



**STATEWIDE TRAINING AND EDUCATION  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE (STEAC)  
OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL**  
State Fire Training Division  
715 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814  
Website: <https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/divisions/state-fire-training/>



## STEAC Meeting Minutes

January 10, 2025 – Teleconference Meeting

### I. Introductions and Welcome

#### Members Present:

Michael Richwine, Chair  
Glen Pavlovsky, California Professional Fire Fighters (alternate)  
Todd Braverman, California Fire Fighter Joint Apprenticeship Committee  
Tierney Harrison, California Fire Fighter Joint Apprenticeship Committee (alternate)  
Bret Davidson, Cal Chiefs – Training Officer Section (South), STEAC Vice Chair  
Shawn Tukua, Cal Chiefs – Training Officer Section (South) (alternate)  
Richard Beckman, California Fire Technology Directors Association  
Ray Mosack, California Fire Technology Directors Association (alternate)  
Peter Cacossa, California Fire Technology Directors Association  
Geoff Belyea, FDAC (alternate)  
Gregory Barton, League of California Cities  
Justin Chaplin, CAL FIRE Training Center  
Cat Frazer, CAL FIRE (alternate)  
Donavan Lacy, Cal Chiefs - Training Officer Section, (North) (alternate)  
Devin Flannery, CFCA  
Brian Marshall, CAL OES  
Javier Lara, CAL OES (alternate)  
Jason Hosea, California State Fire Fighters Association (alternate)  
Scott Lewis, FIREScope

#### Members Absent:

Jaime Brown, Metro Chiefs  
John Bagala, California Professional Fire Fighters  
Greg Greenlee, California Fire Technology Directors Association (alternate)  
Kyle Heggstrom, FDAC  
Christopher Nigg, League of California Cities (alternate)  
Nicole Gissell, CAL FIRE Training Center (alternate)  
Andrew Kibby, CAL FIRE  
Kirk Noffsinger, Cal Chiefs - Training Officer Section, (North)  
Keith Alexander, CFCA  
Tom Carlisle, California State Fire Fighters Association  
Derrick Chapman, FIREScope (alternate)

**State Fire Training Staff:**

Jill Bennetts, SFT, Associate Governmental Program Analyst  
Mark Bisbee, OFSM, Battalion Chief (RA)  
Natasha Cocke, SFT, Office Technician  
Brandon Erickson, SFT, Staff Services Manager I  
Chris Fowler, SFT, Supervising Deputy State Fire Marshal III  
Selena Garcia-Villicana, SFT, Staff Services Analyst  
Derek Lueth, SFT, Associate Governmental Program Analyst  
Caryn Petty, SFT, Deputy State Fire Marshal III (Specialist)  
Kris Rose, SFT, Staff Services Manager I  
Vickie Sakamoto, SFT, Assistant State Fire Marshall  
Frank Vue, SFT, Associate Governmental Program Analyst

**Other In Person Attendees:**

Greg Belk, CAL FIRE

**Welcome**

The meeting was called to order at 09:00 AM by Chief Richwine, STEAC Chair.

**Roll Call/Quorum Established**

A quorum was established during introductions.

**Member Appointments and Reappointments**

1. Peter Cacossa – CFTDA – Member Appointment
2. Greg Greenlee – CFTDA – Alternate Appointment
3. Ray Mosack – CFTDA – Alternate Appointment
4. Derrick Chapman – FIRESCOPE – Alternate Appointment
5. Todd Braverman – Cal-JAC – Member Appointment
6. Tierney Harrison – Cal-JAC – Alternate Appointment
7. Shawn Tukua - Training Officer Section (South) - Alternate Appointment
8. Chris Nigg – League of California Cities – Alternate Appointment
9. Richard Beckman – CFTDA – Member Reappointment
10. Brian Marshall – OES – Member Reappointment
11. Javier Lara - OES –Alternate Reappointment
12. Cat Frazer – CAL FIRE – Alternate Reappointment
13. Scott Lewis – FIRESCOPE – Member Reappointment
14. John Bagala – CPF – Member Reappointment
15. Glenn Pavlovsky – CPF – Alternate Reappointment

16. Bret Davidson - Training Officer Section (South) - Member Reappointment

17. Greg Barton - League of California Cities – Member Reappointment

### **Past Member Recognition**

1. Ken Sebastiani – CFTDA – Alternate
2. Gail Warner – CFTDA – Member
3. Darren Hall – CFTDA – Alternate
4. Jason Serrano – FIREScope – Alternate
5. Taral Brideau – CAL JAC – Member
6. Chris Ottolini – CAL JAC - Alternate
7. Jeff Boyles – League of California Cities – Alternate

After Chief Richwine acknowledged the outgoing members of STEAC, Chief Sakamoto spoke on behalf of Chief Berlant. Chief Sakamoto thanked everyone for attending this meeting in light of the fires in Southern California. She also expressed her and Chief Berlant's gratitude for the past STEAC members and their contributions to this program. She explained these past members have been vital to the success of SFT through their support of cadres, behavioral health training, suicide awareness training, and Blueprint 2030.

## **II. Agenda Review**

Presenter: Chief Richwine

## **III. Approval of the October 11, 2024, Minutes**

Presenter: Chief Richwine

<b>Motion:</b>	<i>Bret Davidson moved to accept the minutes from October 11, 2024. Richard Beckman seconded the motion.</i>
<b>Action:</b>	<i>All members voted unanimously.</i>

## **IV. State Board of Fire Services (SBFS) Update**

Presenter: Chief Fowler

Chief Fowler stated that the State Board of Fire Services (SBFS) was able to reach a quorum and met on November 5, 2024. The committee approved 11 curriculum packages, 11 reaccreditations, 1 new ARTP, and 6 changes to SFT program business practices. The next meeting will be on February 5, 2025.

## **V. Consent Items**

### **A. Low Angle Rope Rescue (2007) Retirement**

Presenter: Chief Petty

Chief Petty discussed the retirement of the Low Angle Rope Rescue (LARRO) (2007) curriculum, which uses techniques and equipment that are outdated by today's standards. In 2021, SFT introduced the new Rope Rescue Awareness/Operations (RRAO) and Rope Rescue Technician (RRT) courses. All the information from the LARRO course is captured in these courses, which Chief Pettys added are now recognized in the industry as best practice. Chief Petty recommended the retirement of the LARRO curriculum. She said that students looking to take this type of training should be encouraged to take the newer Rope Rescue courses instead. This course is scheduled to retire fully on March 1, 2025. Students who are currently working on a LARRO task book must complete this by March 1, 2025. There was no further discussion on this topic.

### **B. Orange County Fire Authority Reaccreditation**

Presenter: Chief Petty

Chief Petty spoke to the committee about Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA)'s first ALA reaccreditation. She described how this department works to promote teamwork and has a reputation for reliability and exceptional customer service. Orange County Fire Authority offers comprehensive training with cutting-edge techniques and a strong focus on wellness and safety. Chief Petty pointed out that OCFA leads the state in wellness. This organization also maintains strong communication with SFT and actively participates in curriculum development and cadres.

Chief Petty then yielded the floor to Battalion Chief Eric Bennett, who spoke on behalf of OCFA. Eric Bennett discussed his experience with ALA accreditation and thanked Chief Petty, the STEAC committee, and the accreditation committee for their feedback and timely support. While he was initially daunted by overseeing OCFA's accreditation, Eric said that the clear expectations and support from this program made it a fairly easy process.

Eric Bennett further discussed how OCFA is a group of motivated individuals who care about their program and SFT. He expressed gratitude for his instructors' hard work and determination. He thanked the STEAC Committee for the opportunity to showcase OCFA. Eric also shared that the department has been busy due to the Southern California fires, where they unfortunately had a line of duty death.

Chief Petty offered her condolences to Eric Bennett and members of Orange County Fire Authority.

Chief Petty concluded this presentation by stating that OCFA's self-assessment report and site evaluation both went very well. SFT recommends a five-year reaccreditation of OCFA as an ALA in the SFT system.

### **C. Non-Motorized Watercraft Rescue Technician (2021) Course Rollout – Delivery Format Change**

Presenter: Chief Fowler

Chief Fowler explained that the 2021 Non-Motorized Watercraft Rescue Technician curriculum was published as a F-STEP course in August 2024 and had a virtual rollout, as originally proposed by the cadre. The rollout consisted of an online 2 to 3-hour update for existing registered instructors. However, since the rollout, the cadre has identified safety concerns within the dynamic water environment that now warrant in-person training.

As a result, three in-person training courses will be offered by the cadre members in 2025. These courses will be two-days long and will be delivered in standard course delivery format, corresponding with Chapter 5 of the SFT Procedures Manual. This training will result in an updated diploma for registered instructors. The cadre will be responsible for establishing and collecting any fees for the in-person delivery.

The implementation plan has been updated and included in the STEAC Meeting materials.

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

## **VI. New Accredited Academies**

### **A. None to Report**

## **VII. Curriculum Development & Delivery**

### **A. Fire Officer 3 (2020)**

Presenter: Chief Bisbee

Chief Mark Bisbee stated that this is the second time the Fire Officer 3 curriculum has been presented at STEAC. Since the last curriculum presentation, 14 hours of instruction on behavioral health and cancer awareness were added to Fire Officer 3A. The course hours have increased from 40 to 54 hours to align with the 54-hour delivery model and to line up with Fire Officer 4 curriculum. This is the only new change to the Fire Officer 3 curriculum. Chief Bisbee recommended a motion for the updated Fire Officer 3 curriculum and the additional changes to Fire Officer 3A.

Bret Davidson asked Chief Bisbee if embedding behavioral health curriculum into Fire Officer 3A is meant to replace SFT's existing Behavioral Health and Cancer Awareness course. Chief Bisbee responded that the course is being modified and gave Chief Petty the floor to elaborate on this. Chief Petty explained that the Behavioral Health and Cancer Awareness cadre is meeting next month to modify the curriculum with updated information. She added that the cadre is also going to reexamine the second and third levels of this course to see if they are necessary or if the curriculum can exist with just one level. Whatever information is added to the course will eventually be added to the

Fire Officer curriculum. Chief Petty envisions that the stand-alone class will continue as an option for students who do not pursue the Fire Officer 3 certification.

After this discussion, Chief Richwine asked for a motion to approve the Fire Officer 3A curriculum.

**Motion:** *Devin Flannery moved to accept the motion. Richard Beckman seconded the motion.*

**Action:** *All members voted unanimously.*

## **B. Fire Officer 4 (2020) Delivery Model (Information Only)**

Presenter: Chief Bisbee

Chief Bisbee explained the proposed model for the new Fire Officer 4 curriculum. Chief Bisbee feels that today's curriculum has lost opportunities for fire officer candidates from across the state to meet in-person and interact with each other. He has noticed that high-level certifications have had decreasing numbers of candidates. For example, the Executive Chief Fire Officer program does not have many instructors and has few class deliveries. The Fire Chief program has only had 43 certifications over the past 25 years.

Chief Bisbee feels that the solution is to create a pilot program for Fire Officer 4, where chiefs from across the state will form a cohort and review the curriculum with a cadre put together by SFT. This cohort will meet in person at various locations over the course of one year. Chief Bisbee feels that this collaboration would increase morale, the number of Fire Officer certifications, and the number of Fire Officer 4 instructors. He also believes that this will strengthen the quality of the program.

The purpose of this curriculum is to create a self-refreshing cadre which reflects new student voices and creates opportunities for consistent input on the Fire Officer 4 program. Students who go through the program would eventually be able to participate in the cadre and implement feedback from recent students and working chief officers. Chief Bisbee's goal is to have a strong network for fire chiefs throughout California. Reflecting on his own experience, Chief Bisbee said that many new chiefs tend to struggle alone and emphasized the importance of building a community of support.

Richard Beckman asked a question about the correlation between the Fire Officer 4 and the National Fire Academy (NFA)'s Executive Fire Officer (EFO) curriculum. He says that he sees a lot of job openings that ask for EFO certifications and not Fire Officer 4. Chief Bisbee answered that the difference between the two programs is that the Fire Officer program is based on professional qualifications while the NFA program focuses on what they believe a fire chief needs to succeed. Chief Bisbee wants to create a California Fire Academy standard that focuses on relevant, current issues.

Bret Davidson expressed his concern over this program not being able to find an audience. He feels that it lacks incentive for most potential participants and points out that SFT's Fire Chief and Fire Officer 4 certifications are not mandatory for many fire chiefs. There are many people who can get officer positions through the NFA program. Bret Davidson feels that there are not enough fire chiefs who will be able to take the time away from work to earn their certification when it is not required for their job. He

stated that the NFA program is successful because this program is a requirement for most executive fire officer positions and does not require participants to already be a fire chief. Bret agrees that there needs to be a forum for fire chiefs and thinks that CFCA would be a good place for Chiefs to network and discuss improvements to SFT programs. Chief Bisbee said that this was a great point and thanked Bret Davidson for his input.

Devin Flannery asked Chief Bisbee a question about the long-term goals for this program. He said that he is currently in the EFO program and finds a lot of value in it. He asked if the goal is for the Fire Officer 4 program to eventually move towards a cohort-based program instead of classroom-based instruction. Chief Bisbee responded that he would not be able to answer this question until he sees the results of the pilot program. He added that it is important for the people currently working in the fire service to provide input on what model is most relevant.

Todd Braverman added that Cal-JAC would be happy to support the Fire Officer 4 program by providing a host site for the cohort or providing meeting time at the Cal-JAC biannual conference. Chief Bisbee said that the Fire Officer 4 cadre meetings would likely occur outside of the conference but that the cohort could potentially meet at Cal-JAC facilities. He also thanked Todd Braverman for his support.

### **C. Fire Fighter 1A & 2A Structural (Information Only)**

Presenters: Chief Fowler and Brandon Erickson

Chief Fowler discussed important updates from the Fire Fighter 1A and 2A Staff Report. SFT will release this curriculum on July 1, 2025. The Fire Fighter 1 and 2 curricula from 2019 will retire on July 1, 2026. This retirement date was established based on input from accredited regional training programs and CFTDA, who asked for a longer transition between the two curriculum models.

There are numerous Fire Fighter 1 changes listed in the CTS Guides section of the Staff Report. Chief Fowler asked that the committee read through this extensive list. She added that SFT staff can put together a summary of these changes by the next STEAC meeting, if the committee would like a summary. This summary was not already included in the Staff Report because it would have made the document significantly longer.

There are also a few Fire Fighter 2 CTS Guide changes. Seven sections were modified with clarifying language. Chief Fowler stated that these changes were implemented to correct content and to allow students to better perform the JPR.

Chief Fowler also described structural changes to Fire Fighter 1A. The cadre increased the hours from 264 to 266 hours to accommodate new course content. An awareness lecture on diversity, equity, and inclusion was added to section 1.3. A hazards lecture on safe operations around electrical storage systems has been added to section 2.10. Lastly, the cadre added a JPR demonstration requirement to the thermal imagers lecture in section 3.9. This demonstration requirement is reflected in the certification task book. Students will be given a thermal imager and a scenario where they must

identify victims in locations with low visibility. SFT also edited the course plan to reflect the CTS guide changes. There were no changes to Fire Fighter 2's hours or JPRs.

Todd Braverman asked if the previously discussed behavioral health and cancer awareness topics were already included in the 266 Fire Fighter 1A hours. Chief Fowler confirmed that this was embedded into the curriculum hours.

Chief Fowler then yielded the floor to Brandon Erickson from SFT. Brandon shared a PowerPoint presentation with the committee, showing notable changes to the Fire Fighter 1 and 2 certification process. These changes are also captured in the Implementation Plan and Staff Report.

The changes are listed below in order of the PowerPoint slides:

- Implementation Timeline: SFT proposed a transition period of 12 months, which will occur from July 2025 to July 2026. The 2019 and 2024 editions of the Fire Fighter 1 and 2 curricula would run concurrently for one year. The 2019 curriculum is set to retire at the end of this transition period, in July 2026. July 2027 will be the deadline for all 2019 Fire Fighter 1 and 2 examination retakes. This would give students who attended a certification exam in June 2026 one year to complete any necessary retakes.
- Fire Fighter 1 and 2 Exam Process: It has been proposed that candidates will be allowed 1 initial exam attempt and 2 reattempts for both cognitive and skills exams. This would make the number of attempts the same for both exam types. The exam retakes must be completed at their same academy, within 30 days of the original test date. This change is in line with the exam policies at many other states. This new timeframe would allow SFT to retire old curriculum more quickly.
- Fire Fighter 1 and 2 Test Banks: SFT is also proposing two separate test banks for the Fire Fighter 1 examinations – an IFSTA test bank and a Jones & Bartlett test bank. For the 2019 curriculum, the cadre combined material from both test banks, but there were inconsistencies between the two sources. This often led to less-than-desirable test items. The separate test banks would allow academies to pick their preferred textbook and its corresponding exam. However, all students within the academy must take the same test. Brandon also noted that IFSTA made several changes to their textbooks. Academies that use the IFSTA testing materials would need to buy three textbooks to cover the essentials, Hazmat FRO, and Wildland topics. IFSTA no longer makes a Wildland textbook, so academies using IFSTA would have to buy that book from Jones and Bartlett.

Brandon acknowledged that moving to two separate test banks is a radical change. However, this idea was suggested repeatedly during the test bank validation process and is supported by the cadre.

- Certificate Updates: Brandon Erickson explained the different certificates that applicants receive with their Fire Fighter 1 and Fire Fighter 2 certifications. For Fire Fighter 2 certifications, individuals who graduate from a California Fire Academy receive a certificate with IFSAC and Pro Board seals. Individuals who received these seals from another state and apply for reciprocity would get the



same certification but without the seals. This is because an individual cannot receive dual IFSAC and Pro Board accreditation. This design makes it easier for hiring managers to tell if a candidate has received their official seals through a CA Academy or from another state.

Using the Fire Fighter 2 model, SFT plans to simplify the certificates for Fire Fighter 1 academy graduates. Currently, graduates receive three certificates with IFSAC and Pro Board seals: one for Fire Fighter 1, one for Hazmat, and one for Wildland training. The graduate also receives a fourth CA Fire Fighter certificate without seals. However, many employers received this fourth certificate and believed that their employee did not have official seals and needed additional training. To eliminate this confusion, SFT is planning to eliminate the fourth certificate. SFT will only issue the other three certificates together, once a student has completed their Fire Fighter 1 requirements. The goal is to simplify the hiring process for fire departments.

- Exam Updates: SFT plans to change how Fire Fighter exam records appear on Acadis. The Firefighter 1A, 1B, and 1C exams will appear on one record on Acadis, rather than three separate records. This would make it easier to review a student's eligibility for certification and exam retakes.
- Fire Fighter 2 Certification Fees: SFT is proposing that Fire Fighter 2 applicants pay one \$150 fee upfront with their application. Applicants would no longer have to submit separate exam and task book payments. Students would pay the \$150 fee with their exam registration. Instead of mailing in their task book, students would upload their document to a Webform on the SFT website. This is meant to streamline the payment process and to speed up the certification issuance timeline.
- Skills Exam Results: SFT plans to post skills exam results through the SFT User Portal. This change would eliminate the need for a separate exam file and speed up the timeline for when students receive their test results. This change would also allow for flexible payment options and apply to all certification exams. The goal is for this to be implemented in July 2025. However, SFT is waiting for Acadis to add this functionality to the user portal. Because of this, it is possible that this change could be delayed to January 2026, or even July 2026.

After sharing the PowerPoint slides, Brandon Erickson opened the floor for questions.

Justin Chaplin asked how SFT decided on a 30-day window for exam retakes. He explained that this change feels sudden and believes that it will be a challenge for some organizations to get students from across the state to return for retakes. He also was curious about the impact of this new deadline on ARTPs. Brandon Erickson responded that this timeline is in line with the policies of other states and that the purpose of this is to keep students from trying to retake exams at a different academy. Chief Petty also clarified the difference between exam reattempts and remediation. After students take an exam, they have 30 days to reattempt it. However, if they need to go through remediation and redo an entire module, they still have a year to complete their three attempts within the same academy.

Chief Greg Belk, from CAL FIRE, also asked about the ARTP timeline language. He is concerned that a thirty-day reattempt limit would be difficult for ARTPs to accomplish logistically. He suggested changing the wording to say that students must complete their testing at the same academy within their training cycle. Brandon Erickson pointed out that SFT only receives examination dates and does not know the exact training dates for academies. (Depending on the academy, a training cycle can last weeks, months, or even up to a year). As a result, the academies would have to manage their exam retake timelines. But ultimately, the intention is that exam retakes occur within the same academy and training window. The thirty-days was added as a potential timeframe.

Donavan Lacy inquired about open testing and how this new timeline would affect alternate deliveries. Chief Petty added that this would not really impact alternate delivery. She elaborated that he would just need to accommodate for those exam retakes within his training event. For example, if his event occurred over a weekend, he would need to add time at the end of each day to allow for retakes, if needed.

Donavan Lacy also asked a follow up question about the test bank. He asked if he would need to host an open testing event for the IFSTA test bank and a separate open testing event for the Jones & Bartlett test bank. Brandon confirmed that yes, that is what would be required under this new model.

Chief Greg Belk asked if certification diplomas will signify if a Fire Fighter 1 or Fire Fighter 2 certification was granted via course reciprocity. Brandon responded that the certifications do not indicate this. Rather, it is assumed that all Fire Fighter 1 and 2 diplomas with IFSAC and Pro Board seals are granted by the State of California. Chief Belk expressed that the hiring processes would be easier if applicant diplomas demonstrated that they'd received reciprocity. Brandon Erickson added that the Fire Fighter 1 diplomas could get confused, since there are many possible diploma types and no-seal diplomas. This would have to be simplified first before creating reciprocity diplomas.

## **VIII. State Fire Training Updates**

### **A. Staffing Update**

Presenter: Chief Fowler

Chief Fowler introduced Natasha Cocke, who is SFT's new Office Technician and STEAC coordinator.

### **B. Blueprint 2030**

Presenter: Chief Fowler

Chief Fowler thanked all meeting attendees for participating in the Blueprint 2030 process. Blueprint 2030 is in the final stages of the approval process. SFT is working concurrently with CAL FIRE Communications on a digital publication for the SFT Strategic Plan. Brandon Erickson and the IT Department are also working on a

webpage addition that will allow stakeholders to visualize the progress towards these initiatives.

### **C. Title 19, 2025 Procedures Manual**

Presenter: Chief Fowler

Chief Fowler stated that the updated Title 19 procedures manual was approved by Chief Berlant and will move forward with the legal team in the coming weeks. She thanked Chief Petty for her work on this document and for editing over 541 pages.

Chief Fowler also shared some budget updates with the committee. SFT needed a 4.97 million allocation and will be receiving 4.48 million. This will result in an anticipated half a million-dollar shortfall next year. SFT will know more about the impact of this budget change when the state announces its budget this afternoon. It is likely that SFT will lose half of the vacant deputy positions and will not be able to hire additional personnel. However, Chief Fowler stated that the department will be solvent. She is optimistic that SFT will be able to write a budget change proposal and get those personnel positions back in the future.

Lastly, Chief Fowler added that the SFT Annual Report is now published on SFT's website. It was published in December 2024. This document summarizes SFT's improvements, growth, and hard work from the past year.

## **IX. Public Comment**

No Public Comments.

## **X. Roundtable/Announcements/Correspondence**

### **A. FIREScope White Paper – Technical Rescue Tech**

Presenter: Chief Fowler

Chief Fowler explained that SFT received a white paper from FIREScope. This letter requested that STEAC direct SFT to implement a policy change. This proposed that SFT pay for FIREScope's designated instructor cadre to travel and deliver in-person curriculum rollouts. Chief Fowler added that SFT does not have the budget allocation or authority to provide this to FIREScope. Curriculum rollout changes would need to be decided by the cadre. Chief Fowler then invited FIREScope's liaison, Scott Lewis, to share his perspective on the letter.

Scott Lewis explained that FIREScope was requesting a funding stream to cover the cost of technical rescue training. FIREScope now recognizes that this request is outside the scope of SFT. Scott Lewis wants to be able to take a correct process back to FIREScope so the cadre can understand where they should direct these requests. Chief Fowler said that she will connect with Scott Lewis after the meeting so they can establish language explaining what is under SFT's authority and how SFT they can support the cadre.

Scott Lewis asked a couple follow up questions about the curriculum rollout process. He asked the committee if there is a JPR threshold that triggers a virtual rollout instead of an in-person curriculum rollout. What is going to be the best way to get new information to cadres and new instructors. Chief Fowler responded that there is not a JPR threshold that influences the type of curriculum rollout. She added that the curriculum process is fluid and varies depending on the course and cadre. Chief Fowler and Scott Lewis plan to connect outside of the meeting to discuss the best way to provide information to FIREScope.

Bret Davidson asked Scott Lewis if FIREScope has a chain of command for questions before they are brought to SFT. According to Bret Davidson, CAL OES, the organization above FIREScope, was not aware of the letter to SFT. Scott Lewis said that CAL OES is in their chain of command. He added that FIREScope sent the letter hoping that this topic would be brought up as a discussion point.

Chief Greg Belk from CAL FIRE commented that in-person rollouts are necessary for some curriculum. Scott Lewis added that FIREScope's goal was to find a better way to conduct curriculum rollout. This organization has a lot of new members who were unclear on how to differentiate the roles of FIREScope and SFT.

## **B. Announcements**

Presenter: Chief Richwine

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

Todd Braverman discussed Cal-JAC's upcoming EMT academies and training programs. Cal-JAC's first San Diego academy will have 24 graduates and will be followed by another academy this summer. They also have an upcoming EMT graduation in Elk Grove on January 29th. 32 individuals in their Los Angeles paramedic academy are also starting orientation at clinical sites. Todd announced that Cal-JAC is partnering with Sac Metro to start a local paramedic academy on February 7, 2025. This is the first hybrid Cal-JAC academy and will focus on upgrading existing EMT members of departments in the Sacramento area. The goal of this program is to mitigate paramedic shortages and provide free opportunities for employees to complete paramedic training.

Bret Davidson from Cal Chiefs – Training Officer Section (South), shared that they are preparing for the Training Officers symposium in March. He said that the organization is grateful for SFT's support and that things are going well for training officers in Northern and Southern California. Their resources are currently spread across the state, with many members fighting the fires in San Diego and Los Angeles.

Peter Cacossa from CFTDA (North) commented that there have been changes in CFTDA's leadership. He is excited to work with Richard Beckman and to learn through his participation in STEAC.

Richard Beckman from CFTDA shared that they are working with the California Math Initiative to grant credit for prior learning. The goal is to create opportunities for fire

fighters to earn community college credit for their previous work. This would allow fire fighters who were unable to attend college to earn a degree and gain access to promotional opportunities. They are currently focused on creating a Wildland Firefighting associate's degree for fire fighters with corresponding experience and certificates. CFTDA is working with colleges across the state to create one template that community colleges can use to grant units in a consistent manner. They are also working to find a funding solution for students. Currently, FAFSA will only pay for the hours required for certificate, as determined by the state. Since many firefighter academies go beyond the minimum hours required, many students do not receive enough financial aid. Lastly, CFTDA will have their next meeting on February 20, 2025 at the College of the Desert.

FDAC's Geoff Belyea stated that the organization is preparing for the upcoming legislative session. Many districts are currently supporting fires down south and posing questions about water systems.

Justin Chaplin, from CAL FIRE Training, has been working on getting a site evaluation for the Attwater training center. CAL FIRE Training is also working on implementing the 66-hour work week. Justin Chaplin will also participate in the test bank validation process in Oklahoma the week after this meeting.

Cat Frazer shared that CAL FIRE had 289 courses and 4,856 students. This does not include the training completed at the regional level. They are also implementing the change from a 72 to 66-hour work week as well as the addition of new job positions and classifications. With CAL FIRE's strong growth, they will need to provide training for new classifications. Cat Frazer then asked if she could yield the floor to Chief Greg Belk for more CAL FIRE information. Chief Richwine approved.

Chief Greg Belk described how CAL FIRE is moving towards a 66-hour work week. He said that the union wants to decrease this to 56 hours. He has slowly tried to convert CAL FIRE procedures to mirror those of local governments and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) process. CAL FIRE plans to continue its growth by hiring 2500 new employees and expanding their training centers over the next five years. Chief Belk says that he appreciates the support of the State Fire Marshal and STEAC.

Donovan Lacy echoed Bret Davidson's announcement about the Cal Chiefs Training Symposium. He also told the committee that he has had a lot of great communication with colleges in northern California, like Shasta College and Cal Fire Redding Training Center. He concluded his update by expressing appreciation for SFT's understanding and help.

Devin Flannery shared that Cal Chiefs and FIRESCOPE are hosting a Fire Operations Technology summit from January 28-30, 2025 in Redlands, California. He noted that he has received information stating that Senator Hurtado has expressed interest in reapproaching the SD577 bill which would provide funding to cover the costs of the Fire Fighter 1 applications for entry level, community college candidates.

Brian Marshall updated STEAC on the Southern California fire relief efforts. At the time of the meeting there were over 2100 fire fighters sent to Southern California. Brian Marshall shared that he is currently working to get more resources sent to the fires in

Los Angeles and San Diego. CAL FIRE also put in an EMAC order for 200 out-of-state engines. He also shared that the governor's budget release (on January 10<sup>th</sup>) would be pivotal for Cal OES and other state agencies, like CAL FIRE.

Jason Hosea shared that CSFA is focusing on supporting training for volunteer fire departments. They are also partnering with the EMS Corp and Public Works Alliance to develop and provide EMT training to under-resourced young adults. CSFA will also host two upcoming training academies in Northern California and Southern California.

Scott Lewis shared that FIREScope started a 56-person academy in Sacramento. They are also preparing for their first single-roll ambulance academy in February 2025.

Chief Richwine concluded this portion of the meeting by asking the committee to join him in a moment of silence in honor of the fire fighters currently battling the fires in Southern California.

## **XI. Future Meeting Dates**

**April 11, 2025; July 11, 2025; October 10, 2025**

Presenter: Chief Richwine

## **XII. Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 11:12 AM.