

MINUTES OF MEETING OF
FIRE SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Room 102, Business & Professions Building
Sacramento, California

February 26-27, 1954

The meeting was called to order at 1:45 p.m. to O. S. Ball, Chairman.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman O. S. Ball, Fire Warden, Stanislaus County
Gayle V. Coger, Chief, Fresno City Fire Department
George E. Courser, Chief, San Diego City Fire Department
S. H. Edmondson, Chief, Pasadena City Fire Department
Frank P. Kelly, Chief, San Francisco City Fire Department
Keith E. Klinger, Chief Engineer, Los Angeles County Fire
Department
Louis F. Ledford, Chief, Palo Alto City Fire Department
DeWitt Nelson, State Director of Natural Resources
Marion M. Nelson, Fire Control Officer, U. S. Forest Service
Eacil A. Roberts, Chief, Inglewood City Fire Department
Burnett Sanford, Regional Forester, National Park Service
J. Lyle Stevenson, Chief, Stockton City Fire Department
Joe R. Yockers, State Fire Marshal

Harold P. Sowhay, Chief, Fire Services Division, Office of
Civil Defense

E. C. Adams, representing Loren Bush, Board of Fire Under-
writers of the Pacific

R. Stange, representing Jay W. Stevens, National Board of
Fire Underwriters

Absent: John H. Alderson, Chief Engineer, Los Angeles City Fire
Department
Loren S. Bush, Chief Engineer, Board of Fire Underwriters
of the Pacific
Jay W. Stevens, Assistant Manager, National Board of Fire
Underwriters

Members of State Fire Marshal's
Advisory Board and Visitors:

George Arens, Chief, Arbuckle Fire Department
Lloyd B. Canfield, Chief, Beverly Hills Fire Department
Gene Desimone, Chief, Citrus Heights Fire Department
Thomas Diess, Battalion Chief, Sacramento City Fire Department
Don Lavenberg, Chief, South Pasadena Fire Department
Jesse H. McLendon, Public Safety Officer, FCDA Region 7
H. F. Morris, Chief, San Mateo City Fire Department
Harold E. Payton, Captain, San Anselmo Fire Department

Mason D. Riegel, Division of Fire Services, OGD
Charles E. Smith, State Fire Marshal's Office
Lester G. Smith, Division of Fire Services, OGD
Melvin Swift, Chief, Woodland Fire Department
George R. Taylor, Division of Fire Services, OGD

Chairman Ball introduced Chiefs Edmondson, Klinger and Kelly as new members of the Committee.

I. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Motion 1 It was moved by Chief Yockers, seconded by Chief Sanford, and unanimously carried,

That reading of the minutes of the previous meeting be dispensed with, since copies had been distributed to members prior to the meeting.

II. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Chief Stevenson, chairman of the subcommittee appointed to consider the question of filling the vacancy created by the resignation of Chief William Meinheit, reported that, after due consideration, Chief Howard LeStrange, City of Berkeley Fire Department, had been recommended.

Motion 2 It was moved by Chief Yockers, seconded by Chief Ledford, and unanimously carried,

That the Committee recommend to Governor Knight that Chief Howard LeStrange, City of Berkeley Fire Department, be appointed to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Chief Meinheit.

At the request of Chief Bowhay and DeWitt Nelson, the Committee recessed for twenty minutes to inspect the new Civil Defense and Forestry units stored at the State Garage.

III. "OPERATION FIRESTOP"

Chairman Ball asked M. M. Nelson to explain to the Committee the project, "Operation Firestop". Mr. Nelson outlined the objectives of the project and stated that, even though the project is only sixty days old, it has progressed very rapidly. He added that the Federal Civil Defense Administration was most interested in the results of this program.

Chief McLendon pointed out that Congress has appropriated funds to assist in this project but that the funds have certain legal strings attached: they can only be used on that phase of the operation that deals with the control of mass fires and conflagration. The use of smoke and fog barriers is one phase that is of particular interest to the Federal Civil Defense Administration.

Mr. DeWitt Nelson pointed out that results from tests conducted in "Operation Firestop", whether positive or negative, would be of great importance to the fire services.

Motion 3 It was moved by Chief Edmondson, seconded by Chief Coger, and unanimously carried,

That the Committee go on record as supporting "Operation Firestop".

IV. ALUMINUM PIPE PROCUREMENT PROGRAM

Mr. Lester Smith explained that the estimated cost of 80,000 feet of aluminum pipe and the necessary fittings was \$160,000, but that the bid cost was \$103,000. To increase the pipe order to 100,000 feet, as originally recommended by the Committee, would cost approximately 25% more than the present bid price. Chief Smith pointed out that the cost of an increased pipe order for 100,000 feet would be well under the original estimated cost for 80,000 feet.

Motion 4 It was moved by Mr. DeWitt Nelson, seconded by Chief Stevenson, and unanimously carried,

That the aluminum pipe order be increased to 100,000 feet and required fittings be purchased if funds are available.

Chief Smith next spoke on the question of storage locations for aluminum pipe. He pointed out the prospective storage locations should be considered on the basis of transportation, manpower and communications available at the location. State and county highway maintenance yards and State Division of Forestry stations were mentioned as ideal locations because of these factors.

Chief Bowhay asked the committee for their recommendation as to the amount of pipe to be stored in any one location. Several members thought that stocking of pipe should be in minimum units of 10,000 feet.

Chief Yockers asked if any consideration had been given to building trailers to tow the pipe behind fire apparatus. Chief Bowhay replied in the negative, but stated he would explore the possibilities.

Chief Lavenberg suggested that several units of pipe -- two or three thousand feet -- be withheld from stockpiling and circulated to fire departments for training purposes.

Chief Courser asked if the pipe, when stockpiled throughout the State, would be under the jurisdiction of the fire services or public works agencies. Chief Bowhay explained that the pipe was to be under the jurisdiction of the fire services and pointed out that FGDA had already stockpiled steel pipe in locations around the target areas for use by public works agencies.

Motion 5 It was moved by Chief Klinger, seconded by Chief Roberts, and unanimously carried,

That a three-man subcommittee be appointed by Chairman Ball to study the question of distribution of aluminum pipe and report their recommendations before committee adjournment on February 27th.

In response to Motion 5, Chairman Ball appointed Chiefs Kelly, Canfield and Klinger. Chief Klinger was appointed as subcommittee chairman.

V. PORTLAND FIRE CONFERENCE

Chairman Ball called upon Chief McLendon to speak on the forthcoming high level fire conference to be held at Portland, Oregon, April 22 and 23. Chief McLendon explained that the purpose of the conference was to evaluate accomplishments in the Civil Defense Fire Services' program and, with latest information available on improved atomic and nuclear fission weapons, consider possible adjustments in the defense plans. It was mentioned that eight top Federal Civil Defense Administration officials, as well as Mr. Horatio Bond of the N.F.P.A., would attend the conference.

Subjects on the conference agenda will include a comparison of World War II destruction and weapons with present day weapons; urban analysis; ways and means of augmenting water supplies; communications for the fire services, with emphasis on statewide radio networks; panel discussions by fire chiefs representing critical target cities, chiefs representing the mobile support areas, and State Fire and Civil Defense officials. Chief McLendon said that arrangements and program were near completion and additional information from FCDA would soon be transmitted to the local level through Chief Bowhay's office.

VI. MATCHING FUND PROGRAM

Chief McLendon next spoke on the possibilities of another Federal matching fund program for the fire service during the 1954-55 fiscal year. He said that a national inventory of equipment would be taken soon, to determine how much equipment is now available for the target areas. If the results of the survey indicate a need for more fire apparatus, FCDA will ask Congress for a supplemental budget and extend a matching fund program to local fire departments for the purchase of fire apparatus and equipment.

VII. ASSIGNMENT OF STATE FIRE PUMPHERS

Chief Lester Smith explained the new conception of specific targets within a target region and the policy of not locating Civil Defense fire apparatus within three miles of such a target. He pointed out that the targets shown on the maps displayed to the committee were installations and industries listed by the military as critical to the defense effort. Any apparatus previously assigned that is now within three miles of a listed target is subject to reassignment to a more suitable location. State institution assignments, he said, would be governed by the same policy.

Chief Bowhay asked that the committee review the maps on display and recommend a plan of distribution for the new group of pumphers now in production.

The meeting recessed until February 27 at 9:00 a.m.

The Committee reconvened at 9:15 a.m. on February 27th.

Chief Bowhay asked the members for their thoughts on the allocation of a certain number of pumpers to each region leaving it up to the regional and area fire chiefs to decide on locations of the pumpers within their regions.

Motion 6 It was moved by Chief Gager, seconded by Chief Courser, and unanimously carried,

That the Division of Fire Services allocate a certain number of Civil Defense pumpers to each region and that the regional and area fire chiefs make the determination as to their location; the assignment to departments to be subject to the approval of the State Director of Civil Defense.

Several members suggested that 20% of the 100 pumpers be assigned for training purposes and that they be circulated on a schedule and not permanently assigned to any one department, this 20% to be exempt from the target area restrictions. Chief Bowhay stated he would have to request FCDA to grant approval of such a concession. It was suggested that the first 25 pumpers be assigned as they are received and that FCDA be requested to grant permission for assignment of training units to critical target areas.

Motion 7 It was moved by Chief Ledford, seconded by Chief Yockers, and unanimously carried,

That 20% of the Civil Defense fire apparatus be assigned for training purposes, the State to furnish liability insurance and be responsible for repairs to the equipment other than normal maintenance.

The Committee reviewed its original recommendations of August 18, 1952, in regard to the care, housing and placement of State pool fire apparatus.

Motion 8 It was moved by DeWitt Nelson, seconded by Chief Edmondson, and unanimously carried,

That items 4 and 5 be deleted from the list of recommendations; item 10 be changed to conform with the policy of assigning 20% of fire apparatus for training; and item 16 changed to conform to policies outlined in OCD Bulletin No. 131.

VIII. MUTUAL AID DISPATCH OF STATE FIRE PUMPERS

The Committee reviewed the recommendations of the Southern California Fire Chiefs in regard to State-owned Civil Defense fire equipment. A discussion as to the number of men a department, having accepted the assignment of an OCD unit, must furnish with the apparatus on a mutual aid request, resulted in the following motions:

A motion by Chief Roberts, seconded by Chief Arens, to establish the number of men required to be furnished on an OCD unit at a minimum of four was

defeated. Mr. M. M. Nelson pointed out that in most cases the OCD units dispatched on the Macrovia Peak Fire had only two men on them and it worked out very well.

Motion 9 It was moved by Chief Klinger, seconded by Mr. M. M. Nelson, and duly carried (two negative votes cast),

That any department accepting the assignment of an OCD fire pumper agree to furnish a minimum of two men with the dispatch of the unit on mutual aid; and that this requirement be incorporated into the written agreement between the State and the transferee.

The Committee next considered the priority of release of Civil Defense fire apparatus when dispatched to a watershed or forest fire. Several members pointed out that prevailing conditions on fires of this nature sometimes prevent the early release of equipment, even though it appears that the fire has been checked, and that the decision to release equipment should be left to the officer in charge of the fire.

Motion 10 It was moved by Chief Klinger, seconded by Chief Sanford, and unanimously carried,

That the recommendations of the Southern California Fire Chiefs on the priority of release from watershed and forest fires be revised as follows:

"In the use of pool apparatus in forest and watershed areas, the following general principals will be observed" (Delete item 1 through 4):

Consideration should be given to OCD equipment for first priority for release when fire is under control.

The Committee next considered the question of who is held responsible for the replacement of equipment lost or damaged when dispatched outside of a region.

Motion 11 It was moved by Chief Yockers, seconded by Chief Ledford, and unanimously carried,

That the Office of Civil Defense, State of California, be responsible for the replacement of pool equipment lost, destroyed or damaged when dispatched out of region, except when dispatched to assist the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, or State Division of Forestry; and

That separate written agreements between the above Federal and State agencies and the Office of Civil Defense be obtained, making these forestry agencies responsible for the replacement of pool equipment lost, destroyed or damaged when dispatched to assist them.

The question of payment to firemen dispatched on mutual aid with pool equipment was discussed. It was noted that the Southern California chiefs recommended that payment to firemen dispatched with pool equipment be made for time in excess of 24 hours. Mr. Sanford and M. M. Nelson pointed out that Federal forestry agencies make a practice of beginning fire fighters' wages at the time they go on the fire and that they would continue to do so. Mr. Sanford also stated that they can pay either direct to the city involved or to the individual; however, if payment is made to a city it must be handled on a contractual basis and no overtime payment can be made to the individual.

Chief Bowhay said that there were several cases on the Monrovia Peak Fire where city firemen received direct payment from the U. S. Forest Service and it later developed that they were placing their retirement plan in jeopardy.

Motion 12 It was moved by Chief Ladford, seconded by Mr. DeWitt Nelson, and unanimously carried,

That a statement be incorporated in a letter from the Office of Civil Defense to the agencies having State pool apparatus to the effect that billing for salaries of fire fighters dispatched with OGD pool equipment to U. S. Forest Service, National Park Service or California Division of Forestry, is on an optional basis; that is, payment can be made directly to the individual or to the political subdivision; and

That a statement be incorporated in the letter advising political subdivisions that any direct payment to individual employees of the political subdivision may jeopardize retirement system benefits, as well as other benefits, of the employees involved.

IX. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Chief Klinger reported that the subcommittee appointed to study the distribution of aluminum pipe had decided to wait until after the FGDA Fire Conference at Portland, Oregon, on April 22 and 23, before submitting its recommendations to the committee.

X. CHAIN OF COMMAND

Chief Yockers advised the Committee that he had received a request from the Senate Interim Committee on Governmental Administration that he appear before them, and that he desired advice from the Committee relative to the testimony he should give. He called attention to complaints he had heard relative to conflict in the chain of command in the fire service.

A lengthy discussion on this subject followed and it was brought out that the original chain of command, as set forth in the Fire Disaster Plan, had been altered to give greater authority for dispatch of fire apparatus to local and regional coordinators. It was the general consensus of opinion that plans and operations, including dispatch of apparatus, should be handled through service channels and normal lines of communication. It was also brought out that the original Fire Disaster Plan was designed to

operate, so far as possible, on a day-to-day mutual aid basis.

Motion 13 It was moved by Chief Edmondson, seconded by Chief Stevenson, and unanimously carried,

That the Committee recommend that the fire disaster plan be altered to conform to the original plan.

The Committee further recommended that Chief Yockers and Chief Sowhay discuss the details of this motion prior to the hearing and consult with the Director of Civil Defense to determine if the original fire plan, which provided for operation of the fire plan through fire service channels, could not be reactivated without seriously interfering with the over-all plan of operation.

XI. FIRE SERVICES RADIO NETWORK

Mr. Riegel gave a brief progress report on the statewide radio network for the Fire Services.

XII. PROPOSAL TO PLACE FIRE SERVICE UNDER RESCUE SERVICE

Chief Stevenson called to the Committee's attention the proposal of PCDA to combine their Rescue and Fire Services, placing the Fire Service under the Rescue Service. He also pointed out that the International Fire Chiefs' Association and the National Fire Protection Association had gone on record opposing this move.

Motion 14 It was moved by Chief Stevenson, seconded by Chief Coger, and unanimously carried,

That the committee recommend that General Robertson request of Governor Knight that he send a letter to Governor Val Peterson, Federal Civil Defense Administrator, opposing the placement of the Fire Service under Rescue Service at the national level.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business at hand, the meeting was adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

MASON D. RIEGEL
Acting for
Loren S. Bush,
Secretary