
AB 835 SINGLE EXIT STAIR WORK GROUP MEETING

Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, June 3, 2025



Crystal Sujeski, CAL FIRE – Office of the State Fire Marshal, Chair (Present)
Robert Marshall, Deputy Fire Chief San Mateo, Co-Chair (Present)

Task Group Members

Stoyan Bumbalov, Executive Director, Building Standards Commission (Present)
Timothy Omalley (Alternate), Building Standards Commission (Present)
Kyle Krause, Deputy Director, Housing Community Development (Present)
Mitchel Baker (Alternate), Assistant Deputy Director, Housing Community Development (Present)
Stephan Smith, Executive Director, Center for Building in North America (Present)
Jeff Maddox (Alternate), The Fire Consultants (Present)
James Dobson, Fire Marshal, California Fire Chiefs (FM Section) (Present)
James Gillespie Fire Marshal (Alternate), California Fire Chiefs (FM Section)
Joe Cavin, Fire Marshal, California Fire Prevention Officers (Present)
Ian Hardage, Fire Marshal (Alternate), California Fire Prevention Officers (Present)
Brian Rice, President, California Professional Firefighters
Melissa McDonald, Executive Assistant (Alternate), California Professional Firefighters
Ed Mendoza, MAP Research Associate, California YIMBY (Present)
Brian Hanlon, CEO (Alternate), California YIMBY
Robert Raymer, Consultant, California Building Industry Association (Present)
Christopher Ochoa, Senior Council (Alternate), California Building Industry Association
Ali Fattah, Asst Deputy Director, San Diego, Representing California Building Officials (Present)
Matt Wheeler (Alternate), California Building Officials
Faruk Sezer (Alternate), California Building Officials (Present)
Tracy Rhine, Senior Policy Advocate, Rural Counties Representatives of California (Present)
Patrick Blacklock (Alternate), Rural Counties Representatives of California
Staci Heaton (Alternate), Rural Counties Representatives of California
Jack Smalley, Legislative Advocate, California State Association of Counties
Mark Neuburger, Legislative (Alternate), California State Association of Counties
Travis Tyler, Director, California State University (CSU) (Present)
Mike Major, (Alternate), California State University (CSU)
Stephen Guarino, Director, University of California (UC) (Present)

CAL FIRE Staff

Jena Garcia, CAL FIRE – Office of the State Fire Marshal (Absent)

1. CALL TO ORDER 8:01 AM

- A. Welcome/Introductions
- B. Roll Call/Quorum Established
- C. Agenda Review (Motion Required)

Crystal Sujeski
Crystal Sujeski
Robert Marshall

Motion:

Action:

Motion:

Action:

2. OLD BUSINESS

Robert Marshall

A. Timeline

1. Draft August 2025
2. 2nd Draft September 2025
3. 3rd Draft October 2025
4. Final November 2025 to present to the State Fire Marshal

3. NEW BUSINESS

Robert Marshall

A. Subgroups

- I. Cost Impact [Lead Stephen Smith] stephen@centerforbuilding.org
 1. Nothing new to report since the last meeting in May
- II. Fire Protection (Active/Passive) [Lead Jeff Maddox] jmaddox@thefireconsultants.com
 1. Nothing new to report since last meeting in May
 2. Fire Sprinklers –
 - a. Reliability of protection – Earthquakes, floods, etc.
 - b. Reasonable protection – NFPA 13 R vs 13 and combustible concealed spaces, bathrooms, and closets (Ali Fattah)
 - c. Subgroup opinion that the building codes and NFPA 13 identify when 13 R and 13 D systems can be used.
 - d. Onsite water supply
 3. Smoke Control – Cost of door hold open devices \$500?
 - a. Impact of fire operations and hoses obstructing doors
- III. Code Comparison [Lead Ali Fattah] AFattah@sandiego.gov
 1. Size
 - a. Maximum number of stories - Limit to 4
 - b. No high-rises
 - c. 4000 sq feet
 - d. Roof Access if needed
 - e. Travel distance limitations/conditions
 - f. Separate Buildings/Subdivided lots
 - g. Exit termination/discharge/egress courts
 - h. Stairwell loading/minimum widths – 48 inches
 - i. Doors swing – path of travel
 - j. Direct access vs intermediate quarter

- IV. History / Baseline (US) [Lead Stephen Smith] stephen@centerforbuilding.org (No Report)
- V. Egress Analysis [Lead Tim Spears] tim.spears@sicfire.org
 - 1. Greg Rogers covering for the meeting.
 - a. Egress Analysis Summary
 - i. Human Behavior
 - ii. Counterflow in stairwells
 - iii. Elevators
 - iv. Mobility Challenges
 - v. Egress Risk for Elderly Residents
 - vi. Design Limitations
 - vii. Sensory Impacts
 - viii. Environmental Impacts
 - ix. Behavioral Factors and Pre-Evacuation Delays
 - 2. Tim Spears stepped down and Joe Cavin is taking the lead joe.cavin@santamonica.gov
 - a. If you are an interested party, email Joe Calvin directly.
- VI. FD Capabilities [Lead James Dobson] james.dobson@sanjoseca.gov
 - 1. Survey – Summary of information being collected.
 - 2. Will be distributed to Operations Section of Cal Chiefs, Cal Cities, and Fire Districts.
 - a. Proposed to send out this week

4. ROUNDTABLE

Robert Marshall

- A. Stephan Smith-Applying the same standards to single stair buildings. Emphasized the need for code consistency and fairness across building types—stating that if a standard is deemed inadequate in one context, it may pose broader issues. Concluded by acknowledging the reality of code imperfections and trade-offs, while advocating for a balanced and uniform standard.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Robert Marshall

- A. None

6. UPCOMING MEETING DATE FOR 2024

Crystal Sujeski

- A. The first Tuesday of each month starts at 8 AM and ends at 10 AM (unless voted on by the members for a better meeting time).
 - i. Next Meeting – July 1, 2025, 8-10 AM PDT

7. MEETING ADJOURNED (Motion Required) 12 PM

Crystal Sujeski

Motion: Approve (Dobson / Ridley)	Action: Approved
-----------------------------------	------------------

If you would like to watch the recording of this meeting, please visit the link below:

- <https://youtu.be/iJI6NFdGUVQ>