



## CONTRA COSTA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

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### CONTRA COSTA COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY REPORT NO. 1905 “Fire Inspection Records and Reporting”

#### CONTRA COSTA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT’S RESPONSE

FINDINGS – *California Penal Code Section 933.05(a) requires a response to the designated findings of the Grand Jury.*

F1. The Code Enforcement Unit’s fee revenue has declined every year over the past four years. Fee revenue in the 2017-2018 fiscal year was less than half the amount collected just five years earlier.

***Response: Agree.*** *The revenue collected for activities (primarily fire code enforcement inspections) declined as a result of staffing vacancies, as well as recruitment and retention issues for new fire inspector positions. Revenue is only collected from inspections actually performed.*

F2. Each inspector in the Code Enforcement Unit can average up to 900 inspections per year. There are currently seven inspectors assigned to inspect about 8,000 occupancies.

***Response: Partially Disagree.*** *To date our calculations and planning indicate the typical workload factor for a fire inspector assigned to the Code Enforcement Unit to be approximately 1,200 new inspections per year after the first year (due to training and education time commitments during their first year). There are currently seven (7) fire inspector positions staffed in the Code Enforcement Unit.*

F3. Additional fire inspectors or other efficiencies are needed to keep pace with state-mandated inspections for schools and multifamily residences.

***Response: Partially Agree.*** *Additional fire inspectors may not absolutely be needed to keep pace with state-mandated inspections for schools and multi-family residential occupancies, however additional fire inspectors would provide benefit to the District and the public by performing other mandated and non-mandated inspections, and providing additional capacity to complete all the mandated inspection programs when long-term absences or vacancies exist that would otherwise create issues at a minimum staffing level. Efficiencies are needed to transition from a heavily paper-based inspection process to an electronic format.*

F4. By December 2018, the Fire District completed the required state-mandated inspections for schools and multifamily occupancies that are known to them.

***Response: Agreed.***

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F5. The Fire District has not consistently performed all the state-mandated annual fire inspections for schools or multifamily residences in prior years.

Response: **Agree.** *Similar to other fire prevention bureaus the staffing, recruitment, and retention of personnel impacted the ability to complete all state-mandated inspections in prior years.*

F6. There is no evidence that the public was informed of potential impacts of the fiscal crisis on state-mandated fire inspections prior to the media reporting in June 2018.

Response: **Partially Agree.** *A formal reporting mechanism to the Board of Directors specifically addressing state-mandated inspections was not implemented prior to 2019. Bi-monthly reports on fire prevention bureau activity are provided to the Advisory Fire Commission at their regularly scheduled public meetings and fire prevention productivity reports were provided to the Board of Directors in the Fire Chief's report from 2010 through 2013.*

F7. The current RMS system used for processing fire inspections requires that inspectors use paper forms in the field and manually enter data into the RMS once they return to the office.

Response: **Agree.**

F8. The Fire District does not have a formal audit process to confirm the accuracy and completeness of RMS data.

Response: **Partially Disagree.** *The District did initiate an audit process to confirm the accuracy of RMS data related to occupancies in 2018.*

RECOMMENDATIONS – *California Penal Code Section 933.05(b) requires a response to the designated recommendations of the Grand Jury.*

R1. The Fire District Board of Directors should consider directing the Fire Chief to evaluate the current staffing needs of the Code Enforcement Unit and confirm it has the staffing needed to complete the state-mandated annual inspections for schools and multifamily residences (currently about 8,000) by December 31, 2019.

Response: **The recommendation has been implemented.** *The Fire Chief has directed the Fire Marshal to evaluate the current staffing model of the Fire Prevention Bureau and determine the level of staffing necessary to complete all mandated inspection programs, as well as completing other inspection programs and inspections of other occupancies considered to be best practices within the industry.*

R2. The Fire District Board of Directors should consider directing the Fire Chief to produce public quarterly reports on the status of compliance with state-mandated inspections, including status for the prior 12 months and projected status to the end of the year, by December 31, 2019.

**Response: This recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented prior to the end of 2019.** An annual report, consistent with the intent of AB1205 will be produced annually for the Board of Directors. In addition, a quarterly report will be provided for the Board of Directors.

R3. The Fire District Board of Directors should consider directing the Fire Chief to develop a publicly available internet-based address lookup feature disclosing the status of state-mandated fire inspections by June 30, 2020.

**Response: This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or not feasible at this time.** This may be possible in the future with the implementation of a new records management system (RMS) for the fire prevention bureau. It is not possible with the current RMS deployed by the District.

R4. The Fire District Board of directors should consider directing the Fire Chief to replace the existing RMS with a system that includes the ability to utilize a tablet device for data entry in the field by June 30, 2020.

**Response: This recommendation will be implemented.** The District is currently in negotiations with a vendor selected to replace the RMS. It is anticipated the new system will be deployed and operational by June 30, 2020.

R5. The Fire District Board of Directors should consider directing the Fire Chief to connect the new RMS database to state and local data sources and to the District's own Computer Aided Dispatch system by June 30, 2020.

**Response: This recommendation will be partially implemented.** The new RMS will source state and local County data sources. The software will not connect directly to the District's Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system. To integrate this will be a monumental task with little value of the integration. However, the software will be immediately available for fire dispatchers to reference if needed. Additionally, we plan to provide key information to first responders while they are responding to incidents via their mobile data terminals in the apparatus. This provides fire dispatchers access to the information if needed and presents the information to first responders to make decisions on actionable intelligence.

R6. The Fire District Board of Directors should consider directing the Fire Chief to develop and implement an audit process to verify the accuracy and completeness of the RMS data by December 31, 2019.

**Response: This recommendation will be implemented.** The procurement of the new RMS will enable the District to implement an improved audit process. The implementation date will need to coincide with the deployment of the new RMS in mid-2020.