

WHITE PAPER

Continuity of Government (COG) in San Diego and the State of California

Protecting Linemen, Preserving Power, and Restoring Order Through Military-Civilian Integration

Executive Summary

This Department of Technology white paper, while incomplete and evolving, outlines a strategic Continuity of Government (COG) framework for the City of San Diego, the County of San Diego, and the State of California. It emphasizes the critical importance of protecting power company linemen during disaster recovery operations. Linemen are essential to the restoration of power, communication systems, and water infrastructure, and thus play a foundational role in maintaining civil order during emergencies. We encourage all interested parties to use this white paper as a preliminary and general roadmap for your town, city, county, and state COG framework. Every town, city, county, and state will have their unique needs, expectations, and capabilities.

Utility crews can face escalated risks from looters, criminal elements, and civil unrest. This paper proposes a robust integration of U.S. military assets, including nuclear-powered aircraft carriers and U.S. Navy hospital ships (*USNS Mercy* and *USNS Comfort*), to provide logistical, medical, and security support for linemen, alongside law enforcement and fire services.

I. The Role of Linemen in Disaster Response

Linemen are among the most crucial first responders in any disaster scenario. Their work to restore power grids directly impacts public safety, hospital functionality, water delivery systems, law enforcement communication, and the broader economic recovery. Yet their vulnerability in unsecured zones during emergencies has become a critical weak point in disaster resilience.

Key Vulnerabilities:

- Targeting by looters for copper, equipment, and fuel.
- Physical assaults or obstruction while working in unstable regions.
- Delays in grid restoration due to lack of security or trauma care.

Key Proposal: Elevate linemen to the status of Tier-1 essential responders, with military-backed security and access to dedicated emergency medical care.

II. City of San Diego – Local COG Plan

Leadership:

- Director of Technology – City of San Diego
- Mayor’s Office, San Diego Police Department (SDPD)
- San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) Emergency Coordination
- Naval Base San Diego Command Liaison

Military Asset Utilization:

- **Nuclear-powered aircraft carriers** will be deployed as emergency power sources and command centers.
- **USNS Mercy** to serve as a floating hospital specifically designated for injured linemen, firefighters, and police.

Security Measures for Linemen:

- Military-escorted work convoys.

- Drone surveillance and aerial security patrols.
- Pre-cleared "Safe Work Zones" (SWZs) enforced by police and military units.
- Real-time emergency call response for field-deployed utility crews.

Family Support and Morale:

- Emergency housing for families of linemen, police officers, and firefighters will be made available on military bases.
 - This measure is intended to enhance morale and ensure peace of mind for essential responders, allowing them to focus on their mission knowing their loved ones are secure.
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III. County of San Diego – County COG Plan

Leadership:

- Supervisor of Technology – County of San Diego
- Sheriff's Department, SDG&E, and Regional Emergency Services
- Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton and Coast Guard Sector San Diego

Military and Emergency Coordination:

- **USNS Mercy** will serve as a regional triage and recovery unit for linemen injured during repair operations.
- **Camp Pendleton** will serve as a logistics and security support base for inland recovery zones.

Linemen Protection Measures:

- Paired security teams of sheriff's deputies and military police.
- Mobile medical units and airlift support for linemen.

- Secure equipment and fuel depots.
- Emergency shelter and recovery stations for field teams.

Family Support and Morale:

- County-level coordination will include the use of Camp Pendleton and other military installations to provide emergency housing for families of first responders.
 - This policy will help stabilize the home front and boost operational efficiency.
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IV. State of California – Statewide COG Plan

Leadership:

- Secretary of Technology – State of California
- Governor’s Office, California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), California National Guard

Strategic Military Assets:

- Deployment of **USNS Mercy** and **USNS Comfort** as responder hospitals for linemen statewide.
- **California National Guard** to escort utility repair teams, provide fuel transport, and ensure aerial grid surveillance.

Statewide Priorities:

- Legal designation of linemen as protected emergency personnel.
- Establishment of rapid-deployment power restoration teams combining military and utility experts.

- Fast-track triage and trauma services for linemen.
 - Integration of linemen protection protocols into state emergency legislation.
 - Provision of emergency family housing on military installations to support responder morale and family safety.
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V. Joint Operations Command: Public Order and Technology Resilience Council (POTRC)

The POTRC will oversee coordination among military units, technology departments, utility companies, and law enforcement.

Mandates:

- Monitor threats to linemen and first responders.
 - Facilitate rapid deployment of medical and security assets.
 - Operate a central communications and logistics platform.
 - Maintain a Responder Priority Network for medevac and trauma services.
 - Coordinate responder family relocation and housing support on military bases.
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Summary

In the wake of an EMP, cyberattack, massive wildfire, or broader civil collapse, the restoration of electricity is not merely a technical objective—it is a cornerstone of national survival. Without electrical power, water systems fail, hospitals go dark, communications collapse, and law enforcement becomes severely hindered. The immediate restoration of electrical infrastructure is not just urgent—it is existential.

At the center of this critical mission are linemen—highly trained specialists who possess the knowledge and skill to rebuild what disaster tears down. But in times of crisis, these men and women face not only the physical dangers of high-voltage environments but also the threats of violence, civil disorder, and total logistical breakdown. Their protection and operational support must be elevated to the same priority level as law enforcement, military, and emergency medical personnel.

To meet this challenge, the immediate creation of a **Department of Technology** is essential. This department must be established at **every level of government—local, county, and state—and led by directly elected officials** who are accountable to the people and empowered to act decisively in times of crisis.

- At the **local level**, a **Director of Technology** should oversee coordination with city utilities, police, and military liaisons to secure linemen and ensure emergency power restoration within neighborhoods and city infrastructure.

- At the **county level**, a **Supervisor of Technology** must direct inter-municipal coordination, manage regional military and law enforcement support, and deploy mobile recovery units across rural and suburban zones.
- At the **state level**, a **Secretary of Technology**, elected statewide, must serve as a cabinet-level official with the authority to direct statewide technology policy, emergency infrastructure recovery, and integration with federal agencies and military assets.

These elected leaders will be responsible not only for maintaining and modernizing critical infrastructure, but also for creating and executing comprehensive Continuity of Government (COG) plans that explicitly include protection, support, and prioritization of utility restoration crews.

The Department of Technology will serve as a civilian-military coordination hub—bridging the private sector expertise of utility companies with the logistical strength of the U.S. military. With the power to mobilize emergency resources, preposition supplies, establish secure working zones, and implement real-time communications between agencies, this department will ensure linemen are never left vulnerable again.

The urgency is clear: every hour without power during a major disaster puts lives at risk and accelerates social collapse. The Department of Technology must be formed now, with empowered, accountable leadership to prepare our communities before—not after—the next crisis strikes.

Only through this structure can we ensure cities like San Diego will recover faster, safer, and stronger.

Restoring power starts with protecting the people who power recovery.