

# Freeway Complex Fire 11/15/08 – 11/17/08 After Action Report

Orange County Sheriff Department  
Emergency Management



# Preface

The intent of this After Action Report is to document the County of Orange's response efforts during the Santiago Fire from November 15-17, 2008. This report will discuss the Orange County Emergency Operations Center efforts to support field response activities, as well as those activities involving County Departments.



# After Action Report Participating Agencies

- Orange County Superior Courts
- Orange County Sheriff-Coroner Department
- OC Public Works
- WEROC
- Orange County RACES
- Orange County Department of Education
- Treasurer-Tax Collector
- Social Services Agency
- Probation
- Health Care Agency
- Clerk of the Board
- County Executive Office
- Board of Supervisors
- Auditor Controller
- OC Waste and Recycling
- OC Public Works
- OC Community Resources
- Public Defender
- American Red Cross
- District Attorney
- Orange County Sanitation District
- Orange County Fire Authority
- City of Dana Point
- City of Huntington Beach
- City of Westminster
- City of Irvine
- City of Brea
- City of Anaheim
- City of Yorba Linda
- State OES
- Caltrans
- CHP
- FEMA



# Background

- The Freeway Complex Fire initially started out as two separate fires.
- The first fire began at approximately 9:01 a.m. on Saturday, November 15, 2008.
- The area in which the first fire began was on the 91 Westbound Freeway at the Green River onramp located in the City of Corona.
- The second fire began at approximately 10:46 a.m. on Saturday, November 15, 2008.
- The second fire began near the Olinda Alpha Landfill located in the City of Brea.



# Background Continued

- Southern California was on a “Fire Watch.”
- Santa Ana winds contributed to unpredictable fire behavior and rapid progression.
- Due to the activation of two Orange County City Emergency Operations Centers, Yorba Linda and Orange, the Operational Area Emergency Operations Center activated.



# Significant Events

- Orange County Proclaimed a Local Emergency on November 15, 2008.
- Yorba Linda, Brea and Anaheim Proclaimed Local Emergencies on November 15, 2008.
- Gubernatorial Proclamation and Presidential Declaration were received.



# Significant Events Continued

- Public information was actively managed via the dissemination of 25 news releases.
- Coordination of resources from the Emergency Operations Center to the Sheriff's Department Operations Center, Incident Command Post and the field units.
- WebEOC.



# Significant Events Continued

- CERT Mutual Aid Program (CMAP) coordination and support of volunteers at the Incident Command Post.
- A Local Assistance Center coordination between SSA, the City of Anaheim, CEO and other County support agencies.



# Lessons Learned

- Erratic and fast moving fire situations created an information flow problem. Timely and accurate briefings for responders and public were difficult.
- Information was outdated by the time it was released to the public.
- Additional training is required for the new AlertOC system. Development of a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for AlertOC is required.
- Incorporate the use of a Joint Information Center.
- Obtain an “emergency use only” credit card for EOC use.

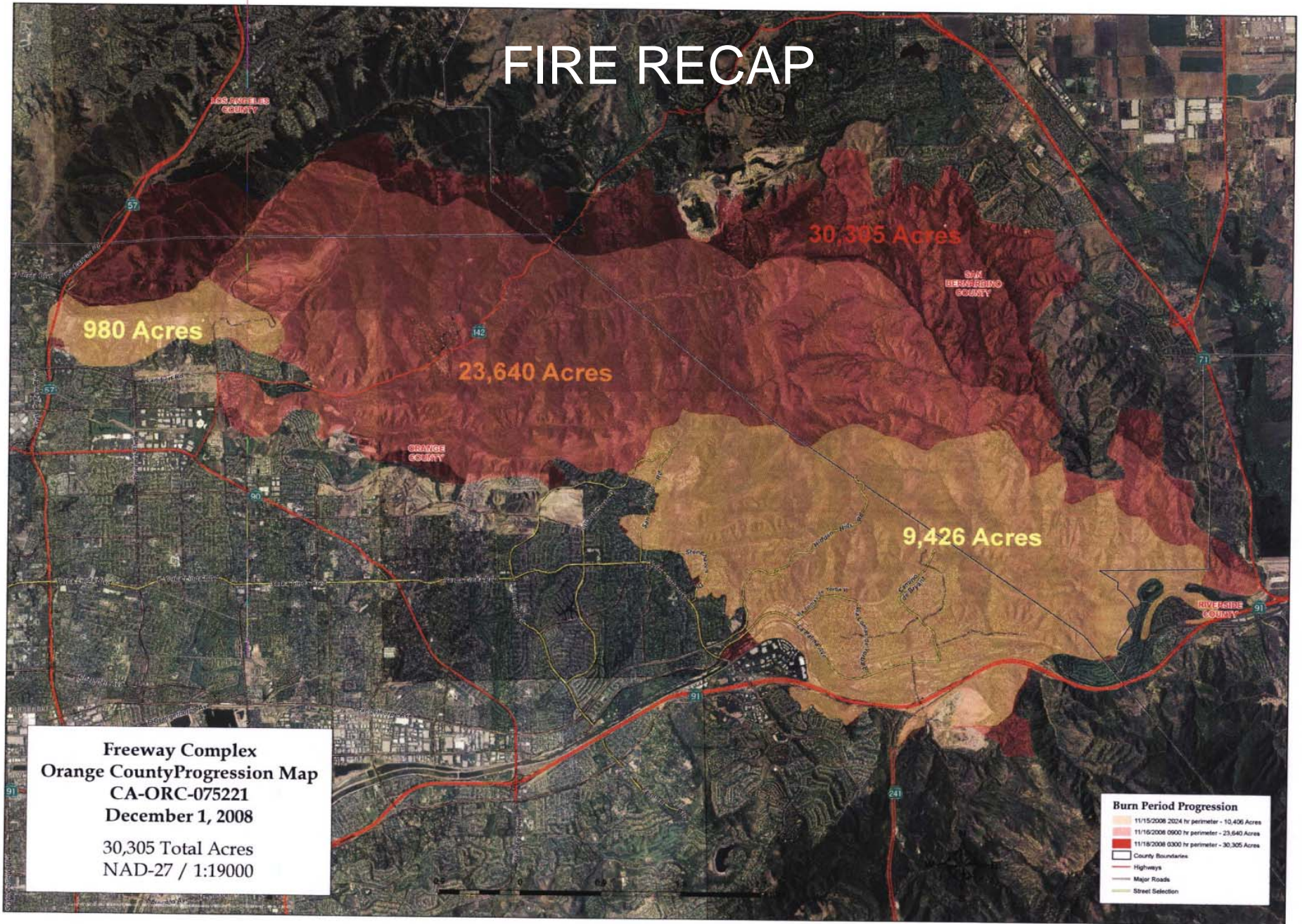


# Lessons Learned Continued

- Identification of a reliable alternate location for the EOC.
- External agency network information is not accessible due to firewalls and IT support at the EOC. Critical information such as infrastructure maps and community special needs information is necessary to manage emergencies.
- Development of a “How to Guide” will be provided for people responding to the EOC to give technical guidance.
- Notification of surrounding jurisdictions of EOC activations.
- Additional training for all EOC responders is needed on the WebEOC program and shift change briefings.



# FIRE RECAP



**Freeway Complex  
Orange County Progression Map  
CA-ORC-075221  
December 1, 2008**

30,305 Total Acres  
NAD-27 / 1:19000

**Burn Period Progression**

- 11/15/2008 2024 hr perimeter - 10,406 Acres
- 11/16/2008 0900 hr perimeter - 23,640 Acres
- 11/18/2008 0300 hr perimeter - 30,305 Acres

County Boundaries  
Highways  
Major Roads  
Street Selection

# Fire Recap

- 30,305 acres.
- 14 minor injuries to fire personnel.
- No lives lost.
- The American Red Cross opened 3 shelters.
- Animal Care Services opened 3 shelters.
- Both a State Proclamation and Federal Declaration of Emergency were granted, ensuring reimbursement for public agencies and programs for community members.



# Fire Recap Continued

- Individual claims = \$139,499,000.
  - 187 residential structures destroyed
  - 127 residential structures damaged
  - 2 commercial properties destroyed
  - 2 commercial properties damaged
  - 11 out-buildings destroyed
  - 32 out-buildings damaged



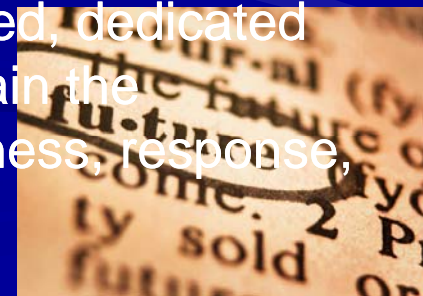
# COST

- The cost for response to the Freeway Complex Fire for the Emergency Operations Center (County Departments), Orange County Sheriff's Department field response, OC Public Works Storm Center and field response and the damages sustained to the Brea Olinda Landfill are currently estimated at \$3,585,000.
- The fire discipline response and costs will be provided in the Orange County Fire Authority after Action Report.



# Conclusions

- This After Action Report discusses the activities that occurred throughout the activation of the County's Emergency Operations Center. The document identifies problems and recommended solutions. This report will serve as a blueprint for future planning and coordination activities.
- The 2008 Freeway Complex Fire challenged the County Emergency Operations Center on a different level than the 2007 Santiago Fire. The County's main responsibility revolved around Operational Area coordination and mutual aid support.
- The future will surely guarantee additional challenges in the way of emergencies. These emergencies will impact the life and safety of our community members. It is only through continued, dedicated emergency management that the County will maintain the established leadership role in emergency preparedness, response, mitigation, and recovery.



# THANK YOU!



# Orange County Sheriff's Department Operations Center Freeway Complex Fire Activation

Orange County Sheriff Department  
Emergency Management



# Department Operations Center

## ■ Historical

- Historically the DOC has informally been co-located in the EOC during its activation or duties were handled by individual division commanders and/or in the Incident Command Post (ICP)
- Homeland Security Presidential Directives 5 and 8 (HSPD-5, HSPD-8) require use of National Incident Management System (NIMS)



# Department Operations Center Continued

- First actual **Level-3** DOC activation was for the Golden Guardian Exercise on 11/13/08 (two days before the Freeway Complex Fire- the DOC was already activated to a **Level-1** at the time due to the high wind conditions)
- The DOC has since been formally activated 7 times in the last three months



# Department Operations Center Freeway Complex Fire

- Freeway Complex Fires DOC: Level III Activation
  - Operations placed on mandatory 12 on/12 off
  - Jails at full staffing
  - Air Support (Duke I and II)
  - 277 Personnel (206-sworn, 21 civilian/professional, 50-reserves)
  - Command Post
  - Staging Area
  - 6 Branch Commands



# Department Operations Center Freeway Complex Fire Cont'd

- Unified Command
- Resource Coordination
  - Field units assisted with evacuations and traffic control
  - Air Support
- Communications
- Demobilization



# ■ Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Coordination

- Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department  
(including other Region I Los Angeles County  
Police Agencies)
- Riverside County Sheriff's Office
- Anaheim Police Department
- Buena Park Police Department
- Cypress Police Department
- Fountain Valley Police Department
- Garden Grove Police Department
- Huntington Beach Police Department
- Irvine Police Department
- Los Alamitos Police Department



## ■ Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Coordination Continued

- Newport Beach Police Department
- Placentia Police Department
- Westminster Police Department
- State Office of Emergency Services
- California Highway Patrol
- Mutual Aid Resources were also identified for several post-fire rain events to prepare for potential debris flow
- Mutual Aid Coordinator was made available to local agencies to anticipate potential needs



# Department Operations Center Lessons Learned

- Dedicated DOC Facilities
- DOC Information Technology and Dedicated Communications Systems
- Incident Management Teams Need to be Identified and Trained
- DOC Coordination with EOC and Incident Command

