

REDWOOD DISPATCH COMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY STANDARD OPERATING POLICY

SRA, MTZ and Borderline Vegetation fire INCIDENTS

Policy


28


Green denotes the most recent change

Page 1 of 4

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Approvals


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28.0 SRA & MTZ VEGETATION FIRE INCIDENTS

28.1 Dispatch and communications procedures for vegetation fires in SRA and MTZ are the same.

28.1.1 CAL FIRE - St. Helena shall be the Incident's Command Center (Primary Dispatch Center) for all SRA and MTZ Vegetation Fires and shall function as the Single Ordering Point.

28.1.2 For SRA fires, CAL FIRE is not the single ordering point until the first unit arrives on scene. REDCOM resources may request additional equipment through their assigned control channel while enroute, should the incident warrant such. CAL FIRE will then be notified of the additional resources ordered.

28.1.3 All fires and potential fires, regardless of type and time of year, must be determined to be in Local or State Responsibility Area (LRA or SRA), or in a designated Mutual Threat Zone (MTZ).

28.1.4 Once CAL FIRE or REDCOM determines that a vegetation fire is in SRA or MTZ requiring a CAL FIRE response, the following will occur.

- REDCOM resources will be dispatched on the REDCOM Channel and respond on their assigned Control Channel. CAL FIRE resources will be dispatched and respond on LNU West.
- CAL FIRE-St. Helena shall coordinate with the CRO to determine; Incident Name, Command Channel, primary tactical channel and Incident within an incident (IWI) channel prior to the REDCOM dispatch or as soon as possible after the REDCOM dispatch.
- CRO will advise responding resources that the fire is located in SRA/MTZ and CAL FIRE-St. Helena will be the incident's command center using the phrase, "This fire is in the SRA (or MTZ), CAL FIRE WILL BE THE INCIDENT'S PRIMARY DISPATCH CENTER."
- CRO will monitor the CAL FIRE Command Channel as feasible during the response.

28.1.5 If a REDCOM dispatched resource arrives at scene first:

- advise the CRO “AT SCENE”
- give a report on conditions (ROC)
- switch to the CAL FIRE Command Channel
- give the same report on conditions to CAL FIRE
- assume Incident Command as appropriate, using the identified incident name
- remain on the assigned CAL FIRE Command Channel
- all further incident resource orders are to be processed through the Primary Dispatch Center

28.1.6 All subsequent REDCOM dispatched resources will status on scene with the CRO and switch directly to the tactical channel.

28.1.7 The CRO and CAL FIRE – St. Helena will both maintain independent status of their dispatched resources. On larger and longer duration fires, these lists must be reconciled with CAL FIRE – St. Helena, and the IC.

28.1.8 If the REDCOM call taker or CRO receives any supplemental information, they are responsible for updating CAL FIRE – St. Helena.

28.1.9 After release by the IC from a SRA/MTZ fire, a REDCOM dispatched resource, on the assigned Control Channel, shall status “AVAILABLE, SWITCHING BACK TO REDCOM”. This only applies to resources that arrived first at scene and/or assumed the incident commander role as all other resources are statused by the CRO.

28.2 DISPATCH AND COMMUNICATIONS PROCEDURES FOR ALL NON-VEGETATION FIRES IN THE SRA/MTZ. Including vehicle and structure fires, and arcing power lines.

28.2.1 REDCOM shall be the Incident’s Primary Dispatch Center for structure or vehicle fire in the SRA, and will maintain this role. REDCOM will be the Single Ordering Point for the Structure or Vehicle fire.

28.2.2 CAL FIRE will respond to all structure and vehicle fires in the SRA and will send a reduced response. The initial response will be 1 Battalion Chief and 3 Engines but can be modified by the CRO, CAL FIRE – St. Helena, or responding resources depending upon circumstances of the location and information gathered from reporting parties.

28.2.3 If the structure or vehicle fire spreads to the vegetation CAL FIRE St. Helena will assume Primary Dispatch for the vegetation fire and will be the Single Ordering Point for the vegetation fire.

28.2.4 Unified Command for the structure/vehicle fire and vegetation fire:

- REDCOM resources will respond on their assigned Control Channel,
- CAL FIRE resources will respond on their assigned Command Channel,
- CRO shall advise CAL FIRE St. Helena of Command and tactical channel assigned to the structure or vehicle fire.
- CAL FIRE shall advise the CRO of the Command, primary tactical and incident within an incident channels assigned to the actual or potential vegetation fire.
- ~~It is the responsibility of the responding CAL FIRE Battalion chief to coordinate the CAL FIRE response with the CRO or Incident Commander on the assigned Command channel.~~

28.2.5 The first arriving REDCOM resource arrives at scene:

- advise the CRO “AT SCENE”
- give a report on conditions
- assume command as appropriate
- REDCOM Incident Command and the CAL FIRE Battalion Chief MUST establish Unified Command at the incident.
 - The REDCOM Incident Commander will maintain responsibility for the structure and vehicle fire. All resource orders will be placed through REDCOM
 - The CAL FIRE Battalion Chief will maintain responsibility for the vegetation fire. All resource orders will be placed through St. Helena ECC.

28.2.6 All subsequent REDCOM resources will status on scene with the REDCOM CRO and switch directly to the tactical channel. CAL FIRE resources will maintain their status with CAL FIRE – St. Helena and switch to the tactical channel.

28.3 BORDERLINE VEGETATION FIRES DISPATCHED IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO THE SRA/LRA/MTZ LINE.

28.3.1 Any vegetation fire that is in close proximity to the SRA/LRA line or an MTZ line should be considered a threat SRA and should be dispatched as an SRA or MTZ vegetation fire.

- Close proximity shall be defined as; If at any point, while verifying the location of a vegetation fire, an SRA or MTZ line is identified near the location of the vegetation fire, the fire shall be dispatched as either SRA or MTZ, instead of being dispatched as an LRA vegetation fire.
- Close proximity means:
 - Immediately next too
 - Across the street from
 - Caller location vs. where the fire actually is
- Vegetation fires spread laterally across the ground and cross jurisdictional borders routinely.
- Wind direction and terrain dictate the spread of vegetation fires.

28.3.2 Should an incident be dispatched in the wrong jurisdiction LRA/SRA and units have arrived on scene prior to the determination, Incident Commanders have the latitude to remain on the originally assigned tactical frequency, given the incident does not go extended.

28.4 DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

28.4.1 SRA

- State Responsibility Area, relating to CAL FIRE having the primary jurisdiction and financial responsibility for suppressing vegetation fires.

28.4.2 LRA

- Local Responsibility Area, relating to the Local Fire Agency having the primary jurisdiction and financial responsibility for suppressing vegetation fires.

28.4.3 MTZ

- Mutual Threat Zone, A predetermined geographical area identified in a written agreement where CALFIRE responds to vegetation fires in the LRA because of the combined financial and environmental threat to LRA and SRA lands and improvements.

28.4.4 The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) has a statutory and financial responsibility to mitigate all vegetation fires in SRA, and other types of fires which threaten vegetation in SRA.

28.4.5 SRA and LRA classifications are identifiable on CAD maps. Since CAL FIRE maintains the official SRA boundary, REDCOM dispatch personnel must verify with CAL FIRE-St. Helena that a location is SRA.

28.4.6 Examples of when CAL FIRE – St. Helena would become the Dispatch Center:

- Any vegetation fire in the SRA, MTZ or any borderline vegetation fire that threatens SRA.
- A fully involved structure with multiple spot fires located in a remote location

28.4.7 Examples of when REDCOM would be the Primary Dispatch Center:

- Any vegetation fire in the LRA
- Any structure fire, vehicle fire or other fire in the SRA but not threatening or burning the SRA.