



County of Orange

County Executive Office

June 28, 2022

Honorable Erick L. Larsh
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of California
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Subject: Response to Grand Jury Report, "Where's the Fire? Stop Sending Fire Trucks to Medical Calls"

Dear Judge Larsh:

Per your request, and in accordance with Penal Code 933, please find the County of Orange response to the subject report as approved by the Board of Supervisors. The respondents are the Orange County Board of Supervisors and the County Executive Office.

If you have any questions, please contact Lala Oca Ragen of the County Executive Office at 714-834-7219.

Sincerely,

Digitally signed by Frank Kim
DN: cn=Frank Kim, o=County of
Orange, ou=CEO,
email=frank.kim@ocgov.com,
c=US
Date: 2022.06.28 16:36:52 -0700

Frank Kim
County Executive Officer

Enclosures

cc: Orange County Grand Jury
Lilly Simmering, Deputy County Executive Officer
Lala Oca Ragen, Director, Performance Management and Policy
Elizabeth Guillen-Merchant, Director, Performance Management and Policy



**Responses to Findings and Recommendations
2021-22 Grand Jury Report:**

“Where’s the Fire? Stop Sending Fire Trucks to Medical Calls”

SUMMARY RESPONSE STATEMENT:

On May 20, 2022, the Grand Jury released a report entitled “Where’s the Fire? Stop Sending Fire Trucks to Medical Calls.” This report directed responses to findings and recommendations to the Orange County Board of Supervisors and Health Care Agency/Orange County Emergency Medical Services (OCEMS). The responses are below:

FINDINGS AND RESPONSES:

F3. ALS staffed ambulances or smaller squad vehicles are often the most appropriate response to medical calls and do not compromise the quality of medical care.

Response: *Agree with the finding.* OCEMS does not opine, direct, nor have authority over which vehicles/resources a jurisdiction deploys to a 911 call. OCEMS establishes the minimum number of paramedics/Emergency Medical Technicians and equipment necessary for a medical response.

F4. There has been a breakdown of communication and trust between OCEMS and Orange County Fire Chiefs.

Response: *Agree with the finding.*

Day to day operations and patient care issues have not been affected. OCEMS and Fire EMS Coordinators meet and communicate regularly about prehospital care issues. Fire Agency representatives and OCEMS continue to meet regularly at OCEMS Advisory Committees: Emergency Medical Care Committee (EMCC), Transportation Advisory, Facilities Advisory and monthly County Paramedic Advisory. Additionally, OCEMS and the Chairman of the OC Fire Chiefs continue to work together to resolve issues with enhanced communication.

F9. OCEMS has the authority and responsibility to inspect all for-profit ambulances operating in Orange County; however, publicly owned ambulances are not automatically subject to OCEMS oversight.

Response: *Agree with the finding.*
OCEMS authority and responsibility to inspect all for-profit ambulances operating in Orange County is the EMS Act and the County Ambulance Ordinance.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESPONSES:

R5. Departments with publicly owned ambulances should allow OCEMS to inspect their ambulances for compliance with State EMS guidelines and adopt OCEMS recommendations. F9

Response: *The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.* OCEMS will explore amendments to the County Ambulance Ordinance that all ambulances, private and public, be inspected for compliance to local medical standards to ensure safe and equitable patient care and not set a double standard. Once the ordinance is passed, OCEMS will initiate the inspections.