



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: CEO  
Department No.: 012  
For Agenda Of: February 7, 2012  
Placement: Departmental  
Estimated Tme: 45 minutes  
Continued Item: No  
If Yes, date from:  
Vote Required: Majority

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Department Director(s) Chandra L. Wallar, County Executive Officer, 568.3400

Contact Info: Dennis Bozanich, Assistant to the CEO, 568-3400

**SUBJECT:** Board Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Public Safety Aviation Final Report and Recommendations

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**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: N/A

**Recommended Actions:**

That the Board of Supervisors:

- A. Accept and file the Subcommittee's Final Report including Recommendations:
- 1) Form a joint fire and law enforcement aviation program within the Sheriff's Department based on an Operational Agreement between the Fire and Sheriff Department that recognizes very different missions requiring a tightly integrated team, under unified command, of pilots, crew chiefs and maintenance personnel willing to communicate and maintain positive working relationships to serve the people of Santa Barbara County.
  - 2) Include the vital elements of aircraft and equipment availability, operational procedures, financial policies, staffing levels and leadership expectations in the Operational Agreement.
  - 3) Use professional pilots for public safety flight operations. Crew Chiefs should be made up of appropriate Fire or Sheriff personnel to match the mission.
  - 4) Clarify the roles and responsibilities for medical evacuation provided by the aviation program and emergency medical transportation provided by CALSTAR to eliminate mission and dispatch confusion.
- B. Receive a report from the Fire Chief and Sheriff about the Operational Agreement (Attachment C) and transition plan, and

- C. Request an implementation status report from the Fire Chief and Sheriff in July 2012 and January 2013 or sooner if circumstances warrant
- D. Request the development of a helicopter replacement plan that includes future public safety aviation needs to protect life and property

### **Summary Text:**

Since June 2011, the Board of Supervisors' Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Public Safety Aviation, Supervisors Lavagnino and Wolf, has conducted a series of fact finding sessions to assess the County's current aviation programs including the operations and assets. This Final Report provides a summary of the history and development of the public safety aviation program, best practice methods from the existing County programs and other jurisdiction and finally recommendations for improving the effectiveness of the program in Santa Barbara County.

### **Background:**

The Board Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Public Safety Aviation was formed by Board action on June 7, 2011. Supervisors Lavagnino and Wolf were appointed as Subcommittee members. Staff support was provided by the County Executive Office. Since June 2011, the Subcommittee has conducted over 12 hours of sessions with local and state public safety aviation experts along with public health representatives. These sessions provided valuable information that increased the Subcommittee's understanding of the role of aviation assets and their contribution to fire, law enforcement and medical aid responses. Additionally the Subcommittee used these meetings to learn from subject matter experts their experiences and strategies to increase the effectiveness of the operations here in Santa Barbara County.

In addition to the fact-finding sessions, Subcommittee and staff spent countless additional hours reviewing aviation operational manuals, as well as past reports on the topic. This additional study and research along with the testimony of the subject matter experts contributed to the recommendations and findings contained in the Final Report.

At the conclusion of the fact finding sessions, the Subcommittee believed, that through cooperation and leadership, public safety missions that are inherently different can be effectively operated under a single chain of command with a highly integrated team of public safety professionals. As contained in the Final Report, the Subcommittee recommendations are to:

- Form a joint fire and law enforcement aviation program within the Sheriff's Department based on an Operational Agreement between the Fire and Sheriff Department that recognizes very different missions requiring a tightly integrated team, under unified command, of pilots, crew chiefs and maintenance personnel willing to communicate and maintain positive working relationships to serve the people of Santa Barbara County;
- Include the vital elements of aircraft and equipment availability, operational procedures, financial policies, staffing levels and leadership expectations in the Operational Agreement;
- Use professional pilots for public safety flight operations. Crew Chiefs should be made up of appropriate Fire or Sheriff personnel to match the mission, and
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities for medical evacuation provided by the aviation program and emergency medical transportation provided by CALSTAR to eliminate mission and dispatch confusion.

The Subcommittee requested that the Fire Chief and the Sheriff work together to create a workable operational plan based on the recommendations in the Final Report. The Fire Chief and Sheriff considered a variety of different plans that identified service level and staffing models. Each of the plans is aligned with the recommendations contained in the Subcommittee's Final Report. Currently, the separate aviation programs would prevent response to two simultaneous law or fire missions. The Subcommittee and the departments identified various plans that would enhance the **quality** of service by providing two multi-mission helicopters and flight crews that will be capable of responding to two simultaneous fire or law missions when necessary. Cross training all members of the aviation team will allow for improved mission response flexibility and effectiveness. One of the models cooperatively developed by the departments provides two multi-mission helicopters and two multi-disciplinary flight crews seven days a week, fifty-two weeks a year and results in savings of approximately \$270,000. (See Attachment B) Since the Recommended Option provides a significant increase in the quality of service through multi-mission simultaneous response at a lower cost, the Fire and Sheriff's Departments were asked to develop an Operational Agreement that integrates the Subcommittee's recommendations with the service and staffing levels found in the Recommended Option.

The Draft Operational Agreement (See Attachment C) between the Sheriff's Department and the Fire Department identifies the organizational and resource allocation requirements and systems necessary to accomplish the Subcommittee's recommendations. The agreement is provided to the Board to demonstrate the commitment on the part of departmental leadership and operational staff to increase the effectiveness of the aviation program and to enhance the safety of the public.

### **Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

For FY2012-2013 the current program would cost \$2.26 million. The Operational Agreement would cost \$1.99 million. If implemented in FY 2012-2013, the Operational Agreement would save over \$270,000.

### **Attachments:**

- A – Board Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Public Safety Aviation Final Report
- B – Joint Aviation Program and Cost Options
- C – Operational Agreement between the Fire and Sheriff's Departments
- D – PowerPoint Presentation

### **Authored by:**

Dennis Bozanich, Assistant to the County Executive Officer

### **CC:**

Chief Michael Dyer

Sheriff Bill Brown