



DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION  
Office of the State Fire Marshal  
**Underground Facilities Safe Excavation Board**

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**CA Underground Facilities Safe Excavation Board**

**Office of the State Fire Marshal  
Monrovia, CA  
February 22-23, 2018  
10:00 a.m.**

**WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT (FEBRUARY 22, 2018 at 10:00 a.m.):**

Jessica Arden, Chair  
Vince Bernacchi  
Ron Bianchini  
Randy Charland  
Marjorie Del Toro  
Bill Johns  
Marshall Johnson  
Carl Voss

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

None

**STAFF:**

Tony Marino, Executive Officer  
Brittney Branaman, Policy and Budget Manager  
Zachary Trammell, Government Analyst  
Jason Neyer, Government Analyst  
Deborah Yang, Legal Counsel

Chair Arden called the workshop meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**Agenda Item No. 1: Board Notification of Incidents**

Chair Arden reviewed the agenda for the three workshops on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, including web cast instructions.

Staff presented a report on research conducted on incident reporting. The report highlighted research into other states practices for reporting incidents. The only consistent information on notification of incidents was basic information including the date, time, individuals involved and what caused the incident. There were inconsistent requirements on who is required to report and what type of incidents are considered reportable.

Members, staff, and attendees discussed thresholds at gas utilities that lead to incident level investigations including injury, property damage, dollar amounts and media coverage. One utility stated that out of an estimated 3,000 incidents reported in a year, roughly 10-40 are classified as above threshold.

A utility company representative noted that internal investigations are done on all incidents, including those that don't meet certain thresholds. Members asked if it would be possible to create reports for all incidents, regardless of threshold since internal reports were already being done. It was discussed that reporting thousands of incidents regardless of threshold would put a significant strain on resources.

Time requirements for reporting incidents including time frames and reporting methods was discussed. It was brought up that when an incident occurs, the priority is safety and reporting is secondary.

Members, staff, and attendees discussed tracking "small" incidents and how most small incidents don't have a ticket, which makes them difficult to track. It was mentioned that certain groups doing smaller projects including landscapers, fencing installers, and real estate agents may not see themselves as excavators and therefore don't know they need to have a ticket. Reaching out to associations for the above-mentioned groups was proposed to increase awareness.

Members, staff, and attendees examined incident reporting related to transmission and distribution. It was mentioned that more incidents occur on the distribution side, but the incidents related to transmission tend to be more serious.

Members, staff, and attendees discussed the varying level of 811 involvement/responsibility in different states. Members asked if the California 811 centers had the resources to be a clearinghouse for incident data.

Various sources of data being collected was discussed by the group, including data from private utilities, Public Utilities Commission ("PUC"), regional notification centers, and the Common Ground Alliance ("CGA"). Members, staff, and attendees discussed a separate workshop for utility companies to report data on incidents to the Board. Members suggested starting with the CGA Dirt report as an initial data source to analyze. Participants showed interest in having data on violations that didn't lead to an incident, but this is difficult to collect because most violations that don't cause an incident aren't reported.

Members, staff, and attendees discussed reporting incidents and who should be required to report (excavators and/or operators). Anonymous reporting was discussed as a possibility and comment was made on experiences in other states where the anonymous reporting to 811 call centers was misused. It was also mentioned that anonymous reporting may not include enough data to act upon.

Member Charland offered to set up a locating field trip and James Wingate, Executive Director of USA North 811, offered a tour of their call center.

Members, staff, and attendees discussed whether sub-contractors were covered by a contractor's dig ticket as this seemed to be an area of confusion during discussions and in the field.

(The workshop meeting recessed for lunch at 12:30 p.m. and resumed at 2:10 p.m.)

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT (FEBRUARY 22, 2018 at 2:10 p.m.):**

Jessica Arden  
Vince Bernacchi  
Ron Bianchini  
Randy Charland  
Marjorie Del Toro  
Bill Johns  
Marshall Johnson  
Carl Voss

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF:** Tony Marino, Executive Officer  
Brittney Branaman, Policy and Budget Manager  
Zachary Trammell, Government Analyst  
Jason Neyer, Government Analyst  
Deborah Yang, Legal Counsel

Chair Arden called the workshop meeting to order at 2:10 p.m.

**Agenda Item No. 2: Baseline Safety Assessment**

Chair Arden read the six questions on the agenda for the Baseline Safety Assessment workshop.

Executive Officer Tony Marino presented a report on research conducted on Baseline Safety Assessment. His report highlighted a need for a safety-first approach to regulation and how to demonstrate program effectiveness.

Members, staff, and attendees discussed not duplicating what is already in place that relates to baseline safety, specifically that of the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (“OSHA”).

Members asked representatives from the contractors’ association if they could mail out information, possibly a survey, from the Board to their members (+8,000 contractors). Representatives expressed willingness to help. Members stated they are looking forward to the Board standardizing rules, particularly with potholing.

The group discussed the responsibility for lines owned by individuals and lines owned by utility companies. Often, the utility owns the lines up to the meter box only. Group had questions on marking utilities on private property. Is it homeowners or contractors working for homeowners hitting lines on private property

Members, staff, and attendees discussed the necessary data to analyze baseline safety. It was suggested that having a clear idea of data needed would help the process. The group spoke on data available in the CGA DIRT report and data available from the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (“PHMSA”) and the PUC.

Members, staff, and attendees discussed the type of data that should be captured on a damage report.

A representative from USA North 811 went over the internal process for creating a ticket.

Members asked if the utility companies had data on where incidents happen and asked them to provide what they felt would be beneficial to the Board.

Members asked a representative from the PUC if it would possible to have a “data dump” shared with the Board. The representative said if confidentiality could be addressed, then it would be possible.

Representatives from Southern California Gas offered to present data in another meeting.

Members suggested using data from utility companies to focus outreach/investigations in areas that may need it.

Members, staff, and attendees discussed the type of data that should be collected now so there would be a record of it in the future.

The group discussed public awareness to increase understanding of the call 811 requirements. Several marketing ideas were discussed including billboards, call center giveaways, infomercials, and documents in new home packages. Members, staff, and attendees also discussed past commercials run by DigAlert call center.

Members, staff, and attendees discussed the high call percentage in Utah. An attendee who worked for the 811 call center in Utah said it may have been due to a high-profile incident in Utah with extensive media coverage.

Members, staff, and attendees discussed GPS marking of lines including GPS balls that are very accurate. Group discussed the functionality of marker balls.

Chair Arden asked if there was public comment on any issue not on the agenda. There was none.

(The workshop meeting recessed at 4:30 p.m. to resume at 10:00 a.m. the following day.)

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT (FEBRUARY 23, 2018 at 10:00 a.m.):**

Jessica Arden, Chair  
Randy Charland  
Marjorie Del Toro  
Marshall Johnson  
Carl Voss

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Vince Bernacchi  
Ron Bianchini  
Bill Johns

**STAFF:**

Tony Marino, Executive Officer  
Brittney Branaman, Policy and Budget Manager  
Zachary Trammell, Government Analyst  
Jason Neyer, Government Analyst  
Deborah Yang, Legal Counsel

Chair Arden called the workshop meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**Agenda Item No. 3: Identification of Relevant Education**

Staff presented a report on research conducted on education in lieu of fines. The report detailed the lack of a national standard on education in lieu of fines, but found that education tends to be used as the second step in a three-step escalation of enforcement preceded by warnings and followed by fines.

Attendees discussed the structure of educational programs. Members asked about the length of other states' classes. Staff found that classes tend to be 1-2 hours long.

Discussion took place on who in an organization should be required to attend educational trainings. It was discussed that if both management and staff were required to attend education, it would create “buy in” from different levels of an organization which could be vital in reducing future incidents.

Members, staff, and attendees discussed diversity in the types of education that could be available, including breakfast events and tail-gate meetings.

Members, staff, and attendees discussed the Gold Shovel program as a standard in training. Attendees briefly explained the Gold Shovel program. It was brought up that some companies have their own training programs.

There was discussion on the impact of having investigators in the field. It was brought up that just by having a presence, it could help in having people call 811 and practice responsible excavation. It was discussed that investigators who find violations could direct those responsible to educational opportunities to increase awareness of proper excavation practices.

Members, staff, and attendees discussed the type of education suitable for locators. It was suggested that incorrect markings by locaters aren't due to a lack of training and that a fine may be the best action in that instance. Internal disciplinary actions for locators was discussed.

The conversation shifted from education to outreach and the topic of how to connect with individuals with jobs related to excavation. Members, staff, and attendees discussed connecting with workers through messages of family with an emphasis on cultural aspects. This led to discussion on how children, the next generation of excavation workers, are being informed of safe excavation practices.

Members, staff, and attendees discussed difficulties locators face, including tickets not being canceled and the scope of a ticket. Several topics related to the scope of a ticket were discussed including how much area one ticket should cover and the amount of time a ticket should cover.

Chair Arden asked for any further public comments. There were none.

### **Other Business**

None.

### **Public Comment**

None.

### **Adjournment**

Chair Arden adjourned the workshop meeting at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Attest:

/s/ Tony Marino

/s/ Jessica Arden

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Tony Marino  
Executive Officer

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Jessica Arden  
Chair