

Agency Profile

CSAs are not separate independent government entities, but are administrative units of county government for the provision of governmental services by counties within the unincorporated area. The County Service Area Law, Gov. Code §25210 et seq., was enacted to address growth problems and service needs in unincorporated areas within counties. County Service Area 7 (CSA 7) serves as an administrative vehicle for the collection of revenue needed for the provision of emergency medical services. CSA 7 was formed in 1976, encompassing the entire incorporated and unincorporated area of western El Dorado County, from the Sacramento County Line to Desolation Wilderness (refer to Map A). The ambulance and emergency medical functions of the CSA are administered through the County Public Health Department and its operations are contracted through an agreement, often referred to as the "Master Contract," with the El Dorado County Regional Pre-hospital Emergency Services Operations Authority (JPA).

The ambulance system involves the El Dorado County fire protection agencies that are JPA members. All of the fire protection agencies on the west slope are JPA members of CSA 7; however, only five of these districts are "providers," directly providing medical transport services. "Provider" member agencies operate medic units/ambulances and receive funds from CSA 7 for personnel, operating expenses, equipment, and administrative overhead. Non-providers receive funds from CSA 7 for medical supplies and training to operate full-paramedic engines or part-time advanced life support engines without medic unit/ambulances. The CSA 7 JPA Service Providers are:

- Cameron Park Community Services District
- Diamond Springs/El Dorado Fire Protection District
- El Dorado County Fire Protection District
- El Dorado Hills County Water District
- Georgetown Fire Protection District

The governing body of the CSA is the Board of Supervisors. Historically, the County would convene as the Board of Directors of CSA 3 and CSA 7; however, they abandoned this practice some years ago in order to have CSA business transacted more directly by the Board of Supervisors. The change was motivated by the understanding that all CSA power resides in the Board of Supervisors and the "existence" of a separate CSA board is a mere formality.

Land Use Character

Western El Dorado County is at the heart of California's Gold Rush country, often called the "Mother Lode." There is one incorporated city, Placerville, which is the County seat. Two major highways, U.S. 50 and State Route 49, intersect the western county, while State Route 88 establishes the county's southern border with Amador County. Over 78% of the county residents live in the

unincorporated areas. Major residential communities (El Dorado Hills, Cameron Park and Shingle Springs) in the western part of the county serve as suburban areas to the Sacramento Metropolitan Region. The county roads in the southern portion of the county lead to El Dorado wine country, which draws many tourists and locals to the otherwise rural area. The northwestern part of the county is rural, with small, historic communities peppering the landscape. The northeastern part of the county is a predominantly forested area that provides trees for the timber industry and recreation to the county's residents.

Level of Service

As mentioned above, CSA 7 is not a service provider per se, but a governmental organizational mechanism by which emergency medical and ambulatory services are provided. The County's Public Health Department manages the JPA's contract, monitors the JPA's performance for compliance and it reviews the proposed budget for ambulance services. The JPA's Executive Director is a contractor who implements the provisions of the Master Contract and develops a proposed annual budget for JPA funded dispatch services. The JPA Director works with the EMS Administrator at the Public Health Department to implement the provisions of the Master Contract.

CSA 7 has developed policies, procedures, and treatment protocols for the El Dorado County emergency pre-hospital care system. Its main funding mechanisms for these services are property taxes and assessments. Its five service providers provide extensive coverage in the western slope. The contract response standards specified in the Master Contract are:

- Urban – 10 minutes
- Semi-rural – 20 minutes
- Rural – 20 minutes
- Wilderness – As soon as feasible

The newly-implemented Master Contract (effective July 1, 2006) added language that requires the JPA to develop and implement a remediation plan if response time requirements are not met in any two consecutive months. Non-compliance for three consecutive months will now constitute minor breach of contract. *"Multiple minor breaches"* for failure to comply with response time standards has also replaced *"three consecutive months or any four months in a calendar year"* as cause for major breach.

Commission's Policies and Guidelines

LAFCO Policy 4.4 requires the Commission to review the following topics before making sphere of influence determinations. The Commission's review of fire suppression and emergency services addressed these requirements as noted below. All citations are from the Countywide Fire Suppression and Emergency Services Municipal Services Review, adopted by the Commission in August, 2006.

1. Service capacity, level and types of services currently provided by the agency, and areas where these services are provided

Refer to pages 259-261, "Operations;" pages 261-262, "Organization;" page 266, "District Services and Supplies;" and Map 6 – "CSAs 3 and 7".

2. Financial capabilities and costs of service

Refer to pages 259-261, "Operations;" page 264, "Administration;" pages 264-265, "Budget Process;" and page 265, "Salaries and Benefits."

3. Topographic factors and areas of social and economic interdependencies

Refer to page 309, "Table 111 – El Dorado County Land Use Forecasts."

4. Existing and planned land uses, land use plans and policies, consistency with county and city general plans, and projected growth in the affected area

Refer to pages 307-312, "Growth and Population Projections for the Affected Area."

5. Potential effects on agricultural and open space lands

The 2004 General Plan directs unincorporated growth to already existing population centers, or "community regions." As noted above, CSA 7 encompasses the entire western region of El Dorado County, which has various land uses. However, any reorganization or expansion of CSA 7 should not have a detrimental effect on open space lands since emergency medical and ambulatory services are not growth-inducing or lead to the premature conversion of agricultural or open space lands to urban uses. To a large extent, these services protect the human, economic and resource assets of the community by responding to emergencies that threaten lives of its residents, regardless of the developed or undeveloped state of the land.

6. A description of the services that will be provided to any areas which may be added to the sphere and the timing and method for funding expansion of facilities or services

Refer to pages 259-261, "Operations;" pages 261-262, "Organization;" page 266, "District Services and Supplies;" and Map 6 – "CSAs 3 and 7".

7. An analysis of the effects of a proposed sphere of influence on other agencies and their service capabilities:

Any discussion of a reorganization that would affect CSA 7 would most likely not involve the district itself but its service providers. For that discussion, refer to pages 336-339, "Government Structure and Cost Effectiveness."

DETERMINATIONS

In determining the sphere of influence for each local agency, Government Code §56425(e) requires the Commission to consider and prepare a written statement

of determinations with respect to four factors. Staff recommends the following determinations for amending the sphere for CSA 7:

1. *The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open space lands.*

The present land use in the CSA 7 service area varies, from an urban area (City of Placerville) to suburban areas (El Dorado Hills and Cameron Park) to rural and semi rural (i.e. Georgetown Divide or South County) to open space and natural (such as the Eldorado National Forest or the areas along Cosumnes River and the North and South Forks of the American River). The 2004 General Plan would direct growth to already-existing communities. Consequently, growth will most likely occur in already-populated areas, increasing the service demand and impacting response times. Since EMS services for the county are shared between two dependent districts separated by geographic and topographic factors, it does not appear that there may be an overriding reason for an amendment of the CSA 7 sphere of influence.

2. *The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.*

Presently, all developed and undeveloped areas within the CSA 7 service area receive sufficient emergency response services as needed. While there have been some challenges with meeting the response standards in the past year, all parties have instituted a collaborative process to address these issues and re-evaluate and re-negotiate performance standards if the situation warrants. Given this background, there are no areas outside of the current CSA 7 service boundaries that are likely to require inclusion consideration within its sphere of influence in the foreseeable future.

3. *The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide.*

CSA 7 appears to provide adequate emergency response services within and, in cases of mutual aid responses, outside its boundaries. The agency is compensated for these services primarily through property taxes and assessments.

4. *The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the Commission determines that they are relevant to the agency.*

Because the CSA 7 covers the county's western slope, there are multiple communities of interest; however, while relevant to the agency, this sphere of influence would not separate or split a social or economic community of interest.

Based upon the information contained in this document, it is recommended that County Service Area 7 Sphere of Influence be updated to affirm its original sphere, which is coterminous with its current boundaries.