

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

449



FROM: Riverside County Fire Department – Office of Emergency Services

SUBMITTAL DATE:
May 21, 2008

SUBJECT: Report to the Board on sending a Delegation of County and Local Officials to evaluate the devastating effects of the magnitude 7.9 earthquake in eastern Sichuan, China.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors consider sending a Delegation in 2009 if it is determined that it is still needed.

BACKGROUND: On May 20, 2008, Supervisor Bob Buster asked staff to evaluate sending a delegation of County Officials to China. The Fire Department met with the Community Health Agency and the Sheriff's Department and are submitting the attached report in response to Supervisor Buster's request.

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Departmental Concurrence

For John B. Hawkins, County Fire Chief
Peter Lent, Deputy Director O.E.S.

FINANCIAL DATA

Current F.Y. Total Cost:	\$ 0	In Current Year Budget:	N/A
Current F.Y. Net County Cost:	\$ 0	Budget Adjustment:	N/A
Annual Net County Cost:	\$ 0	For Fiscal Year:	

SOURCE OF FUNDS:

Positions To Be Deleted Per A-30	<input type="checkbox"/>
Requires 4/5 Vote	

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE

BY: Robert Tremaine

County Executive Office Signature

- Dep't Recomm.: Consent Policy
- Per Exec. Ofc.: Consent Policy

Prev. Agn. Ref.:

District: All

Agenda Number:

3.38

Report to the Board on sending a Delegation of County and Local Officials to evaluate the devastating effects of the magnitude 7.9 Earthquake in eastern Sichuan, China

On May 12, 2008, a devastating earthquake, with a magnitude 7.9 struck eastern Sichuan, China. Approximately 12 million people were living within a 60 mile radius of the epicenter in Wenchuan. The earthquake left thousands dead and injured, millions homeless, crippled government infrastructure and leveled homes, apartments, fire stations, schools, hospitals and businesses.

As with all catastrophic events there are lessons to be learned which can assist Governments with mitigating effects, responding to, preparing for and recovering from a similar event. As Riverside County has many active earthquake faults the potential to duplicate impacts as experienced in China is probable.

As the Board is aware, after the tragic events of September 11, 2001, a delegation of County Officials was sent to New York City to meet with New York City officials to learn from their experiences. Our delegation arrived in New York City on March 11, 2002; 6 months to the day after the airplanes struck the World Trade Center Towers.

The delegation quickly learned from the officials in New York City that they still were severely impacted from the events of September 11 even though it was six months later. They were still recovering bodies and removing debris while the delegation was there. It was a challenge for them to make time for us and one Fire Chief wanted to be at Ground Zero assisting rather than meeting with us. Valuable lessons were learned by all County Departments that were in the delegation. This information allowed us to assist in our preparation and planning for future catastrophic events.

The Fire Department, Sheriff's Department and the Community Health Agency concur on the following recommendation:

A Delegation to China should not be considered until the beginning of 2009. This is based on the following:

1. Adequate time to recover needs to be given to the Government of China.
2. A Delegation to China should not be considered prior to the Golden Guardian 2008 Exercise in November, 2008. This allows us the opportunity to evaluate our systems for strengths and weaknesses and then compare the systems utilized in China. The science behind the Golden Guardian 2008 Exercise, of a magnitude 7.8 earthquake along the San Andreas Fault with the fault rupture beginning at the Salton Sea, simulates impacts that are eerily similar to what occurred in China.
3. Delaying sending a delegation to China allows worldwide experts in the Seismic Engineering, Geological, Medical, Social, Economic and many other fields to evaluate the data and compile the impacts. This will provide us with a more comprehensive analysis of what went wrong and what went well. This information may well negate the need to send a delegation.