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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF MONO

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Queenie Barnard, Clerk of the Board

September 8, 2026

The Honorable Mark Magit
Presiding Judge
Mono County Superior Court
100 Thompson Way
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

To the Honorable Judge Magit and Members of the Grand Jury:

Please find the Board of Supervisors' responses to the Grand Jury's investigation report entitled "The Mono County Pack Fire Emergency Communications Issues" enclosed with this letter. The Board appreciates the Grand Jury's focus on the critical emergency services systems that serve Mono County residents, visitors, and first responders.

The Board takes very seriously the concerns raised about dispatch and the broader emergency response system. The Pack Fire and other incidents have underscored that dependable, well-coordinated emergency communications are essential to public safety. The Board recognizes the urgency and value of sustained improvements to the County's dispatch model, staffing, training, coordination, and communications capabilities.

The Board wholly supports advancing an independent dispatch model with dedicated dispatch-only personnel and meaningful participation by regional stakeholders. The Board has directed the Sheriff and County Administrative Office to move this work forward, including evaluation of appropriate governance, staffing, technology, and facility options. The Board also supports continued dispatch training and examination of tools and procedures that can improve resource tracking and operational consistency.

Improvements to dispatch must be made alongside strengthened emergency management within the County and interagency coordination. The County is recruiting an Emergency Management Director, continuing work on countywide communications improvements, and will work with fire districts and other partners to improve notification practices, incident-response protocols, and shared preparedness. The Board will require monthly progress updates on the independent-dispatch effort and a six-month update addressing progress on the objectives identified by the Grand Jury.

The Board is grateful for the Grand Jury's service and for its recommendations. Thank you for your contribution to ensuring and improving the County's ongoing work to build a more reliable, resilient, and effective system of emergency dispatch and communications.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Kreitz".

Jennifer Kreitz

Chair, Mono County Board of Supervisors



Mono County Responses to Investigation Report: The Mono County Pack Fire Emergency Communications Issues

Findings:

F1: The cause of the Pack Fire is still under investigation by the USFS. The previous night's fire, the Magee Fire, and the Pack Fire are declared separate incidents by the USFS.

Response to F1: Agree.

Implementation of F1: None.

Implementation Timeline for F1: None.

F2: There is no set protocol for the first Mono County arriving fire unit to notify dispatch of how many additional resources need to be dispatched immediately.

Response to F2: Agree. Mono County does not have a fire department. The County is served by its various independent fire protection districts that have their own service boundaries and provide mutual aid to each other in the event of a larger event or emergency that exceeds the resources of any one district.

Ultimately, consistent with guidance and regulations from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the California Office of Emergency Services (CalOES), each of these fire districts should have a protocol for determining how to decide what extra resources may be needed at an incident and for when and how to ask for those additional resources to be dispatched.

Responses to an incident are generally governed by the standards and requirements set out in the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and the National Incident Management System/Incident Command System (NIMS/ICS) promulgated by CalOES and FEMA. Pursuant to those systems, the officer of the first arriving engine at an incident assumes Incident Command (IC) and announces this over the radio. The IC is responsible for establishing an Incident Command Post (ICP) by identifying a safe, visible, and stationary physical location from which to conduct incident management.

At that point, the IC is responsible for a size-up or conditions report, where they report to dispatch an incident name, location and approximate acreage, estimated rate of spread, fuel type, threats to life, structures, and infrastructure, and the additional resources needed immediately. Dispatch then sends what the IC requests, based on those in-the-field determinations that can only appropriately be made by a firefighting professional with on the ground observations of the incident.

Nonetheless, the County agrees that a uniform protocol across districts would have value in easing resource determinations for responding fire districts and for IC. Moreover, dispatch needs to be a part of the development of protocols so that they can effectively respond to and implement those protocols that the fire districts have developed.

Implementation of F2: Mono County periodically enters into a broad memorandum of understanding (MOU) with all the fire protection districts, including the fire agency at the



Mountain Warfare Training Center, for the purpose of coordinating and assuring mutual aid between the districts to assist in effective response to emergencies county-wide. The most recent version of that MOU was entered into by all the districts and the County in 2025.

The County, in its capacity working together with the fire districts, can incorporate requirements for fire districts to develop or maintain incident response protocols consistent with SEMS/NIMS at the next adoption cycle for that MOU. Dispatch should participate in those conversations to the extent they need to understand how to implement the protocols. The Sheriff and County Administrative Office should also work to determine if there are software updates necessary to facilitate response to fire protocols.

Implementation Timeline for F2: During the 2030 MOU cycle, the County, through the Sheriff and County Administrative Office, can work with the fire districts to incorporate requirements to develop or maintain response protocols to the extent they do not already exist, or find ways to facilitate training assistance with those state and federal protocols. Dispatch shall be included in those efforts to ensure they can effectively respond to an implement those protocols.

F3: There is no set protocol to notify all the fire departments and law enforcement agencies that there is a large working fire or other significant disaster in the County. This would be a notification call, not a dispatch.

Response to F3: Agree. While “all calls” can be made for an emergency incident, it is ultimately up to the IC on the ground at a given incident to determine what resources are needed and should be notified or requested from dispatch based on what they observe at the scene. The Emergency Management Director role, once filled, and the CAO and Sheriff in the interim, will review existing notification systems and determine what improvements can be made to make sure the public and agencies have timely information about incidents.

Implementation of F3: The Emergency Management Director, and the CAO and Sheriff in the interim, will review existing notification systems and determine what improvements can be made to make sure the public and agencies have timely information about incidents.

Implementation Timeline for F3: The Emergency Management Director role, when filled, will have emergency notifications as a top priority in the workplan. In the interim, the CAO and Sheriff will explore options to improve existing public notification systems. A review of options to improve notifications shall be completed by January 1, 2027.

F4: There is no set policy and procedure for dispatch to track and account for all departments and agencies that are on scene at the initial stages of an incident.

Response to F4: Agree. The IC at a scene is responsible for tracking what agencies or resources have arrived, particularly because some agencies may self-dispatch or may be requested independently by IC without routing through a call to dispatch. Under the SEMS/NIMS framework, if an incident expands beyond the capacity of the initially-arriving local resources, the IC must transition to an expanded organizational structure called a Unified Command (UC). Under a UC, agencies co-locate at a single ICP, establish a single planning cycle, and issue a co-signed unified Incident Action Plan (IAP).



However, while dispatch may not be able to track self-dispatching resources or federal partners that do not route through dispatch, dispatch can log all of the resources that it sends in response to requests from the IC or UC. There are systems and software that can facilitate the ease of that kind of tracking that should be evaluated in the move to establishing an independent dispatch that is separated from the jail. Further, sometimes agencies and units are self-dispatching out of a distrust of the existing systems, or in line with past community practices. As the County and other stakeholders like the Town of Mammoth Lakes work towards establishing an independent dispatch that operates within strengthened interagency relationships, hopefully the rate of self-dispatch will lessen as trust and confidence in the systems improve.

Implementation of F4: The Sheriff, together with the County Administrative Office, are tasked with advancing a model of an independent dispatch that will ideally be removed from the jail and incorporate participating regional stakeholders, such as the Town of Mammoth Lakes and the Mammoth Lakes Police Department. New job descriptions for dispatch-only roles will be created as part of that effort.

Implementation Timeline for F4: The Board will require monthly updates on the progress of work towards an independent dispatch from the Sheriff and County Administrative Office, akin to the monthly updates the Board currently receives regarding Emergency Management. The Board will require a six month update that outlines progress on all objectives set by responses to this Grand Jury report.

F5: Training and professional development are insufficient to support system demands. Limited training, dual role positions and limited exposure to higher volume dispatch environments contribute to variability in dispatch performance and system reliability. The lack of comprehensive situation specific procedures for quick reference materials may further limit operational consistency during critical incidents.

Response to F5: Agree and disagree. Mono County dispatchers do receive more than adequate training hours. However, unlike dispatchers in larger jurisdictions, Mono County dispatch does not receive the high volume and frequency of calls that can provide regular opportunities to exercise their training.

The dual roles of dispatchers are inherently limiting, particularly for recruitment of candidates. The Board is extremely concerned that staffing concerns can result in a single individual handling both dispatch and jail responsibilities. Dispatch requires dedicated staff that cannot be pulled away to other duties. Further, those individuals are responsible for maintaining a significant amount of professional knowledge that pertains to both roles and regularly executing both. A model where dispatchers are not required to also be certified law-enforcement officers would allow for dispatchers in that role to focus purely on dispatch.

Quick reference guides may assist in certain circumstances, such as providing over-the phone emergency medical dispatch assistance. However, due to the wide variation in types of calls, reference guides can become ineffective and overly detailed tools that cannot adequately substitute for dispatcher training and experience.

Implementation of F5: The Sheriff, together with the County Administrative Office, are tasked with advancing a model of dispatch that will be removed from the jail and incorporate participating regional stakeholders, such as the Town of Mammoth Lakes and the Mammoth



Lakes Police Department. As part of that move towards a dispatch disconnected from the jail and dispatchers not subject to the requirements of serving in the capacity of Sheriff's Deputies, stakeholders can work to determine what resources should be kept available to dispatchers at their stations. Likewise, dispatchers can be, and have been, sent to higher volume call centers in other jurisdictions to serve in order to bolster training and experience.

Implementation Timeline for F5: The Board will require monthly updates on the progress of work towards an independent dispatch from the Sheriff and County Administrative Office, akin to the monthly updates the Board currently receives regarding Emergency Management. The Board will require a six month update that outlines progress on all objectives set by responses to this Grand Jury report.

F6: The current dispatch structure is not optimized for effective emergency communication. The dual role requirement for dispatch personnel divides focus between corrections and dispatch responsibilities, reducing specialization and operational effectiveness. This may also contribute to recruitment difficulties by way of narrowing the applicant pool to only those persons interested in performing both functions.

Response to F6: Agree. The Board agrees that the dual roles of dispatcher and Sheriff's Deputy create difficulties in finding the right candidates in a rural area where personnel are already difficult to hire. However, the Board wants to be clear that when a dispatcher is working as a dispatcher, they should only be serving in that capacity and that staffing concerns should never result in a sole dispatcher being pulled away from the desk.

Implementation of F6: The Sheriff, together with the County Administrative Office, are tasked with advancing a model of dispatch that will ideally be removed from the jail and incorporate participating regional stakeholders, such as the Town of Mammoth Lakes and the Mammoth Lakes Police Department. New job descriptions for dispatch-only roles will be created as part of that effort.

Implementation Timeline for F6: The Board will require monthly updates on the progress of work towards an independent dispatch from the Sheriff and County Administrative Office, akin to the monthly updates the Board currently receives regarding Emergency Management. The Board will require a six month update that outlines progress on all objectives set by responses to this Grand Jury report.

F7: Geographic location contributes to persistent staffing challenges. The placement of the dispatch center in Bridgeport limits access to a broader workforce, particularly compared to population centers such as the Mammoth Lakes area.

Response to F7: Agree. The location of the dispatch center in Bridgeport contributes to staffing difficulties, and some staff commute in from out of state to work in Bridgeport. As part of the effort from the Sheriff's office to split dispatch out from the jail, the County is exploring the possibility of placing a dispatch center in a location more accessible to Mammoth Lakes and Bishop to increase hiring opportunities. The Town of Mammoth Lakes has been in the process of developing a public safety complex at the Mammoth Lakes Airport in the Long Valley, and the county is exploring the possibility of locating a dispatch center there.



Implementation of F7: The Sheriff, together with the County Administrative Office, are tasked with advancing a model of dispatch that will ideally be removed from the jail and incorporate participating regional stakeholders, such as the Town of Mammoth Lakes and the Mammoth Lakes Police Department.

Implementation Timeline for F7: The Board will require monthly updates on the progress of work towards an independent dispatch from the Sheriff and County Administrative Office, akin to the monthly updates the Board currently receives regarding Emergency Management. The Board will require a six month update that outlines progress on all objectives set by responses to this Grand Jury report.

F8: Dispatch deficiencies are part of a broader, under-resourced emergency response system. Evidence indicates that dispatch performance issues are intertwined with larger systemic limitations including staffing, communications, and interagency coordination.

Response to F8: Agree and disagree. The County has been actively engaged in an effort to improve and streamline its emergency management, particularly following turnover after the Pack Fire. This spring, the County engaged a consultant to conduct a comprehensive organizational and programmatic assessment of the County's Office of Emergency Management to provide a path forward. That assessment was presented to the Board on July 14. The assessment is attached to this response as **Exhibit A** for reference.

The assessment had several key findings and recommendations for the County to act on. Focusing on and improving interagency coordination was among the most significant findings and recommendations. The Board is actively recruiting for an Emergency Management Director, who will be responsible for engaging other agencies within Mono County, such as the fire districts, the Town of Mammoth Lakes, the Forest Service, and the Bureau of Land Management, to improve communication and coordination.

As a rural county, there are inherent challenges associated particularly with staffing and communications. The County has pursued an updated county-wide communications update through implementation of the California Interoperable Radio System (CRIS). The County works to attract and retain staff by investing in the development of affordable and workforce housing to make it possible for individuals to live and work in Mono County.

Implementation of F8: The Emergency Management Director role, once filled, will focus on improving interagency coordination. The Information Technology Department will continue to implement CRIS and provide regular updates to the Board.

Implementation Timeline for F8: The Board will require monthly updates on the progress of work towards an independent dispatch from the Sheriff and County Administrative Office, akin to the monthly updates the Board currently receives regarding Emergency Management. That update will include efforts towards interagency coordination. The Board will require a six month update that outlines progress on all objectives set by responses to this Grand Jury report.



F9: The Pack Fire response does not appear to be solely attributable to dispatch performance. While dispatch related concerns were identified, multiple factors - resource limitations, communication challenges, and operational decision making - contributed to the overall incident response.

Response to F9: Agree. The Board takes very seriously the allegations that the performance of dispatch may have contributed to deficiencies in emergency response. This past spring, in response to concerns raised by the public regarding the Pack Fire and other incidents involving dispatch, the Board ordered an investigation. The investigation was distilled into the 2026 Investigation Report, which is attached to this response as **Exhibit B**, for reference.

While the 2026 Investigation Report did not connect deficiencies in dispatch to the Pack Fire's ultimate outcomes, the report confirmed overarching concerns with Mono County's current dispatch model, which were already identified in the 2020 Feasibility Study, and concurred with the 2020 Feasibility Study's suggested approach for an independent dispatch model.

Implementation of F9: None.

Implementation Timeline for F9: None.

F10: While the County has a short-term, midterm, and long-term strategy for emergency communications and dispatch, the current structure and planning efforts are fragmented and do not reflect a comprehensive system design.

Response to F10: Agree and disagree. The County has been actively engaged in an effort to improve and streamline its emergency management, particularly following turnover after the Pack Fire. This spring, the County engaged a consultant to conduct a comprehensive organizational and programmatic assessment of the County's Office of Emergency Management to provide a path forward. That assessment was presented to the Board on July 14. The assessment is attached to this response as **Exhibit A** for reference.

The assessment had several key findings and recommendations for the County to act on. Refining and filling the role of Emergency Management Director was chief among the findings. The Board has approved a modified job description as of July 14 and is actively engaged in recruiting for that role. The assessment provided clear goals for establishing interagency coordination, increasing disaster preparedness efforts, investing in wider emergency response exercises and training, and updating core emergency operations documents.

The County aims to follow the assessment's guidance in setting a work plan for the Office of Emergency Management, with the County Administrative Office responsible for implementation in the near term as we fill the Emergency Management Director role.

Implementation of F10: The Emergency Management Director role, once filled, will focus on the implementation of workplan priorities from the assessment.

Implementation Timeline for F10: The County is actively recruiting for the Emergency Management Director role. The Board receives at least monthly emergency management updates from the County Administrative Office in the interim. Once that role is filled, the Board will be looking to the Director to report progress on making the changes identified in the assessment.



F11: The County contracted a private firm, Federal Engineering, to conduct a Regional Dispatch Feasibility Study and Implementation Plan. A 120-page detailed and comprehensive document was submitted in 2020. This document covered every aspect of establishing a state of the art professional Dispatch Center. The concept was initially well received by both Mono and Inyo Counties, however, COVID-19 issues stymied the project.

Response to F11: Agree. The timing of the study with respect to COVID-19 and the focus on constructing a new jail both took focus away from moving to the dispatch model envisioned by the study. While Inyo County and the City of Bishop have expressed that they are not interested in a regional model, Mono County will still be pursuing an independent dispatch, with dedicated dispatch-only employees.

Implementation of F11: The Sheriff, together with the County Administrative Office, are tasked with advancing a model of dispatch that will ideally be removed from the jail and incorporate participating regional stakeholders, such as the Town of Mammoth Lakes and the Mammoth Lakes Police Department.

Implementation Timeline for F11: The Board will require monthly updates on the progress of work towards an independent dispatch from the Sheriff and County Administrative Office, akin to the monthly updates the Board currently receives regarding Emergency Management. The Board will require a six month update that outlines progress on all objectives set by responses to this Grand Jury report.

F12: The Dispatch Department has recently been under the leadership of new management. The new manager is progressive and proactive. New higher training standards are being implemented, including tactical dispatch, active shooter and emergency medical training (telephone CPR instructions). Also, dispatch personnel are being sent to agencies with higher call loads to observe, train, and shadow operations in higher volume emergency communication centers. Such exposure will improve familiarity with larger scale incident management, operational workflows, and standardized dispatch practices.

Response to F12: Agree. Leadership within dispatch has been positive for maintaining high standards for training, and for implementing the requirements for emergency medical dispatch beginning on January 1, 2027. The Sheriff's Office has been working to support those positive efforts by also focusing on incentives to improve retention, such as working to offer commuter cars for employees to drive to and from the jail in Bridgeport to ease the burden on employees living at a significant distance from Bridgeport (e.g. for employees commuting up from Mammoth).

Implementation of F12: The Sheriff's Office continues to explore retention incentives that will maintain existing staff who already receive high levels of training. The Sheriff's Office will continue to support dispatch leadership in pursuing rigorous training programs for dispatchers, particularly with the implementation of emergency medical dispatch, as well as continue to send dispatchers to higher volume jurisdictions to gain additional experience.

Implementation Timeline for F12: Ongoing.

F13: The Pack Fire resulted in no fatalities or serious injuries to any residents. This, despite 30 structures completely destroyed and 6 others partially destroyed. On January 7th, 2025, the combined Palisades and Eaton Fires, even with the virtually unlimited resources of LA County, resulted in 28 fatalities.



Response to F13: Agree. To scale the Pack Fire in terms of size and population impact, was the same size as what the Palisades Fire and Eaton Fire were to Los Angeles County. Mono County is incredibly fortunate that the efforts of first responders and emergency personnel were able to contain and mitigate the Pack Fire to the extent they did.

Implementation of F13: None.

Implementation Timeline for F13: None.

Recommendations:

R1: Establish a set protocol for the first arriving fire unit to notify dispatch as to how many additional resources need to be dispatched immediately. This could be in the form of a 2nd alarm, 3rd alarm, 4th alarm, 5th alarm notification in the initial radio communication from fire unit to dispatch. With the known geographic location and the call for a 3rd alarm assignment, dispatch would have a call out list and could immediately dispatch the appropriate fire units and other designated resources.

Response to R1: Agree and disagree. The responding fire protection district unit that assumes IC needs to have a protocol for how to assess an incident and what additional resources should be requested from dispatch. Mono County can work with the fire districts to encourage the development of uniform protocols, through the MOU with the fire districts. Dispatch must be involved in the development of those protocols to ensure that they can effectively respond to and implement the protocols.

Implementation of R1: Once an Emergency Management Director is hired, that individual will work to coordinate with the fire districts to bring them together to develop uniform protocols for wildfire response and what resources should be requested and when.

Implementation Timeline for R1: At least by the adoption of the next MOU with the fire districts in 2030, the County's Emergency Management Director shall have coordinated with the fire districts to encourage the development of uniform county-wide protocols that can be memorialized in the MOU.

R2: Establish a set protocol to notify all the fire departments and law enforcement agencies that there is a large working fire or other significant disaster in the County. This would be a notification, not a dispatch. This would give the Volunteer Fire Departments and law enforcement agencies advance notice of a possible dispatch.

Response to R2: Disagree. IC or UC should determine what resources are needed and which agencies should be requested from dispatch, based on what they are able to observe at the scene. An "all call" notification can be issued if that is determined necessary. The Emergency Management Director role, once filled, and the CAO and Sheriff in the interim, will review existing notification systems and determine what improvements can be made to make sure the public and agencies have timely information about incidents.

Implementation of R2: The Emergency Management Director, and the CAO and Sheriff in the interim, will review existing notification systems and determine what improvements can be made to make sure the public and agencies have timely information about incidents.



Implementation Timeline for R2: The Board will require monthly updates on the progress of work towards an independent dispatch from the Sheriff and County Administrative Office, akin to the monthly updates the Board currently receives regarding Emergency Management. The Board will require a six month update that outlines progress on all objectives set by responses to this Grand Jury report.

R3: Establish a policy and procedure for dispatch to track and account for all departments and agencies that are on scene at the initial stages of an incident. Once the Unified Command is set up and running, this information could be relayed to them. Unified Command could then take over this function.

Response to R3: Agree and disagree. IC should know what resources they have on scene. While dispatch can and should track who dispatch has sent to the scene, they would not be able to track or account for self-dispatching units or agencies, or resources called for directly by the IC over the air, which dispatch may not always hear. Typically, IC would delegate someone to track what resources and agencies have been called for, and that information would pass to UC as it is set up.

Implementation of R3: Dispatch should explore whether there are software tools that can improve their ability to track and report out the resources that dispatch has sent. The Sheriff and County Administrative Office are tasked with moving forward an independent dispatch, and the Emergency Management Director will be responsible for strengthening interagency coordination, which

Implementation Timeline for R3: The Board will require monthly updates on the progress of work towards an independent dispatch from the Sheriff and County Administrative Office, akin to the monthly updates the Board currently receives regarding Emergency Management. The Board will require a six month update that outlines progress on all objectives set by responses to this Grand Jury report.

R4: Establish written situation-specific procedures including quick reference materials that dispatchers can utilize in their decision making process for critical incidents and emergency scenarios.

Response to R4: Agree and Disagree. Dispatch has existing procedures for how to dispatch basic and typical calls. Dispatchers assign different priority levels for calls based on information obtained from the call. They are trained to make those assessments and assign priority. Priority helps determine how many resources are dispatched and with what urgency.

As part of the effort to implement a dispatch independent from the jail, the Sheriff and County Administrative Office and stakeholder agency representatives can determine together if and what resources should be developed and made available at the dispatch desks, particularly because of the wide range of potential scenarios and determinations about how to narrow what situations are compatible with quick reference material formats. Quick Resource Guides may be most effective for Emergency Medical Dispatch, which is in the process of being rolled out for a mandatory implementation date of January 1, 2027.

Implementation of R4: The Sheriff and County Administrative Office, and the Emergency Management Director (once hired), can work with stakeholder agencies as part of advancing the independent dispatch model to determine if and what materials would be useful.



Implementation Timeline for R4: The Board will require monthly updates on the progress of work towards an independent dispatch from the Sheriff and County Administrative Office, akin to the monthly updates the Board currently receives regarding Emergency Management. The Board will require a six month update that outlines progress on all objectives set by responses to this Grand Jury report.

R5: Establish Dispatch as a stand alone professional function. The County could separate dispatch responsibilities from corrections duties to improve recruitment, retention, and performance. Consider lateral hiring of dispatchers from other agencies or those with prior training and experience.

Response to R5: Agree. The Sheriff and County Administrative Office are tasked with advancing a model of independent dispatch that aligns with both the 2020 Regional Dispatch Feasibility Study and the findings of the 2026 Investigation.

Implementation of a standalone dispatch center will involve logistical challenges, such as identifying appropriate funding, the appropriate responsible agency, or whether a joint powers authority is the right model to manage dispatch. Ultimately, an independent dispatch also requires a “hardened facility,” that requires certain building standards that cannot readily be met by available property. The County will explore the possibility of locating the independent dispatch at the proposed public safety complex to be located at the Mammoth Airport in Long Valley as that is constructed.

Implementation of R5: The Sheriff and County Administrative Office, and the Emergency Management Director (once hired), are tasked with advancing the independent dispatch model.

Implementation Timeline for R5: The Board will require monthly updates on the progress of work towards an independent dispatch from the Sheriff and County Administrative Office, akin to the monthly updates the Board currently receives regarding Emergency Management.

R6: Evaluate relocation of the primary dispatch center. Even given the lack of continued participation of Inyo County, a feasibility study could be conducted regarding placement of a future primary dispatch center closer to population centers such as Bishop and Mammoth Lakes. Several potential advantages associated with the airport area include:

- Proximity to the County's primary workforce population centers.
- Immediate access from US Highway 395, including during winter conditions.
- Potential coordination with future public safety infrastructure development in the area.

Response to R6: Agree and disagree. The County is interested in moving dispatch out of the jail and to an area with more available potential employees. The Board likely does not need a dedicated feasibility study and can work with the existing Regional Study's findings. The Sheriff and County Administrative Office will explore the possibility of locating the independent dispatch at the proposed public safety complex to be located at the Mammoth Airport in Long Valley as that is constructed. The Board received a presentation regarding the proposed complex on June 16, 2026. Nonetheless, the new jail facility currently under construction will be equipped with a dispatch center that will meet standards, and it is possible that the new jail is ultimately the most feasible and quickest location to stand up an independent dispatch.



Implementation of R6: The Sheriff and County Administrative Office, and the Emergency Management Director (once hired), are tasked with advancing the independent dispatch model, including identifying the appropriate physical location.

Implementation Timeline for R6: The Board will require monthly updates on the progress of work towards an independent dispatch from the Sheriff and County Administrative Office, akin to the monthly updates the Board currently receives regarding Emergency Management. This update will include progress towards identifying appropriate facilities for an independent dispatch. The Board will require a six month update that outlines progress on all objectives set by responses to this Grand Jury report.

R7: In addition to sending current dispatch personnel to train at higher volume emergency communication centers, consideration could be given to combining this field training concept to the initial POST dispatch training in Riverside or San Bernardino.

Response to R7: Agree.

Implementation of R7: The Board recommends this approach for the consideration of the Sheriff and the dispatch supervisor, but acknowledges that training and personnel needs are at the discretion of the Sheriff to determine. It may not be feasible to combine POST and field training if such a time period would result in staffing issues that endanger public safety.

Implementation Timeline for R7: This response serves as the Board's formal recommendation to the Sheriff and dispatch leadership.

R8: Even if Inyo County is not willing to participate with the regional dispatch approach, many of the concepts and procedures formulated in the Fire Engineering, 120-page, Regional Dispatch Feasibility Study and Implementation plan can be utilized in restructuring of the Mono County Dispatch Program.

Response to R8: Agree. The participation of all jurisdictions as suggested in the 2020 Study is not required for the County to move forward with pursuing an independent dispatch. The County will work with its in-county stakeholders and follow the recommendations of the 2020 Study, as well as the concurring findings of the 2026 Investigation.

Implementation of R8: The Sheriff and County Administrative Office (and the Emergency Management Director, once hired) are tasked with advancing the independent dispatch model and engaging stakeholders in line with the recommendations of the 2020 Study and 2026 Investigation.

Implementation Timeline for R8: The Board will require monthly updates on the progress of work towards an independent dispatch from the Sheriff and County Administrative Office, akin to the monthly updates the Board currently receives regarding Emergency Management. The Board will require a six month update that outlines progress on all objectives set by responses to this Grand Jury report.

09.08.26 - Item 5E - M26-167- Cover Letter Pack Fire GJ Response

Final Audit Report

2026-09-11

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