

## RELATED TERMS

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# LESSON LEARNED

## Fire Department Apparatus and Equipment: Maintaining Reserve Apparatus

### SUMMARY

Fire departments should place reserve apparatus in stations where they can be maintained and ready for service. All reserve apparatus should be fully equipped and ready for service.

### DESCRIPTION

The San Diego, California, area suffered one of the most destructive fires in the state's history in October 2003. The Cedar Fire began in the Cleveland National Forest in the Cedar Creek area late in the afternoon of October 25, 2003. The City of San Diego's Fire-Rescue Department (SDFD) initially committed 2 Strike Teams to support fire operations across 116,000 acres in neighboring jurisdictions. The fire entered the city of San Diego the next morning. Over the next 2 days, the wildland/urban interface fire consumed more than 28,000 acres within the city and the Miramar Marine Corps Air Station. The SDFD response included several hundred personnel and approximately 100 apparatus. The only resources available to respond to the fire were from within the SDFD, the Federal Fire Department, and the Miramar Marine Corps Fire Department.

At the time of the Cedar Fire, SDFD maintained a tiered reserve apparatus fleet comprised of ready reserve, stripped reserve with hose, stripped reserve, and training reserve. The magnitude of the Cedar Fire forced SDFD to mobilize every apparatus in its fleet to support the control of the fire. The SDFD established a logistics section on October 26 in order to repair and staff reserve apparatus. It found that the stripped reserve engines were not equipped for firefighting. The SDFD after-action report (AAR) later determined that the process for placing an engine in service proved too long and complicated. The AAR observed that "equipment was not centrally located and accessible. There was not sufficient shelf stock of equipment to fully outfit all reserve apparatus." Ultimately, the apparatus and equipment available to respond to the Cedar Fire fell "far short" of what was required for an incident of this magnitude.

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### CITATION

San Diego County Office of Emergency Services. *San Diego County After-Action Report: Firestorms 2003*. 2003.

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