Fire-Rescue Department Engine Brownout Plan and Lifeguard Reductions Update

Public Safety & Neighborhood Services Committee
September 22, 2010
Fire Chief Javier Mainar

Report Focus

- 7th Report to PS&NS
- Brownout Plan
  - Workload and Response Time Statistics Update
  - Projected and actual savings realized
  - Training and inspection impacts adjustments
  - Significant incident (child choking death)
- Lifeguard Budget Reductions
  - Beach Coverage Statistics Update
  - Savings realized
  - Beach coverage and training impacts adjustments

Brownout Plan Refresher

- Brownouts Defined
  - Temporary closure of 0-8 fire engines per day
  - Implemented in the 13 stations with more than one response unit
- Brownouts implemented on February 6, 2010 as a budget reduction measure to save $11.5M in overtime
- Each brown-out unit saves approximately $1.4M annually
- Today's report covers Feb. 6 though Sept. 15, 2010
  - 69,858 emergency incidents during this period
    - 2,105 fires
    - 60,344 medical
    - 7,409 other

Statistical Summary of Brownouts

- Out-of-Service Time for Participating Engines = 32% - 100%
- Compliance with 5 min. First Unit Arrival Response Time
  - National Standard = **90%** Fire-Rescue Interim Target = **55%**
  - City-Wide Same Period Last Year = **55%**
  - City-Wide During Brownouts = **54%**
  - Participating Districts Same Period Last Year = **28% - 86%**
  - Participating Districts During Brownouts = **24% - 80%**
- Average Response Times (minutes/seconds)
  - City-Wide Same Period Last Year = **5:03**
  - City-Wide During Brownouts = **5:07**
  - Participating Districts Same Period Last Year = **3:49 – 6:16**
  - Participating Districts During Brownouts = **3:50 – 6:36**

Effective Fire Force

- Defined as the number of firefighters required to perform operations at a typical single family dwelling fire
  - 14-15 firefighters depending on whether an aerial ladder is deployed
  - SDFD achieves this with 3 engines, 1 truck and 1 battalion chief

- Compliance with 9 min. Effective Fire Force Arrival Response Time
  - National Standard = 90% Fire-Rescue Interim Target = 72%
  - City-Wide Same Period Last Year = **70%**
  - City-Wide During Brownouts = **72%**
  - Participating Districts Same Period Last Year = **20% - 100%**
  - Participating Districts During Brownouts = **0% - 100%**

- Average Effective Fire Force Response Times
  - City-Wide Same Period Last Year = **7.94 minutes**
  - City-Wide During Brownouts = **7.73 minutes**

Analysis of Response to Child Choking Fatality

- Death of two-year-old child in Mira Mesa on July 20, 2010
- An engine response time of 9.5 minutes resulted from:
  - Multiple incidents occurring at the same time (call stacking)
  - Brownout of Engine 44 (Mira Mesa)
- Closest engine would have been available to respond if not for brownouts and its response time would have been approx. 2 minutes
- It is not known whether an earlier arrival could have saved the child's life; however, earlier intervention by paramedics is desirable due to higher level of training and availability of specialized equipment
- Police officers, paramedics, and fire fighters did all they could do to save Bentley Do's life

Non-Emergency Impacts and Adjustments

- Reduced Manipulative Training Opportunities
  - Fewer units makes it difficult to go out-of-service for training
- Training Adjustments Made
  - Units allowed out-of-service at one time increased from 12 to 14
  - Units in Department-wide training sessions decreased from 5 to 3
  - More training delivered at fire stations or online
- Delays in Completing Fire Inspections
  - Fewer units are busier with emergency responses
  - Unable to keep up with fire inspection workload
  - 90-day overdue inspections up from 12% (April) to 20% (Aug)
  - Results in greater risk and revenue collection delays
- Inspection Adjustments Made
  - Light duty staff assigned when available

Brownout Projected vs. Actual Savings

Projected savings for last half of FY 2010 = **$4.2 million**

FY 2010 brownout savings realized = **$4,174,806**

FY 2011 Projected Savings = $11.5 million

Lifeguard Reductions

- Personnel
  - 8 Lifeguard FTEs
    - 4 filled (demoted to LGI)
    - 4 unfilled
  - 1 Lifeguard II Training Coordinator
  - Reduction of Hourly LG Budget
  - Reduction of Overtime Budget

- Non-Personnel
  - Overlap Training Wednesdays Eliminated
  - River Rescue Team Training Budget Cut by 50%

Impacts of Reductions

- Loss of Beach Coverage
  - 2 fulltime LGs in Fall, Winter and Spring/1 fulltime LG in Summer
  - 3 hourly LGs on weekdays in Summer and 4 hourly LGs on weekends
  - Hourly LG positions during Spring Break and Spring/Fall weekends
- Operational Adjustments Made for Beach Coverage
  - 2 hourly LGs patrolled Torrey Pines Beach in summer
  - Standard Operating Procedure for Torrey Pines Beach responses
- Loss of Training Opportunities
  - Only minimum training required for safety being provided
- Adjustments Made for Training
  - Pre-shift and in-service training modules developed
  - Winter training plan developed for 10/2 implementation

Incidents at Torrey Pines Beach (6/16 thru 7/15)

- City Portion of Beach (553 incidents)
  - 29- Medical Aid
  - 0- Water Rescues
  - 5- Cliff Rescues
  - 511- Preventive Actions
  - 1-Enforecement
  - 7 - Other calls for service

- Non-City Portions of Beach (563 incidents)
  - 88- Medical Aid
  - 0- Water Rescues
  - 0- Cliff Rescues
  - 470- Preventive Actions
  - 0-Enforcement
  - 5 - Other calls for service

Wind n' Sea Beach Coverage/Incidents

- Budget Reduction Staffing at Wind 'n Sea Beach
  - Seasonal staffing in place/No year-round staffing provided
- Staffing Reductions Made to Achieve Budget Savings
  - 1 fulltime LG in Summer
- Incident Count (1271 incidents)
  - 58- Medical Aid
  - 97- Water Rescues
  - 1,052- Preventive Actions
  - 0-Enforcement
  - 0- Other calls for service

Lifeguard Budget Reduction Savings

Lifeguard reductions for the last half of FY 2010 were a prorated shared of the FY2011 savings shown below.

FY2011 savings = $721,915

Questions?