

>>Chief Joe Tyler: Good day. On July 27th, 2023, in this very room at Sacramento Headquarters, we recorded the first ever podcast that was to be distributed statewide, and we've held on that podcast since then. We held on the podcast because of a tragic accident that occurred on August 6, 2023, where we lost three important members of the CAL FIRE family. Our thoughts and our memories will always be with Fire Captain Tim Rodriguez, Assistant Chief Josh Bischof and our contracted pilot, Tony Sousa. The podcast was recorded prior to that event. And as you begin to listen to this podcast, and you hear the light hearted discussions, please know that nothing was meant offensively and it was all in light nature. I hope you enjoy the podcast moving forward.

[Soft Drum Beat]

>>Monte Manson: All right, ladies and gentlemen, this is CAL FIRE's first podcast. We call it CAL FIRE Presents: Five Points with the Chief. I am Monte Manson, the Deputy Director for the Professional Standards Program. We will be focused on Director Joe Tyler. All of the successes and challenges of running a department like this and what keeps him up at night.

[Whoosh Sound]

>>Chief Joe Tyler: How do we continue to advance this department with a motivated, happy, productive of staff?

[Whoosh Sound]

>>Monte Manson: Ladies and gentlemen, stay tuned. This is going to be great. Let's get cooking.

[Intro Music]

>>Monte Manson: All right. So here we are with the Director and Fire Chief for CAL FIRE, Mr. Joe Tyler.

>>Chief Joe Tyler: Thank you, Monte.

>>Monte Manson: All right. It's good to see you. It's good to see you. So, you know, let's just start off with something really simple. And I think it could be something that a lot of the listeners might even have in the back of their minds, which really goes to your title. I just called you Director Tyler. Many people call you Chief Tyler, but you have a lot of titles that go in front of your name. Do you mind just really quickly talking about that and what each one of those means and really what do you want everybody to call you?

>>Chief Joe Tyler: I appreciate that, Monte. So it is an interesting dynamic because I really, based on various settings, go by three different titles. By statute, I was appointed by the Governor on March 4th of 2022 as the Director of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, known as CAL FIRE. And by statute, that's what I will go by, but certainly as the largest fire department and natural resource protection agency across the state of California, it is reasonable to be referred to as the Fire Chief. My background from the point I started in 1990... 1989 as a volunteer, in 1990 with CDF at the time, Now CAL FIRE... my whole service primarily has been in fire suppression. And now that's to say that I've done a dynamic number of things across my career, just like many people. But it's important in settings to be referred to as the Fire Chief as well. That's where the Chief comes in. Now, at a national level, certainly I go across the nation and participate in national level meetings. Many of those meetings are with places like the Council of Western State Foresters and the National Association of State Foresters. And therefore, I am also the State Forester of the state of California. So you may hear at various times that I'm referred to as the State Forester, that I'm referred to as the Director, and that I'm referred to as the Fire Chief.

>Monte Manson: You've been at this since you said 1989. And it's funny, when I think of 1989, I was a freshman in high school. Not to date myself, but it's quite a ways back. So you've definitely been at this for a while. And hearing all of these different titles, Obviously, it places a lot of responsibility on exactly what it is the Director has to do. Can you just quickly talk about, you know, some of those cooperations that you are involved with? You know, you talked about NASF, you know, some of these other national organizations that the Director of CAL FIRE is responsible for. Just quickly, just get into that a little bit.

>>Chief Joe Tyler: Yeah, as the Director of CAL FIRE, it's my responsibility, first and foremost, to support our women and men across our department. But as an appointee of Governor Newsom, I am responsible to align with the initiatives and the responsibilities that the administration is pushing forward, not just at the Governor's Office level, but at the Natural Resource Agency level, under Secretary Wade Crowfoot. So it is it is cross boundaries. It's about our Office of the State Fire Marshal. It is about our administrative support that we have across the department. It is about our natural resource protection and our resource management programs. It is about fire prevention and law enforcement, and certainly it's about fire suppression as well. Now, think of all those different organizations and meetings in which we represent. Quite honestly, I'm the face of the department, speaking on behalf of the work the women and men do across the state.

>>Monte Manson: Absolutely. Absolutely. But again, like you said, it's the people of the department, those 12,000.1 employees that we always talk about who really do all of the work. You know, folks at our levels, we're really the figureheads. We're the faces sometimes that represent all of the work that these folks are doing. That's a beautiful thing.

[Transition Music]

One of the big questions that I think might be important for all of the listeners for this first podcast really is to just talk about how we got here in the first place. Why are we doing this as a podcast? How did this come about from your perspective? I think I was there when the conversation first ensued, but I would love for you to just kind of describe in your words, you know, kind of how this started. And I'll jump in too, but I think this was a really good story and something that I want folks to know that we're all listening and we really do want to do what we can to support all of our folks. So can you talk about that a little bit?

>>Chief Joe Tyler: Yes, so much so. But I'm going to go back in time just a little bit. First back to March 4th of 22. You know, first and foremost, I honestly never thought that I'd be sitting here in the position as the Director of CAL FIRE. I was the Deputy Director of Fire Protection prior to this and never initially had my sights set on being the Director. But opportunities arose and here I am and doing what I love best to support the people. So on March 4th, I put out a written message across the department about who I am, where I came from, and what my priorities were. And a year and a half later, my priorities haven't changed. It is the health and wellness of our women and men across the state. It is about getting them the assistance they need. It's about being ready in the job in which they've been appointed to. I could say operationally ready. Some people would understand that, but it's being ready and trained and having the tools to do your job. Then it is also about aggressive initial attack for fire suppression while doing fire prevention work and fuels reduction are so important, and I put that in that first written message to the department. Now all good things are the expectation that I would have updated a monthly message and all good things get turned sideways when you're listening to and hearing all the different stakeholders. And so a monthly message didn't come out after that. But what we did in turn was we put together a what we referred to as a town hall meetings. And the intent at the time, the department was right about 10,000 employees, and the attempt was to hit every unit and every program and talk about those priorities and also have individuals ask questions. Those were questions largely that I didn't have ahead of time, that we were answering off the cuff to be able to communicate and hear from the ground level of various issues that were going on. Now, my goal would be to continue townhall meetings, but where we got was to a position that we started going to all the leadership level one classes and as part of leadership level one every Friday for what should be an hour and a half, usually turns into two, two and a half hours. We upset Bob and Lael. They gave us grace to continue going, but it has a really interactive discussion with the students in leadership level one. And one of the questions came up in leadership. Level one was, Chief, you did your message, you did your town hall meetings, which by the way, out of 10,000 employees, we probably reached about 4000 employees in all of those town hall meetings.

>>Monte Manson: 40%, you know, yeah...

>>Chief Joe Tyler: But the student in leadership level one said, I drive an hour, 2 hours to work from where I live. And wouldn't it be nice as I'm driving to work to be able to listen to a podcast and hear updates about what the department's doing? Obviously, I'm busy at work. I don't have time to read it. I don't have time to always go to my email and see any updates that are occurring. But while I'm driving, I can listen to a podcast and that's the genesis of where we are today.

>>Monte Manson: Yeah, that's right. That's exactly how I remember it as well. And I do have to say that in all of those leadership level one classes that we've attended, particularly on those Fridays, like you mentioned, the students in there... you see the evolution from Monday through Friday when they become so in tuned with what it is that they need to do to help move this department forward. And it is a beautiful thing to see and it really comes out in those questions. Hence, here you and I are sitting right now with something of a great idea that came out of those classes. So a shameless plug to the folks who need to get into leadership level one and or leadership level to please take those classes. As you can see, we do a lot of real good thinking in those classes and you never know. Some of those ideas come out of that stuff. There are other things that come up and I think we're going to get, you know, one of the questions that we're going to get to later on talks about how do we make sure that folk's ideas can come forward through the department. We'll get to that a little bit later.

[Transition Music]

>>Monte Manson: One of the things that I kind of wanted to get into, particularly for you, is to give the listeners a little flavor about kind of what you've been through over the past year and a half as the Director and Fire Chief and the State Forester and all of the things that you talked about earlier. You know, I think that there may be a perception out in the field about what your position does and is responsible for. You gave a little bit of a flavor of it just a little while ago. But if you wouldn't mind just kind of getting into that a little bit more, what has that looked like, you know, for the past year and a half? And then we're also going to get into, you know, kind of what your future plans and thoughts are for the department, for yourself and those kinds of things. So can you talk about that a little bit?

>>Chief Joe Tyler: Yeah, absolutely. So I realized, first and foremost, that it's about our communication and our cooperation across the department, outside of the department. We have we have really two groups. One is our internal customers, our employees, and the other one is our external stakeholders and our partners and our allied agencies. And it is so important to build those relationships and communicate and hear differences and similarities ahead of time. So it's been so important to be able to meet with various stakeholder's groups at the local, state, federal, tribal levels, attend various meetings

across the state of California, whether that's Cal Chiefs, whether that is FIRESCOPE, whether that is communicating with our labor organization, executive boards and their leadership. At the same time, I spend almost every day or every other day speaking with the Governor's Office and the Natural Resources Agency working through various complexities. And like I said, the National Association of State Foresters attending meetings across the nation to represent the great work that CAL FIRE is doing. And it is recognized in those meetings, the great work that California is doing as a whole, the investments by the administration to put into forest health and fuels reduction efforts and a lot of the operational resources that have come about here in the last couple of years are really about all of those initiatives as well. Advancing the great work of the women and men of this department is what is so important. You know, and I look back ten years ago, this department was just over 6,500 people. And the last ten years we have now doubled in size.

>>Monte Manson: That is a massive growth.

>>Chief Joe Tyler: Last year, over 1,600 employees were added to the department, the single largest growth of the department in a single year. And so that brings a lot of complexities and it brings a lot of workload and it's working through all those and trying to address issues and deal with those issues before I have to take them to the Deputy Director level, before I have to take them to the Region Chief level, before they trickle down to the Units and the people on the ground.

>>Monte Manson: Yeah, Yeah. That's very, very true. And one of the things that I was thinking about as you were just speaking is, what are your expectations for even down to that Firefighter 1 level, you know, or some of those levels in terms of how they are to engage with cooperators that they interact with on a regular basis. What are some of your expectations of those folks as they interact? Because I know that a lot of our listeners really that's the level that they're working at, which is extremely important. What do you see for them in terms of their interaction with cooperators and those organizations that we find so important in order to get our jobs done?

>>Chief Joe Tyler: Well, I think that everybody that's heard from me has really heard that the important thing for me is customer service. Right? And it doesn't, again, matter whether it's the external customer or if it's our constituent, if it's a member of the public, if it's somebody who's passing through the state of California, customer service is number one. So how do we get to customer service? We are as transparent as we possibly can be. We are honest and we are professional. At the same time, we are humble. We are humans. We make mistakes. We make errors. Be humble about that, admit when we make a mistake. And when you do that, you portray a good level of customer service. You show genuine, active interest in a person's question and you can move forward from there.

[Transition Music]

>>Monte Manson: I want to move on to another of the points that I know we want to get to, which has to do with some of the successes that have happened in the organization in that year and a half. And then additionally, some of the challenges that you face. You've touched on a couple of things previously, but I want to talk a little bit about those successes. What are some of the things that you've seen as successes in the department so far?

>>Chief Joe Tyler: So there's been a lot of successes in the department, whether it be our efforts in forest health and fuels reduction, whether it be the addition of the Blackhawk helicopters and the C-130s, whether it be adding 190 people that's from a budget change proposal called Direct Mission Support, and that is from so long ago, you know, where the administrative side of the department was left behind as the need for wildfire suppression and prevention continued to increase. And then recognizing the fatigue over the last several years of our employees makes us realize that that we have to do something different and having the accelerated relief proposal that added 455 people last year as well, that's incremental over a five year period but is providing growth to the department. At the same time, specifically for our firefighters, our Bargaining Unit 8 individuals, they are going to see a change as well. And in that change... I'm going to talk both kind of about success and challenges rolling here... They are going to transition into a 66 hour workweek from a 72 hour workweek potentially on November 1st of 2024. Now, what does that mean? Numbers. It's all about data, right? It basically means that a Bargaining Unit 8 firefighter is going to go from working 12 days in a work period to 11 days in a work period. And then the ultimate goal for all of us is to provide more relief, staffing and more opportunity for health and wellness of our firefighters. But it's not only for our firefighters, it's for everybody. So outside of Bargaining Unit 8, that's what Direct Mission Support was about. It was about providing additional administrative support individuals to relieve the burden and the workload that everybody was being inundated with. And that was so important. Now to be able to achieve all of those things we have to be able to keep up and provide employees a level of safety in the workplace and the job skills they need to do the job in which they've been employed. So I look at it as both as success and a challenge. First, I think so many people have heard me say that there's always a way to get to yes, unless you're violating the law or the statute or regulation. But there's always a way to get to a yes. Now I need to know how to get to yes, because that's what we have everybody in this department for, is to bring forward ideas. Sometimes that yes requires funding, sometimes that yes requires personnel, sometimes that yes requires the potential change of regulations or statutes or laws through legislation. But there's always a way to get to yes. Some are easier. Some are harder. Now as we grow this department, as we've talked about, to provide those job skills, we have to provide training. 1967, we open up the CAL FIRE Training Center, formerly known as the CAL FIRE CDF Academy, in Lone in Amador County, and it has served its purpose and met the needs there. But this department continues to grow and outgrows and outpaces the abilities of training all of our employees, specifically in Lone. So we tried it once before, we revitalized it in 2015, we opened up training Center South at the Ben Clark Public Safety Training Center in cooperation with Riverside County and Riverside County Fire Department, one of our Schedule A agreements, to begin doing firefighter academies there. But we also recognize that due to fatigue, due to increasing wildfires, due to my desire and hope that everybody is happy in their job, some people voluntarily separate from this department and find other opportunities. So we have to find ways to better recruit and retain our employees. Now, to better recruit and bring in our employees goes back to

training yet again. So I'm going to stop there and talk about both successes and challenges. Again, I talked about Lone, I talked about Ben Clark. Well, this year we opened up another training center in Redding at Shasta College, working with Shasta College, the Shasta Community College in Redding to put both a Fire Fighter Academy and a Company Officer Academy there. Looking for ways to diversify our workforce, we worked with the administration and opened up the Ventura Training Center that trains both formerly incarcerated firefighters, as well as provides training opportunities and growth for our California Conservation Corps to develop those individuals into the CAL FIRE workforce. And quite honestly, we have hired significant number of people out of that program as well. And I have to give kudos to those working in Madera-Mariposa in what is called the Castle Training Center. It's not formally under the statewide training program, but they are doing tremendous work providing training to our firefighters and other company officers in that regional aspect there. Lastly, to allow the continued growth in Lone, we are currently working on acquiring what we call the University of Phoenix Building. It is an administrative multistory building that's located in Sacramento near the intersection of Interstate 80 and Interstate 5 that will allow employees to go to one week classes, administrative training in that building, thereby allowing law enforcement and fire control training to occur out in Lone. So those are both successes and challenges because there's just a lot of logistics and funding required behind it. You know, I talked about recruitment and retention, and I was just looking at, knowing we were going to do this podcast, I was looking at our monthly Workforce at a Glance. That's available on our Intranet under the Management Services and Workforce Planning headers. In the toolbar, you can look at the Workforce at a Glance. It talks about the entire department, how many employees we have, but equally important is how many employees are available to retire right now. Now think about this - 12,000.1 positions in the department, 14% of our employees are eligible today to retire.

>>Monte Manson: That's right. Yeah.

>>Chief Joe Tyler: Yeah. So what is 14%? Well, you just do some quick math, it's somewhere in the neighborhood of 1,500 of our 12,000 employees are eligible to retire. So what have we done as another success? We have allocated significant funding both in Communications and education and our Workforce Planning unit to be able to try to recruit, try to provide more opportunities to grow and diversify this department. We created a new website that is still being finalized, but we recognize that sometimes it's difficult to navigate the Cal Careers website to find job opportunities within CAL FIRE across the state of California. So utilizing QR codes and our own website, which will be JoinCALFIRE.com, it will provide an opportunity for people to come straight to CAL FIRE to look at opportunities within our organization.

>>Monte Manson: Yeah, really quickly, Chief, I just want to give a shout out to the I.T group and to Management Services and the staff who have been working very, very hard on some of the stuff that you're talking about right now with regards to recruitment. Amazing work to those folks. And I know that some of the Units are also doing a lot of recruitment efforts as well, and so they deserve a great shout out. But to your point, that is some of the work that just simply has to be done in order to continue to

grow the department the way that you're looking for. So I just wanted to mention that, didn't mean to cut you off. Yeah, but keep going. Keep going.

>>Chief Joe Tyler: Yeah, so one of our other recent initiatives is entering a multiyear contract with LinkedIn, right? I had never used LinkedIn at all before nine months ago.

>>Monte Manson: Nor had I.

>>Chief Joe Tyler: And I'm sure that there's so many people that haven't either. I would encourage people to join LinkedIn and find opportunities within CAL FIRE and connect on what we have going on in this department. You know, I talk about diversifying this department. And here's an interesting aspect. 87% of the employees in this department are males, 13% are female. Of the 13% of the females in this workforce, 42% of those are in administrative positions. And only 5.4% today are made up of firefighters. And so we have a responsibility to diversify this department and make this department represent in totality the demographics of the state of California. And I do believe that that's important. And I think that we are... you go to graduations, you talk to groups. I think we're getting there. I think we're doing it. We're touching on it.

>>Monte Manson: I totally agree.

>>Chief Joe Tyler: Our women in the fire service? Not quickly enough. But if we continue to recruit and make efforts, I hope that we will at least improve those numbers over time.

>>Monte Manson: I'll tell you what, Chief, we were at the COA graduations just last week and had an opportunity to see two classes graduate. And I myself noticed the amount of diversity on a number of different fronts that were just in those two classes alone. So something's working. Something is working in the department. And so to all of you who are involved in that, I just want to say thank you. Continue doing that because it's actually starting to show. So I think there's good work. There's good work definitely happen there. More to be done. But like you said, the statistics are what they are, but things are going to change for sure. Yeah.

>>Chief Joe Tyler: I agree. You know, one of my other priorities back from question one was finding efficiencies. And so I want to touch on this. We have a great expansion of a technology research and development and innovation programs under Deputy Director Scott Gregory and Assistant Deputy Director Ben Rogers. They're doing some great work in technology. They're finding efficiencies for us in areas of technology that we have never used before. So things like new recruitment websites, and LinkedIn that I talked about, as well as streamlining processes for hiring, they're doing some outstanding



work. The technology and the area of Intel is outstanding as well, providing near real time or real time data to decision makers. So what does this all mean to the people on the ground? What it means to the people on the ground - and it can't happen overnight, but if we have a vision and initiative to get there, it will happen - is to, one, for our firefighters, make every effort to decrease the number of times that they're not able to go home at the end of their shift. Whether that's considered a force hire or going to a wildland fire for 20, 30 days, it is getting them home to their families, their friends, letting them disconnect and relax. You know, as I watched our federal partners previously go from 14 days of work two days off, to 14 days on, three days off, I recognized we couldn't do that in CAL FIRE. So a couple of years ago, we set the initiative of 21 days and 4 days away from the incident and many places across the department, many of the Units are doing that. Obviously, it's based on some operational need as well. But they're getting there. The transition to a 66 hour workweek, the addition of relief staffing, and unfortunately it will have impacts to our cooperative fire protection agreements, our Schedule A agreements, but making sure that we're appropriately staffed in our Schedule A agreements for the health and wellness of our employees are equally important. And likewise, for our administrative staff, that Direct Mission Support, like I said, is trying to decrease the workload of the people who are keeping this department running every single day behind the scenes. Decrease the workload, improve some happiness, and improve morale within this department. I'm not saying the morale is bad. Some places are less happy than others, I think. But overall in this department, it is a great organization to work for.

>>Monte Manson: 100% agreed. I think you're absolutely right. And, you know, I think that's just a part of working through a 12,000.1 employee department, is there are ebbs and flows everywhere. And, you know, as the Director and even all the way down to whatever level you want to think about, it is our responsibility to work on that and recognize that and work on it. And I think the folks are doing a great job out there.

[Transition Music]

I want to move on to another point with regards to what keeps you up at night. What are some of the things that you know, you talked about some of the challenges already, but what are some of the things that really, at the end of the day just has you thinking, oh, my goodness, boy, this is going to be quite a hurdle to get over. So what are some of those things?

>>Chief Joe Tyler: You know, after talking about all the employees and their heavy burdens and their workloads, talking about people getting still forced on duty because there's nobody to relieve them or large damaging wildland fires that keep people on duty, I almost don't want to answer this question. But half-hearted, lightheartedly, what keeps me up at night? My telephone. My telephone. What I found in this position, and I'm willing to do that and willing to accept this challenge, is my position works and many of the positions work, but my position works seven days a week. And I say it's a telephone lightheartedly because my telephone has always on, I have to leave my telephone on, just like many of the Unit Chiefs and others in this department as well. It is by my bed seven days a week when I'm asleep

at night and that telephone is on. And sometimes that creates a restless night's sleep. Sometimes that is answering calls from the administration and from the Region Chiefs or Deputy Directors at various hours. You know, on average my phone is going off from anywhere from about 7:00 in the morning to 9:00 at night. But I again, I accept those challenges. But the reason that telephone is on, going deeper in that, is because the things that keep me up at night really are twofold. Well, maybe a little bit more than that. One is it's a level of restlessness, knowing that you have 12,000 people that you are supporting and you have the real possibility as people are moving across this great state 24 hours a day, that that phone is going to ring or that text is going to go off, that somebody was significantly injured and or died in the line of duty or off duty. And so that's a little hard knowing that that potential exists. Likewise, there are so many things moving within this department that if I look at my text messages and emails at night, it's not uncommon to have a controversial item across that telephone that will keep me awake with my mind thinking about how I'm going to address it first thing in the morning moving forward. But as we continue moving forward, it goes back to my comments of our successes and challenges, and it is how do we continue... I lie awake at night thinking this, the drive into headquarters, I'm constantly thinking, you know, you ask any of the Deputy Directors or Region Chiefs, I'll spit out a bunch of questions, and those were because of what I thought about at night and what I thought about driving in the morning. But how do we continue to advance this department with a motivated, happy, productive staff in a world of public service to be able to overcome our all-hazard, all-risk emergencies safely and to make California more safe and resilient through wildfire prevention efforts and forest resilience efforts. Offline, we were talking about, you know, for so long, we were continuing to increase our fire protection staff and we will continue to do that. But at some point we have to continue increasing our prevention staff and our support administrative staff, because we're not going to be able to fight our way out of this wildfire problem in California. And it's going to take a lot of prevention efforts to do that. So importantly is, though our firefighters, or our working title of a Firefighter, an Apparatus Engineer is an Engineer and a Captain is a Captain, Battalion Chief is a Battalion Chief, I say that because it's important that both the public and the legislature understand that it's our expectation that though they have civil service class titles and are working on fire engines and hand crews responding to emergencies and helping the public every day, when they're not doing that, we're doing our other mission of natural resource protection, education, prevention, fuels reduction to turn this corner.

>>Monte Manson: It is a very comprehensive role that I think everybody in the department has to play, regardless of what position they're in. Very well said, Chief.

[Transition Music]

>>Monte Manson: So I want to move on to one of the last points here. And it's, you know, again, talking about the number of individuals in this department, the growth that you mentioned previously, over the past ten years from 6,600 to 12,000.1, we've got all these people and as much work and effort that you're putting into trying to reach as many people as possible, obviously, none of us have an opportunity to meet and know every single person. So for those people that you've not yet had a chance to engage with or interact with or they've not had an opportunity to make it to Sacramento, or if you've not had an

opportunity to make it to their Unit or their station, all of those people out there, what is one of your messages? If you can think about maybe the top two or three messages to those folks that you've not had an opportunity to meet, what do you say to them? What's your message to them as the director of CAL FIRE?

>>Chief Joe Tyler: My first message is, thanks for coming to work at CAL FIRE. And at the end of the day, while we have our hiccups, I hope that you are working in a happy and productive environment. That is so important that I just want our employees to be happy and I want their health and wellness to be taken care of. We have to remember, regardless of whether you're in the Office of the State Fire Marshal, whether you are in Resource Management, you're in a Schedule A or Schedule B fire station or hand crew, whether you are administrative support staff. This agency is sometimes referred to as a fire department, other times referred to as natural resource protection. I prefer it all blended together because that is the total mission of this department. And so we have to recognize that every one of us are here for a public service mission, that we are following a path of what we commonly talk to you about as servant leadership, that we are here to serve others. Now, not to the detriment of our health and wellness. And I recognize so many sacrifices that, move forward, that people sacrifice. Likewise, I ask that every new employee and every tenured employee not only think about the sacrifices that they make, but recognize the sacrifices that your loved ones and your close family, friends will sacrifice as well. You know, I just paused for a second because I was asked recently, when the day comes, someday that I retire, what do I want to do? And my response was, I want to have a summer. I have never, and this is my 34th year, had a summer off just like most people in this department. But don't take those things for granted and find opportunities to disconnect when you can and spend time with your family and friends.

>>Monte Manson: Beautiful, beautiful, Chief. Really appreciate that. Well, I'll tell you, those were the five points that we had set up for today's podcast. I'm going to throw in what we're going to call today the extra point. We've got one extra point to hit, and it goes to something that you and I and the executive team for CAL FIRE talked about a week ago, and you had actually asked this question. So the extra point today is what is your why?

>>Chief Joe Tyler: What is my why? So I asked the executive team last week... You know, actually, I'm going to take a step back even further. Every month we have an executive team meeting and there are 3 questions we typically will ask each other, you know, what did we do well? What could we do better? Actually, I don't remember what the third question was. But last week I changed it. And to your point, the question was, what is your why? Why do you come to work every day? What motivates you to be part of public service? What do you want to accomplish? And my answer is: my way is CAL FIRE. My way is the team. My way is the women and men across this state that are doing so many great things. And I am just the mouthpiece, but I am able to talk about the things that everybody is doing across the state. I am able to find wins and opportunities when the legislature concurs and the Governor signs a new budget. To find opportunities to continue to diversify and grow this department. That is my why. Those are my wins. Those are my successes. And then there is one other item that I talked to the executive

team that I didn't ask last week about, and I think this is important and an opportunity that every one of our employees, every one of us are moving so fast in this department. You are doing extraordinary work. Extraordinary is the key. But so often as you are doing and finishing that extraordinary work, things are moving so fast that we just move on to the next subject. And when we do that, we make that extraordinary, just ordinary, right? We don't celebrate our successes. So I guess that's another message is make sure you take the time to celebrate our successes and the people within the Programs, the Regions and the Units that are making those successes happen, to show our appreciation on where we are in the department today.

>>Monte Manson: 100% agreed, Chief. Just to reiterate for everybody out there, please take some time to think about your why individually. It doesn't have to be just us at the executive team. I think each and every one of us in this organization should take an opportunity to think about that why. And then also to your point, Chief, also celebrate all of your successes. It doesn't matter what program you work in, what classification. There's 100 and some odd classifications in this thing. Each and every one of us are doing that great work, and I think we should celebrate that and take that time to do that. So Director Tyler for CAL FIRE, thank you so much for your first one and a half years. We're looking forward to even more great service and support from you and we look forward to speaking with you very, very soon. Thank you very much.

>>Chief Joe Tyler: Monte, thank you for facilitating our very first podcast, Five Points with the Chief. I am committing that, where my initial commitment was to put out regular messages, I think this is a great opportunity for podcasts quarterly and or if other special issues come up, we can always put something together to get that message out and be able to communicate all the way to the ground level.

>>Monte Manson: That's it, Chief. Yes, we will. We're going to hold you to that.

>>Chief Joe Tyler: All right.

[Soft Drum Beat]

>>Monte Manson: So get ready for that. We're going to track you down and pull you in to the podcast room here and make sure that we get you to those at least quarterly podcasts so that everybody can hear about some of the great things that are happening in the department and maybe some of the things that just need to be talked about. So everybody stay tuned. Thank you so much for joining this podcast and we will see you next time.