



**OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL  
STATEWIDE TRAINING AND EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION**

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**Date:** July 17, 2015

Attachment 4

**To:** Ronny J. Coleman, Chairman  
Statewide Training and Education Advisory Committee  
c/o State Fire Training

**From:** Michael A. Garcia, Deputy State Fire Marshal III

**Subject/Agenda Action Item:** Victor Valley College Reaccreditation

**Recommended Actions:** Reaccredit Victor Valley College as a State Fire Training Accredited Regional Training Program (ARTP)

**Background Information:**

A reaccreditation site visit was conducted on May 1, 2015 at Victor Valley College (VVC) Fire Academy, is located north of Apple Valley in the Mojave Desert. The reaccreditation evaluation was conducted by Michael A. Garcia, Deputy State Fire Marshal-State Fire Training with Academy Director Heath Cohen, in attendance. After initial introductions and a review of the self-assessment report, a tour of the classrooms and training facilities was conducted along with an opportunity to review course records.

It is noted that the VVC Academy is located at a state of the art public safety training facility that was opened on February 14, 2012.

In 1997, the VVC Academy was accredited as an ARTP in the SFT system. This is the first reaccreditation. VVC continues to provide a fire academy as well as in-service training for the northern portion of San Bernardino County and eastern Kern County. The VVC does not compete directly with other ARTP's, the closest being Crafton Hills College to the south and Antelope Valley College to the west.

During the exit interview, I was able to meet with Dr. Pat Luther Dean of Instruction, EMS coordinator Dave Oleson and part-time faculty Tawnie Johnson, to discuss and review SFT findings.

**Analysis/Summary of Issue:**

A tour of the training facilities, located at VVC, revealed several state of the art classrooms and a fully functioning drill tower including an engine bay with several fire engines, hazardous materials props, rescue systems and advanced fire suppression and rescue facilities.

The VVC Academy enjoys a great relationship with local fire agencies as evident by the number of students attending this academy, and participation with the ARTP's Advisory Committee. The VVC Academy has enough tools and equipment, to conduct a Fire Fighter I Academy (current version).

Local demographics are consistent with the most recent census criteria including the academy demographics endemic to a firefighter academy (very few female participants). VVC actively recruits women candidates from the local high school and from other college programs and community outreach. This is typical of most ARTP's, searching for best practices to enhance under represented populations.

It has been noted by SFT, with the increase in workload when conducting the new version of the Fire Fighter I Academy that there would be insufficient support staff. VVC Academy staff is attempting to obtain a Senior Instructional Aide position to assist with the delivery of the new Fire Fighter I course. It is anticipated there will be increased workload especially with regard to the certification testing and required documentation that must be performed to satisfy SFT requirements. Dr. Luther indicated that the College is aware of this critical need and it is being addressed at the highest levels of the College administration.

This evaluator was impressed with the facility, staff and administrative commitment to maintain SFT standards at the highest level.

I am confident that the VVC Academy will continue to meet all SFT requirements, and recommend approval of the VVC continuing as an ARTP.