



STATE BOARD OF FIRE SERVICES

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, November 16, 2023

1:30 pm to 3:30 pm Pacific Standard Time

Office of the State Fire Marshal

715 P Street, Room 2-301, Sacramento, CA 95814

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Daniel Berlant, CAL FIRE, State Fire Marshal, Chair
Anale Burlew, CAL FIRE, Chief Deputy Director*
Ed Foster, California State Firefighters Association
Nancy Ward, Director, California Governor's Office of Emergency Services*
Brian Marshall, Director, California Governor's Office of Emergency Services
Pete Muñoa, CAL FIRE Firefighters, Local 2881*
David Rocha, California Metropolitan Fire Chiefs*
Frank Lima, California Labor Federation*
Moke Simon, County Government
Len Nielson, Cultural Burning Liaison
Michael S. Williams, California State Firefighters Association
David Gillotte International Association of Fire Fighters

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jerry Davies, California Fire Safe Council and Insurance Industry, Vice Chair
Dan Terry, California Fire Fighter Joint Apprenticeship Committee
Brian Rice, California Professional Firefighter
Robert Magee, City Government

STATE FIRE MARSHAL STAFF:

Andrew Henning, Assistant Deputy Director, Fire & Life Safety, State Fire Training
Frank Bigelow, Acting Deputy Director, Community Wildfire Prevention & Mitigation
Chris Fowler, Deputy State Fire Marshal III, Supervisor, State Fire Training
Crystal Sujeski, Acting Division Chief, Code Development & Analysis
Kara Garrett, Deputy State Fire Marshal III Specialist, Fire Engineering & Investigations
Carrie Lewis, Associate Governmental Program Analyst, Support Services
Daniel Blueford, Staff Services Analyst, Support Services

* Attended meeting remotely

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Daniel Berlant called the State Board of Fire Services (SBFS) meeting to order at 1330 hours.

A. Welcome and meeting logistics.

Daniel Berlant explained that SBFS will be able to conduct hybrid (teleconference) meetings without the need for an in-person quorum (9 Members) or posting of addresses through the end of the year. Beginning next year all SBFS meetings will require an in-person quorum.

Chief Berlant introduced new members Anale Burlew and Len Nielsen. He also reminded members that all Member terms have expired but that CAL FIRE is working closely with the Governor's office to reappoint all current members and to fill the three vacant positions.

B. Roll Call was held, and quorum was declared at 1337 hours

C. Approval of draft meeting minutes

1) May 18, 2023, meeting

[Attachment – [meeting-minutes-5-18-23.pdf](#)]

(Discussion/Public Comment/Action)

This item was **motioned** by **Member Frank Lima**, and **seconded** by **Member Ed Foster**. Chair Daniel Berlant called for a vote and the motion to approve the May 18, 2023, Draft Meeting Minutes was **carried** unanimously at 1339 hours.

D. Announcements

There were no announcements.

2. CONSENT ITEMS

The Consent Items were heard out of order beginning with Program & Advisory Committee Reports for Community Wildfire Preparedness & Mitigation.

A. Community Wildfire Preparedness & Mitigation (CWPM)

1) Fire Hazard Severity Zones (Informational Only)

Frank Bigelow provided an update on the Fire Hazard Severity Zones. The team has been working on the regulatory process for close to a year. The public comment period has closed for a third time and no comments were received that would make changes to the maps. Next steps are to respond via writing for the final statement of reasons to all comments received (2400 in total) and submit to the office of administrative law. They will have 30 days to review, then it goes to the Secretary of State to be signed and it would then be in effect. Next step is to begin work on the LRA.

2) Program Update (Informational Only)

Frank Bigelow provided updates on CWPM. The first item that's being worked on is the 0-5 foot defensible space regulation which would include the ember resistant zone language. The plan is to present it at an upcoming Board meeting then it will move to the Public Comment period. It should be implemented in January of 2025. The first year will be new construction only, then one year later it will be for the built environment as well.

CWPM has implemented a Qualified Entities Program to multiply our defensible space inspection staff. In addition, there's a newly developed common reporting platform. So, regardless of which system inspectors are using, the data will be accessible.

Michael S. Williams asked what the status is of getting the Fuel Mitigation Grants funded.

Frank Bigelow gave an update on the Wildfire Prevention Grant Program. Adjustments are being made and then the grant agreements will be signed. A new solicitation just opened on Nov. 1, 2023 and closes July 10, 2024 with approximately \$117M to give out.

B. State Fire Training Division (SFT)

Program Updates (Discussion/Public Comment/Action)

- 1) Consumnes River College ARTP Reaccreditation
[Attachment – [cosumnes-river-college-artp-reaccreditation.pdf](#)]
- 2) American River College ARTP Reaccreditation
[Attachment – [american-river-college-artp-reaccreditation.pdf](#)]
- 3) College of San Mateo ARTP Reaccreditation
[Attachment – [college-of-san-mateo-artp-reaccreditation.pdf](#)]

Andrew Henning provided an update on the reaccreditations for Consumnes River College, American River College, and the College of San Mateo. These are reaccreditations and are valid for 5 years. No significant issues were noted.

- 4) Incident Safety Awareness for Hired Vendors Card
[Attachment – [incident-safety-awareness-for-hired-vendors-card-issuance.pdf](#)]

Historically SFT has mailed paper cards to the instructors to fill out and issue to students which are valid for one year. This proposal transitions to a digitally issued card which the student would print and take to incidents.

- 5) Retirement of SFT ID Legacy Look-Up
[Attachment – [retirement-of-sft-id-legacy-look-up.pdf](#)]

A look-up tool similar to the instructor database was piloted at a few incidents over the summer where the ID card can be checked at the incident to determine if it's valid. Cards have been manipulated in the past to change expiration dates.

- 6) NWCG ICS Ratio Update
[Attachment – [NWCG-course-ratios.pdf](#)]

SFT was trying to align with the NWCG max students. This was a significant decrease from what SFT historically allowed. Class sizes were reduced for about two weeks and had a lot of unhappy people. We are reverting back to what SFT has historically done. We are looking for approval to move back to the increased class size.

- 7) Fire Control 3 (2018) – Amendment of Max Class Size & Instructor/Student Ratios
[Attachment – [fire-control-3-course-plan-amendments.pdf](#)]

SFT would like to decrease the amount of requests to increase above max class size by making the increased class size the norm.

David Gillotte asked if the student to instructor ratio would remain the same.

Andrew Henning responded that the student to instructor ratio would remain the same.

The Consumnes River College ARTP Reaccreditation, American River College ARTP Reaccreditation, College of San Mateo ARTP Reaccreditation, Incident Safety Awareness for Hired Vendors Card, Retirement of SFT ID Legacy Look Up, NWCG ICS Ratio Update and Fire Control 3 – Amendment of Max Class Size & Instructor/Student Ratios agenda items were **motioned** by **Member Michael S. Williams** and **seconded** by **Member Moke Simon**. Chair Daniel Berlant called for a vote and the motion was **carried** unanimously at 1353 hours.

Andrew Henning provided two non-agenda item updates. SFT just went through its first reaccreditation pro board. SFT staff has been working for about a year and a half on this process which is similar to what ALAs and ARTPs go through for their site accreditation.

SFT staff has been working on a self-assessment report which started in July of 2022. It was submitted to the pro Board. In the end there were no formal recommendations to fix anything and recommended a full reaccreditation.

SFT is also in the process of transitioning to a new process for course returns. The vendor is updating the course return process to allow course payments by credit card. It is anticipated that this will be implemented in July of this year. The instructor will log in to the SFTID user portal and manually enter the students into the course using their SFTID. The instructor will submit course data, it will be reviewed for max class size and confirmation that student count is correct, then the course will be approved. This will prompt payment from the instructor. There will be a user convenience fee just below 3% but this will streamline the diploma issuance process.

There will be an update to Firefighter I and II certification curriculum in the Spring based off the new addition of NFPA 1010. SFT isn't anticipating changes except that it might add 30 min. of student time.

3. PROGRAM AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. State Fire Training Division

- 1) Hayward Fire Department Accreditation
[Attachment – [hayward-fire-department-accreditation.pdf](#)]

Chris Fowler explained that the Hayward Fire Department reapplied to be an accredited academy. They were unanimously approved to rejoin the accredited academies for three years.

The Hayward Fire Department Accreditation was **moved** by **Member Michael S. Williams** and **seconded** by **Member David Gillotte**. Chair Daniel Berlant called for a vote and the motion was **carried** unanimously at 1404 hours.

2) Animal Technical Rescue Awareness & Technician

[Attachment – [animal-technical-rescue-2021-curriculum.pdf](#)]

Chris Fowler explained that SFT developed the Animal Technical Rescue curriculum in alignment with NFP 1006. This is an update to current curriculum to ensure the effective and coordinated response to rescuing trapped, stranded, or entangled animals. This is the second reading of the curriculum with no stakeholder requests for edits.

The Animal Technical Rescue Awareness & Technician was **moved** by **Member Michael S. Williams** and **seconded** by **Member David Gillotte**. Chair Daniel Berlant called a vote, and the motion was **carried** unanimously at 1405 hours.

3) Tower Rescue Technician (2021) Curriculum

[Attachment – [tower-rescue-technician-2021-curriculum.pdf](#)]
Information Only

Chris Fowler explained that SFT has developed new Tower Rescue Technician curriculum in alignment with NFPA 1006 to provide the student with knowledge and skills to safely conduct tower operations. This is the first reading of this material – there has been no stakeholder feedback. On page 2 there are details about how to build out the instructor cadre. This is a new course and SFT will need to support the development of a larger pool of instructors within the SFT system.

Acton Item – All Members - Please review details on page 2 on how we plan to build this out. If you have any comments or questions about the plan to build out please contact Chris Fowler.

4) Rope Rescue (2021) Curriculum

[Attachment – [rope-rescue-2021-curriculum.pdf](#)]
Information Only

Chris Fowler – SFT has updated Rope Rescue curriculum in alignment with NFPS 1006 to include Awareness, Operations, and Technician level JPR.

Course was aligned to remove five topics that were not included in NFPA 1006 and five JPRs were added. Going forward we will be authorizing the current 2017 Rope Rescue Registered Instructors to teach this class. SFT will automatically update those stakeholders in Acadis.

Effective June of 2024 SFT will retire the Rope Rescue Awareness/Operations and Technician 2017 classes.

Daniel Berlant mentioned that the Columbia College ARTP Reaccreditation was accidentally left off the agenda. The Board will give a tentative approval internally until the agenda item is brought back to the Board in Feb. 2024.

B. Code Development & Analysis

1) Program Update (Informational Only)

Crystal Sujeski provided a program updated on Code Development and Analysis. CDA really works in the future, code cycles are 18-month cycles. This year we are in the 2022 edition of Title 24 (CA Building Standards Code). We wrapped up our intervening post cycle which will become effective in July of 2024. We are in codification, which went to the publisher and will be available the beginning of January but will be effective in July.

CDA is looking at the 2024 Triennial Code Adoption Cycle and has formulated workgroups on special interest – one is I-3 and the other is continuing WUI – chapter 7a, 49 and residential code regulations. Another special project is to look at our existing regulations and putting them into a IWUI format. The draft has been sent back to sub-groups that worked on the analysis. Also looking at the 2027 model codes (I codes). The process has started on ICC workgroups – focus is to bring 7a regulations to the national stage. CDA should be getting a report shortly.

In terms of Title 19, CUPA has noticed a package for above ground storage.

4. OLD BUSINESS

A. SBFS/CHP Highway Incident Training Video

Andrew Henning gave an update on the SBFS/CHP Highway Incident Training Video. Chief Tyler, the CHP Commissioner, met a few months ago – the project is back on track. A tentative meeting is scheduled for Monday, Nov. 20. The CAL FIRE video group will be taking the lead on the video installment but are waiting for confirmation from CHP. Will have more of an updated in Feb. This will be a shorter video than originally thought – the goal is to show what are the strategic objectives of the CHP and the fire service on a highway incident – extricate, treat, and transport patient and open the highway.

Frank Lima asked who will be representing fire services' interests.

Daniel Berlant responded that CHP will be following CAL FIRE's lead. There is a draft of the video and Daniel will send it to the SBFS Members. It will also be shown at the next SBFS meeting to ensure it meets the intent of SBFS.

Andrew Henning also explained that we will have a fire service created video and that SBFS will get to approve the video when finalized.

David Gillotte commented that a joint goal should be to convey safety for both CHP and CAL FIRE.

Action Item - Members to get names or ideas to Carrie Lewis.

B. Battery Energy Storage System Working Group Proposal

[Attachment – [lithium-ion-battery-workgroup-charter-draft-20230802.pdf](#)]

Daniel Berlant There's a lot happening in the energy storage systems realm both with lithium ion, e-scooters, and mobility devices. There's a lot happening and a lot of resources available for fire service training. There's a workgroup under our Board that has representation from all of the stakeholders that are leading efforts in energy and education so we can do a better job of staying on top of what's happening not just here but internationally, and we'll make that information available to all members of various stakeholder groups. We are looking for members to represent us at the international level. Anyone can participate and we'd like to have a core group of representation. We are looking for names so we can get this workgroup up and running.

Names from your organizations that want to participate so we can get this running the first quarter of 2024. The point is to get the research, education, and standards for the codes all to one place.

We're working with building officials and fire prevention officers and reaching to the Energy Commission to hold a symposium on this topic. Battery storage is an important component of the State's plan and strategy for energy reliability. Obviously, our focus is to keep people safe. We are trying to streamline getting more electric energy out there and that the fire service is well represented and informed of what's happening.

Acton Item – All Members - Please send names to Carrie Lewis at carrie.lewis@fire.ca.gov. We will send an email with the charter.

David Gillotte volunteered to be part of the workgroup.

Brian Marshall commented that they have SMEs that have working on this topic and would like to have them invited to the workgroup. He will send names to Carrie Lewis.

Crystal Sujeski mentioned the CA Energy Commission launched a webinar series to discuss a permitting guide book for designers, plan checkers, and field inspectors for residential and large energy storage farms.

5. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

6. MEMBER UPDATES

David Gillotte for Dan Terry – opening up a new FC/TC training center in Carlsbad.

Moke Simon – There was an update on the home hardening pilot program in Lake County and they will be doing projects in the Spring in the Riviera area. There was also an update to the Board of Supervisors program, and they will be doing home hardening projects in the Spring as well. JPA of Lake County is moving forward with a 5-year grant. All counties did a good job a responding to the Fire Hazard Severity Zones with mapping that changed critically for most northern counties. Tribes across the State are working with the CA Energy Commission and Lake County fire associations are participating in cultural burns. They would like to implement some grants for tribal nations.

David Rocha – There was a change in leadership with Chief Stowell finishing his term and Chief Gardner from Ventura County stepping in as the new chairperson. Riverside County has joined the Metro Chiefs.

Brian Marshall – CAL OES was engaged in the San Francisco APEC worldwide event. Also working with the Tustin Naval hangar incident, which is quite complex due to land ownership, it's protected by the Orange County Fire Authority, it's military, and air pollution issues. Demolition contract has been awarded. The upcoming winter is at the forefront of the Director's mind. There was a significant winter season, and all the waterways are full, everything is at max capacity and predictions are for a very significant weather event this winter. There are still burn scars with potential for mud and debris flow.

Len Nielson – He's the Staff Chief of Prescribed Fire and is now the Cultural Burning Liaison on the SBFS. There were 13 tribal wildfire grants for a total \$19M specifically for tribal entities. One of those is the Scott Valley Band of Pomo Indians grant. Grant programs allow tribal entities to be the grantee, so they need to look at needs not just tribal wildfire resilience. Accomplished 2 cultural burns this last weekend in Woodland and Mariposa, both were successful.

David Gillotte - IFF has standing committees working in association with IAFC and other stakeholder groups established to work in EMS, wildfire, labor employee assistance, urban interface, behavioral health,

hazardous materials, human relations, protective clothing, and the wildfire respiratory project. IFF/IFC training materials will become blended. David will share the work with SBFS moving forward.

Edward Foster – CSFA is focusing on the shortage of qualified applicants in the fire service. They are working on a program to educate jr. high and high school age individuals on what a fire service career might offer. They will be addressing outreach to minorities and female firefighter applicants looking toward the Firefighter I certification program through the jr. college system. Also, the CSFA Training and Education Expo is a 3-day workshop with curriculum focusing on life fire training, fire coms operations, wildland fires, classes in leadership, diversity, fire investigation and fire prevention training. The expo is the week of Feb. 25, 2024, at the Riverside Convention Center. The CSFA has partnered with Firehouse Magazine providing involvement in the vendor area and a new organization called Prevent Training Solutions providing fire related and EMS training in CA.

Anale Burlew – She is new to her position and is honored to be part of the group. We've been very fortunate to have such a mild fire year so far. Doing fuel mitigation with the mild conditions to do prescribed burning and are utilizing additional funding for increased exclusive use helicopters throughout the State. Have not activated any CAL FIRE incident management teams this year for wild land fires. In the process of starting some down staffing for resources. Traditional staffing will extend into the fall and early winter.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no Public Comment.

8. UPCOMING MEETING DATES

The next State Board of Fire Services will be on February 22, 2024, and the quorum will need to be in person. Note that all members will be reimbursed for travel.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Daniel Berlant adjourned the meeting at 1459 hours.