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## **Delta Emergency Response Bill Becomes Law**

**Written for the web by C. Johnson, Internet News Producer**

A bill requiring a task force to make recommendation on how the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta will be managed in an emergency response situation was signed by Gov. Schwarzenegger Tuesday.

Specifically, SB 27 requires the committee to make recommendations on the formation of a unified command system; coordinate development of a draft emergency preparedness and response strategy to the Delta region; and develop and conduct an all-hazard emergency response exercise in the Delta.

The measure mandates the task force requirements be complete before January 1, 2011. The state Office of Emergency Services is responsible for convening the Multi-Hazard Coordination Task Force. Local, state and federal stakeholders will be included.

SB 27's author, Sen. Joe Simitian, D-Palo Alto, said California can't afford to have the kind of finger-pointing that occurred in the disastrous aftermath of Hurricane Katrina when levees broke.

"A combination of factors – earthquakes, sea rise caused climate change, flooding, deteriorating unstable levees – make the Delta a disaster waiting to happen," Simitian said in a prepared statement. "The scientists tell us there's a two out of three chance the Delta will collapse in the next 50 years. We can't afford to overlook emergency preparedness and jeopardize the 23 million people, \$20 billion in agricultural economy and communities from Contra Costa County to the Mexican border that depend on the Delta."

Simitian said that the intent of his legislation is to ensure "that at the moment of emergency, we know who's in charge and what's to be done; and that folks are properly trained for a successful response."