



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

PO Box 944246
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460
Phone: (916) 445-8444
Website: www.fire.ca.gov



Date: January 16, 2015

Attachment 9

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

From: Rodney Slaughter, Deputy State Fire Marshal III

Subject/Agenda Action Item: Water Rescue Classes

Recommended Actions: Information/Discussion

Background Information:

Recent storms across California have underscored the operational necessity for dynamic water and flood rescues. The California fire service reported 655 water rescues between 2010 and 2013. Of those, 345 were rescues performed in a lake, river or stream.

A statewide cadre of water-rescue instructors, assembled by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CAL OES), included FEMA USAR Task Force, local government agencies and CAL FIRE. Collectively, they worked on creating an updated curriculum for River and Flood Rescue for firefighters to meet this operational need. The expressed goal of this group is to standardize water rescue curriculum, validate the instructor training process, and increase accessibility to water rescue training for fire departments in California.

Analysis/Summary of Issue:

The cadre proposes to update current State Fire Training (SFT) FSTEP courses and create curriculum material for new classes that do not currently exist within the SFT compendium of classes. The course materials will follow NFPA 1670 and 1006, along with the guidelines of American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) for water rescue activities. The curriculum would follow the commonly recognized pattern of "Awareness-Operations-Technician". These classes would be offered at the FSTEP level.

The five courses will include

1. **River and Flood Rescue Awareness** is a new 4-hour self-paced course that is meant to prepare a firefighter to safely operate from the shore during water rescue emergencies. The goal is educate the student about; the dangers of working near dynamic water, the personal protective equipment for a shore based rescuer, the techniques used to accomplish a water rescue from the shore without ever entering the water.
2. **River and Flood Rescue Operations** as an updated 24-hour course that is meant to prepare a firefighter to safely operate in dynamic water during water rescue emergencies. The topics covered

are; personal protective equipment for the rescuer, reading the water and understanding the movement of dynamic water, self-rescue skills, communication methods, basic victim rescue skills. This class is delivered in the classroom and at a suitable river or stream location.

3. **River and Flood Rescue Technician** is a new 24-hour class that is meant to prepare a firefighter to safely operate in dynamic water and to mitigate complex rescue scenarios during a water rescue emergency. The topics covered are; basic and advanced searches, victim rescue from mid river entrapments, night time and low light operations, technical rope systems for victim retrieval, vehicles trapped in moving water and recreational boating accidents.
4. **River and Flood Rescue Boat Operations** as an updated 24-hour class meant to prepare a firefighter to safely operate a boat in dynamic water that contains no rapids greater than class 1 and the current speed is generally less than 2 knots per hour. The topics covered will be basic rules of navigation, boat types and uses, loading and launching boats, basic operations of a motorized boat in static and dynamic water, reading the water, basic victim rescue, and basic troubleshooting of the propulsion systems of the boats.
5. **River and Flood Rescue Boat Technician** is a new 24-hour class meant to prepare a firefighter to safely operate a boat in dynamic water that contains class III water with a current of greater than 2 knots per hour. The topics covered will be; loading and launching boats, advanced operations of a motorized boat in dynamic water, reading the water, advanced victim rescue, rescuer deployment and recovery.

The cadre is finalizing, for each course, a course plan, student handbook, instructor guide, student and instructor taskbooks and list of required items and equipment to conduct a class. They will create an instructor task book to qualify new instructors and a transition process to capture existing instructors who meet the requirements of SFT.