

2025-114 AUDIT SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

Los Angeles Fires—Prevention and Response

The audit by the California State Auditor will provide independently developed and verified information related to the prevention and response efforts at the state and local levels for the Eaton and Palisades fires in January 2025. The audit's scope will include, but not be limited to, the following activities:

1. Review and evaluate the laws, rules, and regulations significant to the audit objectives.
2. Review available reports and other information about the January 2025 Los Angeles fires to determine the following information:
 - (a) The number and location of homes, businesses, and other buildings destroyed or seriously damaged.
 - (b) To the extent possible, the number and location of deaths and the demographics of fire victims, including age, ethnicity, and disability status.
 - (c) Key events and decision-makers during the course of the fires, including timelines of fire ignitions and progression, ground and aerial responses, the provision of mutual aid, and issuances of evacuation orders.
3. Evaluate the adequacy of emergency plans, including the following:
 - (a) Whether jurisdictions followed their plans before and during the fires (e.g., notification and evacuation of residents, location of command centers, requesting and staging resources); to the extent that they were not followed, determine the cause and whether authorities issued evacuation notifications to residents in a timely manner.
 - (b) The influence of modeling and any available after-action reports on future fire preparedness and response planning and preparation efforts.
4. To the extent possible, determine whether adequate resources were available and effectively used to fight the Los Angeles fires, including the following:
 - (a) Whether there were adequate ground and aerial firefighting resources, the quantity and location of and timelines associated with any resources staged before the start of the fires, and any constraints on those resources.
 - (b) Whether requests for assistance were made, the timing and provision of that assistance, and any constraints (e.g., wind, unavailable resources) on providing such assistance.
 - (c) Whether adequate water resources were available, including firefighting infrastructure, such as fire hydrant systems, and the consideration of ocean and surface water.
 - (d) Whether the shutoff of gas and electricity for firefighting purposes occurred. If not, to the extent possible, look at whether changes are needed for future emergency plans.
5. To the extent possible, review the form and frequency of communications by local firefighting agencies to the public and elected officials.
6. Determine the extent and adequacy of any brush clearing and staging of emergency firefighting equipment.

7. To the extent possible, determine whether building codes reflect best practices.
8. Review and assess any other issues that are significant to the audit.