mobile Computers (C): Partner installs broadband-compatible devices. DISTRICT provides Tablet Command access with real-time updates.

FINANCIAL UPDATES – APPENDIX A

Cost Allocation Model

- Combines equally shared fixed costs, proportionally shared incident-based costs, and indirect costs (5%).

Cost Categories:

- Fixed Costs: Maintenance, depreciation, rent, utilities, office supplies, etc.
- Calls for Service Costs: Salaries, IT maintenance, training, and communication services.
- Indirect Costs: Administrative overhead charged at 5% of total indirect cost allocation.

EMS Call Billing Rule

- EMS incidents are billed 50/50 between the fire jurisdiction and ambulance provider.
- Fire-only or ambulance-only incidents are fully billed to the respective party.

Budget & Payment Schedule

- The annual budget is prepared by the DISTRICT with Partner input in November.
- Quarterly financial reports and invoices are distributed by the 20th day following each quarter.
- Payment Due Dates:
 - Q1: November 15
 - Q2: February 15
 - Q3: May 15
 - Q4: August 15

Late Payments

- 1.5% interest applied after 60 days; further penalties every 30 days thereafter.
- Balances over 120 days are considered a breach of contract.

COMMUNICATIONS UPDATES – APPENDIX B

FCC Frequency Transfers

- Partner agrees to transfer ownership of FCC call signs to the DISTRICT upon request.
- Frequencies to be used exclusively for RFCC and Operational Area communications.

Transfer-Back Provisions

- Upon Partner's termination or when frequencies are no longer needed, the DISTRICT will assist with license re-transfer.

VHF Legacy Infrastructure

- Partner will maintain its legacy radio system until both parties agree it is no longer needed.

Technology Compatibility

The Partner must ensure compatibility with the following platforms:

- Central Square CAD
- Zetron ACOM radio consoles
- EF Johnson VHF systems
- Tablet Command
- Two-tone alerting systems

APPENDIX C – CALL DISTRIBUTION VARIANCES

Call volume will be regularly monitored to identify potential distribution variances in dispatch assignments among participating agencies.

Resolution Mechanisms:

- Revisions to response plans to redistribute call volume more evenly.
- CAD logic modifications to balance efficiency with equity.

Collaboration Commitment: Agencies commit to engaging in good-faith, data-driven conversations to address imbalances. Partner agreements will receive a quarterly report of all calls outside their service area. Discussions will occur during the Joint Executive Committee meetings.

CONCLUSION

The Second Amendment and revised appendices reflect the RFCC's transition from planning to full operations. These changes improve cost transparency, ensure regulatory compliance, modernize operational systems, and establish a clear governance structure for both financial and communications infrastructure moving forward.

Please contact me if you have questions or require additional documentation.

Garrett Huff
Deputy Fire Chief