



Contra
Costa
County

To: Contra Costa County Fire Protection District Board of Directors
From: Jeff Carman, Chief, Contra Costa County Fire Protection District
Date: December 8, 2015

Subject: Establish Classification of Fire Investigator-56 Hour, reallocate three positions; and abolish Fire Investigator

RECOMMENDATION(S):

ADOPT Position Adjustment Resolution No. 21772 to establish the classification of Fire Investigator-56 Hour (KWH) (represented) at salary plan and grade 4N6-1793 (\$6,877 - \$9,215); reclassify three (3) Fire Investigator (REG) (represented) position numbers 10853, 10854, and 13701 and the incumbents to Fire Investigator-56 Hour (KWH) (represented); and abolish the classification of Fire Investigator (REG) (represented) in the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Cost neutral. Potential long term savings due to the elimination of standby pay differential and reduction in overtime recall frequency and the overtime hourly rate.

BACKGROUND:

The Contra Costa County Fire Protection District is recommending changing the staffing model of the Fire Investigations Unit (FIU) from three positions on a standard 40-hour, five day workweek schedule to three positions on three different rotating 24 hour shifts (A-B-C schedules). The latter model is the same one used for suppression personnel and has the advantage

☒ APPROVE

☐ OTHER

☒ RECOMMENDATION OF CNTY
ADMINISTRATOR

☐ RECOMMENDATION OF BOARD
COMMITTEE

Action of Board On: **12/08/2015** ☐ APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED ☐ OTHER

Clerks Notes:

VOTE OF SUPERVISORS

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of an action taken and entered on the minutes of the Board of Supervisors on the date shown.

ATTESTED: December 8, 2015

Contact: Robert Marshall,
Fire Marshal (925) 941-3520

David Twa, County Administrator and Clerk of the Board
of Supervisors

By: , Deputy

cc: Cheryl Koch, James Hicks, Eldreai Ellis, Denise Cannon-Sanchez

BACKGROUND: (CONT'D)

of providing 24/7 coverage for fire and arson investigations within the District. Reassigning personnel to a different work schedule requires the establishment of a 56-hour classification. The monthly base pay will be the same, but the hourly rate is reduced with a 56-hour schedule (2080 work hours per year vs. 2912 work hours per year).

The District currently has one investigations unit supervisor and three fire investigator positions. In 2014 fire investigators responded to over 600 incidents that required the assignment of an investigator. The District is seeing an increase in the number of fires which require investigation each year and because fires are unpredictable, an improved level of service will be achieved by having an investigator on shift at all times.

Currently, when a fire occurs outside of regular business hours, a standby investigator is contacted. The investigator receives a pay differential for being on standby and overtime pay for travel and investigation time.

Time sensitivity is critical in fire and/or arson investigations. The District does not have a residency requirement, so the investigator may be responding from a significant distance. Because of previous time delays, witnesses have left the scene or the scene may have undergone damage from suppression efforts. In suspected serial arsonist cases, the time frame is critical for identifying suspects and witnesses. A faster response time reduces or eliminates these factors, potentially leading to more arrests and better prosecutions.

Investigators are assigned take home vehicles that contain their specialized protective and investigative equipment. The cost to procure and up fit these vehicles is significant. Currently each investigator has an assigned vehicle. In eliminating the standby requirement, investigators will no longer need take home vehicles.

Assigning investigators to a 56-hour average workweek schedule will result in a scheduled FLSA overtime component being added to their regular, recurring pay. However, offsetting that is the elimination of the standby pay differential (5%), a reduction in unscheduled overtime, a 40% reduction to the actual overtime rate, and elimination of the costs associated with a take home vehicle (procurement, up fitting, fuel, maintenance, etc.). Given that, this action may likely result in long term cost savings. We are, however, categorizing this request as cost neutral while we gather more data during the first year of operation.

The existing incumbents are represented by IAFF, Local 1230. They are aware of and support the transition to a 24-hour A-B-C shift schedule.

CONSEQUENCE OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

The District will continue to conduct fire/arson investigations using standby investigators. This may result in a higher cost to run the program, reduced accuracy in cause and origin investigations, and less success in arrest rates and prosecution of arsonists.

CHILDREN'S IMPACT STATEMENT:

No impact.

CLERK'S ADDENDUM

ADOPTED as amended: deleted "abolish the classification of Fire Investigator (represented) in the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District."

ATTACHMENTS

P300 No. 21772