



## City of Phoenix

FIRE DEPARTMENT  
ADMINISTRATION

April 21, 2023

Gary Neiss, Town Administrator  
PO Box 740, 8 Sundial Circle  
Carefree, Arizona 85377

RE: Response to Information Regarding the Regional Metropolitan Phoenix Automatic Aid System

Mr. Neiss:

Over the past 60 days information has been circulated to the residents of the Town of Carefree through a variety of venues. Much of the information is inaccurate or false, which I believe needs to be corrected. Because of this, I am providing the following information in response to statements that have been made.

1. Both Phoenix and Scottsdale Fire departments FAILED the National Fire Protection Agency standard of 5 minutes and 20 seconds. Phoenix is averaging 9 minutes and Scottsdale is averaging 7 minutes response times.

*The NFPA response time standard is based on a 90<sup>th</sup> percentile standard and is how Phoenix Fire reports their response times. The city's dashboard reflects our overall aggregate data for response times. This includes all engines, ladders, rescues (ambulances), and specialty response units. To ensure a consistent comparison is utilized when comparing response times to those provided for Rural Metro Fire, I wanted to provide the current "average" response time for a Phoenix Fire Department Engine Company. The "average" response time for the first arriving Engine Company within the City of Phoenix (520 square miles) in 2022 was 5:04 seconds. It appears Rural Metro is only using the response times related to their Carefree fire station, not of their aggregate response data.*

2. Daisy Mountain Fire covers 250 square miles and supports 60,000 people with only 6 stations. This means that **each** fire station must cover 42 square miles and support 10,000 people.
3. Automatic Aid is severely UNDERSTAFFED, OVERWHELMED and in CRISIS.

*While unprecedented growth has presented challenges to meeting the rising demand, the current jurisdictions that comprise the “Automatic Aid” system are fully staffed. Departments continue to work with their governing bodies to increase their authorized staffing levels to meet the unprecedented growth that has been occurring within Maricopa County over the past several years. The Phoenix Fire Department continues to work on strategies with city leadership and city management to improve our infrastructure and expand our resources and personnel. Since 2021, the Phoenix Fire Department has been able to increase sworn staffing levels by 87 and anticipate another 31 positions in the next fiscal year.*

4. Automatic Aid requires a 25-year contract and the County Board of Supervisors controls Automatic Aid.

*The Regional Metropolitan Phoenix Fire Service Automatic Aid Agreement is an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) that jurisdictions voluntarily participate in to collaboratively provide Fire and EMS emergency services to the region. The current agreement was signed in 2022 and is a 10-year agreement. Each jurisdiction retains authority over their individual organization but agrees to work collaboratively as a regional fire service. Governance is provided through the Central Arizona Life Safety Council (CALSC), which is comprised of the Fire Chiefs of each participating jurisdiction. The Maricopa County Board of Supervisors has no authority over the “Automatic Aid” system.*

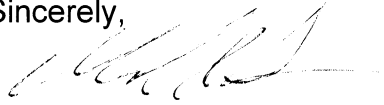
I would also like to respond and clarify the difference between Automatic Aid and Mutual Aid response.

*The Regional Metropolitan Fire Service Automatic Aid system consists of 24 automatic aid partners. Its purpose is to have a highly efficient, effective, and mutually beneficial relationship among multiple regional jurisdictions to provide for the overall public safety of the region through an Automatic Aid system. The Automatic Aid system provides for an automatic response of the closest, most appropriate fire department/district resources despite the jurisdictional boundaries. The scope of the Automatic Aid system provides response to fires, medical emergencies, mass casualty response, hazardous materials incidents, technical rescue, extrication, and other types of emergency response as requested by our communities or partners.*

*A Fire Service Mutual Aid agreement is a prearranged agreement which neighboring agencies may request resources through a formal communicative process. A mutual aid request is a formalized request outside of the Automatic Aid agreement and requires the initiating agency to contact the requestee for assistance. The steps include the requesting agency to contact the Phoenix or Mesa Regional Dispatch Centers. A mutual aid request could consist of any of the scope provided by the Automatic Aid system including medical transportation. A response to a mutual aid request is at the discretion of the participating agencies and may require approval by the highest ranking on-duty fire officer of the agency asked to provide the resources. These requests may be fully, partially, or not filled depending on the availability of resources and coverage within the agency’s jurisdiction. Decisions based on firefighter safety/rescue, or the safety of the community can facilitate an immediate mutual aid response to the requesting agency.*

Please let us know if there are any questions or if additional information is needed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Duran', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mike Duran, Fire Chief  
Phoenix Fire Department