



## CITY OF OAKDALE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Station No. 1 • 325 East "G" Street / Station No. 2 • 450 Willowood Drive • Oakdale, CA 95361

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December 14, 2010

### California Avenue Fire - Incident Review Summary

A working structure fire was reported at 1 AM on Wednesday, October 27, 2010 in the 200 block of California Avenue in Oakdale. A delay in dispatching the Fire Department to this incident is the basis for this incident review summary.

At 1:00:09 AM on Wednesday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, a 911 call was received by Oakdale Police Dispatch and the caller reported a house on fire in the 200 block of California Avenue. The caller was transferred to Stanislaus Regional 911 (fire dispatch). The SR911 Dispatcher dispatched Modesto Fire Department to the 200 Block of California in Modesto.

This error caused a three minute and 14 second delay in dispatching the correct agency and automatic aid resources to this incident in Oakdale. Once the error in location was realized a correct call was entered for dispatch. The second dispatcher set tones for the correct agencies on the Fire Dispatch channel. The dispatcher failed to switch from the command channel that they monitor to the dispatch channel to voice dispatch the call. The Fire Fighters in Oakdale heard the tones and called into the center to report they did not hear the voice dispatch. The Dispatcher reset tones and voice dispatched the call on the dispatch channel. This resulted in a three minute delay for a total of six minute and 14 second delay in dispatching this call. The result of this delay did not impact the final outcome of the building of origin but it did have a direct impact to both homes adjoining this structure. The resident to the South (235 California Avenue) sustained moderate fire damage to the exterior wall, attic, and suppression damage to the interior. The occupant, a senior citizen, was displaced. The resident on the North side (255 California Avenue) sustained minor damage and was not displaced. Damage to a boat parked in the driveway was incurred.

It should be noted that Oakdale Police Officers who responded took action to notify residents and assist neighbors out of harm's way while waiting for fire resources to arrive. A neighbor also engaged by using a garden hose to cool the house on the North side of the building of origin.

The cause of this fire has been determined to be arson. An investigation is currently underway. All leads are being pursued by the Modesto Fire Investigation Unit and the Oakdale Police Department. Contact person: Ken White 209-652-1760 Lead Investigator.

On Monday, November 1, 2010, an After Action Review was conducted with focus on the fire response and suppression activities. This is a common practice after a significant incident. Team members attending this review included first in assignment personnel. During this review, a "Corrective Action" list was developed (attached). The review supported and affirmed the strategy and tactics taken on this incident. Implementation of the corrective action lists is ongoing.

On Tuesday, November 30, 2011, a Dispatch Workshop was held with representatives from the Oakdale Police Department, Stanislaus Regional 911, and the Oakdale Fire Department in attendance. This workshop focus was specific to "improving communications between dispatch centers". A "Corrective Action" list (attached) was developed and immediate implementation actions have been taken and are underway.

Summary: The delay in fire response was a result of Dispatcher error at SR911. Personnel action associated with this is confidential as an employer-employee issue. The fire response, tactics and strategy taken were appropriate. The positive results of this fire provided the catalysis to review, revise, and develop procedures for both increased effectiveness in communications between Oakdale Police Department Dispatch and Stanislaus Regional 911, and improved coordination and operations within the multi-agency fire responders.

Procedures called "Handshakes" between dispatch centers (Oakdale Police Department, Stanislaus Regional 911-Fire Dispatch, and Lifecom-Ambulance Dispatch) have been developed (attached). Technical advancements such as "Dispatcher Blast" where the dispatcher's audio will be transmitted to all fire stations in the City for emergency call transfers is being developed. Follow through on all the Corrective Action items identified will be ongoing until completed. A meeting is scheduled for February 22, 2011 to review the status of the Corrective Action Lists and identify further improvements.

Questions or concerns can be directed to: Michael Botto, Fire Chief (209)845-3665-Office or via e-mail at [mbotto@ci.oakdale.ca.us](mailto:mbotto@ci.oakdale.ca.us).

## **After Action Review – Monday, November 01, 2010**

### **California Avenue Fire Incident (Structure Fire) – Wednesday, October 27, 2010**

#### **Oakdale Fire Department – Oakdale Fire District – Stanislaus Consolidated Fire District**

##### **Corrective Action Items:**

- Address Dispatch Delay – (Refer to SR911 for action – Director Thomas).
- Provide Training for Smooth Bore Nozzle Operations (Multi-Agency Training Division).
- Reduce the 300' 2.5" pre-connect hose line to something less in length or alternate load. (Multi-Agency Project – Multi-Agency Training Division to assign).
- Pass Command early if engaged in tactical tasks.
- Sound 2<sup>nd</sup> or additional alarms early. Request additional resources early.
- Establish "Manpower Pool" (located at first arriving engine) and utilize it to account for resources especially those arriving by alternate means (private vehicles, etc..)
- Rehab – Work collectively with Oak Valley to develop a "Standard" rehab policy/procedure for our jurisdictions. This may include utilizing an assigned resource (Oakdale's Mobile Command Unit – Purchase tools necessary CO monitor, misters, easy-ups, chairs, monitoring and tracking equipment, and utilize as a heating and cooling shelter. (Multi-Agency Project – M. Botto to coordinate).
- Work with Oak Valley to establish "Fire Ground Communications". Develop a procedure where the assigned Ambulance crew meets face to face with the IC, establishes tactical communications and has a clear assignment of incident needs. (Multi-Agency Project. M. Botto to coordinate).
- Communicate incident needs in all directions. Divisions/Groups to Operations – Operations to IC and back again.
- Reinforce direction of "closest resource responds" for any alarm assignment. Desire is for dispatch to take on this responsibility and free the IC from agency specific requests. (Multi-Agency Project. Chiefs to work on this task).
- Purchase short hydrant wrenches for apparatus to accommodate "low to the ground hydrants". (J. Tankersley OFD).
- Work towards "Apparatus Familiarization" and "Standardized Hose Loads". (All Company Officers – initiate these training opportunities during daily conference calls and any opportunity that arises as a Multi-Agency Project – Training Division to assist with scheduling).

## SR911 – Oakdale PD Dispatch Workshop

Tuesday, November 30, 2010

Representatives attending: Oakdale PD – Lt. Jenkins, Dispatcher Guillermo  
SR911 – Director Thomas, Shift Manager Silva,  
Systems Engineer Lockwood  
Oakdale Fire Department – Division Chief Fields, Chief Botto

### Discussion Items:

- Review of the California avenue fire incident dispatch audio. This incident was the catalyst for this workshop. Discussion on transfer policies and procedures.
- “Handshake” or transfer procedures for EMS and Fire Department related incidents.
- Improvement opportunities in technology.
- Alternate PSAP and “Operations” while in this mode.
- Development of a Corrective Action List.

### Corrective Actions:

- A. Develop a 911 Caller transfer procedure for Fire Department incidents between Oakdale PD and SR911. Responsible – Chief Botto.
- B. Develop a 911 Caller transfer procedure for EMS incidents. Include procedure to dispatch Fire when warranted. Responsible – Chief Botto.
- C. Upgrade telephone systems at Fire Stations to have “Direct Dial” programmed into phones. Responsible – Chief Botto.
- D. Explore the option of a “Blast System” which would allow an OPD Dispatcher to activate this system by a “push of a button – with light” that would broadcast the dispatchers communications over a speaker system located within the fire stations. Participants to be included in project: Mark Lockwood, Lt. Jenkins, Nate Olson (Delta Wireless Inc.), Ric Small (Waypoint Network). Responsible – Chief Botto.
- E. Fire personnel to specify the “why” when requesting PD resources. Responsible – Chief Botto.
- F. SR911 to assist Oakdale PD in developing a routine testing program for the Alternate 911 Dispatch system. This offer by SR911 includes performing the actual reoccurring testing. Responsible: Lt. Jenkins assisted by Mark Lockwood
- G. Develop a policy/procedure for “Operations” while in the Alternate PSAP mode. Responsible: Lt. Jenkins & Director Thomas.

### Recommendations:

1. An Oakdale PD representative attends the quarterly “PSAP” Managers meetings.
2. Look at options to incorporate the OPD radio system into SR911 for back up. This may or may not be a component of the new tower installation.

End of minutes.



# **EMS HANDSHAKE**

## **A.     *TRANSFER CALLER TO LIFECOM***

### **Announce to LIFECOM:**

- 1. Oakdale PD with a transfer**
- 2. Patient address with cross street (Advise if obtained via ANI/ALI)**
- 3. Nature of complaint**
- 4. Fire is responding or Fire is not Responding**

## **B.     *DISPATCH FIRE – If Emergency***

- 5. Contact SR911 and request Fire response**
- 6. Notify SR911 that the call has been transferred to ambulance**

# **HANDSHAKE WITH SR911**

## **TRANSFER CALLER TO SR911**

### **Announce to SR911:**

- 1. Oakdale PD with a transfer**
- 2. Incident address with cross street**
- 3. Nature of transfer (i.e. Fire, Vehicle Accident, Rescue, etc...)**
- 4. PD is responding or PD is not responding (based on incident type)**

**Initial 911 Call Received at Oakdale PD  
What is your Emergency?**

**IF NOT OBVIOUS - VERIFY IF CRIME SCENE**  
(Fire responds to all crime scenes if there is a valid medical need)

**PREGNANCY: DISPATCH FIRE IF WATER HAS BROKEN.**

**MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS**

**INJURY - FIRE & AMBULANCE**

**NON INJURY - LAW ONLY**

**OAKDALE PD CONFIRMS PATIENTS LOCATION AND PHONE NUMBER**

**IS THE PATIENT HAVING CHEST PAINS?**

**YES**

**NO**

**IS THE PATIENT BREATHING NORMALLY?  
IS THE PATIENT CONSCIOUS AND  
COMPLETELY ALERT?**  
(RESPONDING APPROPRIATELY)

**YES**

**NO OR UNKNOWN**

**TRANSFER CALLER TO LIFECOM**

If Lifecom determines per their EMD  
that a Fire response is required then  
Lifecom will notify SR911 via  
landline

**A. TRANSFER CALLER TO LIFECOM**  
Announce to LIFECOM:  
1. Oakdale PD with a transfer  
2. Patient address with cross  
street. (Advise if obtained via ANI/ALI)  
3. Nature of complaint  
4. Fire is responding or Fire is not  
responding  
**B. DISPATCH FIRE – If Emergency**  
5. Contact SR911 and request Fire  
response  
6. Notify SR911 that the call has been  
transferred to ambulance