



DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION
OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL
STATE FIRE TRAINING
P.O. Box 944246
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Date: April 10, 2026

To: Statewide Training and Education Advisory Committee
State Board of Fire Services

From: Caryn Petty, Deputy State Fire Marshal III (Specialist)

SUBJECT/AGENDA ACTION ITEM:

Victor Valley College
Accredited Regional Training Program (ARTP) Conditional Accreditation

Recommended Actions:

Recommend Victor Valley College be accredited as an Accredited Regional Training Program (ARTP) in the State Fire Training (SFT) system for a Conditional Accreditation period of one (1) year.

Background Information:

An accreditation Site Evaluation was conducted on February 5, 2026, at the Victor Valley College facility in Apple Valley, CA. The Site Evaluation was conducted by Division Chief Chris Fowler and Deputy State Fire Marshal III (Specialist) Caryn Petty, State Fire Training, with Vice President of Instruction McKenzie Tarango and Coordinator Jose Aredondo serving as hosts and representatives.

The Victor Valley College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) was reviewed and discussed, with requirements for supplemental documentation noted. The documentation has since been received and meets the requirements set forth by State Fire Training policies and procedures. The SAR review was followed by an evaluation of all classrooms and training facilities, with an opportunity to review training course records and the equipment complement.

Analysis/Summary of Issue:

An evaluation of the training facilities verified sufficient classroom space and a fully functioning, compliant training facility, complete with all necessary props, tools, equipment, and vehicles to support a fire academy training program. The program utilizes the current Fire Fighter curriculum and has all the necessary materials to deliver a successful Certification Examination. The training grounds feature California Fire Code-compliant classrooms equipped with enhanced audiovisual equipment and necessary learning aids. All academy cadets are provided with sufficient study materials, devices, and equipment to support their success within the academy training. Several Registered Instructors and Evaluators participate in the academy instruction and Certification Exam delivery, making the program self-sustaining. The program will focus on hosting additional registered

SFT courses in conjunction with cooperating and neighboring agencies. All student records are maintained in a compliant and confidential manner in accordance with SFT requirements.

Area(s) of accreditation focus for growth and improvement:

- Consistent participation at the California Fire Technology Director Association's meetings is recommended to continue fostering the growing relationships in the region for enhanced networking and partnership opportunities.
- The current staff is at its capacity, having tasked existing staff with excessive workloads beyond the Academy delivery that would be offset with additional resources and personnel. There is an identified need for additional full-time faculty and clerical personnel to reduce the workload of existing staff and ensure the Academy's thorough delivery, free of peripheral assignments, tasks, and duties.
- SFT recommends additional stationary locker rooms, shower facilities, and extractors to accommodate a safe and healthy learning environment. It is recommended that cleansing stations and shower facilities be expanded to ensure the safety of students and instructors.
- Exploration of Certification Exam progression is recommended, including digitization of skills sheets, video recording, expansion of additional Exam offerings to include Fire and Emergency Services 1 and 2, and Alternate Candidate exam events.
- The program shall continue to explore outreach and recruitment opportunities for expanded diversification of the instructor cadre roster. Ongoing outreach through fire camps and community events is recommended to support continued diversification efforts.

In compliance with the California Code of Regulations, Title 19, and the *SFT Procedures Manual*, Accreditation Process, Section 3.1.6(E), a one-year Conditional Accreditation may be granted in lieu of a full five-year Reaccreditation. This period will support continued growth, sustainability, and compliance for the Victor Valley College ARTP. The College will be revisited in early 2027 for ARTP review and reaccreditation consideration.

State Fire Training recommends recognition of Victor Valley College as an Accredited Regional Training Program in the State Fire Training system for an Initial Accreditation period of one (1) year, pending reevaluation in 2027.

[Attachment: Victor Valley College ARTP Conditional Accreditation 2026]



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Recommended Actions:

Recommend Victor Valley College be accredited as an Accredited Regional Training Program (ARTP) in the State Fire Training (SFT) system for a Conditional Accreditation period of one (1) year.

Background Information:

Per the Victor Valley College Accredited Regional Training Program (ARTP) Site Evaluation conducted on February 5, 2026, the following document outlines the requirements for the one-year Conditional Accreditation as set forth by State Fire Training (SFT). A thorough review of the Victor Valley College ARTP served as the basis for the program review.

Analysis/Summary of Issue:

Conditional Accreditation requires the following items to be completed by January 15, 2027, to ensure compliance with State Fire Training regulatory statute and established procedures (California Code of Regulations, Title 19, and the *SFT Procedures Manual, Accreditation Process*, Section 3.1.6(E)).

- ❑ An updated Self-Assessment Report (SAR) shall be drafted and submitted to SFT no later than January 15, 2027, detailing program progress with the items noted during the February 2026 Site Evaluation. This may build upon the previously submitted SAR but shall clearly identify any/all changes, progress, issues, challenges, or other items necessary for complete review of the proposed ARTP.
- ❑ SFT requires a complete list of procured academy program design items, including, but not limited to, equipment, apparatus, tools, instructional materials, etc. This shall comply with

the Fire Fighter Academy equipment and supplies list(s) in adherence with the *SFT Procedures Manual*, IFSAC/Pro Board, and the CCR, Title 19.

- ❑ Victor Valley College shall provide SFT with a complete training budget and business plan, including current and projected expenditures, allotted program funding, grant funding, etc. The provided documentation shall detail the projected budget for 2027-2032 accreditation cycle as well as the program development funding to date.
- ❑ Victor Valley College shall provide SFT the complete and finalized ARTP Fire Fighter Academy curriculum. This shall include complete course outlines, student and instructor manuals, and all supplemental student materials.
 - This shall include any/all amendments to the provided 2026 SAR, including prerequisite course(s) and application/selection processes.
- ❑ Victor Valley College shall host or co-host no less than two (2) regionally offered SFT courses by December 1, 2026. This shall include, at minimum, one (1) California Fire Service Training and Education System (CFSTES) and one (1) Fire Service Training and Education Program (FSTEP). It is proposed that Victor Valley College coordinate with neighboring ARTPs and agencies to identify the curriculum that is needed by the region (Company Officer, Driver/Operator, Instructor 1/2, etc.).
- ❑ Victor Valley College shall demonstrate active recruitment of diversified Registered Instructors and Lead/Skills Evaluators that are reflective of the region and the College's neighboring fire agencies.
- ❑ Victor Valley College shall provide a complete report detailing the staffing and administrative support necessary for program success. Any deficiencies shall be identified with a notated plan for correction.
 - Detail appropriate and adequate clerical and administrative personnel necessary to support the complete delivery of the Fire Fighter Academy. Because the current clerical staff member may be assigned to other programs, the College shall detail the means by which appropriate clerical and administrative support will be attained for the ARTP. Provide details regarding succession planning, hiring of additional support staff, etc.
 - Detail appropriate and adequate full-time Fire Science Technology and Academy coordination personnel. Individual roles and responsibilities shall be identified with information that supports complete oversight of the program. Full-time instructors, interim or adjunct assignments, and/or part-time personnel are not an appropriate means of ARTP oversight.
 - Detail current Fire Science Technology Program instructional staff, full- and part-time. The ARTP will be operating separately from the Fire Science program, and appropriate and adequate staffing shall be designated for each. While some crossover is permitted and encouraged, the ARTP is not intended to serve in multiple College instructional roles.
 - Victor Valley College shall provide a complete list of Fire Fighter Academy instructors and their SFT Registered Instructor qualifications. The list shall identify adequate staffing for Academy curriculum delivery, with contingency plans for substitute instructors and/or schedule flexibility in the event of an absence, vacancy, etc.
 - Victor Valley College shall provide a complete list of Registered Lead and Skills Evaluators. This list shall designate adequate staffing for the capstone IFSAC/Pro Board Fire Fighter Certification Exam(s), with a contingency plan in place should an absence, vacancy, etc. occur.
- ❑ Victor Valley College shall convene a Fire Advisory Committee meeting biannually during the Conditional Accreditation period and provide an invitation and documented meeting minutes to SFT upon Site Re-Evaluation. This Committee shall be comprised of college

administration/management and other appropriate staff, program staff and instructors, regional entities, and others as appropriate, to identify the training and educational needs within the Fire Science Program, Fire Fighter Academy, and any/all collaborative training ventures.

- ❑ Victor Valley College shall demonstrate active participation in the greater SFT system by maintaining active correspondence with SFT personnel and its designated liaison(s), attending regional training officer and CFTDA quarterly meetings, and working diligently to adhere to the requirements.

Victor Valley College, as an Accredited Regional Training Program (ARTP), is solely responsible for ensuring ongoing compliance with all State Fire Training (SFT) statutes, regulations, and procedures, including California Code of Regulations, Title 19, and the SFT Procedures Manual. As outlined in the October 16, 2025, demand correspondence, the previously identified deficiencies—related to instructor qualifications, instructor-to-student ratios, use of approved skill sheets, and overall program safety and integrity—were the direct responsibility of the College’s administration and program oversight. While the College has taken corrective action to address these issues, the volume and nature of the findings required significant SFT intervention and oversight.

Moving forward, Victor Valley College is expected to demonstrate consistent adherence to established standards without reliance on alternate means and methods (variances). For a period of one (1) year, the College shall operate strictly within the requirements of the SFT Procedures Manual and applicable regulations. Continued participation in the SFT system is contingent upon the College’s ability to maintain compliance, ensure program integrity, and prevent recurrence of the deficiencies previously identified. Failure to demonstrate sustained compliance may result in additional enforcement action, including impacts to accreditation status.

The Victor Valley College Accredited Regional Training Program (ARTP) will be recommended for a one-year Conditional Accreditation to the Statewide Training and Education Advisory Committee (STEAC) in April 2026 and the Statewide Board of Fire Service in May 2026. Upon review and approval by these governing bodies, continued recognition of Victor Valley College in the SFT system is contingent upon compliance with the requirements. Any failure to comply may result in the revocation of the Conditional Accreditation.