

**DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION**

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**Date: July 25, 2011**

To: State Board of Fire Services

From: Chief Mike Richwine

Subject/Agenda Action Item: Reaccreditation of Rio Hondo

**Recommended Actions:**

Approve the reaccreditation of Rio Hondo College as an Accredited Regional Training Program

**Background Information:**

The Rio Hondo Community College District (RHCCD), established in 1968, primarily serves residents of Whittier, El Monte, South El Monte, Pico Rivera, and Santa Fe Springs. The district also serves residents of unincorporated Los Angeles County and several cities outside district boundaries. The district includes one college, Rio Hondo College (RHC), which provides transfer, vocational, and short-term courses for roughly 20,000 students.

Rio Hondo was one of the original applicants for accreditation in May of 1997, and has since been a strong training partner by offering FSTEP and CFSTES classes in the greater L.A. area. In December 2009 an application for reaccreditation, along with a Self-Assessment Report, was delivered to State Fire Training. A site visit was conducted on April 19, 2011 by Mike Richwine, State Fire Training Chief, Tracy Rickman, CFTDA representative, and Dennis Childress, STEAC representative.

The site visit revealed a robust program satisfactorily meeting the required expectations in all facets. Equipment and training resources were adequate, and the course records revealed no deficiencies. Currently this program is completing CSFM courses by "local processing", and is doing an outstanding job with respect to the security of tests and with the process of offering (advertising) courses.

The single greatest deficiency in the program is the lack of diversity in the academy's student and instructor populations. This is being mitigated with outreach efforts directed toward local sports facilities and the hiring of female instructors.

**Analysis/Summary of Issue:**

The Fire Technology program at Rio Hondo College meets all criteria for reaccreditation as an Accredited Regional Training Program. Rio Hondo College's dedication to maintaining quality courses and instruction is evident by their long-term and dedicated instructional staff.