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FIRE DEPARTMENT

RALPH M. TERRAZAS
FIRE CHIEF

200 NORTH MAIN STREET
ROOM 1800
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

(213) 978-3800
FAX: (213) 978-3815

HTTP://WWW.LAFD.ORG

02/21/2020

The Honorable Public Safety Committee
City of Los Angeles
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Council File No. 19-1557 – Woolsey Fire After Action Review

Honorable Members:

In response to City Council action on December 6, 2019 and the motion filed by Councilmember Bob Blumenfield, the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) appreciates the opportunity to submit the following report regarding the LAFD and the Los Angeles Police Department's (LAPD) responses to the Woolsey Fire After Action Review (AAR) submitted by City Gate under the supervision and direction of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. This report is hereby transmitted to the City Council's Public Safety Committee for consideration and approval.

Should you need additional information, please contact Deputy Chief Trevor Richmond, Operations Valley Bureau, at (818) 728-9921.

Sincerely,

RALPH M. TERRAZAS
Fire Chief

Summary

On November 8, 2018, the Woolsey Fire erupted on the northwest boundary of the City of Los Angeles and quickly moved through unincorporated parts of Ventura and Los Angeles Counties. The fire moved quickly to the southwest consuming thousands of acres and eventually jumped the 101 freeway and rapidly moved towards the Pacific Ocean. As a result of the threat to the City of Los Angeles on the eastern flanks of the fire, the LAFD committed nine Type I and one Type III Strike Teams (50 engine companies). The Woolsey Fire proved to be one of most destructive fires in California history. Altogether, the fire consumed nearly 97,000 acres and destroyed 1,643 structures.

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, under the leadership of Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, formed a Woolsey Fire Task Force to solicit input from the impacted communities to determine where improvements can be made. City Gate, a consulting company hired by Los Angeles County, was selected to perform a comprehensive After-Action Review (AAR) of the response efforts. The LAFD was invited to participate in the task force and attended each of the five meetings and participated in listening to the community's concerns.

The After-Action Review was completed and offered to public on November 17, 2019. The LAFD conducted a thorough review of the report and determined that a number of the recommendations could be useful to the LAFD's response in the future.

Findings

The following items are taken from the After-Action Review and were discussed at an executive staff meeting. Presently, action is being taken to implement some of these recommendations.

Response

Woolsey Fire AAR Recommendation #4

Draft an addendum to the Santa Susana Mutual Threat Zone (MTZ) agreement that delegates action if the other party cannot fulfill its obligations.

LAFD Response: The LAFD currently has agreement with Los Angeles County and Ventura County Fire Departments that is reviewed every three years. Within the agreement is the "closest force principle". This principle describes that regardless of jurisdiction, the first company on scene will take immediate mitigating efforts with the thought that all jurisdictions are at risk within the MTZ.

Woolsey Fire AAR Recommendation #8

Continue to train officers and commanders in TIER (Take Initiative, Engage and Report) for fire front following and Life Safety First implementation to allow for flexible engagement.

LAFD Response: This philosophy is currently being communicated to all department members through a variety of mediums. It will also be captured in the annual department brush bulletin that outlines the strategies for each up-coming brush season. Additionally, it will be discussed at length during annual brush fire chief officer training.

Woolsey Fire Recommendation #14

Incorporate the concepts of Fire Front Following and Life Safety First into Department wildfire programs to educate the public and policy leaders.

LAFD Response: These concepts are currently being reviewed and updated in all department manuals.

Woolsey Fire AAR Recommendation #18

Incident Command Training should be conducted not by agency but via mixed discipline classes to build relationships and knowledge of shared experiences, including elected officials and their staff.

LAFD Response: The LAFD is open to including the variety of stakeholders in ICS training. The LAFD Training Division is currently assessing and evaluating what this training might look like.

Woolsey Fire AAR Recommendation #29

Conduct a wildland fire deployment study to establish an appropriate ratio of emergency resources in relation to population and animal risk factors. This study should also help to support funding changes as needed.

LAFD Response: The LAFD has been funded to hire a consulting company for providing a "Standards of Cover" analysis. Within this analysis, it will be determined if current resource deployments are sufficient for the expanding call loads and population densities. This analysis will make recommendations on how to achieve the most efficient resource deployment model.

Recently, the LAFD updated the evacuation guidelines to be more responsive to large and small animal evacuations.

Woolsey Fire AAR Recommendation #31

Consider establishing local government Type I Incident Management Teams within Region 1.

LAFD Response: Type I certification is very difficult to achieve with many executive level positions requiring more than 20 years to become Type I certified. Presently, the federal and state government form Type I teams that can be activated to assist local governments. A more reasonable expectation would be to pursue a local government Type II certification in Region I. Currently, the LAFD has Field Incident Management Teams (FIMT) that meet Type III certification requirements. Over the last ten years the LAFD has made significant strides in getting members certified in the various positions and will continue to work toward Type II certifications.

Communications

Woolsey Fire AAR Recommendation #34

Shorten approval tempo of evacuation alerts, use of alerting tools, and the notification process. This requires a more robust multi-department process.

LAFD Response: The LAFD is presently assuming this responsibility from the Emergency Management Department (EMD) for the very reasons mentioned in the recommendation. LAFD Metro Fire Communications (MFC) in the near future will have the ability to provide for Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) to specific communities. The LAPD Department Operations Center will also be trained to provide these alerts and this should significantly improve the approval tempo for getting these alerts outs. EMD will collaborate with the LAFD and LAPD to determine the most expeditious way to alert communities. Strong governance of this process is being determined that will allow for streamlined messaging.

Evacuation

Woolsey Fire AAR Recommendation #49

Dramatically increase the tempo of pre-alerting and evacuations.

LAFD Response: Currently, LAFD Alert, Notify LA and Nixle are subscription options. The challenge has always been trying to get residents to sign up for these. The LAFD with the assistance of EMD is trying to determine how these subscription options can be better communicated and marketed.

Woolsey Fire AAR Recommendation #55

Conduct thorough safety training and issue PPE for Deputies prior to fire evacuation deployment, which should include LA-County-fire-led training on fire behavior, the hazards associated with premature re-entry, and how to explain these issues to the public in the field.

LAFD Response: The LAFD in the past has trained LAPD Supervisors in basic fire behavior in Operations Valley Bureau (OVB). Presently, the LAFD Training Division is evaluating what on-going training might look like for the LAPD. The LAFD will look at what types of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) would be appropriate for LAPD.

Woolsey Fire AAR Recommendation #61

Invite DPSS and Red Cross personnel to participate in large scale exercises that will include an activation of the Mass Care and Shelter Branch.

LAFD Response: The LAFD is currently working with the variety of Non-Government Organizations (NGO) to include them in mass care training. The LAFD will continue to evaluate and implement training that will include the variety of volunteer organizations.

Re-population

Woolsey Fire AAR Recommendation #64

Conduct a public re-population education campaign commensurate with evacuation training to manage expectations.

LAFD Response: The LAFD is currently working with MySafeLA on this issue. Presently, the LAFD has developed a concept of operation that includes a re-population educational effort that includes literature that is handed out prior to re-population. This was utilized during the 2019 Saddle Ridge Fire. The LAFD will continue to include re-population training in all of its community outreach projects.

Woolsey Fire AAR Recommendation #66

Conduct annual repopulation training for all involved agencies. (public and private)

LAFD Response: The LAFD is presently evaluating and plans to include this training in all annual evacuation training exercises.

Woolsey Fire AAR Recommendation #67

Develop a program to better manage and distribute spontaneous volunteer and donation efforts. Include coordination with the Occupant Support Team.

Response: The management of volunteers would probably fall under the responsibility of EMD. The LAFD has met with EMD on this issue and they are working with local volunteer organizations that provide support for donation acceptance.

Transition to Recovery and Future Mitigation

Woolsey Fire AAR Recommendation #78

Los Angeles County should develop and implement a standard policy regarding the collection of damage information and the release of the Damage Inspection Report by the Damage Inspection Specialist Unit.

LAFD Response: The LAFD Fire Prevention Bureau is currently evaluating how this might operate within the LAFD. During recent fires, LAFD fire prevention inspectors were involved with State Damage Inspection Teams (DINS) in evaluating and reporting damage estimates for impacted properties. The LAFD will continue to evaluate the best way to share this information.

Woolsey Fire AAR Recommendation #82

Create a layered fire defense approach using structure hardening and fuel reduction / change of fuel types to buffer development in relation to managing a neighborhood's expected fire intensity potential. Implementation in the property owner's responsibility.

LAFD Response: The LAFD Fire Prevention Bureau (FPB) is currently working with the Department of Building and Safety (DBS) to evaluate current building ordinances to determine if they can be modified or enhanced to provide for better structure defense against brush fires. Current brush clearance standards within the City of Los Angeles are 200 feet from structures. This exceeds the State requirement of 100 feet. The LAFD has also recently allowed members to attend the North Topanga Fire Safety Council to become certified to teach residents about how to better prepare their homes for brush fires. The LAFD is currently educating Los Angeles residents on "home-hardening" in the wildland urban interface areas.

Policy Leadership Recommendations

Woolsey Fire AAR Recommendation #2

Advance an initiative with all applicable public agencies and private interest groups that are involved in the Santa Monica Mountain's region to develop a unified, comprehensive and strategic wildfire hazard reduction plan.

LAFD Response: The LAFD is working with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) and Mountain and Recreation Conservation Authority (MRCA) on an on-going basis to determine the best way of providing for vegetation management in sensitive areas.

Woolsey Fire AAR Recommendation #3

Encourage the major fire departments in the area to evaluate creating a sub-regional (three county) Multiple Agency Coordination and Control Center within the State Mutual Aid system that will utilize technology to enhance situational awareness and create a shared, real-time intelligence, information and command center on a round-the-clock basis. This concept should further existing agreements and enhance the ability of agencies to work collaboratively during the first one to two days of a catastrophic disaster, for the common welfare, at a pace faster than the statewide mutual aid system.

LAFD Response: The LAFD is currently looking at viable options for interoperability in the Region. The uses of technology may be able to achieve this with a goal of implementing a standards-based system of sharing data between local governments.

Los Angeles Police Department

Response

Woolsey Fire AAR Recommendation #18

Incident Command Training should be conducted not by agency but via mixed discipline classes to build relationships and knowledge of shared experiences, including elected officials and their staff.

LAPD Response: The LAPD is open to including a variety of stakeholders in ICS training. The LAPD Major Incident Response Team will work with City entities to determine the best practice for incorporating mixed discipline ICS training.

Communications

Woolsey Fire AAR Recommendation #34

Shorten approval tempo of evacuation alerts, use of alerting tools, and the notification process. This requires a more robust multi-department process.

LAPD Response: The LAPD Department Operations Center should be retrained to provide Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) to specific communities which should significantly improve the approval tempo for getting alerts out. EMD will collaborate with the LAFD and LAPD to determine the most expeditious way to alert communities.

Evacuation

Woolsey Fire AAR Recommendation #55

Conduct thorough safety training and issue PPE for Deputies prior to fire evacuation deployment, which should include LA-County-fire-led training on fire behavior, the hazards associated with premature re-entry, and how to explain these issues to the public in the field.

LAPD Response: The LAFD in the past has trained LAPD Supervisors in basic fire behavior in Operations Valley Bureau (OVB). The LAPD is currently evaluating the process of issuing field officers and supervisors Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to be utilized during a fire incident.

Re-population

Woolsey Fire AAR Recommendation #62

Redesign, as needed, the repopulation process and establish a decision-making process, including establishing the final authority regarding repopulation determination.

LAPD Response: The LAPD and LAFD should review the current process and update as necessary. Once updates are made the process should be incorporated into a training program to educate Command and General Staff on the process.

Woolsey Fire AAR Recommendation #64

Conduct a public re-population education campaign commensurate with evacuation training to manage expectations.

LAPD Response: The LAPD should provide evacuation and re-population information in its community outreach projects and community meetings.

Woolsey Fire AAR Recommendation #66

Conduct annual repopulation training for all involved agencies. (public and private)

LAPD Response: The LAPD should work with LAFD in incorporating repopulation training that would be incorporated into annual evacuation training exercises.

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

CITY of LOS ANGELES
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT
"IN OMNIA PARATUS"

Date: February 20, 2020

To: Ralph Terrazas, Chief
Los Angeles Fire Department

From: Aram Sahakian, General Manager
Emergency Management Department

Subject: **WOOLSEY FIRE AFTER ACTION REPORT – EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT EVALUATION**

In response to Councilman Blumenfield's motion and your department's request for our input, the Emergency Management Department (EMD) reviewed the After Action Report (AAR) prepared by the County of Los Angeles to report any findings that could be applied to future wildfires. We provide you with this information for inclusion in your report to the Council.

Although the Woolsey Fire had a limited direct impact on the City of Los Angeles, we activated our Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to provide support as needed to LAFD and the County of Los Angeles. Many of the findings in the AAR that call for improvement in Los Angeles County are identified areas of strength for the City of Los Angeles. For example, the County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) relies on the Los Angeles County Sheriff's to activate their EOC, whereas EMD is able to activate the EOC without undue delay during emergencies.

The County AAR identified emergency notifications and public messaging as one of the biggest challenges they faced. The City of Los Angeles has made great strides in improving the speed and accuracy of our NotifyLA protocols. During the recent Getty Fire, many residents reported that their first indication that a wildfire was in their area was a NotifyLA message that they received from EMD. Our process is to have an emergency manager on call next to a computer when there are alerts or warnings from the National Weather Service in order to expedite the delivery of the mass notification messages that go out to the public

The AAR reinforced the need for increased collaboration between the County and City of Los Angeles with regards to training, exercises, public messaging, as well as mass care. The County opened a shelter within City boundaries that caused some coordination issues that had to be resolved by communicating with the American Red Cross and OEM.

The County AAR showed that small departments that have a role in the EOC have a difficult time staffing their positions during prolonged activations. We found similar issues during the Saddleridge and Getty fires. We are working with those small departments now to identify some possible solutions, including expanding the EOC responsibilities to other departments.

The County AAR revealed that private property debris removal was led by the LA County Department of Public Works. Removing debris from private property would be a challenge for the City in a large wildfire or earthquake.

I have attached a copy of the AAR that EMD prepared after the Woolsey fire that identifies some of the lessons learned and best practices that we were able to implement before the wildfires of 2019.

We will continue to improve the coordination and cooperation that already exists in the City of Los Angeles. My department is available to answer any additional questions.

Attachment

C: Cheryl Getuiza



Woolsey Fire

Emergency Operations Center Activation

Level 3 (Lowest Level)

November 8 – 14, 2018

After Action Report & Improvement Plan

CITY of LOS ANGELES
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT
"IN OMNIA PARATUS"

ACTIVATION OVERVIEW

Incident Name	Woolsey Fire EOC Activation
EOC Activation	November 8-14, 2018
Scope	The City of Los Angeles EOC was activated for five days at Level 3 (Lowest Level) to monitor the Woolsey Fire and coordinate City resources from the City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC), 500 E. Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012. The activation was staffed by the EOC Director, Public Information Officer, Planning and Intelligence Section Coordinator, Situation Status Unit Leader, an Agency Representative from the Department of Transportation, and an American Red Cross Agency Representative.
Mission Area	Response
Core Capabilities	Intelligence and Information Sharing Mass Care Services Public Information
Objectives	1. Maintain situational awareness from the Unified Command Post (UCP), Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) Operations Center (DOC), Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) Communication Division, Recreation and Parks (RAP), Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT), and other responding agencies, including the American Red Cross (ARC). 2. Monitor and support American Red Cross sheltering facilities within the City of Los Angeles. 3. Provide emergency information regarding the fire to the public, including people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs, during and after the incident. 4. In conjunction with Los Angeles Department of Transportation, provide real time mapping information of road closures, evacuation routes, and safe routes to activated shelters.
Threat or Hazard	Brushfire
Incident	On Thursday, November 8, 2018 at 1424 hours, a vegetation fire broke out in the Santa Susana Mountains above Simi Valley, California. Over the course of the next several days the fire consumed 96,949 acres of land,

	destroyed over 1,600 structures, prompted evacuations for more than 295,000 citizens and tragically took the lives of three people outside the City of Los Angeles. The Woolsey fire, as it became known, required the collaborative effort of hundreds of Strike Teams from across the nation to protect the homes and people of the Ventura and Los Angeles Counties, including the communities of West Hills in City of Los Angeles (City) and the contracted area of Bell Canyon.
Lead Agency	This EOC activation was led by the Emergency Management Department (EMD) Duty Officer with staffing support from EMD Emergency Management Coordinators.
Participating Organizations	The EOC activation was conducted at the City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC), but the response efforts at Department Operations Centers and the Unified Command Post included help from the City of Los Angeles: • Emergency Management Department • Fire Department • Police Department • Department of Transportation • Department of Recreation and Parks • Department of Building and Safety • Public Works Bureau of Sanitation • Information Technology Agency
Point of Contact	Kate Hutton Emergency Management Department – Operational Readiness Division 213-484-4894 Kate.Hutton@lacity.org Rob Freeman Emergency Management Department – Assistant General Manager 213-484-4804 Rob.Freeman@lacity.org

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On Thursday, November 8, 2018 at 1424 hours, a vegetation fire broke out in the Santa Susana Mountains above Simi Valley, California. Over the course of the next several days the fire consumed 96,949 acres of land, destroyed over 1,600 structures, prompted evacuations for more than 295,000 citizens and tragically took the lives of three people.

The Woolsey fire, as it became known, required the collaborative effort of hundreds of Strike Teams from across the nation to protect the homes and people of the Ventura and Los Angeles Counties, including the communities of West Hills in City of Los Angeles (City) and the contracted area of Bell Canyon.

In the first few days of the destructive wildfire, the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) provided its maximum deployment of ten Type I Strike Teams and one pre-positioned Type III Strike Team. The commitment of resources left fire station districts with minimal coverage, requiring the need for Regional partners to assist with fire protection in several districts within the City.

In addition to the unique challenges of the destructive, wind-driven wildfire in neighboring Counties, the weather changed on the second day and posed threats to the communities of West Hills, and Bell Canyon (a contracted fire protection area of Ventura County by the LAFD) causing voluntary and mandatory evacuations for the citizens in the area.

On November 9, the City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated to coordinate City response and support of neighboring jurisdictions. Due to the relative proximity of City resources and facilities to evacuees in neighboring jurisdictions, several shelters were opened within the City of Los Angeles at Los Angeles Unified School District sites. Additional shelter sites were identified at City Recreation and Parks facilities and were ready to operate if the incident expanded further.

The EOC remained activated until November 13 and coordinated directly with the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation, Recreation and Parks, Information Technology Agency, Public Works Bureau of Sanitation, Police Department, and Fire Department. Additionally, the American Red Cross sent a representative to the EOC for operational coordination.

This After Action Report (AAR) will discuss best practices, strengths, and areas for improvement identified during the incident. Additionally, any areas for improvement will be linked to an Improvement Plan (IP) with assigned responsibility and a timeline for implementing the recommendations.

After Action Methodology

This After Action Report (AAR) was developed in a four-step process over a three-month period following the Woolsey Fire. The AAR was then submitted to the City of Los Angeles Emergency Management Committee for review and forwarded to the Emergency Operations Board for approval.

Step 1 – Identify Goals and Engage Stakeholders

City departments and outside agencies directly involved in the City of Los Angeles EOC activation were identified and contacted for interviews and other documentation related to the incident.

Step 2 – Review Incident Documentation and Conduct AAR Interviews

Emails from the Duty Officer account, whiteboard content, NotifyLA records, Department AARs, and other incident documentation were reviewed for this AAR.

Interviews were conducted with staff from the Emergency Management Department, Department of Transportation, Recreation and Parks, Information Technology Agency, and the American Red Cross for this AAR.

Step 3 – Host Improvement Planning Meetings

The Improvement Plan was developed in coordination with EMD's Operational Readiness Division, which is charged with ensuring EOC processes, procedures, and personnel are ready for emergency response coordination and activation of the City's EOC.

Step 4 – Submit Draft AAR for Comments and Approval

This AAR was reviewed and approved by the Operations Subcommittee (March 12, 2019), Emergency Management Committee (May 1, 2019), and the Emergency Operations Board (May 21, 2019). 7

INCIDENT OVERVIEW

In the afternoon of November 8, 2018, a brushfire was reported near the Rocketdyne Facility along Woolsey Canyon Road. This fire, named the Woolsey Fire, approached and impacted the City of Los Angeles, resulting in a robust field response and EOC activation.

Incident Timeline

The following timeline follows the Woolsey Fire specifically as it relates to the City of Los Angeles and the Emergency Operations Center's role in supporting fire response, mass care, and public information.

Woolsey Incident Timeline		
November 8, 2018	1434	First LAFD units dispatched to assist LA County and Ventura County Fire departments
November 8, 2018	1630	Evacuations issued for the City of Calabasas
November 8, 2018	1730	Evacuations issued for Bell Canyon (91307)
November 8, 2018	2345	Evacuations issued for Bell Canyon (North of the 101 Fwy, South of Bell Canyon Rd, West of Valley Circle Blvd and East of the Los Angeles City limit)
November 8, 2018	2300	Evacuation centers are established at Taft High School and Pierce College in Woodland Hills
November 9, 2018	0200	LA County OEM activates their EOC for the Woolsey Fire as it enters LA County. The fire is approximately 10,000 acres and 0% contained.
November 9, 2018		Evacuation centers are established at Taft High School and Pierce College in Woodland Hills
November 9, 2018	0230	Evacuations for parts of Bell Canyon (North of the 101 Fwy, South of Bell Canyon Rd, West of Valley Circle Blvd and East of the Los Angeles City limit) are changed from Mandatory to Voluntary
November 9, 2018	0955	LACity.org website switches over to emergency template with all main page information related to the fire response
November 9, 2018	1000	EMD coordinates Fire Weather Conference Call to discuss fire conditions, operational needs, and potential EOC activation

		Woolsey Incident Timeline (Continued)
November 9, 2018	1200	The EOC is activated to a Level 3 in support of the Woolsey Fire
November 9, 2018	1400	Conference call with partner agencies to discuss mass care issues
November 9, 2018	1700	The EOC requests identified emPOWER dataset from LA County Public Health
November 9, 2018	1922	NotifyLA (WEA, text, voice, email) is used to alert residents of mandatory evacuations within West Hills area of the City of Los Angeles (West of Valley Circle Blvd with border to the North at Roscoe Blvd and to the South at Vanowen Street)
November 9, 2018		Acting Governor Gavin Newsom issues an emergency proclamation for Los Angeles and Ventura Counties due to the Hill and Woolsey Fires
November 10, 2018	0845	Building and Safety conducts rapid assessment to identify damaged structures within City limits
November 10, 2018	1434	Coordinated with LA County Joint Information Center on press release related to donations and volunteer management
November 11, 2018	0330	NotifyLA (text, email) is used to prepare a message template for Red Flag Parking Restrictions. Ultimately, the message was not sent to the public. Instead, LAFD used their standard Red Flag Parking Restrictions alert system.
November 12, 2018	2020	NotifyLA (text, voice, and email) is used to alert evacuated residents in the City of Los Angeles that all evacuation orders have been lifted for the area
November 13, 2018	1509	All LA Red Flag No Parking Restrictions Lifted
November 13, 2018	1827	Notified incoming B shift (11/14) that their shift would be canceled and the EOC deactivated on 11/13 at 1200 hours. Staff advised to report for normal work hours
November 13, 2018		LA County Board of Supervisors ratifies emergency proclamation
November 14, 2018	1200	EOC deactivates from a Level 3 and transitions to Duty Officer Status

Note*: This incident timeline is not exhaustive. It serves to provide information and context for the incident overall.*

Incident Context and Considerations

One day prior to the Woolsey Fire, a mass shooting took place in Thousand Oaks, just miles north of the City of Los Angeles. While this incident did not lead to an EOC activation in Los Angeles, it did require significant information coordination on the part of the EMD Duty Officer the night prior to the start of the Woolsey Fire.

Additionally, two other fires burned in California at the same time as the Woolsey Fire: The Hill Fire (Ventura County) and the Camp Fire (Butte County), which was the deadliest and most destructive wildfire in California history. The simultaneous response to these fires increased competition for available mutual aid resources.

Evacuations related to the Woolsey and Hill fires forced multiple EMD staff from their homes and closed major freeways, which significantly impacted staff ability to get to the EOC.

ANALYSIS OF EOC ACTIVATION

Best Practices

The best practices identified during this activation were as follows:

- Contacted the ITA ENOC for help with technology outside of regular business hours and without ITA staffing the activation
- Use of an emergency template on the City's main website (http://www.lacity.org), which prioritized emergency information on the landing page of the site while non-emergency information is left off the landing page
- Use of SALUS Story Map to provide public information related to the fires from the City of Los Angeles, County of Los Angeles, and Ventura County
- Proactively requested identified EmPOWER data to identify and contact residents in potential evacuation areas who may need assistance
- Coordination with LADOT and Access Services to provide support in evacuation, transportation, and to provide a representative to the UCP.
- ARC sent an Agency Representative (ARep) to staff the EOC, which enabled a seamless exchange of situational awareness and information
- Whiteboards in the EOC took on a consistent format with essential elements of information, including a chart for shelter population information. Staff appreciated the organization and expressed an interest in continuing the practice

These practices should be continued and codified in plans and procedures for future EOC activations.

Major Strengths

The major strengths identified during this activation were as follows:

- Emergency alerts were requested and sent to the public using a variety of methods, including Wireless Emergency Alerts, text messages, voice calls and emails. The alerts were sent in direct coordination with the lead agency out of the LAFD DOC.
- Public information was coordinated well within the City across social media, City websites, SALUS mapping, the LA 3-1-1 phone center, and field operations. The City was consistent in providing relevant information to the public, even when the information was not directly related to City services (i.e. information from LA County and Ventura County sources).

- Up to date mapping information using the SALUS program worked well. This provided a real-time picture of street closures, evacuation routes, and safe routes to activated shelters.
- At the request of a Councilmember, N95 masks were procured and provided to homeless individuals in areas with poor air quality.
- Unsolicited donations were kept to a minimum through proactive messaging and clear requests for needed goods.

Primary Areas for Improvement

Public Alert and Warning

- Emergency alerts were delayed by the need for several layers of approval, including approval from parties not within the Incident Command structure. Clarification and training is needed for the process of requesting and approving emergency alerts through NotifyLA.
- Information coming from the field for public release, especially through emergency alert platforms, was not always as clear or concise as the platforms require for effective public messaging. Evacuation orders, geographic and/or location information, and other information for the public should be as clear and actionable as possible.
- The City of Los Angeles was not immediately integrated into the LA County "One Voice" messaging, and after that, coordination of messaging was inconsistent.

Operational Coordination

- Donations management became an issue during the incident, especially messaging around material and monetary donations. Entities within the City of Los Angeles encouraged material donations at a site in the San Fernando Valley, which was inconsistent with LA County messaging encouraging monetary donations only.
- The Planning P was not utilized consistently throughout the activation, and an EOC Coordination Plan was not produced at the end of each operational period. Smaller EOC activations are an opportunity to practice and refine the EOC Coordination Process.

Technology

- Basic EOC technology such as computers and printers are reaching the end of their lifespan and failed during the activation. Laptops and PCs in the Management Room were unable to save documents to PDF. Printers in the Management Room were not able to print duplex. A/V elements did not function properly, including television displays.
- EOC staff attempted to use WebEOC to develop the 909 Situation Report, however the system was not functioning well enough to use and staff reverted to a Word document.

EOC Staffing

- Due to the lack of an activated Logistics Section, the EOC was unable to order lunches for EOC staff. A lack of clear policy for staff feeding during a Level 3 activation resulted in staff fronting funds for staff feeding and delays in reimbursement.
- An EOC staffing plan was developed based on the availability of staff in the early operational periods of the incident and that core staffing plan was continued for several operational periods. While Duty Teams were taken into consideration, several members of the Duty Team and backup Duty Team were not available during the initial operational periods of the incident. However, some staff who were not available early in the incident, including on-duty staff, became available later in the incident but were not contacted to indicate their availability for inclusion in the staffing plan. A department policy and procedure on EOC staffing, including Duty Team responsibility, is needed.
- EMD did not have sufficient available staffing to meet all staffing requests, including the LA County EOC, LA County Joint Information Center, Valley Donations Center, and the Unified Command Post while still maintaining Level 3 EOC staffing.

Mass Care

- Shelters were opened within the City, but the City's designated Mass Care lead, RAP, was not directly involved in initial sheltering identification and operations. RAP was later asked to pre-identify potential shelters, but did not receive the amount of information they were accustomed to during standard sheltering operations. This led to difficulty obtaining situational awareness and keeping SALUS shelter map data current.
- RAP DOC was activated to assist with Mass Care and Sheltering requests but none were made and the DOC returned to duty officer status.
- The American Red Cross self-deployed an Agency Rep to the EOC. While this ultimately proved to be an effective staffing decision that facilitated the exchange of information and situational awareness, this process is not codified anywhere in EOC plans or procedures.

IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Introduction

Throughout the activation, several areas for improvement were identified. The primary areas for improvement, including recommendations, are outlined in the following Improvement Matrix.

This improvement plan was developed for the City of Los Angeles following the Woolsey Fire. The recommended solutions, the lead and supporting agencies identified, the suggested resources, and proposed timeline were identified by stakeholders during interviews and throughout the AAR development process

The recommendations are based on findings detailed in the Analysis of EOC Activation section of this AAR. This improvement plan is intended to be a stand-alone document and can be excerpted from the rest of this AAR. The recommended solutions described in this improvement plan represent the best thinking of stakeholders at the time. Lead and supporting organizations may choose another path upon further investigation and reflection on the issue. The Emergency Management will periodically review this improvement plan and provide bi-annual updates to the Emergency Operations Board.

All lead and supporting agencies are encouraged and empowered to initiate the recommendations offered in this improvement plan immediately. A large majority of the solutions listed are to be completed immediately or in the short-term (next 6 to 12 months).

The lead coordinating agencies are simply coordinating entities that are responsible for bringing stakeholders together to develop and implement the recommended solutions. In many cases, EMD has been identified as the lead coordinating agency, which matches the Department's role as the lead coordinating entity for emergency response. However, the support from all City departments and external partners, agencies, and stakeholders is important for the successful implementation of these solutions.

Timeframe and priority represents when the activity or solutions should be ***completed***. All activities should be initiated immediately as appropriate.

- Immediate (High) – next 6 months
- Short-term (Medium) – next 12 months
- Medium-term (Medium) – next 13–24 months
- Long-term (Low) – more than 24 months

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Improvement Plan Matrix

Throughout the activation, several areas for improvement were identified. The primary areas for improvement, including recommendations, are as follows:

Identified Issue	Corrective Action	Lead Agency	Priority	Timeframe
EOC computers and printers failed throughout the activation.	Replace aging EOC technology with existing EMD upgraded PCs and purchase new printers for the EOC.	EMD	High	Immediate
NotifyLA messages took too long to get approval from too many approvers, including people outside the ICS command structure.	Review plans, policies, and procedures related to development and approval of public alerts. Update and train to plans as needed.	EMD	High	Immediate
Lack of a functional donations management plan, including identified lead agencies, pre-approved public messaging, and donations logistics.	Work through the BOC to further develop plans for donations management and formalize relationships with outside agencies that can assist in donations management.	EMD	Medium	Short-Term
The Planning P was not consistently used during the EOC activation. Creation of an EOC Coordination Plan was not consistent.	Review and update EOC Policies and Procedures Manual to indicate when use of the Planning P and creation of ECP is expected.	EMD	Medium	Short-Term
ARC deployed ARep to EOC, which is not captured in current EOC plans/procedures	Work with ARC to clarify/codify procedures for sending ARep to the EOC during a Level 3 activation	EMD, RAP	Medium	Short-Term

Identified Issue	Corrective Action	Lead Agency	Priority	Timeframe
The WebEOC 909 report form did not reflect the paper 909 and did not include necessary sections.	Provide ITA with a 909 Form for a Level 3 and ensure the form is properly programmed into WebEOC.	EMD, ITA	Medium	Short-Term
Undefined EOC staffing processes left staff unclear on expectations and responsibilities	Define a process for identifying staff available for EOC activations and development of a staffing plan.	EMD	High	Immediate
At a Level 3 activation, the EOC is unable to order food for staff due to the lack of a GSD-staffed logistics function.	Work with EMD Finance and Administration to determine appropriate policy and capabilities for Level 3 EOC feeding.	EMD	Medium	Short-Term
Mass Care Branch was not consulted or notified of shelter activations within City limits	Work with EMD and ARC to codify Mass Care and Sheltering procedures during activations.	EMD, RAP, ARC	High	Immediate
Limited information and coordination was available at the local/City level, resulting in decisions impacting City facilities and operations without City input	Work with OEM and the OA to improve coordination during multi-jurisdictional incidents	EMD	Medium	Short-Term

CONCLUSION

The Woolsey Fire was a unique challenge for the City of Los Angeles Emergency Operations Center. Although the fire had very few direct impacts on the City – LAFD was able to prevent flames from making significant progress into the City limits – the EOC coordinated City efforts to support neighboring jurisdictions with significant fire impacts, including loss of life and property.

While opportunities for improvement have been identified, this was a largely successful activation, especially in the area of public information and coordination with external agencies in a complex, multi-jurisdictional incident. Successful use of the SALUS crisis mapping platform will inform future planning efforts for the use of mapping for both operational coordination and public information.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Emergency Proclamations and Declarations

Los Angeles County Emergency Proclamation

PROCLAMATION OF EXISTENCE OF A LOCAL EMERGENCY BY THE CHAIR OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND REQUEST FOR A STATE PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Chapter 2.68 of the Los Angeles County Code empowers the Chair of the the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) to proclaim the existence of a local emergency when the County is affected or likely to be affected by a public calamity; and

WHEREAS, the Chair of the Board finds that beginning on the afternoon of November 8, 2017, conditions of disaster and extreme peril to the safety of persons and property arose as a result of the Woolsey Fire that began in Ventura County but quickly spread into the County of Los Angeles, which has created conditions that are beyond the control of local resources; and

WHEREAS, the Woolsey Fire has burned over 93,000 acres, leading to loss of lives, destruction of property, wide spread evacuations of residents, and multiple human and pet sheltering operations. The Woolsey Fire poses threats to high voltage power lines supplying power to the area and has caused the closure of multiple schools and a major freeway. In order to combat the Woolsey Fire, there has been a need for mutual aid assistance from throughout the State; and

WHEREAS, these conditions warrant and necessitate that the County proclaim the existence of a local emergency.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED AND PROCLAIMED by the Chair of the Board that a local emergency exists in Los Angeles County; and

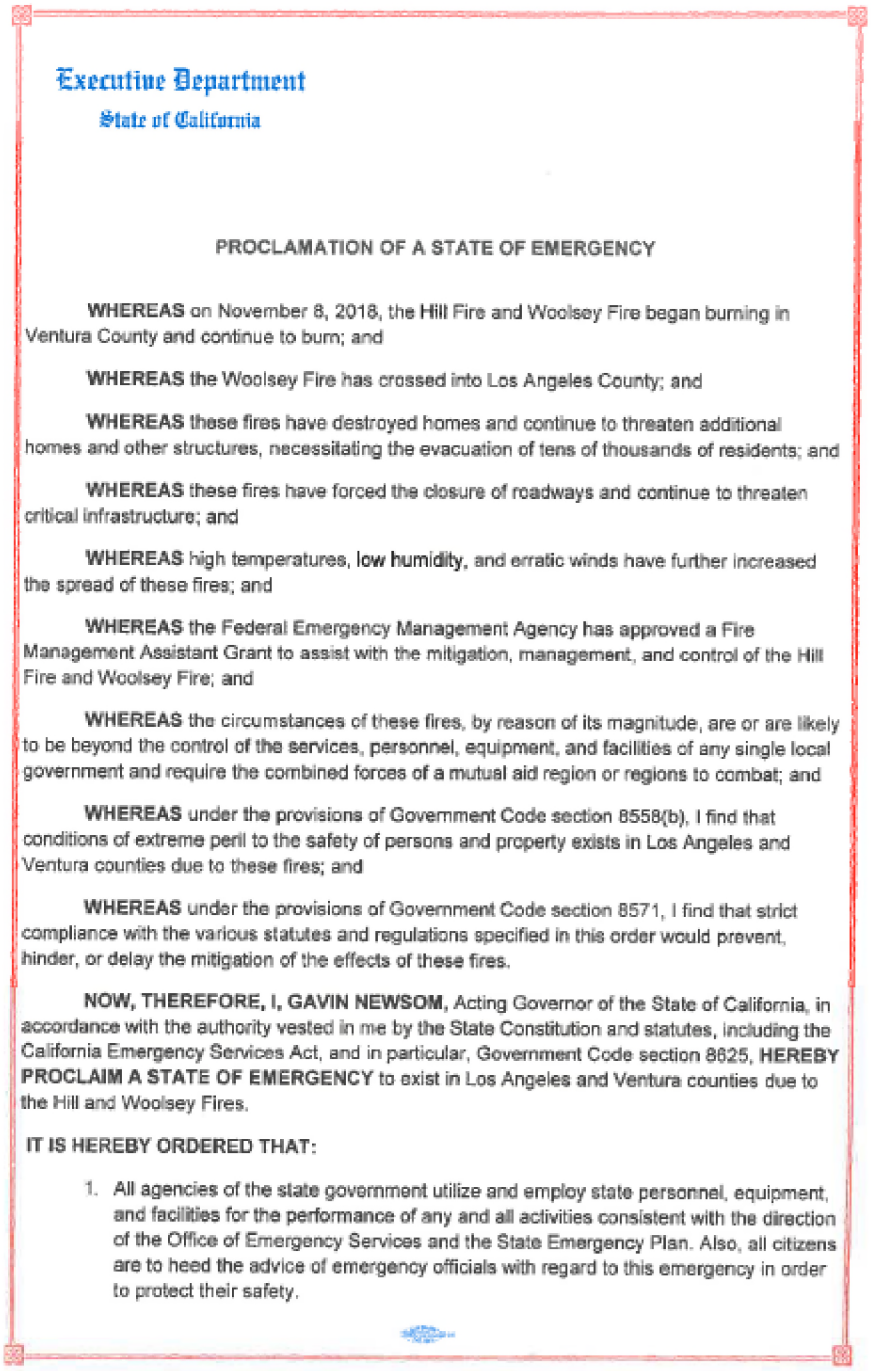
IT IS FURTHER ORDERED AND PROCLAIMED that during the existence of said local emergency the powers, functions, and duties of the emergency organization of the County shall be those prescribed by state law, by ordinances, and resolutions of the County; and

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED AND PROCLAIMED that a copy of this proclamation be forwarded to the Director of California Governor's Office of Emergency Services requesting that the Director find it acceptable in accordance with State law; that the Governor of California, pursuant to the Emergency Services Act, issue a proclamation declaring an emergency in Los Angeles County; that the Governor waive regulations that may hinder response and recovery efforts; that recovery assistance be made available under the California Disaster Assistance Act; and that the State expedite access to State and Federal resources and any other appropriate federal disaster relief programs.

Date: November 13, 2018

Sheila Kuehl
Chair, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

State of California Emergency Proclamation



Executive Department
State of California

PROCLAMATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY

WHEREAS on November 8, 2018, the Hill Fire and Woolsey Fire began burning in Ventura County and continue to burn; and

WHEREAS the Woolsey Fire has crossed into Los Angeles County; and

WHEREAS these fires have destroyed homes and continue to threaten additional homes and other structures, necessitating the evacuation of tens of thousands of residents; and

WHEREAS these fires have forced the closure of roadways and continue to threaten critical infrastructure; and

WHEREAS high temperatures, low humidity, and erratic winds have further increased the spread of these fires; and

WHEREAS the Federal Emergency Management Agency has approved a Fire Management Assistant Grant to assist with the mitigation, management, and control of the Hill Fire and Woolsey Fire; and

WHEREAS the circumstances of these fires, by reason of its magnitude, are or are likely to be beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of any single local government and require the combined forces of a mutual aid region or regions to combat; and

WHEREAS under the provisions of Government Code section 8558(b), I find that conditions of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property exists in Los Angeles and Ventura counties due to these fires; and

WHEREAS under the provisions of Government Code section 8571, I find that strict compliance with the various statutes and regulations specified in this order would prevent, hinder, or delay the mitigation of the effects of these fires.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GAVIN NEWSOM, Acting Governor of the State of California, in accordance with the authority vested in me by the State Constitution and statutes, including the California Emergency Services Act, and in particular, Government Code section 8625, **HEREBY PROCLAIM A STATE OF EMERGENCY** to exist in Los Angeles and Ventura counties due to the Hill and Woolsey Fires.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. All agencies of the state government utilize and employ state personnel, equipment, and facilities for the performance of any and all activities consistent with the direction of the Office of Emergency Services and the State Emergency Plan. Also, all citizens are to heed the advice of emergency officials with regard to this emergency in order to protect their safety.

2. The Office of Emergency Services shall provide local government assistance to Los Angeles and Ventura counties, if appropriate, under the authority of the California Disaster Assistance Act, Government Code section 8680 et seq., and California Code of Regulations, Title 19, section 2900 et seq.

3. As necessary to assist local governments and for the protection of public health and the environment, state agencies shall enter into contracts to arrange for the procurement of materials, goods, and services necessary to quickly assist with the response to and recovery from the impacts of the Hill Fire and Woolsey Fire. Applicable provisions of the Government Code and the Public Contract Code, including but not limited to travel, advertising, and competitive bidding requirements, are suspended to the extent necessary to address the effects of the Hill Fire and Woolsey Fire.

4. The provisions of Unemployment Insurance Code section 1253 imposing a one-week waiting period for unemployment insurance applicants are suspended as to all applicants who are unemployed as a direct result of the Hill Fire or Woolsey Fire, who applied for unemployment insurance benefits during the time period beginning November 8, 2018, and ending on the close of business on May 8, 2019, and who are otherwise eligible for unemployment insurance benefits.

5. Vehicle Code sections 9265(a), 9867, 14901, 14902, and 15255.2, requiring the imposition of fees, are suspended with regard to any request for replacement of a driver's identification card, vehicle registration certificate, or certificate of title, by any individual who lost such records as a result of the Hill Fire or Woolsey Fire. Such records shall be replaced without charge.

6. The provisions of Vehicle Code sections 4602 and 5902, requiring the timely registration or transfer of title are suspended with regard to any registration or transfer of title by any resident of Los Angeles County or Ventura County who is unable to comply with those requirements as a result of the Hill Fire and Woolsey Fire. The time covered by this suspension shall not be included in calculating any late penalty pursuant to Vehicle Code section 9554.

7. Health and Safety Code sections 103525.5 and 103625, and Penal Code section 14251, requiring the imposition of fees are hereby suspended with regard to any request for copies of certificates of birth, death, marriage, and dissolution of marriage records, by any individual who lost such records as a result of the Hill Fire or Woolsey Fire. Such copies shall be provided without charge.

I FURTHER DIRECT that as soon as hereafter possible, this proclamation be filed in the Office of the Secretary of State and that widespread publicity and notice be given of this proclamation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 9th day of November 2018.

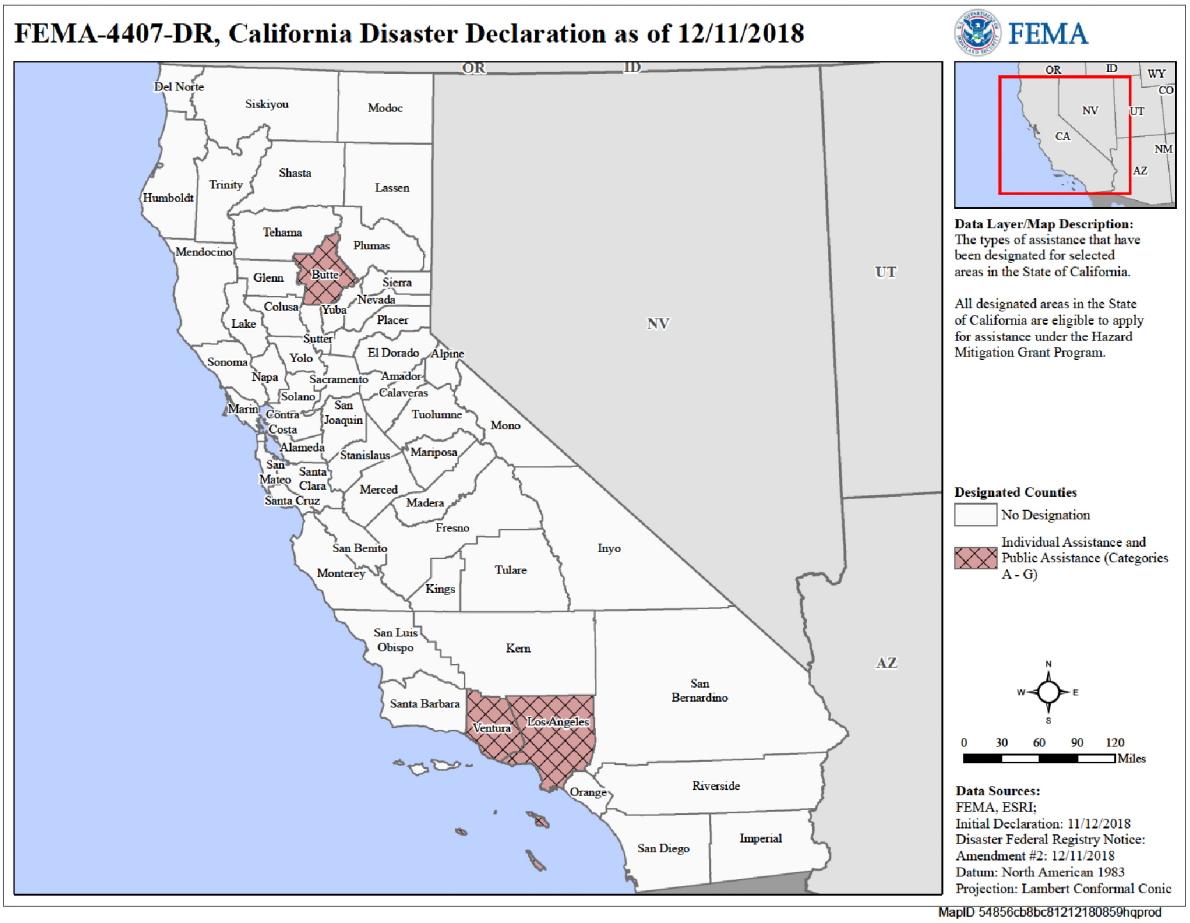


GAVIN NEWSOM
Acting Governor of California

ATTEST:

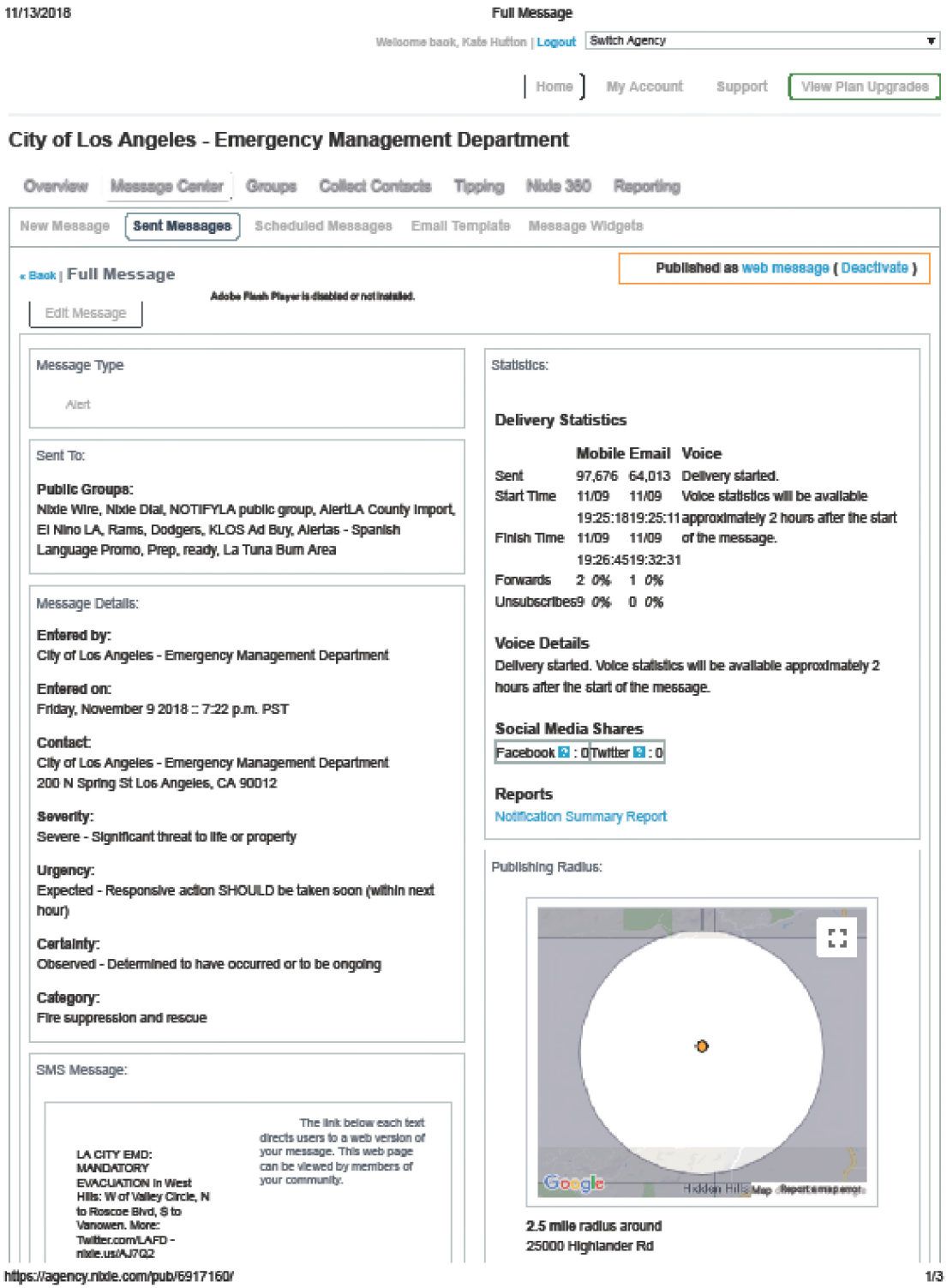
ALEX PADILLA
Secretary of State

Federal Disaster Declaration



Appendix B: NotifyLA Messages

November 9, 2018: Evacuation Order



11/13/2018 Full Message

Welcome back, Kate Hutton | Logout Switch Agency

Home My Account Support View Plan Upgrades

City of Los Angeles - Emergency Management Department

Overview Message Center Groups Collect Contacts Tipping Nixle 360 Reporting

New Message Sent Messages Scheduled Messages Email Template Message Widgets

« Back | Full Message

Published as web message (Deactivate)

Adobe Flash Player is disabled or not installed.

Edit Message

Message Type

Alert

Sent To:

Public Groups:
Nixle Wire, Nixle Dial, NOTIFYLA public group, AlertLA County Import, El Nino LA, Rams, Dodgers, KLOS Ad Buy, Alertas - Spanish Language Promo, Prep, ready, La Tuna Burn Area

Message Details:

Entered by:
City of Los Angeles - Emergency Management Department

Entered on:
Friday, November 9 2018 :: 7:22 p.m. PST

Contact:
City of Los Angeles - Emergency Management Department
200 N Spring St Los Angeles, CA 90012

Severity:
Severe - Significant threat to life or property

Urgency:
Expected - Responsive action SHOULD be taken soon (within next hour)

Certainty:
Observed - Determined to have occurred or to be ongoing

Category:
Fire suppression and rescue

SMS Message:

LA CITY EMD: MANDATORY EVACUATION in West Hills: W of Valley Circle, N to Roscoe Blvd, S to Vanowen. More: Twitter.com/LAFD - nixle.us/AJ7Q2

The link below each text directs users to a web version of your message. This web page can be viewed by members of your community.

Statistics:

Delivery Statistics

	Mobile	Email	Voice
Sent	97,676	64,013	Delivery started.
Start Time	11/09 19:25:18	11/09 19:25:11	Voice statistics will be available approximately 2 hours after the start of the message.
Finish Time	11/09 19:26:45	11/09 19:32:31	
Forwards	2 0%	1 0%	
Unsubscribes	9 0%	0 0%	

Voice Details
Delivery started. Voice statistics will be available approximately 2 hours after the start of the message.

Social Media Shares
Facebook : 0 Twitter : 0

Reports
Notification Summary Report

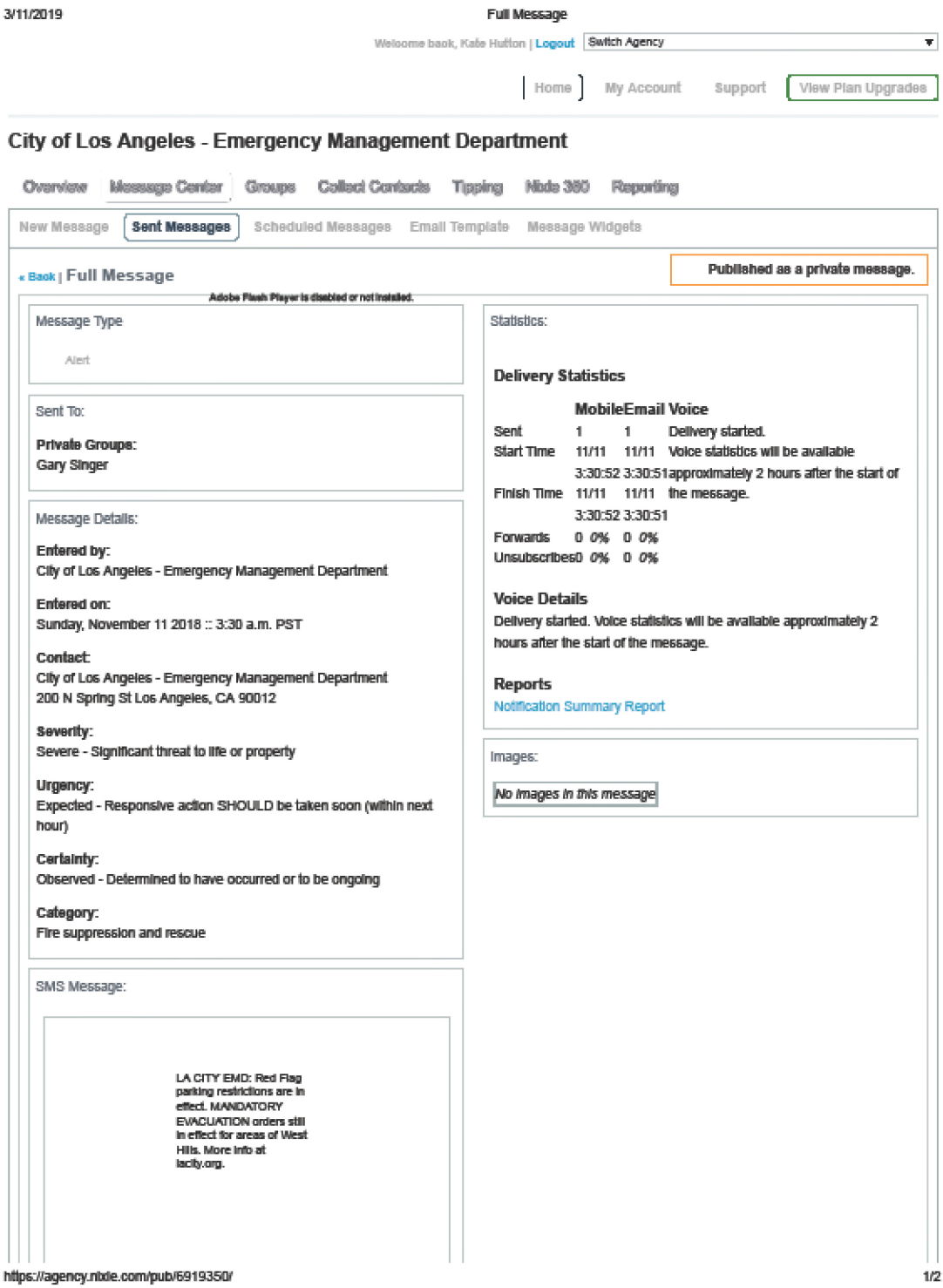
Publishing Radius:

2.5 mile radius around
25000 Highlander Rd

https://agency.nixle.com/pub/6917160/ 1/3

Appendix B: NotifyLA Messages

November 11, 2018: Prepared Draft for Red Flag Parking Restrictions (Unsent)



3/11/2019 Full Message

Welcome back, Kate Hutton | Logout Switch Agency

Home | My Account Support View Plan Upgrades

City of Los Angeles - Emergency Management Department

Overview Message Center Groups Collect Contacts Tipping Nixle 360 Reporting

New Message Sent Messages Scheduled Messages Email Template Message Widgets

« Back | Full Message

Published as a private message.

Adobe Flash Player is disabled or not installed.

Message Type

Alert

Sent To:

Private Groups:
Gary Singer

Message Details:

Entered by:
City of Los Angeles - Emergency Management Department

Entered on:
Sunday, November 11 2018 :: 3:30 a.m. PST

Contact:
City of Los Angeles - Emergency Management Department
200 N Spring St Los Angeles, CA 90012

Severity:
Severe - Significant threat to life or property

Urgency:
Expected - Responsive action SHOULD be taken soon (within next hour)

Certainty:
Observed - Determined to have occurred or to be ongoing

Category:
Fire suppression and rescue

SMS Message:

LA CITY EMD: Red Flag parking restrictions are in effect. MANDATORY EVACUATION orders still in effect for areas of West Hills. More info at lacity.org.

Statistics:

Delivery Statistics

	Mobile	Email	Voice	
Sent	1	1		Delivery started.
Start Time	11/11 3:30:52	11/11 3:30:51		Voice statistics will be available approximately 2 hours after the start of the message.
Finish Time	11/11 3:30:52	11/11 3:30:51		
Forwards	0 0%	0 0%		
Unsubscribes	0 0%	0 0%		

Voice Details

Delivery started. Voice statistics will be available approximately 2 hours after the start of the message.

Reports

Notification Summary Report

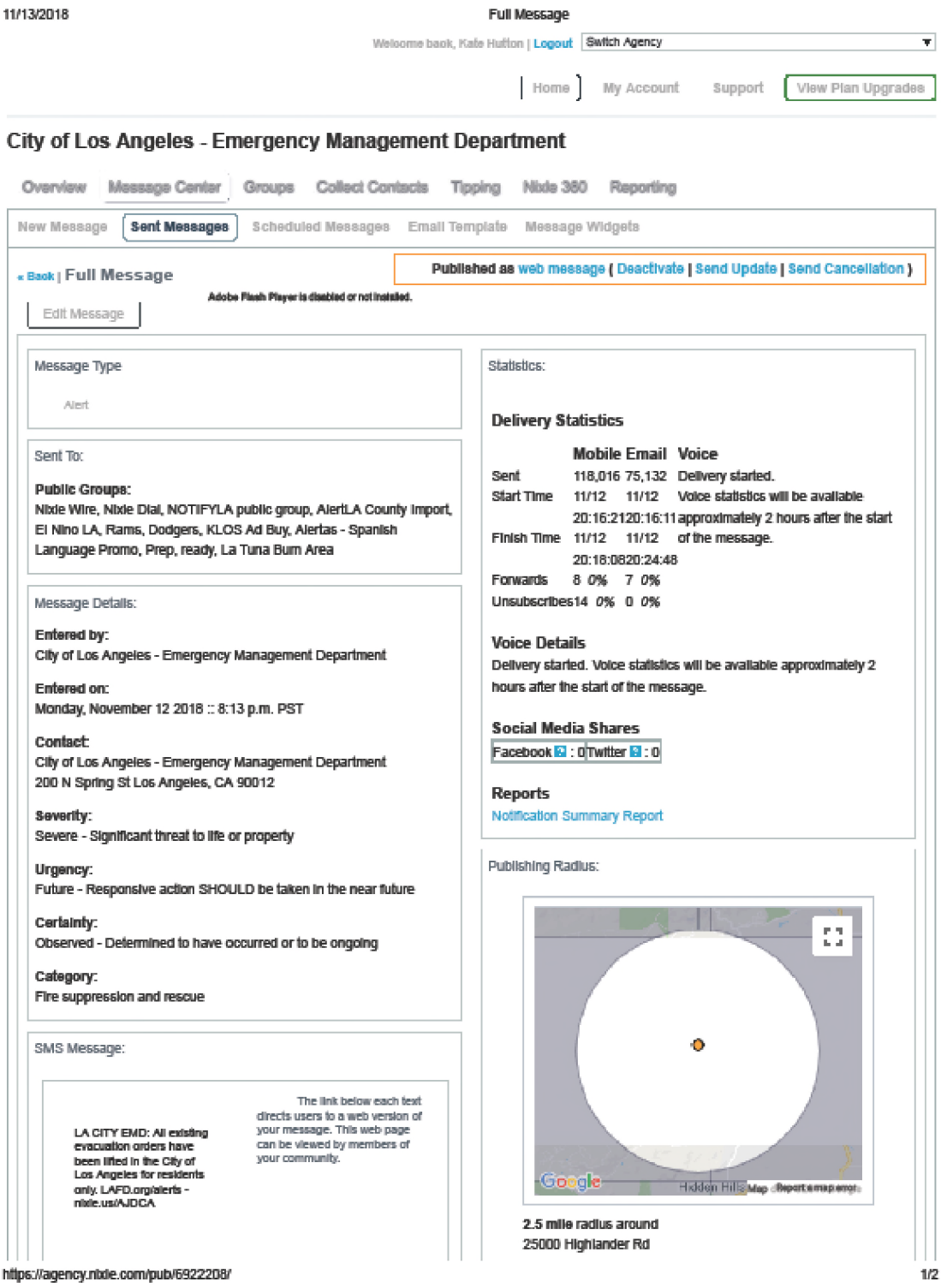
Images:

No images in this message

https://agency.nixle.com/pub/6919350/ 1/2

Appendix B: NotifyLA Messages

November 12, 2018: Evacuation Orders Lifted, Repopulation



11/13/2018 Full Message

Welcome back, Kate Hutton | Logout Switch Agency

Home My Account Support View Plan Upgrades

City of Los Angeles - Emergency Management Department

Overview Message Center Groups Collect Contacts Tipping Nixle 360 Reporting

New Message Sent Messages Scheduled Messages Email Template Message Widgets

« Back | Full Message

Published as web message (Deactivate | Send Update | Send Cancellation)

Adobe Flash Player is disabled or not installed.

Edit Message

Message Type

Alert

Sent To:

Public Groups:
Nixle Wire, Nixle Dial, NOTIFYLA public group, AlertLA County Import, El Nino LA, Rams, Dodgers, KLOS Ad Buy, Alertas - Spanish Language Promo, Prep, ready, La Tuna Burn Area

Message Details:

Entered by:
City of Los Angeles - Emergency Management Department

Entered on:
Monday, November 12 2018 :: 8:13 p.m. PST

Contact:
City of Los Angeles - Emergency Management Department
200 N Spring St Los Angeles, CA 90012

Severity:
Severe - Significant threat to life or property

Urgency:
Future - Responsive action SHOULD be taken in the near future

Certainty:
Observed - Determined to have occurred or to be ongoing

Category:
Fire suppression and rescue

SMS Message:

LA CITY EMD: All existing evacuation orders have been lifted in the City of Los Angeles for residents only. LAFD.org/alerts - nixle.us/AJDCA

The link below each text directs users to a web version of your message. This web page can be viewed by members of your community.

Statistics:

Delivery Statistics

	Mobile	Email	Voice
Sent	118,016	75,132	Delivery started.
Start Time	11/12 20:16:21	11/12 20:16:11	Voice statistics will be available approximately 2 hours after the start of the message.
Finish Time	11/12 20:16:08	11/12 20:24:48	
Forwards	8 0%	7 0%	
Unsubscribes	14 0%	0 0%	

Voice Details
Delivery started. Voice statistics will be available approximately 2 hours after the start of the message.

Social Media Shares
Facebook : 0 Twitter : 0

Reports
Notification Summary Report

Publishing Radius:

2.5 mile radius around
25000 Highlander Rd

https://agency.nixle.com/pub/6922208/ 1/2