

CIVIL DISTURBANCES

7742

(No. 9 November 1993)

CAL FIRE PUBLIC SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

7742.1

(No. 9 November 1993)

As an agency with public safety responsibilities for fire control, nonfire emergencies, and fire law enforcement, CAL FIRE may receive requests to assist other jurisdictions in meeting problems of civil disturbances. In addition, the department may encounter such problems directly within areas for which it has fire protection responsibility. The following is intended to establish the role and responsibilities of CAL FIRE employees as these situations are encountered.

CAL FIRE ASSISTANCE TO DISASTER AREAS

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Under specific statutory authority, certain employees of the department have been designated by the director as peace officers because of statutory duties requiring them to enforce state and county fire laws (except those for which the State Fire Marshal is responsible).

A state-of-war emergency or state of emergency as established by law imposes upon CAL FIRE personnel (within the area or assigned to the area) certain powers as peace officers.

For further reference see GC §8596, 8597.

CIVIL DISTURBANCE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION

7742.3

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OES serves as coordinator for intelligence from all state agencies regarding possible disturbances or existing incidents. This includes receiving information, evaluating the information, and sharing with all appropriate agencies so that a common level of knowledge is achieved. All intelligence will be handled on a confidential, need-to-know basis. It is considered in CAL FIRE's best interest that assigned departmental peace officer personnel maintain close liaison with local law enforcement personnel who may have intelligence regarding possible civil disturbance problems. A close intelligence liaison should alert departmental fire control supervisors about actual or potential hazards to their fire control equipment and personnel as they respond to alarms within sensitive areas. A close liaison will also alert supervisors to problems which may develop in adjacent protection areas. In addition, such liaisons will be valuable during an incident. Information regarding possible or existing civil disturbances within areas which are the protection responsibility of CAL FIRE should be coordinated with local fire and police officials and transmitted to the fire protection section of the director's office, who will transmit it to the OES.

PROTECTION OF DEPARTMENT STRUCTURES, PERSONNEL, AND EQUIPMENT

7742.4

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It may be necessary that departmental structures, personnel, and equipment be provided armed protection. This is primarily the responsibility of the local police chief or county sheriff, but circumstances might dictate that CAL FIRE peace officers be used.

In a rapidly-expanding riot situation, local law enforcement agencies will need their forces to quell the riot. This may leave departmental structures, personnel, and equipment without protection by other than available department personnel. Judgment may indicate that structures, located within or adjacent to a riot area and found not to be vital to continued operations, be locked and abandoned. Those facilities which are vital to continued operations should receive protection. In situations of this nature, it cannot be determined before the disturbance to what degree or extent vital structures or equipment may need to be protected. Determinations made by local administrative personnel must prevail as the gravity of the disturbance develops.

RESPONSIBILITIES DURING CIVIL DISTURBANCES

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Officers of CHP may be assigned to assist local police agencies in quelling local civil disturbances. Peace officers of the department will not be so assigned; however, CAL FIRE employees designated as peace officers may, as specifically requested by the locally constituted authority, provide valuable services to the fire control force in the following manner:

- By providing a liaison service between law enforcement operations units and fire control forces.
- By collecting and communicating intelligence information within the immediate and adjacent disturbance area.
- By assisting in determining the degree of protection needed for the fire control forces and acquiring such help, including equipment and facilities, as the gravity of the disturbance may indicate.
- By providing protection to departmental facilities and associated personnel vital to the department's operations, or to supporting state agencies (e.g., headquarters, dispatch officer, or repeater stations) as may be necessary due to lack of normal police protection or upon request of the local police, sheriff, or military authorities. When local law enforcement personnel or national guard personnel become available to take over such duties, this responsibility shall be relinquished.

The department may use its peace officers as armed personnel on fire apparatus or as armed escorts for fire equipment.

An agency representative shall accompany emergency equipment to areas outside the department's normal jurisdiction to provide adequate coordination with both emergency and law enforcement personnel.

OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR CIVIL DISTURBANCES

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A local operational plan for civil disturbances should be developed for each unit in cooperation with local sheriff, police, and fire departments. In developing an operational plan, consideration should be given to the following:

- Distribution of information pertaining to impending civil disturbances. Distribution of intelligence information between law enforcement and fire forces after a disturbance has developed.
- Protection of departmental personnel, equipment, and facilities. Priority protection based upon the need for continued operation and command of fire forces.
- Selection of an alternate command center if the need arises.
- Formulating a "strike team or task force" type of fire attack operation, designating minimum amounts of personnel and equipment to be assigned to fire responses. In determining what a single task force or strike team may consist of, consider the required force necessary to handle the smallest incident that may be encountered.
- Selection of staging areas for task force or strike team personnel and equipment.
- What action personnel are to take if subject to attack by rioters.
- Callback of off-duty personnel and where they should report.
- Liaison needs between law enforcement, other fire agencies, and the department.
- When a "zone of no response" should be considered.
- Logistical support of operation.

A copy of the plan will be distributed as deemed appropriate for the disturbance.

(see next section)

(see HB Table of Contents)

(see Forms or Forms Samples)