

AUTOMATIC EXTINGUISHER SYSTEMS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

MEETING MINUTES – WEDNESDAY, JULY 22, 2026, 9AM-12PM

Hybrid Committee Meeting



Meeting Location:

Office of the State Fire Marshal
37800 Kilroy Airport Way
5th Floor, McKittrick Conference Room 512
Long Beach, CA 95814

Zoom Meeting ID: 878 9009 7820

MEMBERS PRESENT

Brice Bennett, Committee Chairperson and Division Chief for Engineering and Investigations, OSFM
Patricia Rock, Committee Co-Chairperson and AES Program Coordinator
Jose Colin, Suisun City Fire Department
Randy Roxson, Sprinkler Fitters Association of California
David Karrick, California American Fire Sprinkler Association (CAFSA)
James Feld, University of California, Berkeley (Retired)
Edie Wade, Brooks Equipment Company
Allen Quirk, National Association of Fire Equipment Distributors (NAFED)
Peter Hulin, National Fire Sprinkler Association (NFSA)
Kim Stocking, Advanco Fire Protection (Alternate for Vahe Zohrabian)
Matthew McCarrick, California Association of Life Safety & Fire Equipment (CALSAFE)
Shelley Merrell, Integrated Fire & Safety
Kyle Howeel, Kimble & Co.
Brian Hutto, Schmidt Fire Protection
Jeff Dixon, Sprinkler Fitters Local 483
Amber Barrios, Associated Compliance & Training

MEMBERS ABSENT

Jason McBroom, Alpine Fire Protection District
Chad Richardson, Los Angeles Fire Department
Ken Kwong, Sacramento City Fire Department
Travis Tyler, California State University
James Knowles, Amerex
Wayne Weisz, American Fire Sprinkler Association (AFSA)
Vahe Zohrabian, California Fire Protection Coalition
Richard Eyssallenne, Black Bird Fire Protection

1. CALL TO ORDER

A. Welcome and Logistics Briefing

The meeting was called to order by Chief Brice Bennett at 9:01 AM. Chief Brice Bennett reviewed Bagley-Keene requirements for committee members, meeting etiquette, and when the public attendees could make comments.

B. Committee Members Introduction and Roll Call

Roll call was conducted by Alexander Rapphahn, and it was determined that a quorum (14 of 21) of members was present.

C. Approval of Minutes for November 10th, 2025.

Committee Co-Chairperson Patricia Rock asked for approval for the April 22nd, 2026, meeting.

It was moved by Member Matthew McCarrick to approve the minutes; motion seconded by Edie Wade. Motion was approved unanimously.

D. Announcements and Division Updates

Chairperson Bennett thanked the committee members and public guests for attending and participating. Chairperson Bennett asked the committee members representing sprinkler fitters to help ensure that the photos they upload to their renewal applications meet the requirements. The program will not be making corrections to photos; the application will be rejected. If there are any questions about the photo requirements, please contact the program at aes@fire.ca.gov.

The division's program coordinators have been working with and training fire prevention officers on the OSFM's licensure programs at no cost. The training outlines the different resources available to fire prevention and code officials. It also allows for questions to be asked about enforcing the different licensures from the OSFM. The training takes about an hour and a half to present. Any recommendations or requests for training can be sent to any of the program's general inbox.

Co-Chairperson Rock provided updates on previous committee topics. The Title 19, Chapter 5.5 update package is currently with the economist; when it is returned, it will continue to move forward through the regulatory process. The NFPA 25 workgroup is working on creating a purpose, problem, and rationale for every recommended amendment. More assistance from subject matter experts would be helpful in completing the process in a timely manner. Letters of interest for joining the workgroup can be sent to the AES inbox.

Supervisor I Cortney Walker informed the committee that bulk payments were now available for the AES program. This allows for multiple applications to be paid for with one transaction. The process requires the payee to have all the application numbers of the applications they wish to pay for. Each application must be entered individually and added to the payment selection. After adding all the applications, the payee can pay for them all with one credit card transaction. More information on this topic is available on Informational Bulletin IB-26-005. The program is working with IBTS on correcting known issues with GovMotus and making quality-of-life improvements.

Member Amber Barrios asked if it would be possible to have the Verify License tool

also show the next required CEU due date. Cortney Walker replied that they would have to discuss that question internally, and it may depend on what information they are allowed to show on a public facing tool.

2. OLD BUSINESS

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. Filing a Complaint

Co-Chairperson Rock stated that they had been hearing stories of improper practices from members of the different industries the in FEI programs. Co-Chairperson Rock asked if any of the people who witnessed the improper practices had reported them to the OSFM, and none of them had. Any violations can be reported using the EN17 complaint form. The form is available on the Fire Engineering home page at the bottom of the page under the resource tab. This form applies to all over the programs in the Fire Engineering & Investigations division. The form should be filled out with as much information as possible and then emailed to the general inbox of the program it pertains to. Any additional information such as documents or pictures can be attached to the email, and there is space on the 3rd page of the document for extra information to be written. There is another form specifically for sprinkler fitters, the AES-1009. This form should also be filled out with as much information as possible and sent to the AES inbox. After the program receives the form, they will contact the person who filled it out, ask any questions they may have, and then continue the investigative process. The investigation process is conducted confidentially, and complaints are vetted before investigations are conducted.

Member David Karrick asked how forms where the reporter's information is left blank would be handled. Chairperson Bennett replied that forms without reporter information would have to be evaluated for credibility before moving forward with an investigation. This is to protect the integrity of the investigation if it were to move into legal proceedings. The Division is working with CSLB, and they have information requirements for their investigations that must be met as well, such as the hiring contractor. This is why having detailed information on the form or in the attached documentation is important. Member David Karrick recommended that sections on the application be listed as required to prevent them from being left blank.

Member Peter Hulin asked what authority the reporter has to obtain the information required on the form. Chairperson Bennett replied that something like that would be

on their own accord, but it is not recommended for civilians to be walking around unauthorized on construction sites because of the safety hazards. This information was more directed at code officials and fire prevention officers.

Member Mathew McCarrick asked if multiple complaint forms could be filled out for an incident. Chairperson Bennett replied that they could have multiple parties fill out separate complaint forms for the same incident. The more information they have regarding the complaint, the easier it is to validate the complaint.

Member Edie Wade asked if a person suspects that non-certified/non-registered sprinkler fitters are working on a job and they are not in a position to check their cards, can they still submit a complaint form? Chairperson Bennett replied that anyone can fill out a complaint form, but the first point of contact if there is suspicion of non-compliance on a job site is the jurisdiction having authority. If the building or jobsite sit under the jurisdiction of the State of California, please contact the Fire & Life Safety Division of the OSFM. Only code officials or fire prevention officers may enter job sites on official business and check sprinkler fitter cards. Member Edie Wade asked if these complaint forms could be used by one company to hinder a competitor. Chairperson Bennett replied that the Fire Extinguisher program had something like that happen in the past, but the vetting process for complaint forms identified the intent of the forms.

Member Jose Colin stated that most of the issues they deal with are related to ITM and forms are more directed at FEI program issues. Chairperson Bennett replied that the division can look into adding some ITM sections to the EN17 form, but they can still submit an EN17 form for an ITM issue; they would utilize the last page for the form to describe the issue. Member Jose Colin asked if a section about fire alarms could be added as well. Chairperson Bennett replied that that topic can be brought up during the Fire Alarm Advisory Committee meeting.

Alternate Kim Stocking asked how long it takes for the person who submitted the complaint form to hear back if it is valid and whether it could affect a C-16 license. Chairperson Bennett replied that the complaint and investigation process takes a considerable amount of time, and they do not share the processes used to conduct investigations. Normally, they do not reach out to the complainant after the initial contact unless more information is required. If the complaint involves a C-16 licensed company, then they, the CSLB, may reach out to that company as part of their investigation. Alternate Kim Stocking asked how long a C-16 company has to refute a

complaint against them. Chairperson Bennett replied that if a valid complaint was submitted, the company would be contacted, and that could be discussed.

Member Peter Hulin stated that enforcement has been an ongoing issue with the program due to local jurisdictions not having time or identifying enforcement as a priority. How is there now time for investigations when there is no time for enforcement? Chairperson Bennett replied the investigations are part of the workload of the Deputy State Fire Marshals' program coordinators. Co-Chairperson Rock added that in the past month they have received multiple notifications of job sites being shut down by local AHJs. Member Jeff Dixon asked if it was possible to get a list of the job sites that have been shut down. The local AHJ that are enforcing the regulations deserve to be recognized. Chairperson Bennett replied that they will have to speak with legal to ensure that there would be no issues with publishing a list of shut down jobsites for the public to view. Alternate Kim Stocking added that LA City has been very good about checking sprinkler fitter cards.

4. ROUNDTABLE

Member David Karrick asked for an update on the Inspection Testing and Maintenance licensure development. Chairperson Bennett replied that the process has been slowed due to the internal prioritization of other projects, but they are planning to return to development now that those other projects are nearing completion. When they have a proposition for the next step in the process, they will bring it back to the committee.

Public Guest Hector Fernandez (Mt Diablo Fire) asked if the IMT certification or license would be fee-based. Chairperson Bennett replied that it would be. Alternate Steven Miles asked if they expected any changes in the overall direction of the program with the upcoming election. Chairperson Bennett replied that the program will move forward with the directions that they are given unless those directions change. Assistant Deputy Director Chief Andrew Henning added that the department has developed a proactive transition plan for the upcoming governor on what they would like to maintain as a department. They do not foresee any significant course changes from the current direction of the office. Long-term strategic goals such as the regulation packages and NFPA 25 are still moving forward.

Member Peter Hulin asked if there was an estimated timeline for the adoption of the national version of NFPA 25. Chairperson Bennett replied that due to the queue of regulation changes within Code Analysis & Development that have to be reviewed by an economist, the best estimate they can provide at this time is about a year. Member David Karrick added that

the process could be sped up a little if they had some additional assistance with the NFPA 25 workgroup.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public Guest Glenn Hennington (TrueMist Automist Systems) stated that the automist systems being installed with ADU units have an issue stemming from the lack of water and the required amount of water needed for the system to function. They sometimes require a 5,000-gallon tank with pressure tanks and a pump, which can cost anywhere between \$8,000 and \$15,000. The requirements and cost are pushing people away from the system. They would like a committee member to propose an agenda item for the next meeting to discuss using a Mist System instead of a residential fire sprinkler system. Utilizing the Mist System only could be a cost-saving measure for new construction. He can be reached at glenn@truefireprotection.com. Member David Karrick asked if they have received resistance in certain jurisdictions with the installation of these systems. Public Guest Glenn Hennington replied that they have received push-back from one fire inspector and one fire marshal because they had not received guidance from the state level.

Public Guest Jon Saia asked how a sprinkler fitter who left the labor market and let the certification expire could reactivate their certification. Co-Chairperson Rock replied that a previously certified fitter would need to take the sprinkler fitter exam and then submit a new sprinkler fitter certification application with proof that they previously held a sprinkler fitter certification. They must take the exam to prove that they still have the knowledge and skill level to perform the required duties of a sprinkler fitter. Public Guest Jon Saia asked what the validation for returning sprinkler fitters was. Co-Chairperson Rock replied that because they had already held a sprinkler fitter certification, their employment and hours had already been verified. A previously certified sprinkler fitter who is submitting a new application would only need to provide proof they passed the sprinkler fitter exam, proof they previously held a sprinkler fitter certification, and a photo for the new sprinkler fitter card. Public Guest Jon Saia asked if they would have to provide a backlog of CEUs for the years their certification was expired. Co-Chairperson Rock replied that because they were applying for a new certification, they would not have to provide CEUs until their 3rd year of holding that new certification.

Alternate Kim Stocking asked why renewal applications that were accepted on or before May 1st but then automatically rejected by the GovMotus system for non-payment have late fees applied to them. In previous years, the applications that were accepted before May 2nd but then were rejected could be reaccepted without a late fee being applied. Should a late fee be

applied to a certification/registration before it expires, and if that is correct, then could information regarding this be put on the renewal notification. Chairperson Bennett replied that the program standards are set by the regulations, not by GovMotus. A complete application is an application with payment, and a complete application is required before the deadline to not receive a late fee. There have been issues with GovMotus that have been identified, and they are working to fix them. Co-Chairperson Rock added that the regulations state that a complete renewal must be submitted by May 1st or it is subject to a late fee based on the scheduled fees, and that a complete renewal application includes payment.

Alternate Kim Stocking asked if a person has their renewal application submitted and approved on April 30th but does not pay for it until after May 1st, will they have a late fee? Cortney Walker replied that the way the system is set up applicants are given 30 days from application acceptance to pay for their renewal. If an application is rejected anytime after May 1st, a late fee will be applied because a completed application was not submitted prior to May 1st. Alternate Kim Stocking asked if that information could be put into writing.

Alternate Kim Stocking stated that multiple sprinkler fitters and C-16 contractors had asked her why they had to pay late fees on a certification or registration that was not expired yet. Cortney Walker replied that that was a different topic from Kim Stocking's original question. Anyone who submits a renewal application after May 1st is charged a late fee. All the FEI programs have a late fee cut-off date that is in regulations. Doing away with late fees before license expiration is a different topic, and the two questions need to be considered separately because of the different implications for each. The division is working with IBTS to update the communications that are sent out to inform the license holders when late fees will be applied. But it is the responsibility of the individual to be familiar with the regulations that govern the industry they work in. GovMotus has been updated to apply late fees to applications that were submitted or resubmitted after May 1st to align with the regulations.

Alternate Kim Stocking stated that while reviewing the regulations, they did not see anything about payment timelines or assigning late fees before licenses expire. Chairperson Bennett replied that as an Alternate, Kim Stocking can work with the committee member they represent to get this topic on the agenda for the next meeting or if they will be the acting alternate, they may suggest it for the agenda. In the short term, she can send an email with her questions to the AES inbox, and they will work to answer them thoroughly.

Alternate Kim Stocking asked if this topic was something that the committee would be interested in discussing. Member Amber Barrios replied that this issue is not something that they have encountered a lot because they set a shorter limit than the regulations for the

fitters they manage to complete their renewal. They also inform the fitters they manage of the renewal timeline in January. Chairperson Bennett added that this topic needs to be clarified for all the licensees across all the FEI programs and that input from the industry is important. The office will look into how best to provide this clarification. If they are asking the committee to make a recommendation to change the regulation, then the request needs to be put on the agenda for the next meeting as a new business topic.

Alternate Steven Miles asked if the renewal dates could be listed at the top of the application under the CEU due date. Cortney Walker replied that they are going to add the information to the application instructions section, and they are working with IBTS to get the information added to the renewal reminder emails GovMotus sends out. Member David Karrick asked if a renewal application was submitted via GovMotus on April 30th but not paid for until May 15th, if a late fee would be applied. Cortney Walker replied that previously, with paper renewal applications, payment was mailed in with the application, making it a complete application. Now with GovMotus, for an application to be considered complete, payment must still be submitted. But the applicant does not have the option to pay until the application is accepted. GovMotus is set up to allow for payment to be made within 30 days of application acceptance, even if that payment is made after May 1st. But if the application is rejected due to non-payment after May 1st, a late fee will be applied. Member Mathew McCarrick asked how long it takes for the renewal applications to get approved for payment to be submitted. Chairperson Bennett replied 24 to 28 hours depending on the workload of the program. Alternate Kim Stocking and Member Amber Barrios added that it is normally shorter than the time Chairperson Bennett stated. Cortney Walker added that the 30 days to pay for the application before rejection does not start until the application is accepted. If an application is submitted on May 1st but does not get accepted until May 5th, then the applicant has 30 days from May 5th to pay for the application.

Public Guest Steve Lamb (Raptor Fire Protection) asked why they cannot pay for the renewal when they submit the application online. Chairperson Bennett replied that that topic is something they are looking into across all the FEI programs.

Member Brian Hutto asked if there was an update on the new sprinkler fitter exam. Chairperson Bennett replied that they are working on new exam questions and with Pearson Vue on how the new exam will be set up.

Public Guest Steve Lamb asked why contractors were being required to upload reports and odd documents if they are listed as the responsibility of the building owners by codebooks. Chairperson Bennett asked if this was something that happened on a state job or if they had

contacted their local jurisdiction about this. Public Guest Steve Lamb replied that this had happened in local jurisdictions; recently ,they had issues uploading documents that were requested to have an inspector's certification. Member Peter Hulin asked if the contractor performing the inspection was acting as the owner's agent and the responsibility for filing the reports was part of the contract with the owner. Public Guest Steve Lamb replied that the owner is ultimately responsible for the property, but the fire marshal is coming to the contractor when the forms are not being submitted, not holding the owners responsible. Chief Andrew Henning stated that this issue is with local ordinance for inspection compliance and is a conversation to be had with the local AHJ on who is responsible for submitting reports. It is outside the purview of the OSFM because it is not an OSFM regulation. Public Guest Steve Lamb stated that the OSFM is utilizing the First Due program which, doesn't clearly state what the pricing is on their website. Chief Andrew Henning replied that the OSFM does not use First Due for those types of inspections; the department is using it for other features.

6. UPCOMING MEETING DATES FOR 2026

October 28, 2026, 9am-12pm PST
Office of the State Fire Marshal
715 P St, Sacramento, CA 95814
2nd Floor, Room 02-201

7. MEETING ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Member Allen Quirk to adjourn the meeting, motion seconded by Member Edie Wade; all in favor of adjournment. Chairperson Bennett adjourned the meeting at 10:24 AM. PDT.