

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1171

As Reported By House Committee On:
Government Administration

Title: An act relating to emergency management.

Brief Description: Revising emergency management statutes.

Sponsors: Representatives D. Schmidt, Scott and Dunshee; by request of Military Department.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Government Administration: 1/29/97, 1/31/97 [DPS].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives D. Schmidt, Chairman; D. Sommers, Vice Chairman; Scott, Ranking Minority Member; Gardner, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Doumit; Dunn; Dunshee; Reams; Smith; L. Thomas; Wensman and Wolfe.

Staff: Steve Lundin (786-7127).

Background: A comprehensive program of emergency management exists in the state. In 1995, the authority to administer this program was transferred from the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development to the Military Department, whose director is the adjutant general.

The adjutant general is required to develop a comprehensive, all-hazard emergency plan for the state that includes an analysis of natural and man-caused hazards, and procedures to coordinate local and state resources in responding to such hazards. In the event of a disaster beyond local control, the Governor, through the adjutant general, may assume operational control over all or any part of emergency management functions in the state.

Each county and city is required to establish a local organization for emergency management and prepare a local emergency management plan. The adjutant general may allow two or more counties or cities to establish a single local organization.

Local plans are submitted to the adjutant general for recommendations and certification with the state comprehensive emergency management plan.

A system of enhanced 911 service is established throughout the state on either a countywide or multi-county basis. Each county is required to implement an enhanced 911 communications system that is funded with receipts from a telephone access line tax.

A state fire service mobilization plan is established to provide for large-scale mobilization of fire fighting resources in the state by action of the adjutant general. The plan includes mutual aid agreements and state reimbursement for outside jurisdictions that mobilize under the plan, as well as for a host jurisdiction if its resources are exhausted.

Seven regions are designated in the state, with a regional fire defense board in each region consisting of two members from each member county. The boards develop regional service plans for mutual aid responses that are consistent with the incident command system and state fire services mobilization plan.

Summary of Substitute Bill: A number of changes are made to laws relating to emergency management.

The term man made– disaster is altered to technological, or human caused– disaster.

The state comprehensive emergency plan and local comprehensive emergency plans must include use of an incident command system, which is defined as an all-hazards, on-scene functional management system, or a unified command for multi-agency or multi-jurisdictional operations that is a component of the national interagency incident management system.

The executive head– of a city is defined, depending on whether the city operates under a mayor council, commission, or council manager system of government.

The term joint– local emergency management organizations replaces the term multi-jurisdictional– local emergency management organizations.

The adjutant general verifies, rather than certifies, whether a local comprehensive emergency management plan is consistent with the state comprehensive emergency management plan.

A variety of groups assist in the development of a model contingency plan for hazardous waste management and pollution control facilities, rather than actually developing a model contingency plan.

Changes take cognizance of the transfer of fire service mobilization functions from the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development to the Military Department, and the transfer of state fire marshal functions from the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development to the Washington State Patrol.

All fire fighting resources, including the host fire protection authorities, are mobilized under the fire service mobilization plan.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The joint local emergency management organization is inserted in additional locations. It is clarified that local fire jurisdictions could be either a fire department or fire protection district.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: These are technical changes to update emergency management laws.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Rep. Dave Schmidt, prime sponsor; and Linda Ramsey, Military Department.