



**DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION  
OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL**

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

Meeting Date: November 8, 2012

Meeting Time: 0900-1200

Meeting Location: Office of the State Fire Marshal, Training Conference Room  
1131 S St., Sacramento, CA 95811

**Staff Present:**

Ben Ho, Division Chief  
James Parsegian, Supervising DSFM, Chair  
John Guhl, Supervising DSFM, Technical Advisor  
Ian Lyman, MST, BML Assistant Program Coordinator  
Glenn Tong, Retired Annuitant, Technical Advisor

**Members Present:**

\*Walter Brandes, Riverside County Fire Department  
Gary Dunger, Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development  
Shane Clary, Bay Alarm Company  
Rick Cortina, Pyro-Comm Systems, Inc.  
\*Ronald Farr, Underwriters Laboratories Inc. Regulatory Services  
\*Howard Hopper, Underwriters Laboratories Inc.  
Bill Hopple, Hopple & Co.  
Ray Iverson, Sacramento Metropolitan Fire Department  
\*Jay Levy, Hochiki America  
Rick Lewis, Rolf Jensen & Associates  
John Mapes, Foster City Fire Department  
\*Michael Reeser, Santa Rosa Fire Equipment Services  
\*Richard Roberts, Honeywell Life Safety  
\*Patrick Ward, AON Fire Protection Engineering

**Members Absent:**

Tom Connaughton, Intertek-ETL

**Guests Present:**

Gene Gantt, California State Firefighters' Association  
\*Ken Quick, Southern California Fire Prevention Officers

\* Via Conference Call

**I. Call to Order**

James Parsegian called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**II. Roll Call and Introductions**

Self-introductions were conducted and Ian Lyman took a roll call.

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### III. Approval of 6/28/2012 Meeting Minutes

- Correction needed to the letterhead phone number shown.
- Richard Roberts made a motion to approve the minutes and Rick Cortina and Rick Lewis seconded. Minutes approved.

### IV. Old Business

California Fire Code Adoption/OSFM Smoke Alarm Task Force (Task Force) Recommendations:

A Fire Code regulation package was submitted and it went out for a second 45-day public comment period. Amendments recommended by the committee were approved by State Fire Marshal Tonya L. Hoover. The Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) is monitoring the regulation package as it goes through the regulatory process.

### V. New Business

A) SB 1394 – New requirements for Smoke Alarms.

Senate Bill 1394 (Lowenthal) was signed on September 21, 2012 by Governor Brown and chaptered into law. This new law would require that, commencing January 1, 2014, in order to be approved and listed by the OSFM, a smoke alarm shall display the date of manufacture on the device, provide a place on the device where the date of installation can be written, incorporate a hush feature, incorporate an end-of-life feature that provides notice that the device needs to be replaced, and, if battery operated, contain a non-replaceable, non-removable battery with a minimum 10-year life that is capable of powering the smoke alarm for a minimum of 10 years. This law would also allow the OSFM the authority to create exceptions to the above provisions via the regulatory process.

The Committee will be preparing regulations to implement the Building Material Listing Program requirements for SB 1394. Chief Ho noted that the bill was sponsored by the California State Firefighters' Association (CSFA); however, the OSFM is responsible for implementation of the law that pertaining to the listing of smoke alarms.

The OSFM has received several letters of concern with this bill by the National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA). Their letters mention that several inconsistencies exist between the law and Smoke Alarm Task Force Report's Recommendation # 6 which recommended conventional ion batteries being long-life. It was brought to the attention of the Committee that, if there is any conflicts between the Taskforce report and the law, the law will always take precedent.

Concern was expressed about the fire alarm industry being able to offer products that SB 1394 mandates. Richard Roberts described a process of re-design products to incorporate features (ie. hush feature, end of life alarm, non-replaceable battery), test and validate internally and then at approved labs.

SB 1394 authorized the State Fire Marshal to suspend enforcement of the new smoke alarm requirements, if the Fire Marshal determines that a sufficient amount of tested and approved smoke alarms are not available to property owners to meet the requirements, for up to six months maximum from the January 1, 2014 deadline. In order to proceed with this provision, the State Fire Marshal needs to have the State Fire Marshal's Fire Alarm Advisory Committee evaluate the issues and put together recommendations to the State Fire Marshal. If the State Fire Marshal approves the recommendations and elects to suspend enforcement of the new smoke alarm requirements, the OSFM will notify the Secretary of State of its decision and post a public notice, on our Web site, describing our findings and decision. The bottom line is, even

if the OSFM suspend enforcement of all of or a portion of the new requirements, it can be extended only for six months. Therefore by July 1, 2014, smoke alarms must comply with all the requirements specified in SB 1394 in order to be approved and listed by the OSFM.

SB 1394 Section 3, Parentheses 2 includes the most significant portion of the law, “a smoke alarm shall display the date of manufacture on the device, provide a place on the device where the date of installation can be written, incorporate a hush feature, incorporate an end-of-life feature that provides notice that the device needs to be replaced, and, if battery operated, contain a nonreplaceable, nonremovable battery that is capable of powering the smoke alarm for a minimum of 10 years.”

Chief Ho shared that regulations (Title 19, California Code of Regulations) will take at least six months to be promulgated and after that it will take another six months to go through the adopting process with the Office Administrative Law (OAL). The next step is to meet with the smoke alarm manufacturers to bring to their attention a new law in California that could impact their company’s ability to do business in California and listen to their concerns so that all affected parties can work together to implement this mandate. He announced a meeting will be held with listed smoke alarm manufacturers in early December.

The OSFM has adopted Underwriters Laboratories (UL) 217 and that standard is being used to evaluate and approve smoke alarms for listing. Currently, UL has not proposed any language to revise UL 217 to include a test protocol for an end-of-life of the device feature to providing notice that the device needs to be replaced. UL representatives will be at the meeting with manufacturers and will discuss the standard approval process. We are currently working with UL in this process.

Rick Lewis stated that NEMA has a posted document on their website of all state laws nationwide concerning fire alarm devices. Washington’s law requires lithium battery powered smoke alarms must last ten years.

B) CI Cable and removal of its UL listing.

A dilemma exists for installers concerning prior installations as many await UL to issue a letter concerning installations having used cable that was listed before the listing was pulled. Concerns exist concerning liability and responsibility of prior installations and getting local authority approvals for current projects. Installers are having difficulty obtaining valid cable. Bill Hopple noted that two-hour cable is needed for going through fire zones.

UL’s position on the current situation concerning CI Cable is posted on UL’s website. Chief Ho asked the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to get involved the week prior as it deals with fire safety products and recalls; he hasn’t heard back yet. Committee members understand that the latest test results didn’t show actual cable failure, but that performance was compromised.

Rick Lewis noted that New Jersey State Fire Marshal has issued a letter concerning current installations that utilized CI Cable.

## VI. Open Forum

- Review of concerned citizen’s letter about alarm testing nuisance.

A letter was reviewed concerning testing that took place for hours in a residential apartment building during business hours. Committee members related that issues exist in large scale residential complexes, but that NFPA standards require physical verification of alarm operability. Zone testing is the most common means of limiting nuisance issues. Some homeowners’ associations waive forms of such testing.

- Future Business – NFPA 72 Fire Alarm and Signaling Code

Shane Clary stated NFPA released the 2013 edition of NFPA 72. Shane was concerned about needs for any California amendments prior to January 1, 2014. John Guhl said that OSFM was proceeding with adoption. Ken Quick voiced concern that NFPA 72 needed to be correlated to NFPA 13. James Parsegian stated the Automatic Extinguishing Systems (AES) Advisory Committee has to look at this issue in the next year.

Shane Clary referred to a problem with the 2013 edition of NFPA 72 has several items that were removed for testing and maintenance requirement for integrated systems. This occurred due to NFPA 4 coming out in 2015 per the Standards Council. Shane Clary noted that NFPA 4 is coming out and is meant to become the standard for integrated testing of fire protection systems.

## **VII. Action Items**

### A) Items to be performed by OSFM

- 1) Distribute a list of listed smoke alarms with 10 year batteries (Compiled 11/29/2012).
- 2) OSFM to issue a meeting invitation the following week to smoke alarm manufacturers with listed alarms and approved laboratories concerning SB 1394 (Completed).
- 3) Three NEMA letters concerning SB 1394 will be distributed to Committee (Completed).
- 4) Edit letterhead date, finalize and post Meeting Minutes for the June 28, 2012 meeting.
- 5) Distribution of SB 1394 language to Committee (Completed).

### B) Items to be performed by Committee Members / Public

- 1) Richard Roberts to forward information about a Philadelphia ordinance similar to SB 1394 to OSFM/Committee (Completed).
- 2) Ron Farr to forward letter concerning CI Cable dated 9/10/2012 to James Parsegian that contains contact information concerning Al Ramirez (Northbrook, IL) and Bob James (Tampa). James will forward it to all Committee members.
- 3) Rick Lewis, Rick Cortina, and James Guhl to draft a letter to UL concerning CI Cable issues for possible OSFM signature; questions may also need to be directed to other parties. A letter will be drafted by 11/21/2012. Bill Hopple requested to review at the end. James Parsegian will send out the draft letter to the Committee member prior to the next meeting before submission to SFM.
- 4) Shane Clary to forward to John Guhl five paragraphs removed from NFPA 13 concerning testing and maintenance requirements for integrated systems (due to pending NFPA 4) per NFPA Standards Council. Richard Roberts requested this copy. John Guhl to prepare a document and distribute to Committee.
- 5) Committee to submit questions and concerns to Committee Chair James Parsegian (Completed).
- 6) All concerns, comments or known inconsistencies with the 2011 Smoke Alarm Task Force Report deriving from SB 1394 shall made in writing to the Office of the State Fire Marshal and received by end of day 11/21/2012.
- 7) Gene Gantt of California State Firefighters' Association to forward information to OSFM concerning other states' requirements similar in nature to SB 1394.
- 8) Submit future Agenda Items.

## **VIII. Next meeting**

January 22, 2012 from 9:00 AM to noon at Office of the State Fire Marshal, 1131 S Street, Sacramento. A conference line and GoTo Meeting will be setup.

**IX. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned by Chair James Parsegian, at 11:30 A.M.

Meeting Minutes Developed by:  
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