



**ORANGE COUNTY  
FIRE AUTHORITY**  
**25TH ANNIVERSARY  
1995-2020**





***“We have to retain our fire family structure. There are many great things in the fire service, but it is also work. It’s not just a glorious thing, it’s a demanding and draining thing. The dedication is a spiritual reality, and if a firefighter loses that reality, they’ve changed the reason for being a firefighter. We’re out to help and that’s the whole point.”***

**- Monsignor John Sammon**

Greetings,

The Orange County Fire Authority celebrated its 25th Anniversary in March of 2020. While the coronavirus pandemic has challenged us and required us to adapt, we have persevered. Our department is devoted to making Orange County a safer place to live, work and play. We are continually working to ensure that our training, equipment and facilities meet the changing needs of the citizens and communities we serve. Our strength as an organization is based on the unwavering commitment to excellence held by the men and women of the department.

Originally the California Division of Forestry and Orange County Fire Department, the hardworking men and women wanted to provide improved emergency services for our communities by reorganizing into a new agency. A committed group of 18 cities, the Orange County Board of Supervisors and dedicated department members came together in March of 1995 to form a Joint Powers Authority. The founding member cities included: Buena Park, Cypress, Dana Point, Irvine, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel, Lake Forest, La Palma, Los Alamitos, Mission Viejo, Placentia, San Clemente, San Juan Capistrano, Seal Beach, Stanton, Tustin, Villa Park and Yorba Linda.

We should be proud to look back at the last quarter century and see how far we have come and look towards the future and see what more we can do for our residents in Orange County. It is a great honor and privilege to serve the people of Orange County. The pages that follow are a testament to our lasting strength and unending commitment to provide the best fire emergency service to the cities and citizens of Orange County.

In service of others,

**Brian Fennessy**  
Fire Chief

**Shelley Hasselbrink**  
Board Chair



*Fire Chief Brian Fennessy*



*Board Chair Shelley Hasselbrink*





**95 March 1**  
 An organizational meeting is held at 180 South Water Street, Orange, to establish a Joint Powers Authority that will guide the future Orange County Fire Authority.

**95 March 30**  
 The inaugural meeting of the Orange County Fire Authority Board (established among 18 cities and the county) is held at the Irvine City Council Chambers; Board Chair Thomas Wilson presides.



**March 30**  
 Larry Holmes is named OCFA's first Fire Chief.



**95 April**  
 OCFA sends California Task Force 5 members to assist with recovery efforts following the Oklahoma City bombing on April 19.



**96 March 1**  
 Fire Station 6 opens in Irvine.



**95 July 20**  
 Westminster becomes OCFA's 19th member city.

# 1995-1996



**97 1997**

OCFA's Executive Committee officially recognizes the Pipe and Drum Corps. The Corps performs at OCFA functions, member city events, and during local, state and national memorial services.



**97 October 1**  
Chip Prather is named OCFA's second Fire Chief.



**98 1998**

OCFA's Executive Committee recognizes the formation of the OCFA Honor Guard. The Honor Guard presents colors at all formal OCFA events and travels to annual state events in Sacramento and the national fallen firefighter ceremonies in Emmitsburg, Maryland, and Colorado Springs, Colorado.

**1997-1998**



98

**September 22**

A five million gallon water reservoir in the City of Westminster fails, sending a wall of water and concrete cascading into Fire Station 65 and an adjacent condominium complex. Several on-duty firefighters sustain injuries and the water causes thousands of dollars in damage. Six people are injured, and more than 30 people are rendered temporarily homeless. Incredibly, no lives are lost.

99

**December 26**

An arsonist is caught on video setting fire to a massage center in Laguna Hills. Seventy-five firefighters are called into action, and the damage is estimated at \$1 million.



**1998-1999**



**00 March 23**  
Rancho Santa Margarita becomes OCFA's 21st member city.



**01 January 12**  
Fire Station 47 opens in Irvine.



**00 January 27**  
Laguna Woods becomes OCFA's 20th member city.



**01 September**  
Following the September 11 terrorist attacks, OCFA sends dozens of firefighters to assist in recovery efforts at Ground Zero.



**01 November 17**  
A groundbreaking ceremony is held for OCFA's \$50 million, 20-acre campus. The facility will eventually be called the OCFA Regional Fire Operations and Training Center.



**01 July 26**  
Aliso Viejo becomes OCFA's 22nd member city.

# 2000-2001



02

### April 23

OCFA crews, including the Urban Search & Rescue Team, respond to a head-on collision between a southbound Metrolink commuter train and a northbound Burlington Northern Santa Fe freight hauler. Two passengers are killed and hundreds are injured.



1E

### October

OCFA supports efforts by neighboring agencies to fight a siege of fires that burn from October 21 through November 4. OCFA sends 35 engines in support of the firefighting efforts throughout Southern California.

# 2002-2003





04 2004

OCFA's WeFit, (Wellness and Fitness Program), is created to promote injury prevention and employee health and wellness. The collaborative effort, between OCFA and Local 3631, provides employees with access to health and lifestyle information, routine or trainer-led workouts, and specific programs to build strength, flexibility, and fitness.



04 April 7

The Regional Fire Operations and Training Center (RFOTC) opens, consolidating Executive Management and all OCFA administrative functions within a single location.



# 2004



**06 February 7**

A fire breaks out at Sierra Peak in the Cleveland National Forest. The fire is contained six days later with more than 10,000 acres burned and eight firefighters injured.



**07 September 14**

Fire Station 27 opens in Irvine.



**05 September**

OCFA sends members of California Task Force 5 to support Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts.



**05 September 7**

Fire Station 51 opens in Irvine.

**2005-2007**



**07 October 21-November 8**

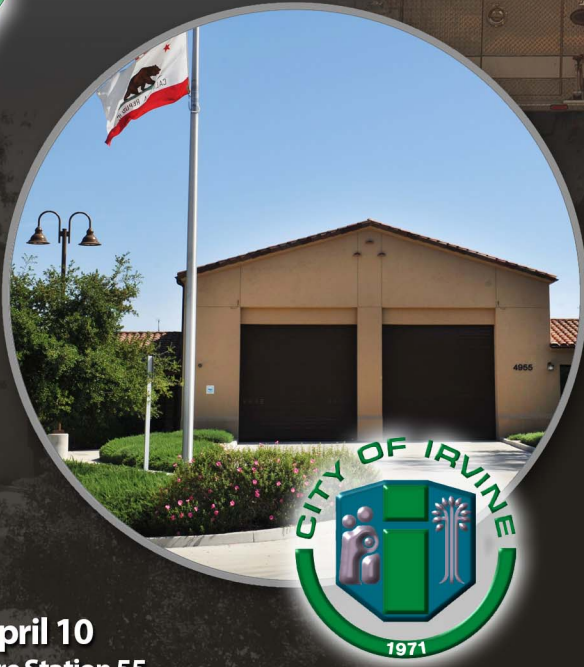
On October 21, one of the most significant Orange County wildland fires in more than 30 years ignites. The arson-caused fire burns near Santiago Canyon Road and Silverado Canyon Road, east of Irvine Lake. Driven by extreme Santa Ana winds in excess of 50 mph, combined with low humidity and long-range spotting of embers, the fire spreads three miles in less than 20 minutes. It lasts for 19 days, burns 28,517 acres, and destroys 42 structures (14 homes, four commercial buildings, and 24 out buildings). Another 14 structures (eight homes, three commercial buildings, and three out buildings) are damaged before the fire is contained on November 8.

From  
Portola  
Hills  
**THANK  
YOU**

**2007**



**08 January 2008**  
Member cities approve a 20-year contract to run from 2010-2030 under the Joint Powers Agreement.



**08 April 10**  
Fire Station 55 opens in Irvine.



**2008**



**08 November 15-19**

On November 15, the Corona Fire Department receives an initial report of a vegetation fire at the westbound 91 Freeway and Green River. Within minutes, OCFA receives similar reports at its Emergency Command Center. Driven by high temperatures, eight percent humidity, Santa Ana winds in excess of 60 mph, and long-range ember spotting, the Freeway Complex Fire results in the greatest loss of Orange County homes since the 1993 Laguna Beach Fire. More than 381 homes, commercial structures, and out buildings are damaged or destroyed. Six cities in four counties are impacted within the fire's 30,000-acre path before it is contained on November 19.

**2008**



**08 December**

OCFA purchases two Bell 412 helicopters equipped with water tanks, snorkels, rescue hoists, and night vision capacity. The helicopters improve response capabilities in wildland firefighting and remote rescues.

**2008-2009**



**April 20**  
Santa Ana becomes OCFA's 23rd member city.

12

**10 December 22**  
OCFA responds to numerous emergencies following heavy rains, mudslides, and debris flows. This prompts evacuations in Silverado, Modjeska, Dove, and Williams Canyons, as well as parts of San Juan Capistrano. Five homes in Dove Canyon sustain severe damage during the mudslides and several homes in Silverado Canyon and Williams Canyon are also damaged.

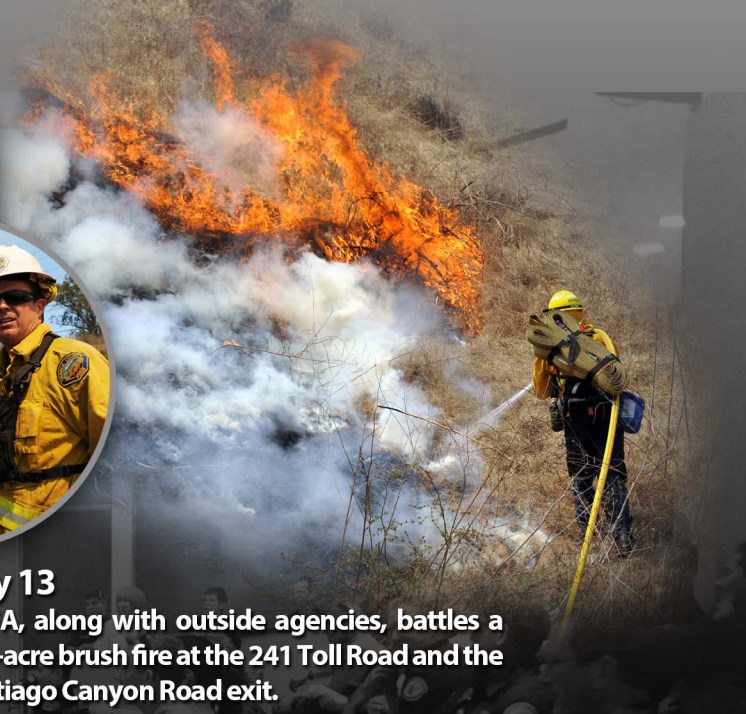


**11 September 11**  
On the day marking the 10th anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks, OCFA pays tribute to those who lost their lives in 2001.



**09 June 11**  
Keith Richter is named OCFA's third Fire Chief.

**10 2010**  
OCFA implements fiscal measures to reduce costs and sustain service levels during what comes to be known as the Great Recession, one of the most devastating economic downturns since the Great Depression. Despite severely curtailed revenue, OCFA avoids layoffs and keeps all stations open.



**14 December 1**  
 Jeff Bowman is named  
 OCFA's fourth Fire Chief.

**15 July 13**  
 OCFA, along with outside agencies, battles a  
 230-acre brush fire at the 241 Toll Road and the  
 Santiago Canyon Road exit.

**13 September 28**  
 Following after-action report  
 recommendations from the  
 Santiago and Freeway Fires,  
 OCFA and partner agencies  
 successfully conduct Orange  
 County's first-ever community  
 evacuation drill. More than  
 1,000 households from the  
 wildland urban interface  
 neighborhoods of Cowan  
 Heights and Lemon Heights  
 participate.

(14) OPEN INCIDENTS AND (25) UNIT STATUS		
15-020331	28222 Glen Ridge, WYO	APA
15-020329 / HP 020298	15871 SPRINGDALE ST, HTB	EMSD
OCFA/DO Requested Units: E25		
OCFA/DO Requested Units: HTB(4/2/3/4)		
15-020329 / H1 020163	20402 NEWPORT COAST DR BLDG C, NPB	EMSD
HP/MS/1 (2/4/1)		
OCFA/DO Requested Units: M4		
OCFA/DO Requested Units: M4		
OCFA/DO Requested Units: M4		
15-020327 / H1 020254	16191 COLUMBIA LN, HTB	EMSD
OCFA/DO Requested Units: E85		
15-020325	24312 El Toro Rd, LOW	PA/MS
HP/MS/1 (2/4/1)		
OCFA/DO Requested Units: M4		
15-020324	14682 Myrtle Port Rd, TST	AD/MS
OCFA/DO Requested Units: M4		
OCFA/DO Requested Units: M4		
15-020322	2214 Via Mariposa E RD, LOW	AD/MS
OCFA/DO Requested Units: M4		
OCFA/DO Requested Units: M4		
15-020320	27788 SANTA MARGARITA RD	AD/MS
OCFA/DO Requested Units: M4		
OCFA/DO Requested Units: M4		
100 N Rose St		



**14 September 9**  
 OCFA reaches a milestone when the TriTech  
 Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system is brought on  
 line. More than one million addresses and 160,000  
 street segments are incorporated into the CAD, a  
 geographic information system that will improve  
 location accuracy and reduce response times.



**15 July 16**  
 Fire Station 56 opens in  
 Ladera Ranch.

# 2013-2015



**16 May 20**

An electrical issue in a bait shop near the abandoned Ruby's restaurant results in a fire on the Seal Beach Pier. 70 firefighters and eight fire boats from OCFA and neighboring departments are able to suppress the blaze, though the pier is left damaged and is not reopened for three years.



Credit: KTLA



**16 December 30**

At 2 p.m., the Knott's Berry Farm Sky Cabin ride becomes stuck, leaving 21 people trapped 125 feet above the ground. OCFA's Urban Search & Rescue team is called in and utilizes a combination of fire truck aerial ladders and repelling techniques to harness the passengers and bring them down one by one in a rescue that lasts over two hours.

**2016**



**17 January 12**

OCFA Fire Station 61 in Buena Park suffers a devastating fire. While no one is hurt, the building itself and four vehicles, including the 100-foot aerial ladder truck are lost. The fire, which is believed to have started due to electrical parts in one of the vehicles igniting, lasts from 3 a.m. until 2 p.m. the following day, when the final hotspots are put out. 60 firefighters from multiple agencies battle the blaze, first from aerial hoses and then from inside the aging fire station. A new fire station had already been in the planning phase before the fire occurred.



**17 August 23**

OCFA sends members of California Task Force 5 to support Hurricane Harvey rescue and recovery efforts.



Credit: Orange County Register



**17 September 28**

Patrick McIntosh is named OCFA's interim Fire Chief.

## 17 September 25-October 1

The Canyon 1 Fire starts in the hills of Coal Canyon along the 91 Freeway near the Orange-Riverside county line when a road flare used by the California Department of Transportation is accidentally knocked into nearby shrubs. Neighborhoods are evacuated and roads are closed in the City of Corona as the winds shift toward the 300-home community near the Green River Road off-ramp. The nearly 1,700 firefighters assigned to the incident work tirelessly through the night and as a result, only six structures are damaged. Additional air and ground resources from multiple local agencies are called in to assist. By October 1, the fire is 100% contained after burning more than 2,600 acres, and no lives are lost during the incident.



## 17 October 9-17

The Canyon 2 Fire starts in the City of Anaheim when an ember is blown from inside the fireline of the Canyon 1 Fire into surrounding brush. Shifting winds and low humidity enable the fire to spread to parts of Orange, Tustin, and Corona. A united effort consisting of numerous fire and law enforcement agencies, and city and county organizations is able to manage the incident, and no lives are lost. 1,600 firefighters battle the fire from the ground and various firefighting aircraft are utilized throughout the event. The campaign lasts until October 17 and 9,217 acres burn, with 15 homes destroyed and another 45 damaged.



# 2017



**18 January 9**  
OCFA sends members of Regional Task Force 10 to support the Montecito Mud and Debris Flow recovery efforts.



**18 April 16**  
Brian Fennessy is named OCFA's fifth Fire Chief.



**18 July 11**  
Fire Station 61 opens in Buena Park.



**18 July 19**  
Fire Station 20 opens in Irvine.

**2018**

**18 August 6-September 13**  
An act of arson in Holy Jim Canyon results in a month-long campaign to extinguish the Holy Fire. 23,136 acres burn in the Cleveland National Forest, affecting Orange and Riverside Counties.



**19 August 16**  
Garden Grove becomes OCFA's 24th member city.



**18 September 11**  
OCFA sends members of California Task Force 5 to support Hurricane Florence rescue and recovery efforts.



**18 November 8**  
OCFA sends members of Regional Task Force 10 to support the Camp Fire recovery efforts.

**20 February**  
The global Coronavirus Pandemic reaches Orange County.



**2018-2020**

# *The Firefighter's Prayer*

When I'm called to duty God  
wherever flames may rage  
give me strength to save a life  
whatever be its age

Help me to embrace a little child  
before it is too late  
or save an older person from  
the horror of that fate

Enable me to be alert  
to hear the weakest shout  
and quickly and efficiently  
to put the fire out

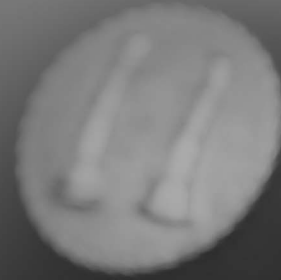
I want to fill my calling and  
to give the best in me  
to guard my neighbor and  
protect his property

And if according to your will  
I have to lose my life  
bless with your protecting hand  
my children and my wife.

*- Author Unknown*



**WE HONOR THOSE**



**LOST IN THE LINE OF DUTY**



Year	Fire	EMS	Other*	Total	Population
1995	2,628	32,190	24,100	58,918	1,102,882
1996	2,820	35,724	26,786	65,330	1,106,760
1997	2,649	37,003	29,308	68,960	1,130,169
1998	2,273	38,204	28,838	69,315	1,164,893
1999	2,320	41,452	27,113	70,885	1,193,638
2000	2,371	45,240	26,169	73,780	1,226,465
2001	2,083	47,617	23,427	73,127	1,256,428
2002	2,224	48,177	23,125	73,526	1,274,684
2003	2,517	52,509	24,547	79,573	1,289,771
2004	2,230	53,463	24,220	79,913	1,308,813
2005	2,186	55,272	25,207	82,665	1,333,386
2006	2,225	56,621	24,956	83,802	1,351,398
2007	2,257	58,252	25,143	85,652	1,384,831

*\*Includes: hazardous material response, swift water rescue response, and public service calls*

# 25 YEARS BY THE NUMBERS

## INCIDENTS AND POPULATION





Year	Fire	EMS	Other*	Total	Population
2008	1,888	60,002	24,685	86,575	1,383,617
2009	1,540	60,208	24,039	85,787	1,389,189
2010	1,329	60,792	25,398	87,519	1,403,072
2011	1,458	61,147	25,373	87,978	1,414,573
2012**	1,827	75,358	27,550	104,735	1,694,010
2013	1,919	81,182	29,232	112,333	1,712,234
2014	1,979	88,158	26,963	117,100	1,733,563
2015	2,086	99,858	28,769	130,713	1,755,436
2016	2,259	104,153	30,522	136,934	1,783,505
2017	2,385	108,347	31,126	141,858	1,793,040
2018	2,338	109,928	30,250	142,516	1,807,862
2019***	2,165	116,646	33,001	151,812	1,982,715
2020****	1,109	54,638	16,904	72,651	1,982,715

\* Includes: hazardous material response, swift water rescue response, and public service calls

\*\* Santa Ana joins OCFA

\*\*\* Garden Grove joins OCFA

\*\*\*\* Includes statistics through June 30, 2020, prior to Placentia leaving OCFA on July 1, 2020

# 25 YEARS BY THE NUMBERS

## INCIDENTS AND POPULATION



**Shelley Hasselbrink**  
Board Chair/Los Alamitos



**Vince Rossini**  
Board Vice Chair/Villa Park



**David Harrington**  
Aliso Viejo



**Elizabeth Swift**  
Buena Park



**Lisa Bartlett**  
County of Orange



**Donald P. Wagner**  
County of Orange



**Rob Johnson**  
Cypress



**Joseph Muller**  
Dana Point



**John R. O'Neill**  
Garden Grove



**Anthony Kuo**  
Irvine



**Michele Steggell**  
La Palma



**Don Sedgwick**  
Laguna Hills



**Sandy Rains**  
Laguna Niguel



**Noel Hatch**  
Laguna Woods



**Mark Tetterer**  
Lake Forest



**Ed Sachs**  
Mission Viejo



**Carol Gamble**  
Rancho Santa Margarita



**Kathy Ward**  
San Clemente



**Sergio Farias**  
San Juan Capistrano



**Juan Villegas**  
Santa Ana



**Thomas Moore**  
Seal Beach



**David John Shawver**  
Stanton



**Letitia Clark**  
Tustin

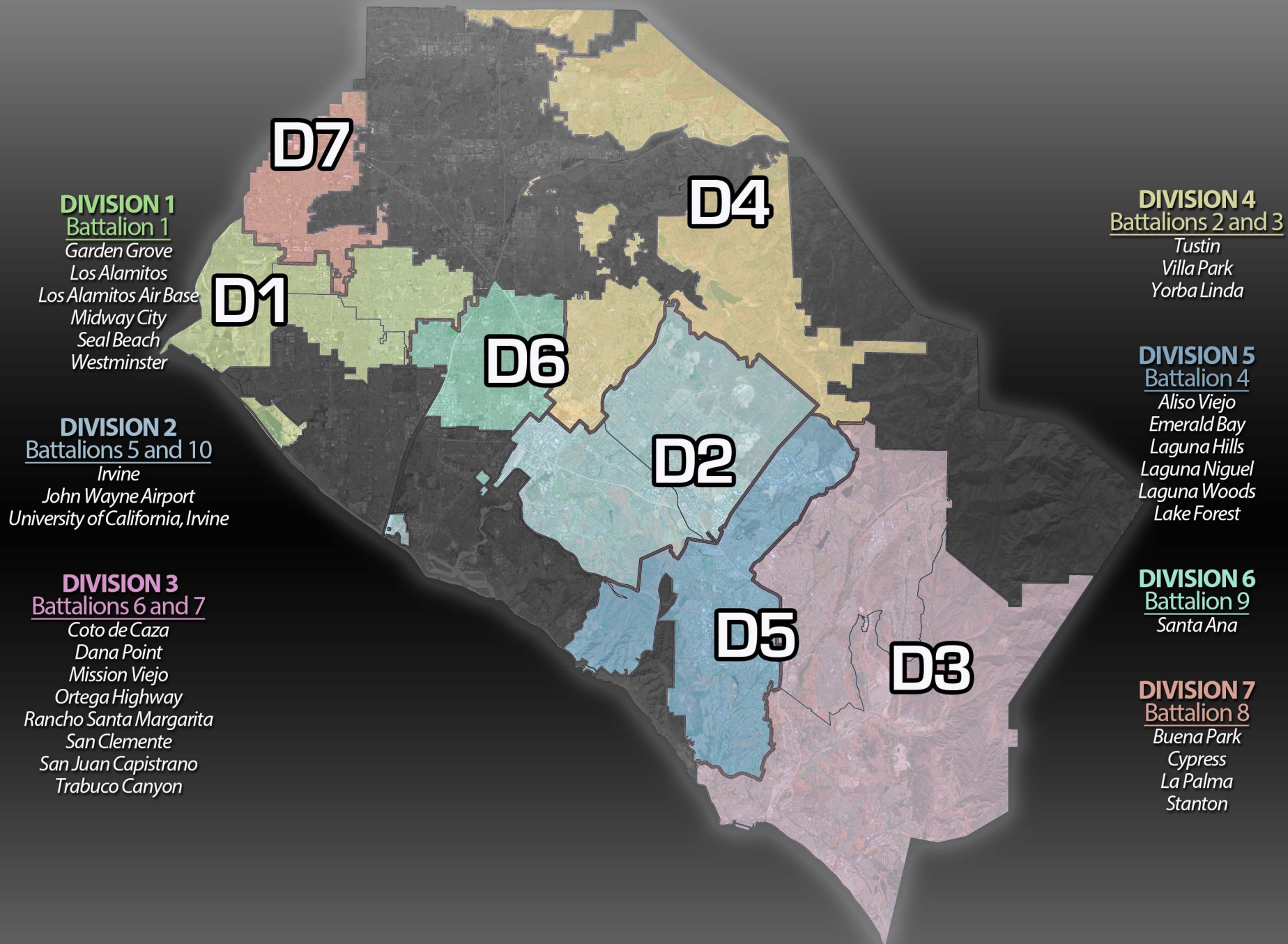


**Tri Ta**  
Westminster



**Gene Hernandez**  
Yorba Linda

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2020



# OCFA JURISDICTION 2020

