

Attachment A: Definitions and Acronyms

Like every discipline, fire and emergency services are replete with terms and acronyms that may not be familiar to the general population. To aid the reader, Table 87 lists definitions of terms and Table 88 lists acronyms used throughout this report.

Table 87: Definitions

Definitions	
Advanced Life Support (ALS)	Pre-hospital emergency medical services intended to stabilize patients prior to transport to a hospital or trauma center. Includes administration of drugs and intubation.
Ambulance or Transport	Vehicle used to transport patients to hospitals/trauma centers.
Apparatus	Specialized vehicles used to provide fire and emergency services: primarily engines, trucks and rescues.
Automatic Aid	An ongoing agreement between agencies that one department will respond automatically into the other jurisdiction to a service call.
Basic Life Support (BLS)	Pre-hospital emergency medical services intended to stabilize patients prior to transport to a hospital or trauma center. Services are at a lower level than ALS services and require less training.
Battalion	A grouping of multiple fire companies under a common command.
Boundary Drop	When two agencies agree that the closest unit will be the first responder to an incident and take responsibility for the incident regardless of political jurisdiction.
CAL FIRE	The State of California fire and emergency service provider; California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.
Company	A grouping of sworn firefighting personnel under supervision of a company officer. A company is typically the personnel assigned to staff a piece of apparatus.
County Comm.	County of Santa Clara Communications Department, the communications/dispatch center for the Santa Clara County Central Fire District and countywide emergency ambulance dispatch, except for the City of Palo Alto.
Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)	A person possessing the certifications necessary to provide BLS service.
Engine	The primary vehicle used by fire departments. It has water in a booster tank, a pump, hoses, and ground ladders.
Fire district	A government jurisdiction formed under the Health and Safety Code that is the responsible jurisdiction for a prescribed geographic area.
Hazmat	Hazardous materials/toxic chemicals dangerous to life and the environment. Type 1 materials require specialized equipment.

Definitions	
Mutual Aid	One or more agencies providing support to another agency upon request at no cost.
Paramedic	A person meeting State certification requirements to provide advanced life support services.
Platoon	A grouping of fire personnel typically working on the same shift rotation schedule.
Public Service Calls	Calls made for reasons including vehicle and residential lockouts, smoke detector battery changes, invalid assists, etc.
Pre-hospital emergency medical care	First responder paramedic and transport services in advance of admittance of a patient to a hospital.
Provider agency or department	A fire department that is a direct provider of fire and emergency services. Some responsible agencies contract with another agency for service delivery.
Rescue	A rescue vehicle is similar to a truck, but does not carry the large aerial ladder. It is similar to an engine, but carries all of the rescue and extrication gear carried by a truck.
Responsible agency or jurisdiction	The government ultimately responsible for providing fire and emergency services—a city, county or fire district.
Sphere of Influence (SOI)	Defined by the state law as the probable physical boundaries and service areas of a city or district. In Santa Clara County, inclusion of an area in a city’s SOI is not necessarily an indication that the area would be annexed to the city or receive urban services.
State Responsibility Area (SRA)	Unincorporated lands outside the jurisdiction of an incorporated city. Cal Fire is the responsible agency for wildfire suppression response to these areas.
Structure Fire	A fire in a building.
Truck	Trucks have ground ladders and a large aerial ladder. Trucks also carry rescue and medical gear.
Urban Service Area (USA)	This boundary delineates incorporated and unincorporated areas authorized to receive urban services, facilities, and utilities, or areas proposed to receive such services within 5 years from a city.

Table 88: Acronyms

Acronyms	
ABAG	Association of Bay Area Governments
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AED	Automatic Electronic Defibrillator

Acronyms	
ALS	Advanced Life Support
AMR	American Medical Response
ARF	Aircraft Rescue Firefighting engine
BLS	Basic Life Support
CAD	Computer Aided Dispatch
CCFD	Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District
CKH Act	Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000
CSA	County Service Area
EMD	Emergency Medical Dispatch
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
EMT	Emergency Medical Technician
FD	Fire District
FTE	Full Time Employee equivalent
FY	Fiscal Year
HIT	Hazardous Incident Team
ISF	Internal Service Fund
JPA	Joint Powers Authority
LAFCO	Local Agency Formation Commission
LAHFD	Los Altos Hills County Fire Protection District
MIS	Management Information System
MSR	Municipal Service Review
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
PSAP	Public Safety Answering Point
QRV	Quick Response Vehicles
RFP	Request For Proposals
SRA	State Responsibility Area
SCC	Santa Clara County
SCFD	South Santa Clara County Fire Protection District
SFD	Saratoga Fire Protection District
SOI	Sphere of Influence
STAR	Supplemental Transport Ambulance Resource
SVRIA	Silicon Valley Regional Interoperability Authority

Acronyms	
USA	Urban Service Area
VFC	Volunteer Fire Company