

STANISLAUS COUNTY
FIRE AUTHORITY

Annual Report

July 2006- June 2007

Stanislaus County Fire Authority Annual Report

On June 30, 2007 the Stanislaus County Fire Authority completed its first complete fiscal year in existence. This report will outline some of the accomplishments that have been achieved through a collaborative effort of the fire agencies in Stanislaus County. All contracts for services have been awarded and each service provider has included a brief outline of program objectives and projects.

During the 2006-2007 fiscal year, six of the services identified and prioritized by the Fire Authority were implemented. Fire Prevention, Fire Investigations, Fire Communications Coordination, Fire Training Coordination and Special Operations services were implemented during the year. In addition, one year contracts were entered into with the agencies of the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of the Fire Authority. Over the life of the five year contracts, the approximate cost will be \$7,762,102. All agencies attending the meetings had the opportunity to assist in the selection of the contract providers.

The service provider's contracts included a provision for an annual performance review. A performance review packet was distributed to all members attending the August meeting. Packets were mailed to those members not in attendance. The performance review provided an opportunity for the member agencies to provide their input and suggestions for improvements or enhancements. The results of the survey are included in this report.

Currently there are 20 member agencies in the Fire Authority. Each agency has designated a representative authorized to vote on issues brought before the Board. The active participation of the membership is important to the success of the organization, and attendance and participation is encouraged. During the past year, attendance at our regular meetings was as follows:

Number of Agencies	Meetings Attended	% of Attendance
5	12	100%
2	11	91%
3	10	83%
3	9	75%
1	7	58%
1	5	42%
1	3	25%
1	1	8%
3	0	0%

Approved and Adopted - 9/6/07

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Service:	Finance Administration
Provider:	Stanislaus County Fire Warden
	Salida Fire, Woodland Avenue Fire
Contract Period:	various
First Year Program Cost:	\$105,800
Annual Increase	4% annually
Funding Source:	
General Fund	\$0
Fees	\$0
Less Than Countywide	\$105,800

Program Highlights

The Stanislaus County Fire Warden's Office provides financial and administrative support to the Fire Authority and the individual agencies with a manager and half time administrative clerk. Also included in the Administrative and Finance service is the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Fire Authority. Some of the projects and accomplishments achieved this year include:

- Developed annual budget for County Fire Service Fund
- Developed 06-07 Business Plan for approval by Fire Authority and Board of Supervisors
- Met with individual Supervisors to educate them on the goals of the Fire Authority
- Met on weekly basis with Executive Committee for planning.
- Development and implementation of five year contracts between Stanislaus County and service providers.
- Development and implementation of annual contracts between Stanislaus County and agencies of the Chair and Vice-Chair.
- Tracked annual revenues and expenditures of the County Fire Service Fund and reported to the Fire Authority.
- Implemented invoicing and fee management system
- Financial administration of the MDC program
- Assisted fire district with administrative aspects of a tax assessment election

Approved and Adopted - 9/6/07

Finance Administration, continued

- Assisted fire district with implementing developer fee study
- Obtained funding for upgrades to fire command trailer and to purchase a mobile air support unit.
- Facilitated contract with Maximus, Inc. to complete a fire prevention fee study and worked with consultant throughout process through adoption by Board of Supervisors and affected cities
- Managed all Fire Authority documents including Form 700s, agendas, minutes, agency representative designations, voting records, and reports.
- Provided information upon request from CEOs Office and Board of Supervisors regarding fire agencies and Fire Authority
- Assisted fire agencies with information requests regarding taxes and assessments.

Survey Response: 4 responses

How many times has your agency used these services during the past year?	-Numerous times -None -Two -N/A
Were your concerns addressed?	-Yes -N/A -No -No response
Has your experience been positive and professional?	-Yes- very positive in being liaison between special districts and county government -Yes -No -No response
In your opinion, does the provider meet Fire Authority expectations?	-Yes, very organized and willing to serve -Yes -No -No response
Do you have suggestions for improvement or service expansion?	-Provide info and financials on redevelopment program -No response -No response -No response

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Service:	Fire Communications
Provider:	Salida Fire District
Contract Period:	12/1/06 – 11/30/11
First Year Program Cost:	\$106,119.49
Annual Increase	4% annually
Funding Source:	
General Fund	\$ 0
Fees	\$ 0
Less Than Countywide	\$ 106,119.49

Program Highlights

The Salida Fire Protection District assumed the Regional Communications Coordinator position in December 2006. Some of the accomplishments during the first year include:

- Evaluated CAD system and worked with working groups to ensure that fire agencies requirements were met in the CAD system.
- Taken the lead in transforming the Communications Standardization Committee into a Communications Advisory Committee. Group now meets monthly to discuss fire communications.
- Established the MDC Workgroup. This group meets monthly to address questions and concerns of MDC users within the fire service.
- Taken the lead in assisting fire agencies with radio programming and pager programming. Providing technical assistance on both mobile and handheld radios.
- Implemented operational procedures for the CP-90 Mobile Command vehicle.
- Developed implementation plan and began working towards the implementation of Fire Frequency Sharing, which will take place on November 7, 2007.
- Evaluated, demonstrated, and working with vendors to establish a countywide RMS system for Fire Prevention and Inspection.

Fire Communications, Continued

- Evaluated proposals that were submitted for Public Works One Stop Permitting with respect to Fire Prevention; provided technical advice to Fire Marshal's office with the project.
- Evaluated proposals for the Countywide Radio Maintenance agreement and reported to fire agencies on the process.
- Submitted application for Assistance to Firefighters Grant for regional interoperability and communications projects.

During the 2007-2008 fiscal year, the Regional Communications Coordinator intends to:

- Continue to assist with the development and implementation of a new CAD system for Stanislaus Regional 911.
- Continue to support the Communications Advisory Committee.
- Continue to support the MDC Workgroup. Research alternative connectivity options for MDCs.
- Continue to program radios and pagers for agencies within Stanislaus County.
- Finalize the operational manual for the CP-90 Mobile Command vehicle.
- Implement Fire Frequency Sharing and ensure that all goals and expectations are exceeded.
- Once a vendor is chosen, and funding is identified, implement the countywide RMS system.
- Work towards finalizing the contract for a Countywide Radio Maintenance contract.
- Continue to apply for fire-related grants for regional interoperability.
- Research options for a countywide alpha paging system.
- Develop a standardized station and paging tone scheme.

Fire Communications, Continued

Survey Results: 3 responses

How many times has your agency used these services during the past year?	-None -One -Approx. 3-4 times
Were your concerns addressed?	-No response -Yes -Yes
Has your experience been positive and professional?	-No response -Yes -Yes
In your opinion, does the provider meet Fire Authority expectations?	-No response -Yes -Yes
Do you have suggestions for improvement or service expansion?	-No response -No response -Countywide purchase program to standardize radio equipment

Stanislaus County Fire Authority Annual Report

Service:	Fire Prevention
Provider:	Stanislaus County Fire Warden
Contract Period:	7/1/06 – 6/30/11
First Year Program Cost:	\$525,000
Annual Increase	4% annually
Funding Source:	
General Fund	\$300,000
Fees	\$100,000
Less Than Countywide	\$125,000

Program Highlights

The Stanislaus County Fire Warden’s Office assumed the responsibility for providing fire prevention services on July 1, 2006. The position of Fire Marshal was filled on an interim basis until a permanent employee was identified and hired. From September until December 31, 2006 Fire Prevention Specialists were contracted from the previous service provider until the County was able to develop job classifications and conduct a recruitment. In January, 2007, three Fire Prevention Specialists were hired (including one employee from the previous service provider). Some of the accomplishments achieved during this first year include:

- Adoption of the 2001 California Fire Code
- Completion of a fee study and approval and adoption of an updated fee schedule
- Completion of all known State mandated inspections
- Implemented a target hazard inspection program
- Developed and implemented a tracking and reporting system for activities and fees.
- Provided reports to Fire Authority on quarterly basis of activity totals
- Provided reports to districts on a monthly basis of all services provided within their jurisdiction
- Adopted and implemented County’s Customer Relationship Management program to monitor and respond to complaints
- Established policy for fire apparatus access and fire protection water supply
- Drafted proposed Weed Abatement Ordinance

Fire Prevention, continued

- Drafted proposed Automatic Fire Sprinkler Ordinance and held multiple workshops for agency input and discussion
- Worked with Community Development Department through the Environmental Review Committee to identify, track, inform and assist fire districts with major development / projects in their areas.

During the 2007-2008 fiscal year, the Fire Prevention Bureau intends to increase staffing to further develop the program to meet the needs of those agencies paying into the Less Than Countywide Fire Tax. This will be achieved through a higher cost recovery based on the implementation of the updated fees.

Survey Results: 4 responses

How many times has your agency used these services during the past year?	-Regularly -One -Special request only: Approx 25 -One
Were your concerns addressed?	-Yes, follow up and documentation is appreciated -Yes -For the most part -Not completely
Has your experience been positive and professional?	-Very Much so. Very thorough. -Yes -Yes, very much so -Yes
In your opinion, does the provider meet Fire Authority expectations?	-Not only meets, but exceeds expectations -Yes -Yes-for the most part -Yes
Do you have suggestions for improvement or service expansion?	-Become more involved in community and project planning when funding is available. -Did not respond -Be more proactive in fire inspections, not only complaint based -No response

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Service:	Fire Investigations
Provider:	Modesto Fire Department
Contract Period:	7/1/06 – 6/30/11
First Year Program Cost:	\$489,546.00
Annual Increase	The greater of 4% or CPI annually
Funding Source:	
General Fund	\$ 0
Fees	\$ 0
Less Than Countywide	\$ 489,546.00

Program Highlights

The Fire Investigation Unit (FIU) of the Modesto Fire Department began operations to include the areas outside the City of Modesto, within Stanislaus County on July 1, 2006. The FIU consists of two 40hr/week supervisors, three shift investigators, and five relief investigators normally assigned to suppression crews. The FIU works under the guidelines of the Prevention Division, and is managed by the Fire Marshal.

- From July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007 a total of 683 investigations were performed.
- 412 were determined to be arson (60.3%)
- 136 were determined to be accidental (19.7%)
- 135 fires the cause could not be determined (19.7%).
- Department SOP's have been developed to implement a "second call" procedure, which initiates an additional investigator to respond to subsequent requests should the shift investigator have a delayed response.
- The FIU averaged over 70 hours of follow-up investigation per month.
- This effort along with the cooperation of the Modesto Police Department and the Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department resulted in 17 arrests.

Fire Investigations, continued

Survey Results: 4 responses

How many times has your agency used these services during the past year?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Numerous times for investigations, training and follow-up -None -Approximately 30 -Approx 12
Were your concerns addressed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Yes, in a professional way -N/A -Yes -Yes
Has your experience been positive and professional?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Yes -Yes -Yes -Yes
In your opinion, does the provider meet Fire Authority expectations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Yes, in many ways exceeds them -Yes -Yes -Yes
Do you have suggestions for improvement or service expansion?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Continue efforts with Fire Warden's Office to develop Arson Task Force -Did not respond -Quarterly reports on the fires and locations -No response

Stanislaus County Fire Authority Annual Report

Service:	Special Operations
Provider:	Stanislaus County Fire Warden's Office
Contract Period:	12/1/06 – 11/30/11
First Year Program Cost:	\$0
Annual Increase	4% annually
Funding Source:	
General Fund	\$ 0
Fees	\$ 0
Less Than Countywide	\$ 0

Program Highlights

The Stanislaus County Fire Warden's Office was awarded the Special Operations Coordinator Position in March 2007. Approval was required from the Board of Supervisors to provide this position through the County. A job classification specific to Special Operations was developed and as of June 2007 the recruitment process is underway. No funds were expended during the 2006-2007 budget period for Special Operations services; however, the Fire Warden's Office has continued to provide support for county fire agencies in the area of Special Operations during the recruitment period. Some of the areas of activity include:

- Assist in developing and updating emergency plans and agreements in the areas of USAR, water rescue and hazmat.
- Participate on Stanislaus County Domestic Preparedness Task Force and Homeland Security Grant Program
- Evaluation and approval of RFP for upgrades to Fire Command Trailer
- Purchase of equipment for Fire Command Trailer
- Evaluation of specifications and proposal for mobile air support unit.

Stanislaus County Fire Authority Annual Report

Service:	Fire Training
Provider:	Salida Fire District
Contract Period:	2/1/07 – 11/30/12
First Year Program Cost:	\$94,894.05
Annual Increase	4% annually
Funding Source:	
General Fund	\$ 0
Fees	\$ 0
Less Than Countywide	\$ 94,894.05

Program Highlights

The Salida Fire Protection District assumed the responsibility of the regional training on February 1, 2007. The District sought interested candidates for the position and applications were requested. An interview process was completed and the District was able to fill the position of Fire Training Coordinator internally. Some of the accomplishments and achievements during the first year of the contract include the following:

- Development of the Fire Training Blueprint 20/20 for Stanislaus County
- Delivery of multiple regional Hazardous Materials courses to various agencies.
- Development of the Stanislaus County Training Advisory Committee.
- Development of regional new generation fire shelter training program
- Development of Highway Safety Response training program
- Planning and delivery of an all risk regional wildland training course for 2008
- Developed a working relationship with many local, state and federal fire agencies to tap in to their expertise for various training components.

During the fiscal year 2007-2008 Regional Training plans on the continued development and delivery of regional training courses and with the continued efforts of the Stanislaus County Training Advisory Committee develop a regional cadre of instructors to assist in the delivery of the courses.

Fire Training, continued

Survey Results: 3 responses

How many times has your agency used these services during the past year?	-None -Approximately 1-2 times –good resource -2
Were your concerns addressed?	-N/A -Yes -One of two
Has your experience been positive and professional?	-Yes -Yes -Yes
In your opinion, does the provider meet Fire Authority expectations?	-Yes -Yes, I think more time is needed to see the value -No
Do you have suggestions for improvement or service expansion?	-No response -Develop some county-wide procedures -Training Advisory Committee meetings are daytime. Volunteers cannot attend

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2006-2007 Financial Summary

	Projected	Actual
Revenues		
Less Than Countywide	\$1,135,208	\$1,217,569
Fire Prevention Fees	\$ 100,000	\$ 108,177
General Fund Contribution	\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000
Total Revenues	\$1,535,208	\$1,625,746
Program Expenses		
Fire Prevention **	\$ 525,000	\$ 452,231
Carry forward to 07-08		\$ 50,000
Investigations	\$ 489,546	\$ 489,546
Admin/Finance	\$ 105,800	\$ 95,997
Communications	\$ 106,114	\$ 106,114
Training	\$ 94,894	\$ 94,894
Special Operations *	\$ 53,634	\$ 0
Carry forward to 07-08		\$ 30,000
Other Expenses		
Fee Study	\$ 20,000	\$ 18,000
Legal Fees- County Counsel	\$ 11,360	\$ 3,872
County Prop tax admin	\$ 20,000	\$ 16,954
Other County Fees	\$ 0	\$ 2,451
Total Expenses	\$1,436,348	\$1,360,059
Net	\$ 98,860	\$ 265,687

The Fire Authority ended the fiscal year with a positive net operating income. Revenues were approximately \$90,000 higher than projected and expenses were approximately \$76,000 lower than projected. A portion of the reduction in expenditures was due to the Special Operations position remaining unfilled through the end of the year. *The \$30,000 allocation for the Special Operations vehicle was not spent, but will be carried over and expended in the 2007-2008 fiscal year. In addition, the Fire Prevention Bureau had savings, due to temporary position vacancies and other expenses being deferred. **A carryover of \$50,000 will be used to address the need for a records management system.

A Capital Acquisitions account has been established to address the need for a vehicle replacement program; \$80,000 was transferred to this account for future replacements.

The 2007-2008 Fire Authority Business Plan was prepared, approved, and submitted to the County Chief Executive Office. Within the Business Plan there was a funding request to the County for \$670,954. This would have funded additional positions to achieve desired service levels beyond what has been provided in the past year. The Fire Authority was informed by the County CEO that he is not recommending any expansion beyond the \$300,000 in funding already provided in the budget. The business plan will be adjusted to reflect the lower level of funding, and the reduced level of service achievable with that funding.