

**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY  
BOARD AGENDA LETTER**



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

**Agenda Number:**  
**Prepared on:** 9/21/05  
**Department Name:** Sheriff  
**Department No.:** 032  
**Agenda Date:** 10/25/05  
**Placement:** Administrative  
**Estimate Time:**  
**Continued Item:** NO  
**If Yes, date from:**

---

**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Jim Anderson  
SHERIFF  
**STAFF CONTACT:** Cmdr. Don Patterson  
x4385  
**SUBJECT:** Santa Barbara County Search and Rescue Model Operating Plan

---

**Recommendation(s):**

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Adopt a resolution pursuant to section 26614 Government code to adopt a Santa Barbara County Search and Rescue Model Plan.

**Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:**

The recommendation(s) are primarily aligned with Goal No. 2. A Safe and Healthy Community in Which to Live, Work, and Visit.

**Executive Summary and Discussion:**

On August 30, 2004 the governor signed California Bill AB 2031. The bill is described as non-urgent and became effective January 1, 2005. California Bill 2031 amends Government code section 22614 to state:

*The board of supervisors of a county may authorize the sheriff to search for and rescue persons who are lost or are in danger of their lives within or in the immediate vicinity of the county.*

This authorization for the search and rescue of persons is to remain consistent with the Office of Emergency Services *Search and Rescue Model Plan*. The Search and Rescue Model Operating Plan provides a matrix of situations and the appropriate response agency. In many cases, the matrix suggests a dual response from the Fire Department and Sheriff's Search and Rescue Units, with the establishment of a Unified Command structure for the incident (Attachment).

Government Code 22614 further states that:

*If the board assigns responsibility for search and rescue activities in a manner that is inconsistent with these model operating guidelines, the board shall adopt a resolution to clarify why the local model provides better protections than the Search and Rescue Model Operating Plan, as developed by the Office of Emergency Services, to residents in need of county search and rescue services.*

The Office of Emergency Services has provided a model MOU for use between the Fire Department and Search and Rescue Teams. The County Fire Chief, John Scherri and the Sheriff, Jim Anderson, have signed the MOU (Attachment). This MOU complements the Search and Rescue Model Plan and is virtually the same as the previous MOU signed in the year 2000 by Chief Scherri and then Sheriff Thomas.

The adoption of this resolution formally acknowledges the County's approval and authorization of the Search and Rescue Model Plan.

**Mandates and Service Levels:**

This law does not require the Fire Department or the Sheriff's Department to participate in Search and Rescue incidents. However, the Fire Department and Sheriff's Department have a long history of providing this service to the citizens of the County. The standard of care for Search and Rescue efforts in California, and the United States, is for the local fire departments and law enforcement agencies to provide this service. If the board agrees to authorize this program, then the service mandates include responding to all reported incidents in accordance to the Model Plan.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

The County Fire Department and Sheriff's Department currently respond to all search and rescue calls for service in conformance with the Search and Rescue Model Plan. The fiscal impact of these responses is already built into each department's budget. This resolution would not change any current fiscal or facilities impacts.

**Concurrence:**

County Administrators Office

County Counsel

Risk Management

**Attachments:**

- Attachment: Search and Rescue Model Plan
- Attachment: Signed MOU between County Fire Chief and Sheriff