



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

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## NOTES

Smoke Alarm Task Force  
Office of the State Fire Marshal  
1131 S Street, Sacramento  
January 13, 2011  
9:30 – 3:00

### Attendees:

Ruben Grijalva (Co-Chair)  
Vickie Sakamoto (Co-Chair)  
Ray Bizal  
Kevin Cimini  
Shane Clary  
Tom Fabian  
Gene Gantt  
Wendy Gifford  
Ben Ho  
Howard Hooper  
Jay Levy  
Jim Palisi  
Jessica Power

Larry Ratzloff  
Kevin Reinertson  
Richard Roberts  
Randy Sekany  
Tom Sri  
Doug William  
Morgana Yahnke

### Via Phone:

Jay Fleming  
Marc McGinn  
Tom McNeils  
Sarah Owen  
Ernie Paez  
Ken Quick

### AGENDA TOPICS

### PRESENTER

#### 1. Welcome

Hoover/Sakamoto/Grijalva

Co-Chairs introduced them selves

Welcome and thank you from Chief Hoover

*This is not a new topic. Over the last 20 years technology has evolved, fire fuels have changed, and public awareness has increased. Each of these components has an impact on the work you will be doing. I ask that the task force keep these items in mind.*

*This group will be very focused in its work and have a short timeline of no longer than five months.*

*The rest of the country will be watching California. Other Countries will be watching California. As the State Fire Marshal I am concerned with just California and that is where I would like this committee to focus. We have some unique qualities and we need to take those into consideration.*

*As Task force members I look forward to your honesty, your thoroughness, your review and evaluation of current research and testing that is reproducible and validated. I stress most current because we are interested in what is happening now/today.*

*Every one comes to this room with a perception, with an opinion; for the next four months I would like everyone to put their perception and opinions somewhat aside and work as a team to provide the best possible evaluation and the best possible report to the State Fire Marshal.*

Chief Grijalva – Welcome

- This is a fire and life safety issue that needs to be addressed. It is controversial, Political
- Technology has evolved
- A lot of information out there (technical, scientific, and some not so scientific)
- Work together to bring all this issues before us
- Give each issue fair assessment, evaluation, consideration, before making our report/recommendation to the State Fire Marshal

**NOTE - Because this may be an issue that the media would be interested in the group decided that responses should be done with a common voice. Chief Sakamoto was designated to be the point of contact.**

## **2. Introductions**

**Sakamoto/Grijalva**

As we go around the room and make self introductions state your Name, who you represent. If you have published any documents or taken any public stand on this issue you could state that if you choose. You can take a moment to state why you are hear; what would make this a successful task force and what you hope to get out of it; what you would like to see done. In concluding, you may what to state if you have information for the task force to consider, and tell us what reports/papers you have written.

Self introduction where made of all attendees and those that called in to the meeting.

## **3. Ground Rules**

**Grijalva**

See “OSFM Smoke Alarm Task Force Ground Rules” Handout (Attachment)  
Ground Rules were discussed and approved.

#### 4. Establish Goals and Objectives

Sakamoto/Grijalva

The following points were made from open discussion:

##### **GOALS**

- Consensus/Majority - What is consensus 75%?
- "Identify Facts"
- Minority Report? – Hopefully won't need one
- Look at all data – condense to relevant with references (Foot notes)
- Studies used based on what is used today
- US Safety Standards
- Look at Full reports (not bits and pieces)
- Look at performance, maintenance, installation etc.
- Location / placement (Nuisance alarms)
- Look UL 217 and 268
- Multi Criteria Detection/Photoelectric/Ionization – Does it work or have limitations?
- Underlying Logic
- Scoping - ? Write a Statement
- Definitions – 'Nuisance' etc
- Legal issues – Technical arguments
- Smoke Alarm Standards
- Limitations on future technology?
- Anticipate completion of the task force activities by June 1, 2011.

##### **SCOPE**

From group discussion it was suggested that the wording from Chief Sakamoto Letter of invitation be the starting point for the Scope.

The letter stated:

"The scope of the project is to address the effectiveness of ionization and photoelectric smoke alarms used in single family dwellings or residential buildings. It is expected the task group will review and examine current studies, reports, and scientific data regarding the effectiveness of both technologies (ionization and photoelectric) of smoke alarms. After reviewing the information, the task group will make recommendations to the State Fire Marshal and anticipate completion of the task force activities by June 1, 2011".

Changed per group discussion to:

*The scope of the project is to address the effectiveness of smoke detection technologies including ionization, photoelectric, and other technologies, complying with current CSFM listing standards, and used in residential occupancies as required by California code. It is expected the task group will review and examine current or relevant studies, reports, and scientific data.*

*After reviewing the information, the task group will identify, analyze and report on key issues and make recommendations to the State Fire Marshal. It is the goal of this task force to complete activities by June 1, 2011.*

## 5. Future Issues

Grijalva

The following points were made from open discussion:

### **KEY ISSUES**

- Define “Nuisance Alarms”
  - Relative to cooking
  - Relative to other “nuisance” Source
  - Correct placement of alarm
- New Technologies
- Statistics (Death, injuries, property)
  - Sleeping vs. awake
  - Trends
  - Effectiveness of smoke alarms
- Delayed Detection – based on technology response
- Residential Sprinkler impact on Smoke Alarms
- Detection Response Times
- Human factors
  - Maintenance
  - Battery Replacement
  - Alarm Silencing
  - Effect of product cost on acceptance and utilization of Different technology
- Adequate # of Alarms / Placement
- Changes to industry standard re: Nuisance Alarms
- Changes to UL 217 and 268 and NFPA 72
- ASET vs. RSET (Available Safe Egress Time vs. Required Safe Egress Time)
- Specific vs. Non-Specific Fire types
- Recalls by Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) re: Smoke Alarms relative to detection issues
- Public Education proper use (use and maintenance)

NOTE – OSFM will provide the group all “CA codes/standards” vs. National (ICC)

When we identify key issues and future presentations we can form subcommittees so people can work away from the meeting and come back to the group with suggestions.

This is our first meeting so we have time for you to think about this, look them over and come back and we can add to it.

## 6. Future Presentation

Grijalva

The idea here is identify any documents/studies you would like see incorporated on the SFM web site as reference information/materials to have available for the whole committee. This is your opportunity to say that this is a document that you or who you represent says should be considered by this committee. This does not mean because we post it that the committee agrees that it should be a key document.

The next step after that is what presentations you would like us to arrange to come in and present to the committee. Any individuals, experts, who you think would be good sources of information.

The following points were made from open discussion:

### **SUGGESTED REFERENCE DOCUMENTS/MATERIALS OR LINKS**

- July 2009 NFPA Task Group Final Report on this subject. They reference 2 NIST reports.
- Presentation by NIST on a report that hasn't come out yet – on primarily combination devises
- Feb 2009 NIST Results from Full Scale Smoke Alarm Sensitivity Study – Thomas Clary.
- Feb 2009 NIST Performance of dual Photoelectric/Ionization Smoke Alarms in Full Scale Fire Test
- Harris Study on Public Education
- 2009 “Full-Scale Residential Smoke Alarm Performance,” AUBE '09, Duisburg Germany, September 8-10, 2009. Clearly, T.,
- 2009 “Smoke Alarm Response and Tenability,” AUBE '09 – Proceedings of the 14th International Conference on Automatic Fire Detection, Duisburg, Germany, September 8–10, 2009. Mealy, C.L., Wolfe, A.J., and Gottuk, D.T.,
- 2008 NFPA, , “Task Group Report – Minimum Performance Requirements for Smoke Alarm Detection Technology,” National Fire Protection Association, Quincy, MA, February 22, 2008.
- 2009 NFPA “Task Group on Smoke Detection Follow-up Report – Subtask Group 1-Task Group on Smoke Installation Strategy, Subtask Group 2-Task Group on Performance Follow-up,” National Fire Protection Association, Quincy, MA, July 1, 2009.
- July 2008 “Characteristics of Home Fire Victims,” National Fire Protection Association, Flynn, J.D.
- Dec 2009 Smoke Alarms – Pilot Study of Nuisance Alarms Associated with Cooking Arthur Lee,
- 2 NFPA 72 ?? reports
- Annex to NFPA 72 to section 29.1.1
- 2007 NFPA Smoke Characterization Study/Report
- NFPA Annual Fire Deaths (2009 Data)
- 2010 University of Maryland, James Milke – on the Performance of Smoke Detectors relative to sprinklers, allowing occupants to safely get out.
- 1980 CalChiefs Study
- For Fire Association of Australia
- Norwegian Study
- Links to reports on Nuisance Alarms

NOTE - Email a list or the actual reference reports, documents, materials, and/or web links to Vickie Sakamoto.

Once a list has been compiled, everyone can look it over and give their opinion as to if they think the committee should consider the document or their reason not to.

The following points were made from open discussion:

### **SUGGESTED PRESENTATIONS**

- 3 Presentation from Manufactures - New Technology and Smoke Alarms (10 Minutes ea)
  - Wendy Gifford – New technology
  - Kidde – New technologies
  - Systems Sensor – Not new by has a multi criteria smoke detector that incorporates photoelectric/thermal/infra-red/CO detection
- Don Russell, Texas A&M
- NIST, Dr. Clary (Thomas)
- Dan Gottuk, Baltimore – Studies and Fire testing
- NFPA Staff Liaison Lee Richardson – NFPA Task Group Report (30 min to summarize both reports)

NOTE – Howard Hopper will Draft Paper on Smoke Alarms in Residential Dwellings

### **7. Schedule Future Meetings**

**Sakamoto**

The following dates were decided on from open discussion

- February 16 and 17 in Culver City  
Presentations
- March 28 in Sacramento/Online
- April 20 and 21 in Sacramento/Online  
(This may be down graded to a one day meeting)
- Tuesday, May 24 in Sacramento/Online

**Office of the State Fire Marshal  
Smoke Alarm Task Force**

**Ground Rules**

Basic rules of engagement for issues with diverse views and opinions. They are not in priority order.

- Roberts Rules of Order
- Stay on track, time is limited, stay on agenda
- Establish fair and balanced report to SFM
- Communicate through Co-chairs
- Be respectful of one another
- Speak up, but not all at the same time
- Speak up in the room, not outside of it
- Maintain open communications via OSFM website, GoTo Meetings, and in-person
- Share all available and appropriate information
- Develop common talking points for media or other organizations, until work complete
- Document current, factual, information
- Other suggested rules...