

Message from the Chief

March 2014

Recently, I visited members of the Fire Apparatus Engineer (FAE) hiring group in Santa Rosa as they worked through the statewide hiring of FAEs. This group, made up of representatives from northern and southern units as well as both regions, was on the second day of a weeklong effort to contact almost 500 FAE candidates to offer either permanent or limited-term positions with the Department for the upcoming fire season.



This undertaking was the culmination of months of hard work to revamp the hiring process for the Firefighter II (FF II) and FAE classifications. A similar meeting will take place in early April in Fresno to process the FF II hiring.

Early in 2013, Executive Management created the Hiring Workgroup to tackle an action item from the 2012 CAL FIRE Strategic Plan. Pulling together a talented mix of employees from units in the north and south, both regions, and Labor and Human Resource Management in Sacramento, the Executive Team tasked this group to streamline the hiring processes and to eliminate statewide hiring redundancies.

Early on, the Workgroup established goals to create similar hiring processes within the fire protection classifications; to eliminate duplication of effort and reduce the workload and cost associated with hiring; to integrate technology; and to establish processes that result in manageable candidate pools. Their efforts to achieve these goals over the past year have culminated in a new centralized hiring process for FF II and FAE classifications, replacing the previous unit-based process.

This was an extremely ambitious project, as it needed to be completed in time for this year's round of hiring, and the group worked very hard to come up with a new, streamlined process. Despite the workload pressures of their normal assignments, these individuals made the time to meet regularly (19 times over the last year) in order to tackle the challenges of such a significant change in process and to develop innovative solutions to potential roadblocks.

In addition, the effort of the Hiring Workgroup is a great example of what we can accomplish when we bring together people with diverse backgrounds, experience, and priorities to work towards a common goal. Their unique blend of knowledge, expertise, can-do spirit, and dedication to the Department enabled them to develop a process that will serve the Department well for years to come.

As with any new process, there are adjustments or refinements to be made, but I am confident that the Hiring Workgroup will continue to work together to evaluate the process and make corrections as necessary.

Most importantly, I want to thank each and every member of the Hiring Workgroup for their hard work and dedication to this effort, and to the Department overall.

Chief Ken Pimlott
Director