



## **Western Lane Ambulance & Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue** *Working Together For Our Community*

### ***Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA)*** ***Frequently Asked Questions***

#### ***What is an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA)?***

An IGA is a formal agreement between two or more local government agencies intended to improve efficiencies and save money by working together for the performance of specific functions. This type of agreement is known as a “190 Agreement” and falls under the legal guidance of ORS 190.00 to 190.130.

#### ***What does the IGA between WLAD and SVFR include?***

The IGA between WLAD and SVFR only involves the sharing of administrative services. This means that the administrative personnel from both Districts work together to provide services such as finance, human resources, and other administrative functions for both Districts.

#### ***What does the IGA mean to our community?***

In simplest terms, the IGA means that two very similar public safety organizations are working together to improve the service we deliver to our community and apply the revenue that is saved where it is needed most.

The idea of similar organizations working together to save money and improve service is not new. Right now, there are many similar agreements between governmental organizations throughout the state of Oregon and our nation. In fact, both the SVFR and WLAD Strategic Plans have objectives to establish partnerships with other organizations to improve service levels and prepare for the future.

***If both Districts are in good financial shape why do you need to find ways to save money?***

You are correct, both Districts are in great financial shape and we want to make sure that continues. Did you know that WLAD has experienced a significant increase in the number of calls they respond to over the past five years? Did you know that WLAD has also experienced a significant increase in the number of times they need to transport patients out of our area? Did you know that these trends are expected to continue? If you weren't aware of this information, it is important for you to know these increases cause more wear and tear on our ambulances and require WLAD to hire more people. Both cost money.

***Alright I can see how that makes sense for WLAD, but what about SVFR?***

SVFR has an expensive fleet of fire engines and other large equipment that is aging and will need to be replaced. An important part of keeping our community safe and protected is making sure we have good equipment and well trained Firefighters. Did you know that replacing a fire engine can cost as much as \$500,000, and that replacing our Jaws of Life rescue equipment could cost us nearly \$100,000? Additionally, the Ambulance District has outgrown their facility, and the Fire District's Old Town Fire Station is located in the Tsunami Zone. Building new facilities to house public safety agencies, like fire and EMS, can cost millions of dollars. WLAD and SVFR believe that finding ways to partner and work together makes us more efficient and helps to save and spend our tax dollars responsibly.

We know that you expect us to prepare for the future, and continue to deliver the great service you receive today. We also know the cost of providing services will increase, and finding ways to keep tax rates at a minimum while simultaneously working with an uncertain healthcare insurance reimbursement system will continue to test us. The IGA won't eliminate all the financial challenges we will face, but we know you want us to be proactive and find ways to ensure our Districts are in a good financial shape in the future.

***I can see how working together can save money and make things more efficient but are there any other benefits to this type of agreement?***

Yes! Our Districts provide very similar services and we are called to many of the same emergencies. During the last year, our leadership teams and personnel have worked and trained together more than they have in the past. This collaboration has resulted in improved operations while responding to emergencies and improved training opportunities. In fact, SVFR and WLAD teamed up to host two Emergency Medical Responder training programs that were taught in Florence and up-river for Mapleton and Swisshome / Deadwood Fire Districts. This joint effort resulted in 15 new medically trained firefighters in our communities!

***Does this agreement to work together mean that the Districts are merging?***

At this time, our goal is to combine the our administrative work responsibilities to improve our services and save money. Operationally, the two Districts remain separate. That's why they wear different uniforms and their vehicles do not look the same. In time, if working together proves to be good for our community, the two Districts may look at additional ways to join forces.

***Why does the Fire Chief wear a different patch that has the insignia of both Districts on it?***

Another great question. First, Chief Langborg serves as both the Fire Chief of the Fire District and the Director of the Ambulance District. Technically, his title is Chief/Director. This title was given to ensure that both Districts are represented equally. The Chief/Director works for both Boards and his position is funded by both Districts.

Chief Langborg is not the only person to wear the combined patch. This patch is also worn by the members of the Administrative Team and our Chaplains. The new patch was designed to reflect the work we are doing together and to make sure that members of the public don't think the Fire District is taking over the Ambulance District or the Ambulance District is taking over the Fire District. The new patch is a visual representation of what we are doing, which is **WORKING TOGETHER FOR OUR COMMUNITY.**

***OK I have a better understanding of what the two Districts are doing, but what if I want more information?***

We have put a lot of information on both websites that includes the Implementation Plan, and what the Administrative Team is working on each month. Just go to our website at [www.svfr.org](http://www.svfr.org) or <https://www.westernlaneambulance.com> and scroll down on the Home Page and you will find a link to this information. Of course, you are always welcome to call our Chief/Director, Jim Langborg, at 541-997-3212 and ask him questions as well.