

# ISSUE #10: BLUE RIBBON TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

*(These recommendations remain unchanged from the Governor's Blue Ribbon Commission Task Force)*

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*The unprecedented natural disaster risk facing California in the 21st Century demands a new commitment to investing in fire and emergency response capacity and sensible land-use and fire prevention.*

*The **Blue Ribbon Task Force** is an 18-member independent panel of fire service professionals. Its first report on the 2007 Southern California Firestorm details more than a dozen specific recommendations to increase permanent state and local emergency services, build additional response to meet catastrophic needs, break down bureaucratic barriers between governmental agencies and establish a new commitment to fire-safe construction and land-use planning. [California Professional Firefighters](#) is one of the founding participants in the Task Force, along with [CDF Firefighters Local 2881](#) and the [California Fire Chiefs Association](#).*

*The Task Force report's core recommendations center around an urgent upgrade in the fire and emergency response capabilities at the state and local level. Specific recommendations include:*

## More firefighters

Expand CALFIRE statewide, with permanent three-person staffing year-round and four-person staffing statewide during periods of highest fire risk. Establish reasonable standards of coverage for wildland-urban interface, and build strong statewide fire training program.

## More fire engines

Fund purchase of 150 new engines by the state Office of Emergency Services. The OES engines would be deployed with local fire departments throughout the state, boosting local protection and providing rapid response during all disasters, including wildland fires.

## More aircraft

Accelerate upgrade of CALFIRE helicopter fleet and redeploy functioning resources to local fire agencies as available to provide additional surge capacity.



## Improved tactical abilities

Establish way to exchange real-time intelligence information among fire responders. Fund satellite or other "cross-band" real-time communication, so firefighters from different agencies can talk to each other.

## Less red tape

Establish direct liaison between state and local governments and military to cut through bureaucratic delays in deployment of resources. Urge Congress to establish and firefighting as an ancillary function of the military.

## Fire-safe construction and land-use issues

Create a working group to develop a model hazard-reduction strategy, including specific fire-safe land-use guidelines, defensible space standards, model building and fire codes, and public education efforts.

## References:

**Blue Ribbon Summary on CPF Website:**  
<http://www.cpf.org/go/cpf/news-and-events/news/blue-ribbon-task-force-issues-report-on-2007-fires>