



STEAC Meeting Minutes

January 29, 2024 – Teleconference Meeting

I. Introductions and Welcome

A. Members Present

Gregory Barton, League of California Cities
Richard Beckman, California Fire Technology Directors Association
Greg Belk, CAL FIRE
Geoff Belyea, FDAC (alternate)
Jeff Boyles, League of California Cities (alternate)
Taral Brideau, California Fire Fighter Joint Apprenticeship Committee
Jaime Brown, Metro Chiefs
Jarrod Clinkenbeard, CAL FIRE Training Center
Bret Davidson, Cal Chiefs – Training Officer Section (South)
Cat Frazer, CAL FIRE (alternate)
Nicole Gissell, CAL FIRE Training Center (alternate)
Kyle Heggstrom, FDAC
Jason Hosea, California State Fire Fighters Association (alternate)
Javier Lara, CAL OES (alternate)
Andrew Kibby, Cal Chiefs – Training Officer Section, (South) (alternate)
Donavan Lacy, Cal Chiefs - Training Officer Section, (North) (alternate)
Scott Lewis, FIRESCOPE
Brian Marshall, CAL OES
Chris Ottolini, California Fire Fighter Joint Apprenticeship Committee (alternate)
Gaudenz Panholzer, California Fire Chiefs Association
Mike Richwine, STEAC Committee Chair
Ken Sebastiani, California Fire Technology Directors Association (alternate)
David Winnacker, California Fire Chiefs Association

B. Members Absent

John Bagala, California Professional Fire Fighters
Tom Carlisle, California State Fire Fighters Association
Darren Hall, California Fire Technology Directors Association (alternate)
Kirk Noffsinger, Cal Chiefs - Training Officer Section, (North)
Glen Pavlovsky, California Professional Fire Fighters (alternate)

Jason Serrano, FIRESCOPE (alternate)
Gail Warner, California Fire Technology Directors Association

C. State Fire Training Staff

Jill Bennetts, SFT, Associate Governmental Program Analyst
Brandon Erickson, SFT, Staff Services Manager I
Chris Fowler, SFT, Supervising Deputy State Fire Marshal III
Dustin Franks, SFT, Staff Services Analyst
Luke Gamboa, SFT, Office Technician
Selena Garcia-Villicana, SFT, Staff Services Analyst
Andrew Henning, OSFM, Assistant Deputy Director – Community Wildfire Assistance and Fire Engineering & Investigations
Derek Lueth, SFT, Associate Governmental Program Analyst
Caryn Petty, SFT, Deputy State Fire Marshal III (Specialist)
Kris Rose, SFT, Staff Services Manager I
Frank Vue, SFT, Associate Governmental Program Analyst

D. Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 09:00 by Chief Mike Richwine.

E. Introductions

A quorum was established during introductions. Chief Richwine acknowledged Chris Fowler's recent promotion to Division Chief of State Fire Training. Andrew Henning has transferred to Community Wildfire Preparedness and Mitigation.

F. Member Appointment/Reappointment

G. The new members who were present introduced themselves during this time.

Kyle Heggstrom – FDAC – Member Appointment
Geoff Belyea – FDAC – Alternate Appointment
Chris Ottolini – Cal-JAC – Alternate Appointment
Tom Carlisle – CSFA – Member Reappointment
Jason Hosea – CSFA – Alternate Reappointment
Jaime Brown – Metro Chiefs – Member Appointment
Jarrod Clinkenbeard – CAL FIRE Training Center – Member Reappointment
Nicole Gissell – CAL FIRE Training Center – Alternate Appointment
Kirk Noffsinger – Training Officers, North – Member Reappointment
Donavan Lacy – Training Officers, North – Alternate Reappointment
Keith Alexander – California Fire Chiefs Association – Member Appointment

H. Past Member Recognition

Gareth Harris, FDAC
Stephen Gutierrez, Metro Chiefs
Rob Wheatley, CAL FIRE Training Center (alternate)
Gaudenz Panholzer, California Fire Chiefs Association

II. Agenda Review

Presenter: Chief Mike Richwine

III. Approval of the October 13, 2023, Minutes

Presenter: Chief Mike Richwine

Motion: *Scott Lewis moved to accept the minutes from July 14, 2023. Richard Beckman seconded the motion.*

Action: *All members voted unanimously.*

IV. State Board of Fire Services (SBFS) Update

Presenter: Andrew Henning

Andrew Henning stated that State Board of Fire Services (SBFS) met on November 16, 2023, approving 3 ARTP reaccreditations for Cosumnes River College, American River College, and San Mateo. Hayward Fire Department was approved for their initial accreditation. They also approved the transition to the digital only Incident Safety Awareness cards from the paper cards. The retirement of the SFT ID legacy lookup tool was approved by SBFS. SBFS approved the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) Incident Command System (ICS) instructor-to-student ratio updates. The Fire Control 3 course was approved to go from 25 students to 30. The Animal Tech Rescue curriculum was updated to the NFPA 1006 2021 edition from the 2017 edition.

V. Consent Items

A. Recognized Fire Agency

Presenter: Chris Fowler

Chief Richwine asked the committee if there were any questions. There were no questions from the membership.

B. Company Officer 2E Experience Update

Presenter: Chris Fowler

Chief Richwine asked the committee if there were any questions. There were no questions from the membership.

C. Alameda County Fire Department ALA Reaccreditation

Presenter: Caryn Petty

Caryn Petty stated the site evaluation took place on October 17, 2023; Alameda County Fire Department is a model agency that is striving to represent the diverse community in which it serves. This agency has made exceptional efforts for outreach via their camps and recruitment events, and they are actively providing a diverse workforce with career-long training and development opportunities agency wide. They're eager to meet the needs of their region and the agency has become a very active participant in the State Fire Training (SFT) system having participated in cadres and other cooperative groups

since its last accreditation in 2018. SFT is recommending continued designation of Alameda County Fire Department as an accredited local academy and SFT system for a reaccreditation period of 5 years.

D. Pasadena Fire Department ALA Reaccreditation

Presenter: Caryn Petty

Caryn Petty stated Pasadena Fire Department had its reaccreditation site visit on November 20, 2023. Pasadena Fire Department is an accomplished and historical organization, serving a unique and diverse community in Southern California. Well-rounded and experienced personnel are providing an expansive response capability with a steadfast focus on serving the rapidly increasing needs of their region. A cooperative neighbor in their region, the agency is serving to promote teamwork, reliability, and exceptional customer service. Routine, professional development and service training specific to the jurisdiction are provided to all members, including an ever-growing list of State Fire Training (SFT) courses and curriculum. Eager to meet the needs of their region, the agency has become a very active participant in the SFT system having participated in cadres and cooperative work groups since its initial accreditation 3 years ago. The floor was then given to Battalion Chief Christian Miller to speak on behalf of the agency.

Christian Miller began, thanking Chief Petty and SFT for their help with the original accreditation and reaccreditation. He then stated that because the Pasadena Fire Department has made SFT a requirement to become part of their training cadre, it has lifted the department as it relates to education and requirements to be in their division and to train members. It's also created a path for people to be instructors within the area to help at colleges like Rio Hondo and Verdugo Fire, and it's created a greater sense of community amongst the area partners. Pasadena FD now holds state Firefighter 2 testing with other departments, when need be, and C. Miller believes this has brought all those involved closer together. The floor was then handed back to C. Petty.

C. Petty stated the self-assessment and site evaluation went well and SFT is recommending the continued designation of Pasadena Fire Department as an Accredited Local Academy in the SFT system for a new accreditation period of 5 years.

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| Motion: | Bret Davidson <i>moved to accept the motion for all consent items. Richard Beckman seconded the motion.</i> |
| Action: | <i>All members voted unanimously.</i> |

VI. Accredited Academies

A. Modesto Junior College ARTP Initial Accreditation

Presenter: Caryn Petty

Caryn Petty stated Modesto Junior College is coming for initial accreditation, they were an Accredited Regional Training Program (ARTP) in the State Fire Training (SFT) system before taking a tactical pause and are now returning with their reinvented

program. The site evaluation took place on October 26, 2023. Modesto Junior College is poised to excel in the SFT system, they were an established ARTP before but needed to restructure. They are serving as a collaborative partner in their region having created outstanding relationships with their neighboring agencies. The college has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to quality of instruction and excellence in training. The Staff and students have demonstrated a proud devotion to professionalism and service required of fire service personnel. The college is focused on providing comprehensive relevant training and professional development specific to the area of need and the students graduating this program are likely to remain in their home jurisdiction for jobs. The floor was then handed over to deputy fire chief Chris Jelinek, serving as director, to speak on behalf of Modesto Junior College.

C. Jelinek stated much value was gained through the site visit and self-assessment report, several recommendations came through that are all actionable and they've been able to build a strong roadmap of how to continue to evolve and improve the program. C. Jelinek wanted to highlight the strong relationship with Modesto Fire. They have entered into a partnership agreement with the college in July 2023 in which a chief officer is assigned to oversee the fire and EMS programs at the college, and through this formalized agreement they are also able to leverage great resources including personnel from the training division. They have permanently assigned 2 reserve engines to the academy and have use of both facilities from the college as well as the training divisions and support courses at the Academy, with the idea that utilizing the best qualities and resources from both partners to make the region's public safety training system better. C. Jelinek continued, stating that they have ambitious goals to expand course offerings through SFT courses and create opportunities for their regions. They are putting additional focused effort into inclusion, specifically to bring more women into the fire service. He expressed the program's excitement to talk about their initial steps to stand up a girls' empowerment camp targeting next semester for the first launch of the program.

The floor was then handed back to C. Petty who stated the site visit went well and the site team was unanimous in the recommendation of Modesto Junior College being recognized as an Accredited Regional Training Program in the SFT system for an initial accreditation period of 3 years.

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| Motion: | <i>Don Lacy moved to accept the motion for all consent items. Scott Lewis seconded the motion.</i> |
| Action: | <i>All members voted unanimously.</i> |

VII. Curriculum Development and Delivery

A. Tower Rescue Technician

Presenter: Chris Fowler

Chris Fowler stated the Tower Rescue Technician is a new curriculum that aligns with NFPA 1006, this is the second reading of the curriculum with no stakeholder requests for comments or edits following the October 2023 STEAC meeting. The cadre is in the

process of coordinating with the State Fire Training for the delivery of the rollouts that are referenced in the implementation plan, with the first delivery pending in February.

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| Motion: | <i>Richard Beckman moved to accept the motion for all consent items. Scott Lewis seconded the motion.</i> |
| Action: | <i>All members voted unanimously.</i> |

B. Rope Rescue Technician

Presenter: Chris Fowler

Chris Fowler stated Rope Rescue Technician has been updated in alignment with NFPA 1006, this is the second reading of this curriculum with no stakeholder requests for comments or edits following the October 2023 STEAC meeting.

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| Motion: | <i>Bret Davidson moved to accept the motion for all consent items. Greg Barton seconded the motion.</i> |
| Action: | <i>All members voted unanimously.</i> |

C. Nation Accredited Certification Expansion – Fire and Emergency Services Instructor 1 and 2

Presenter: Chris Fowler & Brandon Erickson

Chris Fowler stated the proposal is for cognitive and skills exams for Fire and Emergency Services Instructor 1 & 2 and the related procedures which are presented in the staff report. The timeline for this STEAC meeting as well as for the State Board of Fire Services (SBFS) in February is information only and will be awaiting feedback in the coming months so that this can be brought back to STEAC in April and subsequently the SBFS in May for a motion to seek IFSAC and Pro Board approval for the certification exams for the Fire and Emergency Services Instructor (FESI). Following those approvals, in June State Fire Training (SFT) would submit an extension of their accreditation to IFSAC and Pro Board so a final review could be held in the Fall with an anticipated implementation in January 2025. On page 2 of the staff report, there is a detailed analysis and comparison of the current certification and the proposed national certification which gives the student options. The national Certification will not be required. The certification cognitive exam will be from a test bank that is validated from both IFSTA and Jones and Bartlett textbooks; this will allow the testing sites to match the cognitive exam to the textbook that they are using, and they'll be comprised of 50 questions each. For FESI 1, the certification skills exam will be comprised of 5 required skills and one randomly selected skill. For FESI 2, the certification skills exam will be comprised of 6 skills and one randomly selected skill. They will be considered Pass or Fail. A candidate who does not pass a skills exam will be allowed to retake that skill one time within the one year of the initial attempt. Course plans will be modified to include additional course time for the optional certification exams.

The floor was then handed to Brandon Erickson who began a power point presentation. This presentation was made available to the membership and is available upon request. Andrew Henning asked if CAL FIRE, using private training providers to get the FESI 1 and FESI 2 courses, could the ALA just do testing only instead of the task book? B. Erickson responded stating State Fire Training (SFT) imagines course scheduling and

certification exam would be two separate applications, so a site that wishes to do testing only, at an ARTP or ALA, they could submit the application for certification exam.

Later in the presentation Bret Davidson, noticing the Certification with Reciprocity expires in 10 years except with DoD, asked if there is a reason it expires if an individual is with another state and working as a firefighter. B. Erickson responded that it is a reciprocity issue and it's a policy that SFT has on the books for Firefighter 1 and 2.

VIII. State Fire Training Updates

A. Acadis Payment Demonstration

Presenter: Derek Lueth

Derek Lueth began by stating State Fire Training (SFT) has been working on a feature to introduce electronic invoicing and digital course returns to the SFT user portal. While there have been delays, the bulk of the development work has now been completed by the vendor. SFT is working to identify and fix the remaining smaller bugs, but the product is now here and functioning. SFT will be starting a pilot program with a handful of agencies soon with an anticipated full release on July 1, 2024.

D. Lueth prefaced a video demonstration stating that it will show the process of the new credit card payment process, but other avenues of payment will be available. The credit card option will have a 2.99% processing fee that will be paid by the stakeholder. SFT will continue to accept checks by mail. D. Lueth then played the 6-minute video demonstration. The floor was then opened for any questions.

Scott Lewis asked if there is still going to be an option for individuals to pay for their certifications, for example, if S. Lewis were to put on a class and say it's several outside agencies, are they able to log in and do the same thing on their own? D. Lueth responded stating SFT will continue the current policy, which is, that there is only one single payment to be made for the course. Users will see the multiple students listed on that page who are participants in the course that contribute to the total billing amount. There still needs to be one contact that pays the entire invoice. SFT can assign anybody within their system to be that paying party, this could be an individual or an entity like a local fire department as the billing agency and an admin at that department will be given access to Acadis to log in and pay invoices for that department.

Richard Beckman stated currently when a roster is submitted there is an option to mark someone as a new student and the student is assigned an SFT ID when the course is processed. He asked if this would remain with the new system or does something now need to be done ahead of time. D. Lueth responded by stating previously an individual would not receive an SFT ID until they complete their first course, and with this new process, SFT now wants students to get their SFT ID in advance of taking their first course. If someone does not have an ID, they should be accessing the SFT user portal where there is a public webform to request an SFT ID. We are asking instructors to require students to have an SFT ID by the end of a course as there is no longer an option for "new student" when submitting a roster with the new process. The webform to request this ID is currently live.

Andrew Henning asked what is the current processing time from when someone submits a roster to when diplomas are issued? Kris Rose stated that there is a 10 or less business day turnaround time right now but could be higher during peak times such as the end of a community college semester. A. Henning then asked when submitting a roster under this new system, what happens, and would an email be sent out after submission? D. Lueth responded stating a significant amount of time that SFT admin staff spends on course processing is fixing issues with the Excel roster such as wrong ID numbers, spelling errors, emails that are bad, etc., and this new system aims to eliminate that. Now admin staff will see a queue of roster submissions, and then reviews for compliance and approves. An invoice is automatically generated upon approval and submitted via email to the billing agency. The system will also send out 30, 60, and 90-day reminders for an outstanding invoice that is due for a course.

D. Lueth further elaborated diplomas are issued automatically at midnight after payment is processed. For example, if John Smith submits a roster on Monday and an SFT admin reviews and approves this roster on Tuesday, an invoice will be automatically generated and emailed out. John Smith logs in later that day after receiving the email and pays the invoice, if the payment goes through then at midnight that night the students will have their diplomas issued in their portals. So, if payment isn't made then no diplomas are issued with the exception of Accredited Academies who will be given a pass as SFT continues to assist them. If an Accredited Academy accumulates more than \$30,000 in unpaid course fees, then SFT will put a pause on their ability to instruct. D. Lueth continued, stating that any private agency or academy will be able to establish an organization record, and then, by their request, assign somebody as the admin to submit payment on invoices. For example, if John Smith teaches 10 Instructor 1 courses a year, he can have his assistant Kaylee Smith have access to pay for the invoices for that agency.

Bret Davidson asked for additional clarification on diplomas being withheld if an entity owes SFT course fees. D. Lueth clarified that Accredited Local Academies (ALA) and Accredited Regional Training Programs (ARTP) will get diplomas as soon as the roster is approved without payment; all other agencies will not receive diplomas until payment is received. ALAs and ARTPs will have the \$30,000 debt threshold at which point SFT will withhold diplomas and suspend course instruction for that entity.

IX. Public Comment

Cameron Todd of Murphys Fire Protection spoke about his concerns over State Fire Trainings (SFT) instructor certification process. He suggested that the certification process is extremely rigid with a focus on checking boxes rather than accepting an individual's unique background, skills, and abilities. C. Todd believes there is an untapped pool of instructors not associated with the SFT system and requested an ad-hoc committee or new process be formed to evaluate these individuals based on experience and training.

Bret Davidson thanked C. Todd for his service and expressed understanding for the individuals who wish to become instructors. He explained that due to more lax regulations in the past as well as separate requirements between agencies and the state, it can be difficult to assess adequate training. For example, there are individuals

with an I-400 certification who do not possess an I-200 or I-300 certification. The topic was closed, and the feedback will be taken into consideration.

X. Roundtable/Announcements/Correspondence

Richard Beckman stated there was a discussion regarding female firefighter empowerment training/diversity empowerment and teaming up with State Fire Training (SFT) on the subject. He then asked if there was any desire from SFT to draft a proposed state model or course plan for diversity, equity, and inclusion training programs throughout the state. Caryn Petty stated that SFT is active and present at many such camps throughout the state and suggested that SFT could potentially take the best practices from those camps and create a template for organizations to utilize to upstart a camp of their own.

Chief Richwine then utilized the remaining time to check in with each of the organizations present for any updates and current projects.

Jason Hosea stated CSFA will be hosting C-Techs in Riverside February 25th through March 3rd.

XI. Future Meeting Dates

April 12, 2024; July 12, 2024; October 11th, 2024; and January 10th, 2025

Presenter: Mike Richwine

XII. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 10:44 AM.