
AUTOMATIC EXTINGUISHING SYSTEMS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – JULY 16, 2025, 9AM-12PM PST

Hybrid Committee Meeting



Meeting Location:

Office of the State Fire Marshal
5th Floor, OSFM McKittrick Conference Room 512
37800 Kilroy Airport Way, Long Beach CA 90806

1. CALL TO ORDER

A. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Brice Bennett at 9:05 AM. Chairperson Bennett reviewed Bagley-Keene requirements for committee members, meeting etiquette, and when the public attendees could make comments.

B. Roll Call/Determine Quorum

Roll call was conducted by Alexander Rapphahn, and it was determined that a quorum (14 of 19) of members was present. One Member arrived late.

Members Present:

Jason McBroom, Alpine Fire Protection District
Jose Colin, Suisun City Fire Department
Randy Roxson, Sprinkler Fitter Association of California
David Karrick, California American Fire Sprinkler Association (CAFSA)
James Feld, University of California, Berkeley (retired)
Edie Wade, Brooks Equipment Company
James Knowles, Amerex
Allen Quirk, National Association of Fire Equipment Distributors (NAFED)
Wayne Weisz, American Fire Sprinkler Association (AFSA)
Vahe Zohrabian, California Fire Protection Coalition
Matthew McCarrick, California Association of Life Safety & Fire Equipment (CALSAFE)
Shelley Merrell, Integrated Fire & Safety
Richard Eyssallenne, Black Bird Fire Protection
Jeff Dixon, Sprinkler Fitters Local 483
Amber Barrios, Associated Compliance & Training

Members Absent:

Ken Kwong, Sacramento City Fire Department
Peter Hulin, National Fire Sprinkler Association (NFSA)
Chad Richardson, Los Angeles Fire Department
Travis Tyler, California State University

Office of State Fire Marshal Staff:

Andrew Henning, Assistant Deputy Director, OSFM
Brice Bennett, Committee Chairperson and Acting Division Chief for Engineering and Investigations, OSFM

Jeffery Schwartz, Deputy State Fire Marshal III Supervisor, OSFM
Patricia Rock, Committee Co-Chairperson and AES Program Coordinator, OSFM
Terence Liszewski, FE Program Coordinator, OSFM
Cortney Walker, OSFM
Chris Dale, OSFM
Alexander Rapphahn, OSFM
Thomas Setnan, OSFM

Public Guests:

Steven Miles, Local 483
David Lewandowski, Jorgensen Company and CalSafe
Randy Scovill, CSU Office of Fire Safety
Brian Hutto, Local 669 JATC
Earl Treadaway UC Berkeley (Retired)
Jacqueline Wilmot, Brooks Equipment Company
Jon Saia, Fire Safety First
Kim Stocking, Andservice101
Robert Vasquez, Code Red Fire and CalSafe
Shawn Gray, Lund Pearson McLaughlin Fire Protection Systems
Alicia Karrick, Greater Bay Area Chapter AFSA
Shawn Arballo, Local 709

C. Introductions

All non-committee members introduced themselves.

D. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes – (October 16, 2025)

Chairperson Brice Bennett asked for approval for the April 16th, 2025, meeting.
Member Randy Roxson requested that their association be changed from Local 709 to Sprinkler Fitter Association of California

It was moved by Matthew McCarrick to approve the minutes with the correction; motion seconded by Member Vahe Zohrabian. Motion was approved unanimously.

E. Announcements and Division Updates

Chairperson Brice Bennett stated that there was no update on Fire Guard Corp v. California State Fire Marshal et al. Chief Henning added that it was currently with the judge.

Patricia Rock informed the committee of the current 2025 renewal numbers. 2 trainees, 687 apprentices, and 2,719 sprinkler fitters. She reminded the committee that late fees were in effect and addressed two of the recurring issues with renewal applications. Photos for the new sprinkler fitter cards must follow the guidelines listed in the application instructions and CEUs are due at the time of application submission. Any questions can be sent to aes@fire.ca.gov.

Member Amber Barrios asked if photos can be reused or if a new photo will be required each year. Cortney Walker replied that new photos will be required each year and Chairperson Brice Bennett added that pictures will not carry over between renewals.

2. OLD BUSINESS

A. Proposed Regulations Update

Chairperson Brice Bennett informed the committee that the new AES fee increases went into effect July 1st, and any renewals submitted after that will be on the new fee schedule.

Chief Andrew Henning stated that the program was going to pause the ITM certification process pending the outcome of the Fire Guard lawsuit. Once they know the outcome, they will start to put that process back into motion.

Member Jim Feld ask what lawsuit kept being brought up and what it was about. Chairperson Brice Bennet replied that it was the Fire Guard Corp v. California State Fire Marshal et al lawsuit and Chief Andrew Henning added that it was regarding the validity of the sprinkler fitter certification program. It went to trial a few months ago and it currently is with the judge to make a ruling on it, and they can't comment more on it.

Member David Karrick asked for confirmation that the lawsuit was regarding the sprinkler fitter program and not the ITM certification process, but the ITM certification process would be placed on hold pending the outcome of the suit. Chairperson Brice Bennet confirmed that was correct.

B. NFPA 25 Work Group Update

Patricia Rock stated that the work group is comparing the California 2013 edition to the 2026 edition to identify which amendments now the same in the 2026 edition and which would need to be carried over from the 2013 edition. Each member of the work group has taken a chapter to compare the editions, and they plan to have something to present to the committee in October.

Member Vahe Zohrabian asked if this workgroup was to create a new NFPA 25 California edition or adopt the NFPA 25 2026 edition. Patricia Rock replied that the work group was formed to assist in the adoption of NFPA 25 2026 edition with 2 pages of amendments to be added to title 19. Member Vahe Zohrabian asked if there was a timeline for this. Member and Work Group Leader David Karrick replied that they are looking at what is currently in code with the 2013 edition, comparing it to the 2026 draft. Identifying what is what has already been changed, and what would they potentially have to make amendments for. Then the group intends to bring that document back to the larger group in October, so that they all can look at it and say how many potential amendments would be required.

Member Randy Roxson which committee members are in the group. Chairperson Brice Bennett replied that David Karrick, Steven Miles, Jason McBroom, Shawn Arballo, and Chad Richardson are the members in the group.

C. IO Predict Work Group Update

Patricia Rock stated that members are meeting with IO Predict, reviewing questions for the sprinkler fitter exam and providing data to create additional questions for the test bank. They are also reviewing the exam questions to ensure they meet the Knowledge

Skills and Abilities (KSAs) required of a journeyman sprinkler fitter based upon the survey they sent out. The group is also working on creating 4 possible answers to each question. They should be ready to move onto the next stage of the process soon.

Member Vahe Zohrabian asked if the new exam was also going to incorporate ITM questions. Chairperson Brice Bennet replied that that is a question for the work group and IO predict if ITM questions are being added to the new sprinkler fitter exam or being set aside for a separate ITM exam.

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. Renewal Period Proposed Change

Renewal Period Proposed Change to a 365 Day License or Certification

This topic was tabled until the next meeting due to Member Peter Hulin's absence.

B. CEU Proposal (1.0 unit required annually at time of renewal)

Member Vahe Zohrabian stated that the purpose of continuing education was continuous education, not waiting until the last minute to complete the required CEUs. He also noted that sprinkler fitters had altered their old CEU certificates and submitted them. Member Amber Barrios stated that she had also heard about sprinkler fitters changing dates on CEU certificates. Member Amber Barrios suggested a way of countering this would be to have the approved CEU providers send a list of the certificates issued to the OSFM so the certificates submitted by the fitters could be verified. Vahe Zohrabian suggested the use of automation to assist with verification of CEUs and that an annual CEU requirement would prevent sprinkler fitters from waiting until a month before their CEUs are due to start them. Member David Karrick stated that they were in favor of continuing education being more regular, not just every 3rd year. He believes that when the initial idea was put into practice, they thought that people would not do all 30 hours of CEUs in one chunk right before they are due but in practice that is what is happening. He has also heard about people faking CEUs and going to an annual CEU requirement would make the certificates easier to police and possibly generate some revenue to make up for the extra work required by the staff.

Public Guest Steven Miles stated that the 483 union has multiple CEU classes that are longer than 10 hours and they don't want to penalize sprinkler fitters for taking a class longer than 10 hours when 10 hours is all that is required. The goal of CEUs is to encourage sprinkler fitters to better themselves. Requiring 10 hours annually would discourage sprinkler fitters from taking the longer CEU classes because any training after 10 hours would not count for anything unless it was able to roll over to the next year's CEU requirement. Something would need to be put into place so that people who take longer classes are not penalized. Public Guest Steven Miles added that there will always be people who try to alter the CEU certificates, but the Union is available if CEU certificates from them need to be verified.

Member Wayne Weisz stated they agreed with David Karrick and Steven Miles points. More research and discussion on a 10-hour annual CEU is required because doing 30 hours of CEUs in a week does not meet the intent of continuous education. Certification verification with the provider like Amber Barrios suggested would also be good.

Chairperson Brice Bennett acknowledged that the different entities in the industry have a large amount of CEU classes and asked if there was a way for those providers to serialize CEU certificates. Member Amber Barrios stated that the ACT program already does that, they keep an excel file that could be shared with the staff. Member Vahe Zohrabian stated that the OSFM could require all CEU providers to send in proof of completion of CEU classes. That way the CEUs would come directly from the provider and not from the fitters or their bosses. Chairperson Brice Bennett replied conceptually that it is a good idea, but the OSFM requiring anything will take time because the regulatory process requires a fiscal impact study to ensure there are not any undue costs. More discussion on this topic with the providers on the committee to come up with something that would work with most if not all groups were needed. Any large changes like what was suggested take funding and time.

Public Guest Kim Stocking stated that when CEUs were first implemented, an excel spreadsheet form was created and sent to CEU providers for them to fill in. The form was returned and uploaded to the CEU database, something like that could be used to determine the cost of the change. Public Guest Kim Stocking asked if there was a 10-hour limit on safety classes for the CEU requirements and how that would work with a 10-hour annual CEU. She added that she is for the 10-hour annual CEU requirement. Chairperson Brice Bennett replied that the 10-hour limit on safety was recommended by the advisory committee and is in proposed regulations, but those regulations are on hold due to the lawsuit. The 10-hour limit on Safety is not in regulation yet. The two discussion items were brought up, moving to a 10-hour annual CEU requirement and some sort of CEU certificate tracking system to validate CEU certificates. Public Guest Shawn Arballo stated that only 3 people in 709 draft up the CEU letters and they initial and date the letters so they can be tracked back to who certified it if validation is required. Digital PDF can be changed easily with PDF converters so spot checking with CEU providers to ensure they are not handing out CEU certification and to ensure that the individual has not altered a certificate could be a possible solution, but it would take a little extra work.

Public Guest Kim Stocking asked if it would be possible to send a list of people who submitted CEUs back to the provider because it would be easier for her program to verify which certificates were real and which were not. Member Jason McBroom asked if there was a list of what is expected of CEU providers. Chairperson Brice Bennett replied that there was not. Member Richard Eyssallenne asked if the provider uploaded all the certificates not the individuals. Chairperson Brice Bennett replied that a provider would need access to all the individuals accounts, which would be nearly impossible. The onus of uploading CEUs is on the licensee, unless they have deferred their account management to another person. Chairperson Brice Bennett stated that the committee was still talking about how to curb counterfeit documentation and that there was enough discussion to warrant putting a work group together, but they would continue with discussion.

Public Guest Alicia Karrick stated that the program may have difficulty reaching nationally recognized trainers for CEU verification but every CEU class that The Greater Bay Area Chapter of AFSA has ever held has a roster. So, reaching out to providers for verification could be feasible. Member Amber Barrios stated the spreadsheet referred to by Kim Stocking was something that she had originally given to and had been working on with Kemiko Tolon. She still has that spreadsheet if it is something that they would be willing to

start working on again. Additionally, PDFs can be locked, the ACT program locks their certificates for live classes and so does the Victaulic program. Getting a spreadsheet of certificates issued for that year from the providers would be easy to reference when verifying CEUs.

Chairperson Brice Bennett reminded the committee that creating a process that incurs more time on the part of the staff would come with a cost increase. Creating a work group to come up with a process or a system that would not impact on the staff would be the best route. Multiple ideas could be explored to figure out what is best for the staff and industry. Member Vahe Zohrabian asked, right now, if there would be a cost to the OSFM for a provider to upload students CEUs to GovMotus. Chairperson Brice Bennett replied "nothing". Member Amber Barrios responded that there currently was no ability for CEU providers to have their own login credentials, and asked if that would require GovMotus would have to be modified. Member Vahe Zohrabian replied that they could get the GovMotus login information from the fitters. Chairperson Brice Bennett responded that it would require the fitters to give their GovMotus login information to a 3rd party. Member Amber Barrios added that their company does not ask fitters for their login information, they manage all the licenses through one master account. The fitters sign an authorization letter to have their license transferred to the master account. Public Guest Alicia Karrick added that Victaulic would not upload CEU certifications for individual sprinkler fitters. Member Vahe Zohrabian stated that they had strayed from his original topic of an annual CEU requirement to which Chairperson Brice Bennett agreed that they had begun to discuss two different topics.

Member Shelley Merrell asked whether it would be possible for a committee member or members to assist in cross-referencing CEUs from providers and fitters and send suspicious ones to the program for further investigation. Chairperson Brice Bennett thanked Member Shelley Merrell for her kind offer, but that function would probably need to be kept in-house. Public Guest Kim Stocking informed the committee that a draft CEU certificate must be sent to the OSFM when applying to become a CEU provider and they must use the same format for their certificates. They added that there is software on the internet to unlock PDFs without the password.

Chairperson Brice Bennett asked the committee if anyone would like to propose a work group for the topics they had been discussing. Member David Karrick proposed that two work groups be created, one for discussing an annual CEU requirement and another to look at possible ways to verify CEU certificates. Chairperson Brice Bennett asked interested parties to email aes@fire.ca.gov by the end of next week so they can organize coordinators and group leaders with the goal of having something to bring to the committee at the October meeting. Public Guest Robert Vasquez asked if only committee members were allowed to participate in work groups and Chairperson Brice Bennett replied that committee membership is not required to be part of a work group.

C. Updated Committee Make-Up/Roster

Chairperson Brice Bennett stated that this topic was request by Member Randy Roxson. The current committee roster is available on the committee webpage. There are currently two vacancies on the committee for union affiliated installation contractors. Any recommendations for these positions can be submitted to aes@fire.ca.gov. These contractors could be C-16s or stationary engineers, who have expressed interest in the

advisory committee. Member Vahe Zohrabian asked if the corrections he requested had been updated on the roster and Patricia Rock replied that they had. Chairperson Brice Bennett asked Member Randy Roxson if they had anything to add to this topic. Member Randy Roxson asked where the committee roster was available, and Chairperson Brice Bennett replied that it was available on the committee's webpage.

D. Updated Information on OSFM Meetings with CSLB

This is discussed in the Open Forum section.

E. CEU Requirement for Multi-Year Renewal and Historical Recognition Applicants

Member Amber Barrios stated that they deal with a number of fitters that did not renew in 2022 because of the CEU requirement. They are now attempting to renew via multi-year renewals in 2025. They have missed two CEU submittal years but are only being required to turn in 30 hours of CEUs, not 60. This could be exploited as a loophole if the wider industry was to know about it. Their program does not inform fitters about it, as it could possibly encourage fitters to not renew when they are supposed to so they would only have to do half the CEUs required. This helps validate the need to change to an annual CEU requirement. Additionally, a multi-year renewal for up to the 24-25 period was completed with 30 hours of CEUs required, but on GovMotus the fitter was not required to turn in CEUs for the 2025 renewal, their next CEU due date was set at 2028. This means that a fitter who has never turned in CEUs could submit wait 6 years, complete and multi-year renewal with 30 hours of CEUs, and then not have to turn in CEUs again for another 3 years. Member Amber Barrios wanted to make the committee aware of this situation but acknowledged that the annual CEU would resolve it.

Public Guest Steven Miles asked if after moving to an annual CEU requirement, would a fitter who has been expired for 6 years only have to submit 10 hours of CEUs. Cortney Walker replied that they have run into some issues regarding this issue. What do they do for someone who has taken a break from the industry and is now returning? Do they make him provide 60 hours of CEUs for a timeframe that they may not have been in the industry. Member Amber Barrios asked why fitters must pay for all the years their license had been expired and Cortney Walker that they had to. Member Amber Barrios asked at what point do they not allow fitters to perform a multi-year renewal. Cortney Walker responded that that is another issue that they have experienced. Fitters who have let their license expire have two options to get a current license, multi-year renewal or take the fitter exam and get a new license. They have had many discussions regarding the amount of year they are allowing for multi-year renewal to get more in line with the regulations. As with other things that have changed, it requires notifying the industry because they are changing the current business practice to get more in line with the regulations. This requires more discussion with the committee and internally as to which direction they want to go. Cortney Walker has heard from many of the members and public guests that fitters choose the multi-year renewal because they don't want to take the sprinkler fitter exam. They could use the restrictions of the Portable Fire Extinguisher program, any license that has been expired for more than 2 years, current and prior year, cannot be renewed and the applicant must retake the exam and get a new license. Member Amber Barrios replied that that could be a good option to look at. Chairperson Brice Bennett responded that the committee had discussed and recommended that that and is in proposed regulations.

Member Amber Barrios stated that 5 fitters that their company is assisting with getting

current licenses have continued to work in the industry while their license were expired. They just did not want to complete their CEUs. Cortney Walker asked how the OSFM would require proof that the fitters were or weren't working in the industry while their license was expired to establish the amount of CEUs required. Cortney Walker stated that this topic is something that the committee needs to discuss and come to a compromise or decision, This is an example of something that the OSFM shouldn't make an international decision on and then just inform the committee because they have a history of allowing no limits on multi-year renewals. Cortney Walker added that allowing 6-year multi-year renewals is not something they are a fan of. Member Amber Barrios replied that this is why they brought this topic to the committee for discussion, fitters should not benefit from not following the rules. Cortney Walker thanked Member Amber Barrios for bringing this topic to the committee and Chairperson Brice Bennett added that this topic could be brought into the annual CEU workgroup.

Member Vahe Zohrabian stated that having an inactive license status where the person still pays for the years their license is inactive, and the CEU requirement could be frozen could be a solution to this issue. Member Amber Barrios added that it would be like a Planned Nonoperation (PNO) filing for cars. It would allow people who left the industry for a time to maintain their license and assist in relieving some of the issues with multi-year renewals as it would be completed on the user side. Member Amber Barrios and Public Guest Alicia Karrick agreed. Chairperson Brice Bennett replied that this is a topic the OSFM will look into and look at how other industries deal with this issue. Chairperson Brice Bennett cannot give the committee a timeline for the response to this topic as the committee has already made their recommendations for the next regulatory update. If it was something that they were to put in, the committee would be able to comment on it during the 45-day comment period. Member Vahe Zohrabian asked if the committee could vote or make a motion to have the OSFM discuss topic because they believe it could be very beneficial to the industry. Chairperson Brice Bennett asked if Member Vahe Zohrabian was making a motion.

Member Vahe Zohrabian made a motion for the OSFM to explore inactive licenses for sprinkler fitters. This Motion was seconded by Member Amber Barrios.

Member Vahe Zohrabian asked what the status of the forms was. Specifically, did forms for the junior system get adopted as they spent a lot of time on the junior system being part of the old testing forms. People are contacting him trying to figure out which form California will be using. Chairperson Brice Bennett replied that the forms are part of the regulatory update, and it is on hold from moving forward contingent on the outcome of the lawsuit. Member Shelly Merrell confirmed that the junior system form was created. Chairperson Brice Bennett thanked Member Shelly Merrell for the information and all the work she put into the forms. Member Vahe Zohrabian asked if changes could be made to the forms. Chairperson Brice Bennett replied that the forms had already been created, recommended and voted upon.

Public Guest Steven Miles stated that they liked the idea of an inactive license status but there should be some like of notification and or penalty for someone found working while their license was inactive.

F. Residential Use of Mist Systems.

Member Jim Feld stated that the title of the topic was slightly misleading. It is not about an NFPA 750 water mist system; it has similar properties but is not an entire system. It calls Automist, from the United Kingdom, and is a single status extinguishing system. It sits flush with the wall and when the temperature rises high enough to trigger the system it pops out of the wall and will aim a nozzle at the heat source. The nozzle will discharge water at about 1 ½ gallons per minute in a mist with similar PSI to the regular mist systems, at about 1000 PSI. A video provided by the manufacturer shows it activating along with sprinkler systems and outperforming them. Member Jim Feld believes that the system automatically shuts off when the temperature in the room decreases. This system could be installed in every room in a home or just in the kitchen. Member Jim Feld sees issues with this system; a high-pressure pump would be required, that pump would require 10 amps and 230 volts. It is not clear if each unit would require its own pump or if one pump could supply multiple units. Member Jim Feld would like to know if this device would require OSFM listing? Would this device have to be installed by a C-16 contractor? If this system was installed in a home, would it be an equivalent substitution for a 13D system or a California Residential Code system? Has anyone on the committee has any experience with or has been approached regarding this type of system? If this system were voluntarily installed into an existing home, whether or not it already had a sprinkler system, because the owner wants added fire protection, does it have to comply with California Fire Code section 901 4.2 which requires voluntary systems to comply. The code states "A fire protection system or portion thereof not required by this code or the California Building Code shall be allowed to be furnished for partial or complete protection provided that such installed system meets the applicable requirements of this code and the California Building Code". Would these systems fall into this section of the fire code or what sections of the fire code would be involved for these systems. Member Jim Feld stated that they have no vested interest in or association with this product and they are not promoting it. They were asked by a sprinkler contractor if they had any experience with the product and because they did not, they brought it to the committee to see if anyone had experience with it.

Member Vahe Zohrabian stated that because this is a life, safety, and liability concern, multiple issues come into play. First, AFJs, and the second is installation in existing and new homes. After the 2010 Home Coalition between California, Maryland, and Virginia pushed for NFPA 13 D to be adopted in the entire U.S. If NFPA 13 D must be pushed with a minimum cost of 1% of the entire construction. There was no listing of the product with OSFM, FM, UL, or AFJs. Member Vahe Zohrabian does not know how these systems would interact with NFPA 13 D, possibly interfere with cold Solder and other systems in new buildings. They will also cause issues with insurance in new homes because insurance will not accept anything that is not permitted and regulated. The local jurisdiction having authority will also not finalize their inspection because of the addition of a regulated life and safety system. Member Vahe Zohrabian thinks that these systems would be easy to install as long as the power source and water source were protected. Chairperson Brice Bennett replied that Member Zohrabian validated the questions asked by member Feld and added a few more. Had any of the contractors worked with any of these types of systems yet and should these systems be looked at for a BML listing of some kind or where in OSFM they should be looked at. Member Vahe Zohrabian added that the cost of importing the units must be added to the 1% cost for NFPA 13 D.

Chairperson Brice Bennett replied that these systems were like a micro version of the

European targeted systems for large open spaces. Member David Karrick stated that there is a manufacturer that imports from Europe and a couple of registered or approved installers in California. A handful of them have been installed with the approval of the local AHJ as a replacement for 13 D. These systems are available in California through distribution. Chairperson Brice Bennett asked if Member David Karrick would be willing to share their contact with these systems so the OSFM could reach out to them, Member David Karrick replied yes. Chairperson Brice Bennett thanked member Jim Feld for bringing this topic to the committee and he will take this topic to the BML team. Member Jim Feld asked if the OSFM was going to pursue a listing for these units. Patricia Rock replied that the units are not currently listed with BML and not required to be listed.

Public Guest Steven Miles stated that on the website provided by Member Jim Feld, they list a UL certification. He had met a representative from the company at CFPI and noted that these units were fairly expensive compared to typical residential systems. The systems have a lot of moving parts that are not going to be maintained. Member Jason McBroom asked what happens when the power goes out. Patricia Rock stated that another question they have heard is how are these systems maintained. The California fire code requires that auto-mist systems be tested and maintained. How is this done now that they are being put in residential homes, and what are the manufacturers' recommendations for maintenance and testing. Member Jim Feld added that the website stated that the system was UL certified not UL listed. The UL listing requires more extensive testing and requirements for the system. Member Vahe Zohrabian added that these types of systems are exempt from testing. These devices are intended to be installed in single family dwellings which are outside the realm of NFPA 25. Member Jim Feld asked if the committee members have any experience with these systems during the upcoming months, to share them at the next meeting. If the committee gains more experience with these systems, maybe they can create something to give to the local AHJs.

4. OPEN FORUM

A.

Member Jose Colin stated that the committee should take their time with new projects because of the pending lawsuit, and they don't want to put a bunch of effort into something that could be overturned by the lawsuit.

B.

Member Jim Feld asked about sprinkler contractors being on an email list along with sprinkler fitters so when something was sent to the fitters, it would be sent to contractors as well. At the last meeting Chip Lindley said they had met contractors who still had no idea about the program. It would assist contractors who are unfamiliar with the program and help the ones who are keep their fitters in line with the regulations. Chairperson Brice Bennett replied that they had scheduled a meeting with the CSLB but unfortunately some events that occurred recently required the attention of the Division in full and those meetings had to be rescheduled. Another topic they are bringing to the CSLB is a reconciliation from the OSFM and then notifying the listed employers of sprinkler fitters that have not currently renewed. They need to verify if they can legally do this, kind of like an audit. After a month of not renewing, the employer could be notified that their listed employee is no longer current. Member Jim Feld replied that the CSLB may not be

interested in the sprinkler fitters, only the C-16 license holders. Adding the C-16 licensed contractors to the emails the fitters to ensure they get the same information would be beneficial.

Member David Karrick stated that this would show that there is a volume of register sprinkler fitters that are lying about who they work for to maintain their license. They are not working in the industry but want to maintain their certification and the certification is tied to being employed. This is something that they have been in disagreement with since the inception of the program. If a person takes time off, gets laid off, or moves to another state, their certification should not be contingent on employment. Member Amber Barrios asked if there was any discussion about sending letters to contractors who do not have any fitters listed in the GovMotus system. Chairperson Brice Bennett replied, what if the contractor doesn't do installation. Member Amber Barrios asked if a notification could be created to remind contractors to register their fitters and that they must be registered to do installation. Because a lot of companies are doing installation without registered fitters, they are just flying under the enforcement radar. They know of 3 fitters who get paid \$500.00 to stand for inspections for companies they don't work for. This is happening and figuring out how to stop it is a difficult question to answer, they understand that the topic of enforcement has been brought up a lot and there is only so much that can be done. Member Amber Barrios stated that their question was would a letter be sent to contractors that do not have any listed fitters.

Member Vahe Zohrabian that fitters are not cheating or lying. They are maintaining their certifications per the OSFM regulation that requires an employer to be listed in the system and that is not something that they can modify. An inactive license status would solve this issue. Member Amber Barrios replied that the employer on GovMotus can be changed to not currently employed. Member Wayne Weisz asked if an employer had to be listed. Member Amber Barrios replied that earlier this year, some of their fitter's cards were going to be held because they were not currently employed. But after some discussion the cards were released because having a current employer is not listed as a requirement to hold the card. Member Vahe Zohrabian stated that they could not make changes to their employer on GovMotus and was encouraged by Chairperson Brice Bennett to reach out to the program if they need assistance.

Member Jim Feld asked if the new sprinkler fitter cards had the fitters company listed on them. Chairperson Brice Bennett replied that they do not. Member Jim Feld asked if a fitter could go from one company to another working and Chairperson Brice Bennett replied that they could. Member Jim Feld was trying to make sure that there were no issues with the state if fitters from one company wanted to send guys to assist another company.

Member Shelly Merrell stated that whenever they renew their fire extinguisher license, their employees must be listed. Could requiring companies to list their employed sprinkler fitters when they renew their company license help this issue. Chairperson Brice Bennett replied that the OSFM is the company and individual licensure of portable fire extinguishers. Whereas with sprinkler fitters the OSFM is the individual licensure and the CSLB is the company licensure. They are trying to build a better bridge between the two organizations at the direction of Chief Henning. They will continue to build that relationship and come up with better solutions for messaging, information sharing, and how they can

make the trade more efficient for both the contractors and the fitters.

Public Guest Kim Stocking asked after the contractor turns in the 72-hour hire notice that they hired a new fitter, the status on GovMotus does not change and cannot be changed until they renew. Chairperson Brice Bennett confirmed that is correct. Public Guest Kim Stocking asked if after being notified of a new hire, does the OSFM go into that fitter's license and update their employer and Chairperson Brice Bennett confirmed that they do.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

A.

Public Guest David Lewandowski asked for the numbers from last year compared to last year. Patricia Rock replied that they did. For apprentices, this year 2025 they have 687 and last year 2025 they had 841. For fitters, this year they have 2,719 and last year they had 3,146. For trainees, this year they have 2 and last year they had 14. Chairperson Brice Bennett asked the committee how many fitters they thought renewed after the renewal period. They stated that a large portion of them did. Additionally, some apprentices have upgraded to sprinkler fitters. The two years are tough to compare but there is a dip. Member Amber Barrios added that their company has 60 fitters who still have not renewed because they have not completed their CEUs. Patricia Rock stated that last year no CEUs were required and this year they are, which could be the cause of the drop in renewals. Public Guest David Lewandowski asked if the term limits for committee membership were on two- or three-year cycles and if they would all be renewed at the same time. Chairperson Brice Bennett replied that they would be renewed at the same time but would have to get back to him after some research to fully answer his question.

B.

Public Guest Kim Stocking asked if there was any new information on translators for languages other than Spanish. The cost is high for the applicant, and it is unknown where the translator would come from. Chairperson Brice Bennett replied that there are no new changes and there have been changes to Pearson Vue's policy. Public Guest Kim Stocking asked if they had looked at what testing proctors' other departments use or allowing people in the industry, such as fire fighters, who work in the region and speak the language to be used as translators instead of someone who is outside the industry. Or maybe use the cost of hiring a translator to get the exam translated into another language versus having someone come in and translate the exam on the spot. Chairperson Brice Bennett replied that none of those things have been recommended by a member of the committee and that she should speak to one of them to get it recommended. Member Jim Feld asked if there were any assurances that the translator for the exam had no technical knowledge of the subject matter that they could use to coach the test taker to the right answer. Chairperson Brice Bennett replied that it is up to Pearson Vue's testing and translator policies. They do not control the room within Pearson Vue and who they get their certified translators from. Member Jim Feld asked if Pearson Vue had anything in their procedure to ensure that translators have no technical knowledge of the subject matter and that it is something that the OSFM should monitor. Chairperson Brice Bennett replied that they do not have an answer for that question right now and will have to look into it with Pearson Vue and they will make it an item for the next meeting.

C.

Public Guest Jon Saia stated that for the first round of CEUs they didn't have enough providers, so they accepted CEUs from nationally recognized providers such as NFSA or AFSA that were not on the provider list. Is there a possibly of accepting providers from nationally recognized providers to help some of the people that still need to complete their CEUs for this year's requirement. Chairperson Brice Bennett replied they are currently working to reel the CEUs back into only using the provider list, but they are accepting CEUs from national recognized organization and currently safety items do not need to be listed with us as well. Member Vahe Zohrabian suggested that Public Guest Jon Saia look at the approved provider list on the AES webpage, there is a large amount of provider on it now.

5. UPCOMING MEETING DATES

October 15, 2025, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM Pacific Daylight Time (PDT)
California Natural Resources Building 715 P Street, 2nd Floor, Conference Room 02-221,
Sacramento, CA 95814

6. MEETING ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Member Edie Wade to adjourn the meeting, motion seconded by Member Allen Quirk; all in favor of adjournment. Chairperson Brice Bennett adjourned the meeting at 11:08 A.M. PDT.

This notice and copies of the written materials have been posted on the Office of the State Fire Marshal website <https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/>. For information concerning the Committee meeting, please email the AES Program inbox at AES@fire.ca.gov. Any written reports being provided to the Committee members in advance of the public meeting will also be available to the public upon request.

In accordance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, reasonable accommodations are available. Request for reasonable accommodations should be made at least five (5) working days prior to the meeting date. To request reasonable accommodations, including documents in alternative formats, please contact the AES Program inbox at AES@fire.ca.gov.