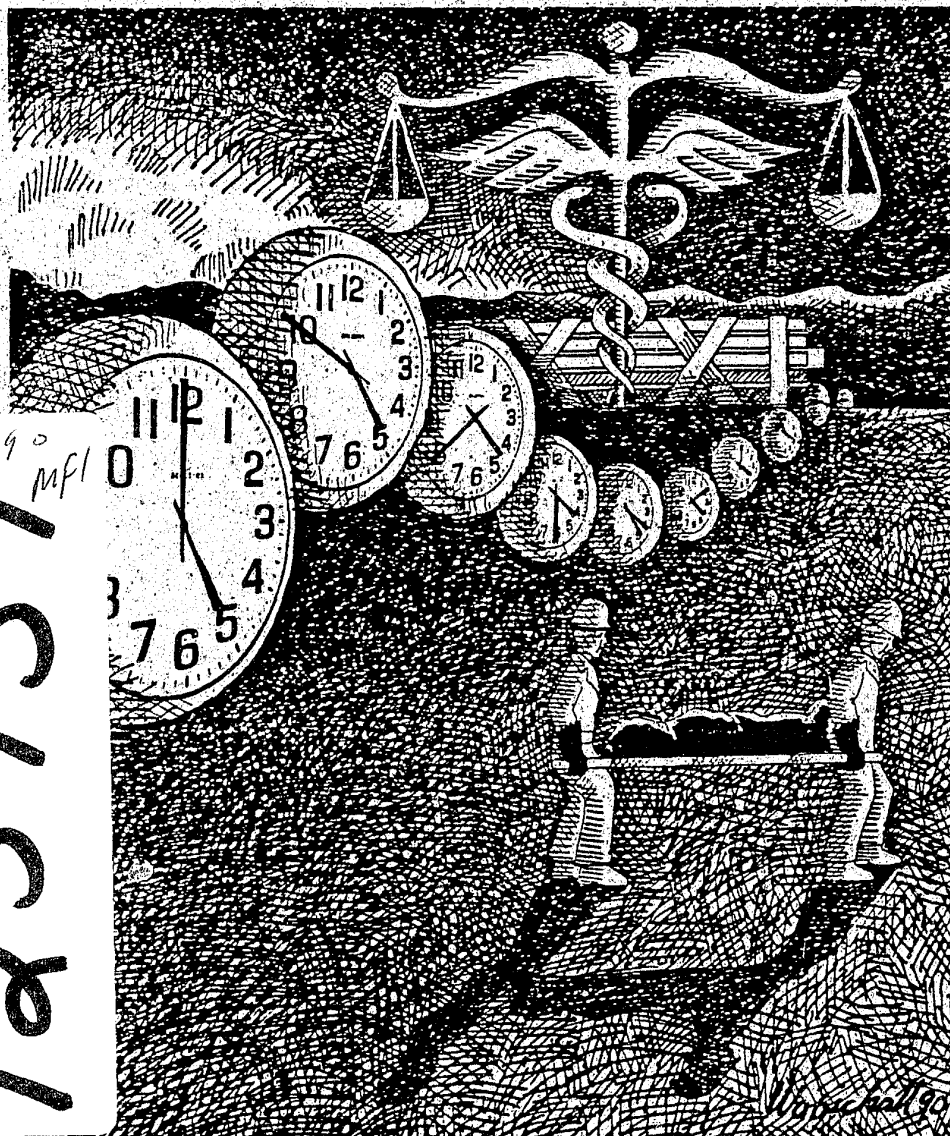


State of California
Governor's Office of Emergency Services

Law Enforcement Mutual Aid

Coroner's Annex



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George Deukmejian
GOVERNOR

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FOREWORD

The California Coroner's Mutual Aid Annex supplements the California Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Plan. Both derive their authority from the California Emergency Services Act and from the State Master Mutual Aid Agreement. The Coroner's Mutual Aid Annex is established to reflect current operational procedures. It describes the statewide Coroner's/Medical Examiner's organization, mobilization, and functions as well as other assistance available from the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, the California State Coroner's Association, other State agencies, and the resources of the Federal Government. Mission statements provide functional capabilities of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, the California Department of Justice, California Department of Motor Vehicles, California Department of Health Services, California National Guard, the Office of Emergency Services, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

This revised California Coroner's Mutual Aid Annex includes operations recommendations of the California State Coroner's Association.

DONALD R. IRWIN
Director

125131

U.S. Department of Justice
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INTRODUCTION

The Coroner's Mutual Aid Annex to the Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Plan is intended to complement and support law enforcement activities during major disasters. The Annex delineates proper procedures for notification and response of coroners under the Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Plan. In describing the assistance which may be received, it serves to complement the California Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Plan which supports the California Emergency Plan.

The Law Enforcement Division of the Governor's Office of Emergency Services is the coordinating element for all state agencies' activities relating to the Coroner's Mutual Aid Annex. Your special attention is invited to the private, state, and federal supporting agencies mission statements at the end of this publication for information on the valuable technical assets identified.

To assure effective and efficient disaster response it is essential that all departments and agencies develop a full understanding of the Coroner's Mutual Aid Annex and of the California Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Plan.

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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this annex is to:

Establish policies and procedures for the collection, disposition, and identification of human tissue and deceased persons resulting from a man made or natural emergency or major disaster, and to coordinate assistance to local governments when requested.

Prescribe for the alerting, dispatching, and utilizing of coroner/medical examiner personnel and equipment whenever local coroners require assistance from other jurisdictions and establishes policy for coroner mutual aid.

Provide coroner mutual aid planning and joint operations at the state, region, operational area, and local levels and to relate such plans to the state plan for disaster and emergency operations.

Create a system for receipt and dissemination of information and data related to major disaster situations resulting in numerous fatalities. This information will be made available to the Governor's Office and other state agencies which support coroner/medical examiner efforts.

II. DEFINITIONS

When used in this annex, various words and phrases are defined as follows:

A. Operational Area

A county and all political subdivisions within the county.

B. Operational Area Coordinator

The county coroner/medical examiner within that operational area.

C. Mutual Aid Region

An area established to facilitate coordination of mutual aid and other emergency operations. Each region consists of two or more county operational areas.

D. Regional Coordinator

The coroner/medical examiner elected by the operational area coroner/medical examiner coordinators within a region to act as the overall mutual aid coordinator for that region.

E. State Law Enforcement Coordinator

The Chief, Law Enforcement Division, Office of Emergency Services who is responsible for administrative action and coordination between state and local law enforcement agencies.

F. STATE OF WAR EMERGENCY

That condition which exists immediately with or without a proclamation by the Governor, whenever this state or nation is attacked by an enemy of the United States, or upon receipt by the state of a warning from the federal government indicating that such an enemy attack is probable or imminent. (Section 8558a, Government Code)

G. STATE OF EMERGENCY

The duly proclaimed existence of conditions of disaster or of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the state caused by such conditions as air pollution, fire, flood, storm, epidemic, riot, or earthquake, or other conditions, other than conditions resulting from a labor controversy or conditions causing a state of war emergency, which conditions, by reason of their magnitude are, or are likely to be, beyond the control of the services,

personnel, equipment, and facilities of any single county, city and county, or city, and require the combined forces of a mutual aid region or regions to combat. (Section 9559b, California Government Code)

H. LOCAL EMERGENCY

The duly proclaimed existence of conditions of disaster or of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the territorial limits of a county, city and county, or city, caused by such conditions as air pollution, fire, flood, storm, epidemic, riot, earthquake or other conditions which are, or are likely to be, beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of a political subdivision and require the combined forces of other political subdivisions to combat.

I. LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

The Law Enforcement Division of the Office of Emergency Services, State of California.

J. UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE

An unforeseen event involving potential or actual personal injury, death, or property damage arising from fire, flood, storm, earthquake, wreck, enemy action, civil disturbance, or other natural or man-caused incident.

III. AUTHORITY

The State of California Coroner Mutual Aid Annex is hereby established under the authority of Sections 8550, 8569, 8615, 8616, and 8668 of the California Government Code, the California Emergency Plan and the Master Mutual Aid Agreement.

A. California Coroner's Mutual Aid Annex

To carry out responsibilities of recovering deceased persons, recovery operations require coordination of responsibilities. The concept of mutual aid, neighbor helping neighbor, is designed to provide assistance to local governments in recovering, identifying, processing, storing, etc., of human remains.

Requests for coroner mutual aid services should be evaluated by the coroner and the regional mutual aid coordinator. Some counties may be impacted more severely than others. After local coroners have exhausted all of their available resources, requests for mutual aid are submitted to the regional mutual aid coordinator.

B. Organization for Mutual Aid

The organizational framework for mutual aid in the State of California is based on levels of increasing responsibility. These levels are: operational areas, regions, the state, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

1. Operational Area

For the California Coroners Mutual Aid Annex, the county is the base or first level and the Coroner or Medical Examiner of the county is the coordinator.

2. Region

To facilitate coordination of mutual aid and other emergency conditions, the State of California is divided into seven coroner mutual aid regions. Each mutual aid region will have a regional coordinator. This person will be elected by a majority vote of the operational area coordinators in each region. Elections

may be held following the county general elections.

Each regional coordinator will designate as alternates two senior officers within his/her department, one of whom will function as the regional coordinator during his absence or inability to serve. If the regional coordinator position is vacated for any reason, a meeting of operational area coordinators will be called by the Chief, Law Enforcement Division, OES, within thirty days of the creation of such a vacancy for the purpose of electing a new regional coordinator.

If for any reason a two-thirds majority of the coroner/medical examiner officials in a particular region desire to hold another regional election, they may request an election by the Chief, Law Enforcement Division, OES, who will conduct such an election.

3. State

The Office of Emergency Services is responsible for coordination and application of state resources in support of local jurisdictions. This office is also responsible for the receipt and dissemination of current information relating to existing or potential major disasters or disorders on which to base coroner mutual aid operations. The Director of OES, through the Chief of the Law Enforcement Division, has responsibility for coroner mutual aid coordination at the state level.

Other agencies having specific responsibilities are the California Department of Justice, the California National Guard, and the California Department of Health.

4. FEMA

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is responsible for coordination and application of federal

agencies resources. A federal agency is defined as any department, independent establishment, government corporation, or other agency of the executive branch of the federal government, including the United States Postal Service, but does not include the American National Red Cross.

C. Procedures for Obtaining Mutual Aid

1. Basic Policy

Based on the Master Mutual Aid Agreement and the California Emergency Services Act, when the Governor proclaims a State of Emergency or a Major Disaster, mutual aid is mandatory. The basic policy of state assistance to local government is to support coroners and medical examiners with state resources after all of their resources are committed and the magnitude of the disaster is or will be beyond their capabilities.

a. Operational Area

When an emergency situation develops, or appears to be developing, which cannot be resolved by the coroner/medical examiner of the county, it is the responsibility of the regional coordinator to provide assistance and coordination. (Section 26602 of the Government Code.)

b. Regional

Should an existing or unforeseen emergency be of such magnitude as to require the commitment of the resources of one or more operational areas, it is the responsibility of the regional coordinator to organize and manage the committed resources within his region. Should assistance from adjoining regions become necessary, requests will be made through the Chief of the Law Enforcement Division of the State OES.

The regional coordinator must keep the state law enforcement coordinator advised of the situation.

c. State

If the combined resources of a region are not sufficient to cope with an emergency situation, or if such a condition is indicated, the regional coordinator will request additional assistance through the State Law Enforcement Coordinator (Appendix 1).

d. FEMA

If the resources of the state are insufficient, federal resources may be made available through FEMA. (In some instances, federal agencies may assist under their own authority.)

D. Operational Guidelines

1. Basic Policies

The California Coroners Mutual Aid Annex reflects the official policy position concerning coroner mutual aid planning and operations in the State of California.

Each region within the state mutual aid structure will develop a separate mutual aid plan based on coroner/medical examiner input from within that region and guidance from the Law Enforcement Division, Office of Emergency Services. The regional plan should include: a) standard operating procedures, b) communications plan, c) personnel alert procedure, and d) resource list. The plan should be compatible with the Master Mutual Aid Agreement.

Maximum use of local existing coroner/medical examiner resources prior to the initiation of a mutual aid request is the main tenet of mutual aid operations.

Unless otherwise expressly provided, or later agreed on by the parties, the

responsible local official in whose jurisdiction the incident occurs will remain in charge. It is strongly urged that local officials consult with the responding agencies so that those involved will understand the nature of the emergency and be able to respond more effectively.

The integrity of responding forces will be maintained whenever possible.

A maximum effort will be made to provide each successive level of authority with complete, current, and accurate information relating to emergency situations, in progress or anticipated, that may require mutual aid or state agency assistance.

2. Guidance for Mutual Aid Operations

a. Planning

Planning at all levels is a key factor in mutual aid operations. Without prior planning and coordination between agencies, response to mutual aid requests is slower and operations are less effective. Each operational area will develop a plan that is consistent with the guidelines given in this Annex.

b. Information

The prompt gathering and dissemination of information relating to major disasters or unusual occurrences is of paramount importance in mutual aid operations. Complete and accurate information is vital for the evaluation of any emergency situation and a necessity for both effective deployment of mutual aid forces and eventual control.

c. Communications

An essential requirement during any emergency is the capability of an agency to communicate both internally and with other involved agencies. With this

requirement in mind, the usual problems of communications should be given a high priority in mutual aid planning.

d. **Conditions of Emergency**

Under the California Emergency Services Act of 1970, there are three types of emergency: 1) **STATE-OF-WAR EMERGENCY**, 2) **STATE OF EMERGENCY**, and 3) **LOCAL EMERGENCY**.

During a **STATE OF WAR EMERGENCY** or **STATE OF EMERGENCY**, the Governor has complete authority over all agencies of state government and the right to exercise, within the area or regions designated, all police power vested in him by the constitution and laws of the State of California (Article 12, Section 8620 and Article 13, Section 8627, California Emergency Services Act). This means that during these two types of emergency mutual aid becomes mandatory.

The Governor is empowered to proclaim a state of emergency in areas affected or likely to be affected when:

- He is requested to do so by the Chief Executive of a city or the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors or Administrative Officer of a county; or

- He finds that local authority is inadequate to cope with the emergency.

A local emergency is the least severe of the three types of emergencies and may be proclaimed by the governing body of a county, city and county, or city, or by an official designated by ordinance.

In periods of local emergency, state agencies may provide mutual aid, including personnel, equipment, and other available resources, to assist local jurisdictions in accordance with mutual

aid agreements or at the direction of the Governor.

By proclaiming a local emergency, the governing body of a city or county increases its authority and may promulgate special orders and regulations as necessary. (For examples of proclamations, ordinances, and resolutions, see the State of California Emergency Plan.)

In situations other than a **STATE-OF-WAR-EMERGENCY**, **STATE OF EMERGENCY**, or **LOCAL EMERGENCY**, state agencies and political subdivisions have the authority to exercise mutual aid powers in accordance with the Master Mutual Aid Agreement and local ordinances, resolutions, agreements or plans.

e. **Actions of State Agencies**

During a proclaimed emergency, state aid will be available. The Office of Emergency Services Law Enforcement Division will coordinate assistance provided through the California Coroners Mutual Aid Annex and all support provided by state agencies, by adjacent states, and by the federal government.

Other State Agencies:

1. **California National Guard**

The military, when authorized by the Governor and requested through OES, may provide men and equipment necessary for collection, identification, transportation, and storage of the deceased, as well as support services. (Appendix 2.)

2. **California Department of Justice**

The California Department of Justice Law Enforcement Division may provide assistance in identification of deceased. (Appendix 3.)

3. California Department of Health

Under the authority of the state Health and Safety Code, the Department of Health may assist in the notification of next of kin where large numbers of deceased constitute a public health hazard. (Appendix 4.)

4. California Department of Motor Vehicles

The California Department of Motor Vehicles may assist in the identification of deceased by providing photographs and thumbprints from its drivers' license records and vehicle ownership information from its vehicle registration files. (Appendix 5.)

The Federal Emergency Management Agency

Under section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (P.L. 93-288 as amended by P.L. 100-707), all requests for a declaration by the President that a major disaster exists shall be made by the Governor of the Affected State. Such a request shall be based on a finding that the disaster is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and the affected local governments and that federal assistance is necessary. As part of such request, and as a prerequisite to major disaster assistance under this Act, the Governor shall take appropriate response action under state law and direct execution of the state's emergency plan. The Governor shall furnish information on the nature and amount of state and local resources which have been or will be committed to alleviate the results of the disaster, and shall certify that, for the current disaster, state and local government obligations and expenditures (of which state commitments must be a significant proportion) will comply with all applicable cost-sharing requirements of

this Act. Based on the request of a governor under this section, the President may declare under this Act that a major disaster or emergency exists.

Federal Resources

P.L. 93-288 as amended by P.L. 100-707, section 402, provides that "in any major disaster, the President (through FEMA) may direct any federal agency, with or without reimbursement, to utilize its authorities and the resources granted to it under Federal law (including personnel, equipment, supplies, facilities, and managerial, technical, and advisory services) in support of state and local assistance efforts; "...

a. Department of Defense Resources

During the immediate aftermath of an incident the Governor may request the President to direct the Secretary of Defense to utilize resources of the Department of Defense for the purpose of performing on public and private lands any emergency work which is made necessary by such incident and which is essential for the preservation of life and property. (Appendix 6.)

b. Federal Bureau of Investigation

May assist in the identification of the deceased. (Appendix 7.)

Forensic Odontology Unit

For special cases and general emergency needs from forensic dentists see Appendix 8.

California Coroner's

The California State Coroner's Association will abide by the Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Plan. The Association is committed to the exchange of information, expertise, training, and disaster preparation.

Appendix #1

LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION, OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

I. Task

When an Emergency or Disaster is of such magnitude that it is or is expected to be beyond the capabilities of the Operational Area and the Region, the affected Coroners Regional Coordinator will contact the Law Enforcement Division of the Office of Emergency Services and request inter-regional and/or state agencies assistance.

II. Authority

Authority for the activities of the Law Enforcement Division, Office of Emergency Services is prescribed by Article 5, Chapter 7, California Government Code.

III. Responsibility

The Law Enforcement Division of the Office of Emergency Services will receive and act upon all appropriate and reasonable requests for assistance from Coroners Mutual Aid Regional Coordinators.

IV. Standard Operating Procedure

The Law Enforcement Division of the Office of Emergency Services will observe all policies and procedures of the Office of Emergency Services, the Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Plan, and the California Coroners Mutual Aid Annex.

Appendix #2

CALIFORNIA NATIONAL GUARD

I. Task

The California National Guard will assist civil authority to discharge lawful responsibilities by performing tasks which include but are not limited to the protection of life and property, search and rescue, and general logistics support.

II. Authority

The Governor, through his Office of Emergency Services, will commit the California National Guard resources in support of local authority under Sections 143 and 146 of the Military and Veterans Code and only upon determination that emergency or highly perilous conditions exist or are imminent.

III. Responsibility

The California National Guard will support, not supplant, local authorities and will terminate their support at the earliest practical time.

IV. Standard Operating Procedure

Where military resources are deployed, a military liaison will co-locate with the Incident Commander at the Incident Command Post. Military support will, at all times, remain under the military chain of command. Support may be obtained by officials of local government making a request through the Office of Emergency Services when a Disaster or Emergency is, or is about to be, beyond the capabilities of local government and all mutual aid resources have been exhausted.

Appendix #3

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

I. Task

Following a major disaster or emergency beyond the capabilities of local government, the Department of Justice (DOJ) will assist with the identification of deceased individuals.

II. Authority

The Department of Justice (DOJ) will assist as per direction of the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Executive Order D-25-83) in any major disaster or state of emergency. DOJ will also assist on its own authority when it is mutually agreed upon at the local level that such services are needed.

III. Responsibility

The Department of Justice will augment the Coroner's resources and work under their authority.

IV. Standard Operating Procedure

When requested, the Department of Justice Latent Print Program will assist the coroner/medical examiners in identifying deceased persons through fingerprints. Department of Justice Latent Print Analysts have extensive training and experience in obtaining and identifying prints from mutilated and decomposing bodies. The Latent Print Program will respond to statewide requests 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Requests may be made by telephone: (916) 739-5137.

Appendix #4

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

I. Task

The Department of Health Services (DHS) will help local government assess health hazards and ensure compliance with health regulations or grant waivers.

II. Authority

The Department of Health Services (DHS) will assist as per direction of the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Executive Order D-25-83) in any major disaster or state of emergency. DHS will also assist on its own authority when it is mutually agreed upon at the local level that their services are needed.

III. Responsibility

DHS is responsible for ensuring observance of health regulations and policies. To assist in Coroner operations, DHS will provide emergency supplies of death certificates, disposition forms, and provide training in their use.

IV. Standard Operating Procedure

Services of DHS should be obtained by contacting the State Office of Emergency Services.

Appendix #5

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

I. Task

The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) will provide assistance to law enforcement agencies during emergencies. DMV's Office of Information Services may assist law enforcement agencies by providing information maintained in its Driver License (DL), Automated Name Index (ANI), and Vehicle/Vessel Registration (VR) files.

II. Authority

Authority for the activities of the Department of Motor Vehicles is contained in sections 1810.5 and 1812 of the California Vehicle Code.

III. Responsibility

The Department of Motor Vehicles will provide information from the department's files pertaining to the issuance of driver licenses and the registration of vehicles and vessels. The information may include name, address, photograph, general description, and thumb print of individuals as well as specific information regarding vehicles.

IV. Standard Operating Procedures

The Department of Motor Vehicles Office of Information Services is available seven days a week. Contact should be made as follows:

Monday through Friday 0700-1700 hrs ----- Manager, of Information Services. (916) 732-0502

Monday through Friday 1700-0130 hrs ----- Manager of Night Operations. (916) 732-7620

After hours 0130 -0700 hrs ----- DMV Computer Operation section. (916) 732-0700

On Weekends 0700 to 0130 hrs ----- Law Enforcement section. (916) 732-7142

Appendix #6

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RESOURCES

I. Task

When directed by the Secretary of Defense, the Department of Defense will utilize their resources to perform work on both private and public property when it is essential and necessary for the preservation of life and property.

II. Authority

Public Law 93-288 as amended by Public Law 100-707, Section 402.

III. Responsibility

When requested by FEMA, the Department of Defense will utilize its resources for the protection of lives and property at the direction of local and State governments.

IV. Standard Operating Procedures

The Department of Defense will respond to local requests for assistance when a valid request has been made through State Office of Emergency Services (OES) to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Appendix #7

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

I. Task

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) may assist at any time free of costs on an approved request for assistance. The FBI Disaster Squad will act on requests for assistance received from the following:

- A. Law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the scene
- B. Coroner or other ranking official such as Mayor or Governor.
- C. Official of airline or other public utility involved.
- D. U.S. Department of Transportation (National Transportation Safety Board or FAA).
- E. State Department in foreign disasters involving Americans.

II. Authority

Title 28 Code of Federal Regulations, Section O 85, authorizes the Director of the FBI to provide humanitarian aid during disasters, subject to the general supervision of the Attorney General.

III. Responsibility

The FBI Disaster Squad provides fingerprint specialists for assistance to coroner or medical examiners in identification of deceased bodies and body parts. Under certain conditions the Disaster Squad may aid local officials in identifying physical characteristics of and jewelry belonging to unknown deceased persons.

IV. Standard Operating Procedure

Requests for assistance from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) should be made to the nearest FBI office in your area or the FBI Identification Division (202) 324-5401 during the normal workday hours or (202)324-3362 after the normal workday hours. Following an approved request the FBI Disaster Squad will:

- a. respond with necessary tools and equipment;
- b. need workspace and furnishings;
- c. print all bodies prior to their release;
- d. compare postmortem with antemortem prints and furnish a written report of their findings to the Coroner;
- e. under the coroners direction, handle press relations;
- f. provide court testimony when necessary.

Appendix # 8

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF FORENSIC SCIENCES

I. Task

The Law Enforcement Division of the Office of Emergency Services or a coroner/medical examiner may contact the Forensic Odontology Unit (see the California Coroners Manpower and Resources Manual for contacts).

II. Authority

The Forensic Odontology Unit has the authority of the requesting agency to perform the identification mission. Dental personnel may act as consultants for the requesting agency.

III. Responsibility

To perform identification procedures in accordance with accepted standards and recognized and accepted techniques for the requesting agency.

IV. Standard Operating Procedure

Upon first notification of activation, the unit leader will obtain as much information as necessary to make early estimations as to the basic nature of the mission. Transportation requirements will be the responsibility of the requesting agency.

Upon arrival the responding Forensic Odontology Unit will report to the county coroner/medical examiner for specific instructions.

The Forensic Odontology Unit will perform identification and verification of human remains by Forensic Odontology methods and will conduct evaluation and investigation of dental related evidence. Upon completion of the assignment the Forensic Odontology Unit will report its findings to the county coroner/medical examiner and act as expert witness whenever necessary.

CORONER MUTUAL AID REGIONS

REGIONAL COORDINATORS

- I. LOS ANGELES CO.
- I-A. SAN LUIS OBISPO CO.
- II. ALAMEDA CO.
- III. TRINITY CO.
- IV. SACRAMENTO CO.
- V. FRESNO CO.
- VI. RIVERSIDE CO.



CALIFORNIA OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES
LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION