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# **FIRE ALARM WORK GROUP**

## **Meeting Minutes – October 6, 2026**

### **Posted – October 16, 2026**

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#### **Contacts:**

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## **I. CALL TO ORDER – 8:32 AM PDT**

### **A. Welcome/Introductions – Chrishana Fields and Joseph Cervantes**

1. Deputy State Fire Marshal III Specialist Chrishana Fields called the meeting to order and introduced herself, as did Joseph Cervantes of the California Automatic Fire Alarm Association (CAFAA).
2. Becca Mansergh read a statement that provided notice that the meeting would be recorded, with a link to the recording to be included in the meeting minutes. She reviewed meeting protocols, including keeping microphones muted unless called upon, using the raise hand feature to request the floor, refraining from using AI note-taking tools, and maintaining respectful and professional dialogue throughout the session.

### **B. [Agenda](#) / Minutes Review**

1. Motion to approve the agenda was made by Joseph Cervantes, seconded, and the motion carried.
2. Motion to approve the [September, 22, 2026 minutes](#) was made by Joseph Cervantes, seconded, and the motion carried.

## **II. OLD BUSINESS**

### **A. Drafted charter**

1. Chrishana Fields presented the current draft of the work group charter, which defines the purpose, goals, and operating procedures of the Fire Alarm Work Group. She noted that revisions had been made to the purpose and goals sections since the last meeting, and that the remainder of the document — including objectives, work group leadership, meeting scheduling, protocols, and the responsibilities of the chair — still required attention.
2. The stated purpose of the work group is to provide advice to the State Fire Marshal through communications at meetings between the CAL FIRE – Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM), representatives of industry, state agencies, the fire service, and other partners. The work group will provide a forum for identifying and discussing improvements to building codes and standards, and for soliciting comments and technical input on issues specific to fire alarm systems. The work group will review existing amendments to the California Building Standards for applicability, redundancy, or obsolescence resulting from updates to National Standards and ICC model codes. The work group will also

consider and recommend new amendments to the California Building Standards to address emerging technologies and identified fire alarm issues or concerns.

3. Seven goals were presented for the work group:
  - i. Identify and address areas of confusion, inconsistency, or potential conflict within Title 24, including the California Fire Code (CFC), California Building Code (CBC), and California Electrical Code (CEC), as they relate to fire alarm systems.
  - ii. Evaluate the continued relevance and effectiveness of existing California-specific amendments in light of recent updates to ICC model codes and national standards, including NFPA 72.
  - iii. Identify and eliminate redundancy by aligning California-specific amendments with national model codes and standards, where appropriate.
  - iv. Develop and recommend updated code language or revisions to the State Fire Marshal that improve the clarity, consistency, and applicability of California's fire alarm requirements.
  - v. Promote statewide consistency and clarity in the application, interpretation, and communication of fire alarm requirements.
  - vi. Ensure proposed regulatory changes are cost-effective, attainable, and supported by sound science and technical justification.
  - vii. Foster innovation by facilitating the timely consideration and adoption of proven materials, technologies, and fire alarm system advancements in California.

### **III. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **A. Subgroups**

1. Educational Occupancies - [David Secoda](#)
2. David Secoda confirmed his willingness to lead the subgroup. Sagiv Weiss-Ishai, who previously chaired this effort, noted that substantial work had already been completed in a prior cycle, including vetting proposals through multiple committees and reaching consensus on code change language for Group E occupancies. That work could not advance during the intervening cycle and is now being directed toward the 2027 triennial adoption. The group agreed that rather than restarting the process, the subgroup should review the existing final proposal, verify that code section references remain current under the adopted code, and prepare it for submission. Greg Cobabe, representing DSA, noted he wasn't involved in the original discussions, would like to participate, and confirmed his availability to assist with matters specific to educational facilities.
3. ESS Heat Detector - [Akilan Ananth](#), [Joshua Costello](#), and [Mitchell Daudert](#)
4. Akilan Ananth confirmed willingness to move forward as a lead for the subgroup, which is focused on heat detector requirements over energy storage systems in garages. Chrishana Fields confirmed the co-leads as Joshua Costello and Mitchell Daudert, and committed to ensuring contact information was distributed among them. Akilan Ananth noted that the subgroup had not yet convened and agreed to schedule an initial meeting. It was also noted that a recent email exchange had not produced clear direction on the topic.

5. Air-Moving Systems Subgroup - [Joseph Cervantes](#)
    - i. Joseph Cervantes reported that he had conducted initial research and identified approximately six areas requiring code changes related to air-moving systems, specifically around California Mechanical Code Section 609. Areas of focus include defining "enclosed space," evaluating the 2,000 CFM threshold for accumulation across units, reviewing NFPA 90A coordination, shutdown methods, smoke control coordination, and addressing exception mismatches — all with the goal of improving clarity for the fire alarm industry around duct detectors and air handler shutdowns.
    - ii. Joseph Cervantes expressed concern about whether the November 1st deadline for mechanical code changes was achievable, noting the challenge of finding additional participants for the subgroup. Nanci Timmins, representing HCAI, indicated that her organization had already drafted cleanup language for Section 609 and offered to share it. Chrishana Fields acknowledged the tight timeline for mechanical and electrical code changes (November 1st) versus the general Title 24 deadline (February 1st) and encouraged Joseph Cervantes and herself to meet the following week to assess whether anything could be submitted in time, while continuing the work for the next cycle regardless.
  6. Carbon Monoxide Detection – Pending
    - i. Chrishana Fields noted that she had been unable to reconnect with the individual who had previously led the Carbon Monoxide Detection subgroup. She noted that proposals had previously been withdrawn due to AB 130 limitations. Joseph Cervantes indicated that the prior lead had recently invited him to an ICC working group on carbon monoxide detection for the I-Codes, and offered to reach out to him to re-engage his participation.
  7. Heat vs. Smoke Detector - [Sagiv Weiss-Ishai](#)
    - i. Sagiv Weiss-Ishai confirmed his willingness to bring forward previous proposals related to heat detectors approved in lieu of smoke detectors, referencing California Fire Code Section 907.4.3. He noted the group's intent to pursue a formal code change rather than merely an informational bulletin. Chrishana Fields invited additional members to participate and asked interested parties to add their names in the chat.
- B. FPO Code Development Committee Report Out
1. Joseph Cervantes provided a report and noted that he is leading Working Group 2 within that committee, focused on buildings under construction. He identified four proposed code changes being developed for the IFC:
    - i. Definitions — Adding language to correlate new NFPA 72 terminology back to the fire code.
    - ii. Section 901.7 amendment — Addressing impairments to existing protected premises systems to allow temporary fire alarm and signaling systems during those events.
    - iii. Chapter 105 amendment — Creating a permitting pathway for temporary fire alarm and signaling systems on construction sites.
  2. Chapter 33 amendment — Adding an item to the required fire prevention plan for the use of temporary fire alarm and signaling systems where approved.

3. Joseph Cervantes expressed confidence that the IFC language could be correlated directly into the California Fire Code once finalized, estimating that the working group would complete the language within two to three meetings, with something presentable by November. Chrishana Fields inquired about Working Group 3, which Cervantes understood to be related to fire protection recall provisions, but was unable to confirm the details and indicated he would follow up.

#### **IV. ROUNDTABLE/PUBLIC COMMENT**

- A. Michael Galleano raised a concern regarding battery calculations and the 25% safety factor required by NFPA 72. He argued that while the code language calls for adding 25% to the required battery load, the practical intent — supported by the commentary — is to account for battery degradation over time, which effectively means the battery's rated capacity should be derated by 25%, not that the load calculation should be inflated. He illustrated the issue with a specific example in which a submitted battery was insufficient once derated, a deficiency that would not have been caught under the "add to load" interpretation.
- B. Sagiv Weiss-Ishai acknowledged that both interpretations exist in practice among contractors and AHJs, and suggested that the Fire Alarm Code Advisory Committee (FAAC) and potentially an OSFM information bulletin or code interpretation request would be appropriate avenues for resolution. He also noted that significantly larger issues surrounding battery testing and performance are already being addressed in the development of the NFPA 72 2028 edition. David Secoda concurred, recommending a formal request for interpretation to the State Fire Marshal as a more expedient option. Chrishana Fields requested Becca Mansergh to share links for the code interpretation process, and Akilan Ananth also added the NFPA interpretation process to the chat. It was agreed that Michael Galleano, who is already a member of the Code Advisory Committee, would pursue the matter through that forum.
- C. Joseph Cervantes raised a separate issue regarding a prior code change to the California Building Code Section 1026, which added requirements for two-way communication systems in horizontal exit compartments for areas of rescue assistance. He noted that the corresponding administrative chapter (Section 105) had not been updated to include permitting requirements for these systems. He requested that this be included in the current code change package as a correlation amendment. Chrishana Fields agreed and requested that the relevant section reference be emailed to her.
- D. Sagiv Weiss-Ishai requested that OSFM compile and share a list of all code change proposals from the prior cycle that had been developed but ultimately not submitted or withdrawn — including the reasons for withdrawal — so that subgroups could efficiently pick up that work without duplicating prior effort. Chief Jena Garcia, Deputy State Fire Marshal III Supervisor, confirmed she could retrieve that information and share it with the group, noting that most withdrawals were likely attributable to AB 130 limitations or timeline constraints around the 15-day rulemaking notice requirement.

**V. UPCOMING MEETING DATES**

- A. Meetings are held every two weeks on Tuesday from 8:30 AM to 10:00 AM PDT
- B. Next meeting: October 21, 2026
  - 1. Chrishana Fields announced that she would be unavailable on October 20th and proposed moving the next meeting to Wednesday, October 21, 2026, at 8:30 AM. No objections were raised, and the date change was confirmed.
- C. Upcoming meetings (TBD)
  - 1. November 3, 2026
  - 2. November 17, 2026
  - 3. December 1, 2026
  - 4. December 15, 2026
  - 5. January 5, 2027
  - 6. January 19, 2027

**VI. MEETING ADJOURNMENT – 9:16 AM PDT**

- A. Chrishana Fields thanked all attendees and the meeting was adjourned.

\*Please [subscribe](#) to the “OSFM Committee and Workgroup Updates” mailing list to receive updates

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

<https://youtu.be/zXUPPs712pM>

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