

DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

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**CALIFORNIA STATE FIRE MARSHAL
FIRE ALARM ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Meeting Date: November 16, 2005
Meeting Location: SFM Headquarters Training Conference Room
Sacramento, CA

SFM Staff

John Guhl, Interim Chair
Darcell Hermann, Program Assistant

Members Present:

Rick Cortina, Wheelock, Inc.
David Secoda on behalf of Shane Clary, Bay Alarm Company
Bill Hopple, SimplexGrinnell
Jon Kapis, Rolf Jensen and Associates
Jim Langhorne, Montecito Fire Protection District
Mark Latham, City of Santa Cruz Fire Department
John Mapes, Foster City Fire Department
Doug Myers, City of Pasadena Fire Department
Cindy Moore, Orange County Fire Authority
Patrick Ward, Schirmer Engineering

Members Absent:

Arnold Cairns, Fire Alarm Consultant
Shane Clary, Bay Alarm Company
Howard Hopper, Underwriters Laboratories Inc.
Michael Reeser, Santa Rosa Fire Equipment Serv.

Guests:

Rick Lewis, Rolf Jensen and Associates

1. Call to Order

John Guhl called the meeting to order at 9:46am.

2. Introductions

John Guhl welcomed everyone to the meeting and self-introductions were conducted. A quorum was established.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting

Minutes of March 2, 2005 and July 20, 2005 were approved.

4. Membership

Most memberships expired December 31, 2005 and were extended six months until new re-appointment letters can be sent. For consistency, all memberships will be renewed for two years with an expiration date of December 31, 2007.

OLD BUSINESS (WORK GROUP UPDATES)**5. Patient Room Corridor Lamps**

No action has occurred. Issue was tabled.

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Action Item: John Guhl will contact Mike Novotny regarding language to present at next advisory meeting. Committee members reviewed and discussed former minutes regarding this issue.

6. FA Plan Review Guide/Check List

Issue was tabled until next meeting. Workgroup will meet after advisory committee meeting adjourns. Rick Lewis will replace Jon Kapis on the workgroup sub committee.

NEW BUSINESS

7. IBC Fire Alarm Standards Review

John Guhl stated that the Fire Alarm Advisory Committee's participation was requested to compare the IBC and IFC to the existing 2001 CFC, CBC and CMC. He suggested that less restrictive requirements in the IBC found to be unacceptable will require an amendment with the appropriate justification. The committee is also charged with reviewing the current SFM adopted national standards and amendments to the standards. Editions of the IBC & IFC will most likely be changed to the 2006 and referenced national standards to the most current editions. If the IBC doesn't address specific standards then we have to make a general justification as to why we need to adopt these specific standards and put them in both the IBC & IFC.

Sub committee task groups for IBC & IFC fire alarm requirements review and comparison are as follows:

Dave Secoda on General, Mark Latham on standards and elevator,
Pat Ward on smoke and elevator, Rick Cortina on specific and elevator,
Jim Langhorne on general and specific,
Bill Hopple on standards and gas monitoring,
John Mapes on elevator and specific,
Doug Myers on specific and smoke and gas monitoring,
Cindy Moore on general and specific,
Rick Lewis on smoke control and gas monitoring,
John Guhl on general and specific requirements with concentration on SFM amendments.
Those on the specifics committee will also review Title 19 requirements.

Action Item: Committee agreed to do the task group meetings by conference calls and emails. Committee to complete a working draft by December 5th through the 9th with a progress report to Dan Najera for completion by December 16th. Diane Arend will then send to the committee members the week of December 19th and finalized by December the 26th. Dan Najera needs the final amendments by December 27th. A copy of sub-committee task group list was distributed to members with initial conference calls to begin Tuesday November the 22nd.

8. Regulations Update

Dan Najera discussed the next generation of the California Building Code with plans to change base model code from the Uniform to the International Building and Fire Code. The OSFM will establish a core group and 14 working groups to compare current California Building and Fire Codes to the new ICC documents. The Fire Alarm Advisory Committee's participation was requested and industry has also been invited to participate. The importance of justification on any proposed amendments in the review process was emphasized. Due to the short time frame only those amendments that can be justified will be brought forward.

The working groups were asked to develop the specific purpose and rationale statements to submit to Dan Najera by mid December. Effective date of this code will be in 2008 and the formal public comment period in early 2007.

Hard copies of the 2003 code books were made available to committee members and E- codes are accessible on line for 2 more weeks. A web based E solution will soon be available to allow for annotations to the code on line.

Each proposed amendment of the rule making package will need the rationale, necessity, authority cited. Dan Najera stated the committee will be developing the interpretative guide for SFM regulations.

Bill Hopple researched the difference between the IBC 2003 and the current fire alarm standards and passed out a document to committee members. Bill Hopple will make the presentation available to the committee to review cross references between the IBC & existing CBC.

9. Replacing System Control Units – Update on Draft Document

Bill Hopple presented hand outs along with his proposed criteria and list of reasons for replacing fire alarm control units. He stated there is nothing wrong with the reference that has been given and suggested not to mess with the Code Interpretation.

Committee discussed the issue of compatible devices with existing control panels. Jon Kapis asked question: If you go from a conventional hard-wired to an addressable, does it still require the full upgrade of the system. Committee discussed scenarios involving control unit and device replacement with comments that OSHPD will not approve a one for one replacement. The committee wants consensus from the state as to what should be done. Bill Hopple suggests a separate guide for the replacement of fire alarm control units, possibly under the State Fire Marshal letterhead and possibly one for fire alarm systems.

Jon Kapis commented on suggestions for the future replacement guide. He stated owners want to be proactive, that fire alarm systems are being discontinued and simple replacements are becoming obtrusive projects.

John Guhl stated that once a document is completed it could be submitted to the Code Interpretation Committee to be added to the existing code interpretation. Bill Hopple responded by stating it should be left alone as a guide.

Additional comments made by committee members on replacing system control units:

Committee says that # 4 already addresses a system.

Dish net devices requiring compatibility is not possible.

Jon Kapis stated it is not uncommon to have multiple fire alarm systems in hospitals and he stated the need for a guideline with more variables and options. He commented that hundreds of thousands of dollars are being spent to upgrade and consolidate fire alarm systems resulting in hostile clients.

Committee commented on San Francisco policy of: "If you replace the control panel, you upgrade the system" and suggestion was made by the committee to take the guide further to reflect this type of clarification.

Committee commented that building owners are removing zones themselves. Rick Cortina stated most municipalities take replacement of fire alarm control panel as devices for compatibility as opportunity to enforce total upgrade of that building to current fire alarm.

Motion made by Doug Myers to develop a separate guide for "when to replace fire alarm systems". Mark Latham 2nd the motion. All committee members were in agreement. Rick Lewis will take the lead and will come up with a direction to take by next committee meeting.

Action item: The fire alarm systems guide committee to come up with a direction to be taken to present at the next meeting.

10. Update NEMA/BML

Bill Hopple stated there is a program sponsored by NEMA 3SB section to eliminate the BML program. The FAQ paper explains why the BML program is not needed and is redundant to national recognized testing lab material. Bill will keep Diane Arend updated on NEMA. NEMA will initiate legislation. Bill Hopple stated that CAFAA supports the elimination of the SFM program. He is working with the Society of Fire Protection Engineers to support the elimination of the program. The Southern California FPO devices committee supports the elimination of the program also.

11. Schedule next meeting

Scheduled for Thursday, March 30, 2006, 9:30 am at
Orange County Fire Authority
1 Fire Authority Rd
Irvine, CA 92602

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 12:50 pm.

Meeting Minutes Developed by:

Darcell Hermann, Program Assistant

Office of the State Fire Marshal

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