



Fire Watch

Los Angeles Fire Department Newsletter

September 2005
Volume 2, Issue 9

Los Angeles Fire Department
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Visit Our Website
www.lafd.org

Our Mission
"To preserve life and property, promote public safety, foster economic growth through leadership, management and actions, as an all-risk fire and life safety response provider."

The Los Angeles Fire Department Newsletter is published monthly by the Planning Section.

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Los Angeles, CA 90012

LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT BUREAU OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

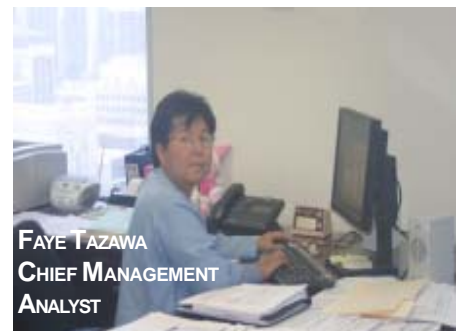
The Bureau of Administrative Services, headed by the Fire Administrator, is responsible for providing the administrative staff functions for the entire Department. These are accomplished through five Bureau sections staffed by 150 personnel.

The five Bureau sections are:

- **Management Services Section**
- **Accounting Services Section**
- **Employee Relations Officer**
- **Management Information Systems Division**
- **Personnel Services Section**

MANAGEMENT SERVICES SECTION

The Management Services Section has four subsections that include the Budget Unit, Revenue Management Unit, GIS Maps and Graphics Unit, and the Projects, Grants and Contract Management Unit.



FAYE TAZAWA
CHIEF MANAGEMENT
ANALYST

Budget Unit

The Budget Unit is responsible for the preparation of the Department's annual operating budget, which totaled \$445.5 million in Fiscal Year 2004/05. The Fire Department's budget is very complex and is the second largest non-proprietary department budget in the City.



SANDRA OCON
SR. MANAGEMENT
ANALYST II

NANCY CAMMARATA
SR. MANAGEMENT
ANALYST I (BSS)

Monitoring of the adopted 2004/05 Budget proved to be very challenging given the City's financial outlook. The budget staff closely monitored civilian vacancies and funding availability throughout the year as the imposed hiring freeze continued to severely impact the Department. The Budget



Unit managed the preparation and submission of the 2005/06 Proposed Budget.

Another major responsibility of this Unit is claims reimbursements. Budget staff reviews and processes all reimbursement claims associated with LAFD resources utilized outside of the City in fighting major brush fires, mitigating floods, or assisting in major catastrophes. The budget staff works closely with the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, U.S. Forest Service, and other entities to process and track reimbursement claims. The General Fund is reimbursed by these agencies when Fire Department personnel are activated to assist in emergency situations. All claim reimbursements have to be processed within established guidelines and timeframes. In Fiscal Year 2004/05, approximately \$2 million worth of claims were processed through various agencies.

Revenue Management Unit

The Revenue Management Unit is responsible for preparing the Cost



of Special Services Report, which resulted in the Fire Department's recovery of over \$96 million in

Fiscal Year 2004/05 for emergency services, inspection services, and miscellaneous services. These services are provided to the Harbor and Airports Departments, the general public, as well as other municipalities.

Other responsibilities include preparation of the Department's Organization Chart and cost analysis of Department proposals.

GIS Maps & Graphics Unit

The GIS Maps & Graphics Unit prepared and distributed over 11,100 map prints for use in field apparatus map books, and replaced 57 panel maps and 41 roller maps for use as ready references at fire stations. A total of 3,110

special purpose maps were prepared for administrative studies and field projects.

The Unit also provided maps and diagrams to other City departments, including Police, City Attorney, Animal Control, Transportation, Sanitation, and other agencies including the CHP, Auto Club, Thomas Guides, ESRI,

and USC.

In addition, nearly 2,000 special request projects were prepared

for use in various Department activities. These graphics products consisted of arson drawings, training aids, charts, graphs, forms, and miscellaneous art such as signage, banners, posters, flyers, logos, etc.

Projects, Grants and Contract Management Unit

The Unit is supervised by a Senior Management Analyst II as the Unit Head and Bureau Project Manager. As the Bureau Project/Program Manager, the Senior Management Analyst II develops,



coordinates, reviews, and reports on various Department projects and programs. These projects, often administrative in nature, include, but are not limited to, Department-wide project and program tracking, Department budget/purchasing tracking system, selected IT systems review, and other key projects. The Unit also oversees the Grants Management and Manuals and Orders Units.

The Grants Management Unit is responsible for coordinating all grant applications and programs for the Department. The Unit is comprised of a Senior Management Analyst I and an Accountant II. The Unit is responsible for the research, application, reporting, accounting,



auditing, and follow-on review of grants managed by the Department.

The Manuals and Orders Unit is responsible for the coordination of all Department contracts and for conducting reviews and liaison with external offices in the processing of contracts. In general, the Manuals and Orders Unit is responsible for the maintenance and update of the Department's Manual of Operation, records retention, mailroom, mass duplication services, and Department contract administration.

ACCOUNTING SERVICES SECTION

The Accounting Services Section is responsible for processing,

providing financial information and reports to management. The System Unit provides support for the development, improvement, and modification of accounting systems. During Fiscal Year 2004/05, the Unit implemented the ongoing program of audit and review of timekeeping and payroll processing to identify, resolve, and prevent errors related to payroll payments.

The Funds & Appropriations and Accounts Payable Unit is responsible for processing and accounting of all payment documents for the Department's purchases and acquisitions of goods and services. For Fiscal Year 2004/05, the Unit processed 11,180 encumbrance documents and 19,595 payment vouchers, including approximately 538 transactions in credit card purchases.

The Emergency Medical Services Billing Unit is responsible for invoicing patients and their insurance companies for ambulance transports to

hospitals provided in response to 911 calls. For the fiscal year, the Unit issued over 171,000 invoices and generated over \$49 million in ambulance revenue. Within the past few years, the Unit was able to reduce the amount of time required to issue an invoice from over 75 days to less than 30 days. The collection rate on the adjusted amount continues to be over the 60 percent range.

The Accounts Receivable Unit processed 6,415 invoices and collected \$46.9 million in revenue from other LAFD services including reimbursements received.

Overall, the Section has facilitated the billings and collections of over \$96.4 million total actual Departmental receipts for the fiscal year.

The Payroll Unit of the Los Angeles Fire Department continues to review, audit, and process all timekeeping, FLSA payments, and payroll change document adjustments for payment to approximately 3,979 sworn members and approximately 420 civilian members with an over \$425 million combined salary budget. Since Fire Department sworn members have the most complex pay system in the City of Los Angeles, the Department has closely worked with the Controller's Office in implementing the new PAYSR Payroll System.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS OFFICER

The primary responsibility of the Employee Relations Officer is to represent the Department in all matters relating to employer/employee relations. Other responsibilities include:

- Participating as a member of the Fire Chief's staff for the purpose of providing input on matters relating to employer/employee relations.
- Functioning as the Department's designated Management



**RUGENA WEAKLEY
PAYROLL SUPERVISOR II**

recording, classifying, interpreting and safekeeping all financial records and transactions of the Fire Department in conformity with the generally accepted accounting principles, City Charter and Administrative Codes, and the City Controller's Office Departmental Manual and guidelines.

The General Accounting and System Unit is responsible for



- Representative. Developing Memoranda of Understanding with various recognized employee organizations through the meet and confer process.
- Maintaining liaison with C.A.O., City Attorney, and other departments relative to employee relations.
- Maintaining and monitoring the Department grievance procedures.
- Responding to major emergencies when on-call as a member of the Incident Management Team.
- Attending meetings of various governmental agencies and professional groups as a representative of the Department, and preparing written reports for the Fire Chief.

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS DIVISION

This Division's primary responsibility is the planning, development, implementation, administration, and support of information technologies for the effective management of Department resources, fire/life safety, and meeting the business goals of the Department. The Management Information Systems Division is comprised of four main Units.

Mission Critical Support Unit

This Unit primarily supports mission critical legacy applications and related subsystems. The Unit also develops and maintains the systems and interfaces with the

legacy systems. Specialized business applications are also developed as the need arises and interface to legacy systems as required. Personnel of this Unit are required to be on-call 24 hours a day, seven days a week to respond to any problem or outage with the Network Staffing System.

Network Operations and Client Support Unit

The staff of this Unit is required to be on-call and respond to network and server problems 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The primary responsibility of this assignment is to administer the Department's network, computer systems, and peripherals; to maintain a safe and secure computing environment; to work with end-users in acquiring the software and hardware necessary to satisfy Department business needs; and to ensure that the software and hardware are maintained in such a manner so as to maximize system availability.

Application and Planning Support Unit

This Unit is responsible for developing new Fire Department automated applications, supporting existing applications, and providing information from various data sources to Department management for use in making resource deployment and management decisions. The Unit works closely with the Information Technology Agency and vendors in the development and acquisition of information technology hardware and software, including commercial off-the-shelf software.

Dispatch Systems Support Unit

The Dispatch Systems Support Unit is responsible for the

maintenance, enhancement, and evolution of the City's most critical fire/life safety system, the Fire Command and Control System (FCCS). This Unit coordinates all modifications and enhancements with the Information Technology Agency, contractor staff, and Operations Control Dispatch (OCD) personnel. The Dispatch Systems Support Unit also responds 24 hours a day, seven days a week to any system outage for the purpose of coordinating the efforts to restore the FCCS to service.

PERSONNEL SERVICES SECTION

The Personnel Services Section, which also includes the Selection Unit, serves over 3,900 uniformed and civilian members of the Fire Department in the following:

- Preparing payroll change documents for new hires, promotions, leaves of absence, transfers and assignments, pensions, and other transactions.
- Maintaining employee personnel folders and records.
- Administering the Department's bilingual compensation program.
- Administering the executive appraisal merit pay process for Chief Officers.
- Administering the Advanced Starting Salary process for Firefighter Recruits.
- Confirming eligibility for family and medical leaves.
- Providing assistance with civilian injured-on-duty situations.



- Assisting with the reasonable accommodation assessment and placement process.
- Maintaining contact with the Personnel Department, City Administrative Officer, Controller, Pension Department, City Employees' Retirement System, and other offices regarding applicability and interpretation of employee salary and benefit issues, eligible lists, position control, and each Memorandum of Understanding.
- Assisting with and monitoring all aspects of the selection and promotional processes for civilian and uniformed classifications, including selection tool development and certification interview training for raters.
- Reporting on the deployment of civilian classifications.
- Assisting uniformed members applying for service pensions.
- Maintaining and issuing uniform insignia items.
- Distributing service pins.
- Monitoring civilian sick leave usage.
- Preparing and forwarding all of the Department's requests for substitute and in-lieu authorities.
- Responding to and preparing verifications of employment for all members, as requested.

WELLNESS PROGRAM

Medical Liaison Unit

The Medical Liaison Unit (MLU) assists members who have sustained a duty-related illness or injury by coordinating with the member, the third-party adjuster, and the Workers' Compensation Division of the Personnel Department. This Unit arranges necessary emergency care 24 hours a day and ensures follow-up care during regular business hours. The MLU tracks all members off-duty IOD (injured on duty) and coordinates the Return to Work Program.

This Unit maintains all pertinent medical reports and records for IOD and non-IOD injuries and illnesses. The MLU responds as part of staff to major emergencies and to members hospitalized due to IOD injuries and illnesses. This Unit also coordinates with the Occupational Health and Safety Division to set up work fitness evaluations, both medical and psychological.

The Medical Liaison Unit processed 1,294 work-related injuries/illnesses in Fiscal Year 2004/05 and made 116 personal visits to injured members who had been admitted to hospitals for care. The MLU also assisted the Pensions Department in processing disability and service pensions and is working on converting stored medical data into a new, more efficient, and confidential system.

Physical Health Program

The LAFD Wellness Program is under the direction of Dr. Steven F. Loy, Wellness Coordinator. The purpose of the Program is to improve the overall health and fitness of firefighters and to reduce

the risks of chronic or life-threatening medical conditions, thereby improving firefighter productivity and morale. Over the long term, it is expected that maintenance of a healthy workforce through active participation in the Wellness Program will reduce Workers' Compensation costs and provide the City of Los Angeles with a more cost-effective Fire Department.

Responsibilities include:

- Determining the current health status and exercise participation of firefighter personnel and identifying potential risk factors.
- Initiating recommendations for developing a Physical Fitness Program, a comprehensive Return to Work Program, and a structured Illness/Injury Prevention Program.
- Developing and disseminating motivational/educational information to encourage improved levels of fitness.
- Designing an individualized exercise/fitness program to enhance firefighter job performance, health, and wellness.
- Providing guidance for firefighters undergoing rehabilitation.
- Assisting in the acquisition of grant funding for future program expansion including exercise equipment for Department facilities.



- Researching and compiling statistical data to demonstrate the effectiveness of the Department's Wellness Program, and preparing progress reports for the Fire Chief, the City Risk Manager, and the Personnel Department.

Behavioral Health Program

The Behavioral Health Program (formerly the Stress Management Program) is a comprehensive, multi-faceted, peer-driven peer support program that provides psychological and behavioral health intervention, care, education, and 24-hour/7-day-a-week crisis support to Department members. The Program attempts to help by providing strategies to remedy excessive distress/conflict/stress. This Program utilizes the strengths of two complementary approaches – critical incident stress debriefing and peer support - as well as pre-incident education and training.

The Program is directed, supervised, and administered by a full-time Fire Department Psychologist. Additionally, a full-time CISM/Behavioral Health Coordinator works directly under the Psychologist to coordinate, plan, intervene, organize, and co-administrate the Program. The Program also utilizes a 24-hour/7-day-a-week CISM Team of approximately 60 active, trained LAFD peer helpers of all ranks and positions. To keep their status current, Team Members are required to attend at least two continuing education programs annually.



The Department Psychologist and the CISM Coordinator received approximately 180 dispatched notifications of incidents possibly needing intervention in Fiscal Year 2003/04. During this same time period, the Department Psychologist, CISM Coordinator, and CISM Team Members responded to 23 formal critical incident stress debriefing sessions, each lasting two to three hours. These post-incident interventions involved face-to-face and group contact with over 400 uniformed personnel. Additionally, over 43 crisis calls were tracked in which telephonic counseling and support were provided to Department members. Over the course of the year, 100 one-on-one individual crisis counseling sessions were provided to Department members. These reported numbers of intervention sessions were arranged, formal meetings. During the course of the year, the Department Psychologist and CISM Coordinator also made numerous informal contacts through conversations that required intervention, support, and CISM management. These contacts were not tracked.

The Program also delivers pre-incident education and stress inoculation at the fire stations, Captain orientations, Recruit classes, new employee orientations, and various training classes. Approximately 1,800 uniformed and 80 civilian members were recipients of this training presentation in Fiscal Year 2003/04.



GEORGIA MATTERA
FIRE ADMINISTRATOR

NOTE: Special thanks to newly appointed Fire Administrator Georgia Mattera, head of the Bureau of Administrative Services, and her staff for providing information for this month's Fire Watch.