



California Fire Technology Directors Association

CFTDA SFM Survey Results

September 5, 2005

What immediate changes do you believe are need?

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1. The SFM Training position (Arts' replacement) should be open to candidates from both the inside and outside to allow for a larger pool of candidates, possibly candidates from local FD Training, community college or both, and the ultimate appointment of an individual with an understanding that SFM Training is there to serve the California Fire Service as a whole, that almost all of the SFM classes are put on by community colleges and local fire departments and that almost all classes are attended by firefighters most of which work for local agencies.
2. SFM approve community colleges and universities with fire programs and curriculum to deliver SFM Classes in a distance learning and hybrid format.
3. Updating and or revising SFM courses. This is a very important issue with the CFTDA. Example; the SFM training division is now offering an Ethics class for instructors. We agree instructor ethic are critical, but how can you emphasize ethics when an instructor cannot use the course material because it is out dated. So the instructor knows he or she has to teach the class to current trends and industry standards, but now the student cannot pass the test. So the instructor ends up having to giving the answers to the students, thus compromising his or her ethics.
4. Stop the pulling of Regional Academy certification; you addressed this at our meeting in Sacramento with you already. You stated before a certification can be pulled it first must be approved by the State Fire Marshal personally.

What are some things we do not want changed?

1. We would like to see Local Processing be maintained, this process provides a valuable service to the California Fire Service as a whole. Many agencies require all of the SFM Fire Officer, and Chief Officer Classes in order to take promotional tests within their department. By allowing the colleges to grade and issue certificates the following week many firefighters become eligible to take department promotional test. An additional reason to keep it, is the community colleges deliver around eighty percent of the SFM classes being offered annually state wide. By allowing colleges to do local processing the colleges have the grades required to input into the college system. If there was no local processing and everything was sent to the state for processing the college could issue a letter grade of an "A" when the student could have been failed by you, and received no certificate.
2. I believe using Kinko to ship class material is working out well, and would like to see it continue.

What are some changes we would like, but realize it will take some time to complete?

We would very much like to be part of the solution and not the problem when it comes to the following areas of State Fire Training. The majority of us would like to see training certification stay with the State Fire Marshal office. Below are some of the areas we realize cannot be fixed over night, and will take some time to develop appropriate remedies

1. Streamline and integrate the Training and Education tracks and curriculum where appropriate.
2. Identify training standards and requirements for certification and qualifications for fire service positions.
3. Review guidelines for instructor qualifications for teaching position certification courses.
4. Revise the accreditation process of regional and local fire academies, and other entities, to deliver position certification courses.
5. California Community College Fire Technology Director's Association (CCCFTDA) and affiliated community colleges and universities would assist in maintaining curriculum, and new curriculum development of position certification courses.
6. Where appropriate and desirable, courses would be delivered in a hybrid (classroom\distance learning) or distance learning format.
7. Review the possibility of adding a required capstone class and comprehensive exam on the critical learning domains in that position.
8. A Continuing Education program and periodic re-certification process for position certification (Fire Officer, Chief Officer, Etc.) courses.
9. Re-evaluate course and certification fees.
10. Re-assess the Peer Review (PACE Committee) process.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Tim E. Capehart
President CFTDA