

Message from the Chief

Chief's Memo – October 6, 2006

Pay Inversion for Incumbent CDF Chief Officer Class Addressed by Department of Personnel Administration, Succession Plan and Reorganization in Progress



The CDF Chief Officer classification took a major step forward with the solution offered by the Department of Personnel Administration (DPA). The solution has been in the process of negotiation between CDF, DPA, and Finance over several years. I am grateful for the support offered by the Administration in resolving a difficult situation for supervisors and managers in the Chief Officer class within CDF.

I would like you all to understand that the process is one that attempts to find a reasonable solution for all departments and the Administration. It is a process of compromise and consensus building, not unlike those for represented classes. Represented groups do not get everything they seek in one negotiation. Neither do managers. In the end, I believe this compensation plan is a good one for incumbent chief officers.

After many months of negotiation and effort, during my tenure as Director, we have reached an agreement with the Department of Personnel Administration and Department of Finance on a solution to the Chief Officer salary inversion problem. This solution is retroactive to July 1, 2006 and consists of the following:

- Assistant Chiefs (AC) will be given a gross compensation increase, inclusive of longevity and Extended Duty Pay (EDP) at 10 percent. That represents a 5 percent increase above the average monthly compensation level of a 72-hour Battalion Chief (BC). Unit Chiefs (UC) and Forestry and Fire Protection Administrators (FFPA) will receive a compensation increase equivalent to 5 percent above the AC level.
- In addition, EDP will increase an additional 5 percent from May 1 through October 31 each year beginning May 1, 2007. This will apply to AC, UC and FFPA positions.

Together this represents an annualized compensation increase of approximately 12 percent in PERSable salary.

In addition, a recruitment and retention bonus will be offered for 36 months at a rate of \$1850 per month for ACs and approximately 5 percent higher for UCs and FFPA. This recruitment and retention bonus will not be PERSable and will sunset on June 30, 2009. Finally Chief Officer CEAs will be compensated at a 5

percent or one-step level above their subordinate staff. We hope to receive a Personnel Management Letter from DPA regarding this inversion plan early next week at which time I hope to be able to provide more details.

The test of the success of this solution will come with succession, as we attempt to fill vacancies. While this solution does not quite offer the incentives for promotion that I had hoped for, it does not provide the penalties that were once part of the package being considered. Through a combination of reinstatements, promotions of 84-hour BC's aiming for Unit Chief positions and higher, and transition of 72-hour BC's in 2-3 years, and other methods, we will hope to address the issue of succession over time.

We will also continue to look at needed reorganization, reclassification, and long-term succession planning. A statewide managers meeting is being held next week to address these issues and look toward the future of CDF.

Although, announcements have been delayed until after the statewide managers have had opportunity for input, we have moved on a course of returning to two CDF Regions. The managers meeting was delayed due to heavy fire season activity. Divisions of labor and responsibilities have taken place at the top levels of CDF in accordance with the PowerPoint that was distributed earlier. More authority and responsibility is being delegated down to the Unit level. We will be discussing more about reorganization and more written information will be disseminated after the meeting next week.

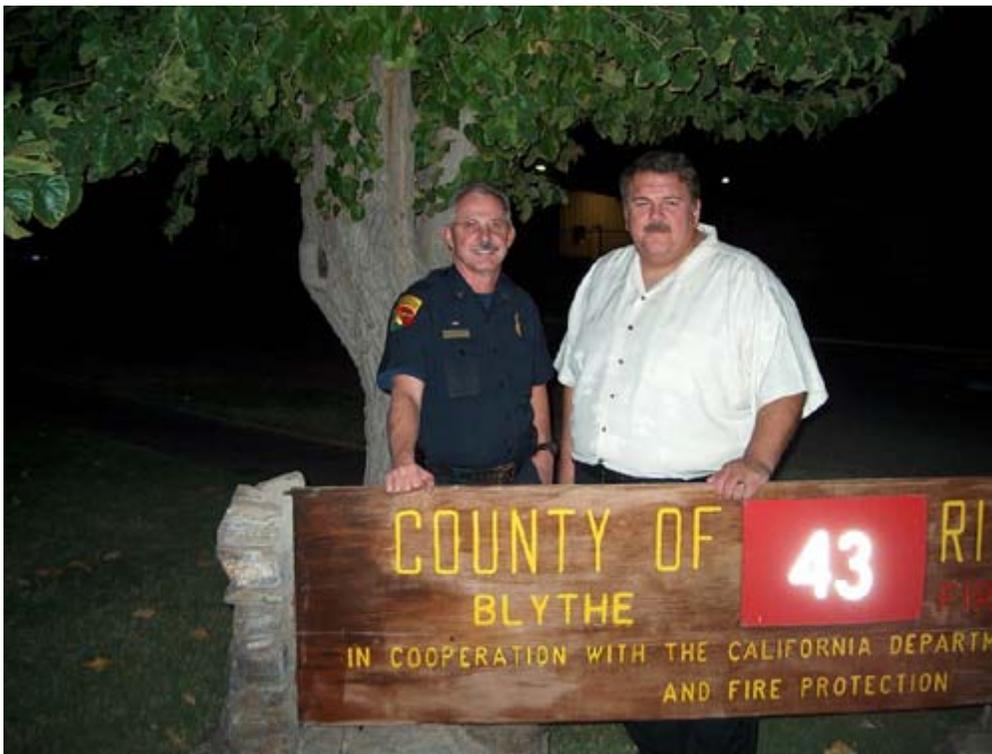


On other topics, Governor Schwarzenegger visited the “Day Fire” and helped lift the spirits of firefighters who had been fighting the month long wildfire that

became the fifth largest fire in California history (since records have been maintained -1932). Remarkably, only eight structures were lost, including one unoccupied residence. CDF employed the use of the DC-10 once again as the wildfire threatened the communities of Santa Paul and Ojai.

I recently attended the California Fire Chiefs Annual Conference in Riverside. I want to encourage Unit Chiefs (or a representative) to participate, when possible, with professional fire service organizations such as Cal Chiefs, League Chiefs, Metro Chiefs, or District Chiefs (FDAC). CDF can and should provide leadership in the California Fire Service. I know that we do so on the local level, but would encourage statewide participation.

While I was in Riverside, I dropped by for a surprise visit of the three Riverside County Fire Stations in the Blythe area. I was warmly welcomed at all three fire stations, and spent some time with BC Bill Zimmerman.



I also attended the dedication ceremony for the new Riverside County Station 64, Sycamore Canyon. I want to congratulate Unit Chief John Hawkins and his staff for an outstanding job with the ceremony, as well as the station. Riverside County will be dedicating three more stations in the near future:

1. FS 13, Home Gardens, Saturday, October 14, 2006, 1000-1300 hours, replacement RVC Fire Station
2. FS 78, North San Jacinto, Thursday, October 19, 2006, 1600-1900 hours, new City of San Jacinto Fire Station, Cottonwood Avenue at Sanderson Avenue

3. FS 59, Mead Valley, Wednesday, October 25, 2006, 1000-1200 hours, replacement RVC Fire Station

Regards,



Ruben Grijalva, Chief
Director / State Fire Marshal

Office of the State Fire Marshal

The Pipeline Safety Division endured a weeklong compliance audit by the US Department of Transportation, Office of Pipeline Safety and received “perfect” marks. This means they will continue to receive matching federal grant funds...last year it was \$985,000. Needless to say, I am very proud of this staff!

SFM staff just returned from a successful ICC Code Development Hearing process in Orlando, Florida. The photo below represents a historic moment in code development history. It shows strength of conviction through collaboration, building relationships and creating partnerships as CDF/SFM works with the American Institute of Architects to solve very difficult issues of fire and life safety. Regardless of the outcome of the vote, there was great progress made. Asst. SFM, Kate Dargan, and staff, should be commended for taking the long view.



Legal

The Fire-Trol decision was handed down. The judge ruled in favor of CDF except for requiring the portions of the Wildland Fire Suppression Manual specifying acceptable fire suppressant chemicals be promulgated as regulations per the APA.

Everyone worked very hard over an extended period of time to achieve this result. The judge relied heavily on the declarations submitted by Dan Lang (including his deposition testimony) on behalf of CDF and by Ben Martin and William Rodriguez on behalf of DGS.

Besides rejecting Fire-Trol's CEQA claims for lack of standing, the judge's decision indicated that Fire-Trol did not provide sufficient evidence to "raise substantial questions about potential adverse impacts of the proposed project on the environment."

Although he is requiring specific provisions of the Manual to be promulgated as regulations, Judge Connelly applied the rational basis test and upheld the standards set forth therein.

The Judge did not support Fire-Trol's "limited to one bidder" and "exclusion of California product" contentions.

Congratulations to CDF and the AG's legal staff, CDF, DGS, and Dan Lang, in particular.

Aviation Management

All aviation assets participated in a statewide safety stand-down on Monday, October 2. This operational pause will highlight flight policy and procedures, and maintain focus on safe execution of duties as the fire season progresses.