



July 8, 2021

TO: FIRESCOPE Board of Directors
23300 Castle Street
Riverside, CA 92518

FROM: FIRESCOPE Task Force & Operations Team

SUBJECT: Proposed FIRESCOPE Specialist / Working Group Reorganization

REQUESTED ACTION:

The FIRESCOPE Task Force & Operations Team request the FIRESCOPE Board of Directors to authorize the Task Force/Ops Team to proceed with the Specialist/Working Group reorganization plan as proposed below.

APPROVAL:

The FIRESCOPE Board of Directors approved the requested action on July 8th, 2021.

SUMMARY

As FIRESCOPE continues to evolve and provide subject matter expertise to a growing number of issues within the California Fire Service, the number of FIRESCOPE Specialist and Working Groups have also steadily increased. Currently, FIRESCOPE supports 11 Specialists Groups and four Working Groups. The number of members traditionally serving as liaisons to these groups from the FIRESCOPE Task Force numbers 12 when all positions are filled. The Task Force Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Cal OES, and California State Fire Marshal representatives typically do not have primary liaison roles. In addition, the Volunteer representative on the Task Force has remained vacant for over a year.

Due to the increased workload resulting from the expanded number of groups, the FIRESCOPE Task Force and Operations Team are recommending a reorganization of the FIRESCOPE Specialist and Working Groups.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The catalyst for a change to the organizational structure of FIRESCOPE is the improvement of three functions:

- Mentorship and succession planning
- Span of control
- Collaboration and deconfliction

Mentorship and Succession Planning

Attached is a draft organizational chart. Below each newly formed Specialist Group are proposed subcommittees. The subcommittee would be a new concept to FIRESCOPE. In this draft scenario, each Specialist Group would be assigned two FIRESCOPE Task Force liaisons and each subcommittee a chair. The purpose of the two liaisons is to provide mentorship, continuity, and succession planning. A newer member can be placed with an experienced member to learn the intricacies of the groups and develop awareness while delivering continuity when there is a departure. Subcommittees would be defined as “standing” and “ad hoc.” Standing subcommittees are permanently established to address issues concerning a specific discipline, while ad hoc subcommittees are an assembly of subject matter experts gathered to address a specific issue.

Span of Control

As the fire service in California continues to increase in complexity, FIRESCOPE continues to address emerging issues. Recently, Maritime and Behavioral Health Specialist Groups, and the Unmanned Aerial Systems Working Group were added to FIRESCOPE. During this period, the number of members on the Task Force has remained static. Although additional Task Force Members will help alleviate the workload, adding additional members to a consensus organization can pose difficulties.

The Task Force believes there is as much to gain through an improved organizational structure to manage the span of control. The subcommittee Chair would facilitate the subcommittee plan of work and subcommittee products would be forwarded to the respective Specialist Group. A reduction to six Specialist Groups will ensure that even as natural member turnover occurs, the important Specialist and Working Group duties can continue unabated.



Collaboration and Deconfliction

The proposed new subcommittees are organized into areas of similarities or overlap under the Specialist Group. Each new Specialist Group would comprise members of each subcommittee to ensure collaboration and deconfliction between disciplines and aid in the vetting of products prior to reaching the Task Force.

Although Task Force members come from various backgrounds and bring special knowledge, skills, and abilities, not all members can be experts in each discipline. Having products reviewed by a multi-disciplinary group of subject matter experts will provide an even more robust vetting process.

CONCLUSION:

As the California fire service evolves, so must FIRESCOPE. This proposed reorganization is based on the ethos established by FIRESCOPE. Maintaining span of control, mentorship, and collaboration are all foundational concepts ingrained in FIRESCOPE doctrine. A reorganization of the FIRESCOPE Specialists Groups would continue to provide the tools necessary to address California's emerging and expanding challenges. The FIRESCOPE Task Force & Operations Team are requesting that the FIRESCOPE Board of Directors authorizes the Task Force/Ops Team to proceed with the Specialist Group reorganization plan as proposed. FIRESCOPE documents requiring updates will be brought back to the Board of Directors for approval.

Attachment: Current Specialist / Working Group Org Chart
Proposed Specialist Group Organizational Chart

Board of Directors Approved: July 8th, 2021