Date: September 15, 2017

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

From: Scott Vail
CalOES Fire and Rescue
California Incident Command Certification Task Force

Subject/Agenda Action Item: California Specific Firing Operations Course (S219)

Recommended Alternative: Information/Discussion

Background Information:
This agenda item is in response to a proposal made by Joe Rawitzer of the RX Fire Council, at the July 15, 2016 STEAC meeting, and given to the California Incident Command Certification Task Force for our consideration of its merits by Chief Zagaris.

The National Wildland Coordinating Group (NWCG) has discontinued the NWCG S-234 Ignition Operations course and replaced it with NWCG S-219 Firing Operations. The NWCG S-219 course is a watered-down version of the NWCG S-234 course aimed at Firefighter Type 1 rather than prospective Firing Bosses. Because of this change there are four areas where the S-219 Course does not adequately train California Firefighters to effectively and safely conduct firing operations. The four areas are:

- Understanding fire behavior as it relates to firing;
- Hands on training to safely and effectively use firing equipment;
- Practical experience on the section of the correct firing patterns and techniques:
- Coordinating firing and holding forces to safely meet control objectives.

These are serious deficiencies in the training and pose a safety problem to local government firefighters assigned to Wildland fires without sufficient understanding of firing operations.

Analysis/Summary of Issue:
Increasingly local government personnel whether overhead or on Strike teams are being used on Wildland fires where it is assumed that they have the required expertise to do firing operations. The original S-234 course reflected the need to have proficiency in firing with the original 32 hours course. The course hours were reduced to 16 hours in the early 1990’s by making the live fire portion of the training optional. The goal was to reduce costs because the target audience was experienced Wildland firefighters, who it was thought, had many opportunities to learn firing operations on actual incidents unlike local government firefighters today. When S-219 replaced S-234 it was good time to review the new curriculum to determine if it met the needs of the California Firefighter.
A group of experienced instructors and practitioners engaged in the review of the course. Overall the S-219 has good objectives and a course outline that covers most of the technical needs to be safe and proficient during firing operations. There is a robust pre-study included by NWCG to the course which would be included in a CA version. There are, however, additional objectives and changes in content that would increase the proficiency and safety of firefighters by:

1) The adoption of additional objectives to the NWCG S-219 course that would provide the students with a broader base of knowledge on firing operations on Wildland fires and prescribed burns to conduct firing safely and effectively. The new objectives would:
   - Identify the role of the Firing Boss,
   - Effectively use firing equipment
   - Prepare a plan that discusses fire behavior, firing techniques, safety and risk management considerations to meet objectives of the operation.

2) Extending the course to 32 hours to accommodate 2 full days of live firing increase firefighter belief that safety and effectiveness on Wildland fires and prescribed burns. As proponents of the enhanced course put forth there is no way a person can become competent to lead a firing operations by sitting through a PowerPoint presentation only.
Ca.SFT-219 Ignition Operations

Description: This course provides information and develops skills required to perform and hold firing operations on wildland fires and prescribed burns. This course contains a mix of online and instructor-led training including live fire exercises. The students will be engaged in wildland firefighting and firing operations. Students are required to complete the online training portion of the course and a pre-course quiz prior to taking the instructor-led training.

Designed For: Fireline supervisors and prescribed burn personnel

Prerequisites: SFT Fire Fighter I or NWCG FFT2
S-290: Intermediate Wildland Fire Behavior

Standard: Complete all activities and formative tests Complete all summative tests with a minimum score of 80%

Hours: On-Line: 2, Pre-course quiz: 2, Lecture: 16:00, Live Fire: 14:00
Testing: 2:00

Hours (Total): 36:00
Class Size: 30
Instructor Qualification: Qualified as a DIVS or FIRB or Burn Boss

Instructor/Student Ratio: 1:30 classroom 1:6 Field

Restrictions: Arduous physical fitness

SFT Designation: FSTEP

Course Goal:
The students will be able to safely and effectively plan, conduct and hold firing operations that meet assigned objectives.

Terminal Learning Objectives

1. Identify the roles and responsibilities of the FIRB for planning,
execution, safety, coordination, and evaluation of an ignition operation on a wildland or prescribed fire. *

2. Describe Firing Operations
3. Describe environmental conditions that can change fire behavior.
4. Describe the characteristics, applications, safety and availability of the various firing devices a FIRB has at their disposal. *
5. Given a wildland or prescribed scenario, prepare a firing plan and briefing that contains desired fire behavior, firing techniques, required resources, coordination, safety and risk management factors, and communication, to meet specific objectives. *
6. Demonstrate the ability to safely and effectively conduct burn operations that meet assigned objectives on live fire exercises.

*NWCG S-219 Objectives, all are included

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### REQUIRED STUDENT MATERIALS

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<th>Material</th>
<th>Edition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Incident Response Pocket Guide, PMS 461</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICS 410-1 Field Operations Guide</td>
<td>2017 Version</td>
<td>FIRESCOPE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fireline Handbook Appendix B</td>
<td>Current Edition</td>
<td>NWCG</td>
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<tr>
<td>Required Pre-work chosen by Instructor</td>
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<td>Ca. SFT-219 Student Workbook</td>
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### REQUIRED INSTRUCTOR MATERIALS

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### VENDORS

**FIRESCOPE** [http://www.firescope.org](http://www.firescope.org)

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**S-219 FIRING OPERATIONS COURSE CONTENT**

### Unit 1 – Introduction
Time 1 Hour

Enabling Learning Objectives

1. Introduce the course coordinator, instructors, and students.
2. Discuss course logistics.
3. Provide a course overview.
4. Discuss course expectations.
5. Identify course reference materials.
6. Discuss position responsibilities.
7. Organize the students into squads of 4 to 6 students each.
8. Review online module.
9. Review Pre-Course Quiz

Exercise(s)
Student expectations for the course

Strategy
This unit is an introduction to the course. It involves student and cadre interaction through introductions and a group exercise.

**Unit 2– Fire Behavior and Basic Firing Concepts**
Time 5 hours

Enabling Learning Objectives

1. Describe how the 10 standard orders are used for size up of probable fire behavior and possible fire behavior.

2. Describe or illustrate the different types of fire spread, e.g., head, flank, backing.

3. Identify fire behavior characteristics that must be predicted.

4. Identify environmental elements that affect fire behavior and firing operations.

5. Describe how to use the Predictive Services Website and fireline observations to keep informed on fire weather and fuels conditions.

6. Describe how to obtain a spot forecast.

7. Describe the significance of ERC, BI, IGC, PI, RH%, FDFM%, PI, ROS, FL and pocket cards in predicting fire behavior.

8. Demonstrate how to perform RH%, FDFM%, PI, ROS, and FL calculations utilizing Fireline handbook appendix B.

9. Demonstrate the use of fire weather and fuels information from Predictive services and a size up the fire environment to predict probable and possible fire behavior.

Strategy
This Unit was developed to improve the students’ ability to “Base all actions on current and expected fire behavior”, related to evaluating the need for firing, for conducting firing operations, and holding firing operations that meet Incident/RX objectives. The unit reviews
with the student concepts learned in S290 to size up the fire environment and to predict changes in fire behavior. The unit describes how to gain and interpret fire weather forecast, fuels reports and NFDRS forecasted values from Predictive Services Websites. The unit will present how to combine this information to predict possible and probable fire behavior of the main fire and firing operations.

Exercise(s)

Given a fire scenario including map, photos of the fire and fire environment, fire weather forecast, NFDRs forecast values, pocket card and current fuels reports for the fire area students are to predict probable and possible fire behavior of the assignment.

Unit 3 – Duties and Responsibilities
Time 3 hours
Enabling Learning Objectives
1. Identify the duties and responsibilities of a FIRB and other key personnel involved in a Firing Organization (suppression and prescribed fire).
2. Identify critical information to assess in the Incident Action Plan (IAP) and prescribed fire burn plan.
3. Identify components within the operational briefing that are specific for firing personnel.
4. Organize and deliver a briefing for varied firing personnel including Leader’s intent and clearly measurable objectives.

Strategy

This unit outlines the details of specific duties and responsibilities for which a Firing Boss is accountable. There are explanations of other position duties a Firing Boss will encounter during both suppression and prescribed fires (RX.) Also covered in this unit; operational and FIRB briefings and communicating leader’s intent.

Exercise(s)
Quiz

Unit 4 – Firing Operations and Techniques
Time 3 hours
Enabling Learning Objectives

1. Identify critical factors to assess during the reconnaissance for a firing operation.
2. Identify the importance of a test fire and what the process is for conducting a test fire.
3. Identify what issues could affect a firing operation and the Go/No-Go decision.
4. Describe the difference between types of firing operations (burning out, backfiring, and prescribed fire).
5. Prescribe the basic elements of a firing plan.
6. Describe the difference between the types of firing techniques (strip, dot, flanking, ring, chevron, concentric).
7. Identify and mitigate complex firing situations safely and effectively.

Strategy

Unit 3 was developed to assist and guide the student into the “real world realm” of firing. Concepts and techniques taught in this unit are paramount to understanding the whole of the course and the process of conducting and participating in a firing operation.

Exercise(s)
1. Given a scenario determine the correct firing technique.

Unit 5 – Risk Management

Time 2 hours

Enabling Learning Objectives

Apply effective risk management during a firing operation.

Strategy

This unit has been developed in order to engage the student in Risk Management concepts. Participation in the exercise and comprehension of the following information is a critical step in preparing the student to fulfill the position of Firing Boss safely and effectively.

Exercise(s)

• Rim Fire Exercise

Unit 6 – Field Exercise

Time 14 hours

Enabling Learning Objectives

1. Demonstrate the safe and effective use of firing equipment.
2. Demonstrate the safe and effective use of holding equipment.
3. Demonstrate how and when to use Strip, Dot, Flank, Ring, Chevron, and Concentric firing.
4. Demonstrate coordinating with engines and holding personnel, equipped with back pumps and hand tools, wet line firing techniques.
5. Perform the position of Firing Boss to plan and execute a firing operation requiring coordination with holding forces and firing squad(s).
6. Holding forces will gain live fire and Position Task Book experience.
7. Mange the burn as an ICS Type 3 Incident.
Strategy

To provide students with hands on experience in planning and executing firing operations that is required to be a safe and effective fireline supervisor. The exercise will provide the students the experience of having actually used firing tools, conducting firing operations and holding firing operations before encountering the need to perform firing operations on an actual incident or prescribed burn. In order to develop fire behavior prediction skills and firing skills students must see the actual cause and effect of environmental conditions on fire behavior and the cause and effect of firing operations on fire behavior. The exercise will allow students to compare and adjust their fire behavior predictions and firing tactics to what actually occurs on a live fire.

The exercise will be organized and managed as an ICS Type 3 Incident and/or a prescribed burn with an appropriate IAP and ICS organization. This will allow for ICS and operational holding positions to gain live fire experience and Position Task Book training.

Live Fire Exercise procedures

1. Live Fire IC/SO will coordinate firing squads and holding forces. Additional ICS positions such as SOFR, FIRB, OPS, DIVS, STL will be implemented following standard ICS principles based on number of Firing Squads, holding forces, the complexity of the burn and the training objectives. See attached suggested organization charts.
2. Each student squad will be assigned a Firing Coach.
3. Each student on the will be equipped in all OSHA and agency required PPE, web gear or fireline pack with a fire shelter, 2 fusses and 2 qt water and assigned a hand tool or back pump.
4. Each squad will be equipped with 2-3 drip torches.
5. A minimum of 1 engine per squad performing firing operations with 1 engine in reserve is recommended. Squads can rotate serving as holding forces.

Exercise(s)

1. Basic firing techniques and holding techniques.
   a. Demonstrate safe and effective use of holding tools.
   b. Demonstrate safe and effective use of firing devices and equipment.
   c. Demonstrate firing squads’ actions to hold firing operations.
   d. Demonstrate Spot fire procedures
   e. Demonstrate 1-2-3, 3-2-1, Dot, Spike, and Chevron firing.
   f. Demonstrate actions required for correcting excessive fire effects in saddles, corners, steep slopes or peaks.
2. Offensive firing techniques and coordination with holding forces.
   a. Demonstrate firing and holding fire from wet line.
   b. Demonstrate firing and holding from scratch line.
   c. Demonstrate coordination with holding forces and the need for holding forces to set pace of firing operations.
d. Demonstrate torch control to add in holding operations and to not exceed
prescription parameters for scorch height or mortality.

3. Defensive Firing
   a. Demonstrate firing tactics to limit damage to resources and to protect
      improvement protect resources
   b. Demonstrate firing operations for simulated Structure protection.
   c. Demonstrate firing operations for approaching fire front.

4. Each student will serve at least twice as Firing Boss and will plan and execute
   appropriate firing operations that meet assigned objectives on a live fire scenario.

Student Assessment

Time 2 hours

1. Final written exam.
2. Firing Coach assessment

Students will be required to achieve 70% average on the final exam and a satisfactory
evaluation on the Firing Coach Assessment.
**Recommended Requirements for a California Specific S-219 Firing Operations Course**

Initial selection of instructors would be accomplished through a Historical Recognition Process. Historical Recognition of Instructors would be by a committee of qualified S-234 Ignition Operations instructors appointed by State Fire Training.

**Historical recognition of Lead Instructors Qualifications Requirements**

| Lead Instructors | 1. Qualified SFT Instructor  
|                  | 2. Qualified as a DIVS or FIRB or Burn Boss  
|                  | 3. Documented satisfactory performance from students, and course sponsors as an instructor for both classroom and field exercise in a live Fire S-234 or C-234 course or completion of Lead Instructor Task Book at CaSFT- Train the Trainer Course. |

| Instructors and Firing Coaches | 1. Instructor 1A & 1B  
|                               | 2. Qualified as a Single Resource Boss or greater with verified performance conducting multiple firing operations on wildland fires or prescribed fires or satisfactory completion of CaSFT-219 Train-the-Trainer course.  
|                               | 3. Completed a S-234 or C-234 or S-219 with live fire exercises. |

**Instructor Qualifications Requirements (not Historically Recognized)**

| Lead Instructor | 1. Qualified SFT Instructor  
|                | 2. Qualified as a DIVS or FIRB or Burn Boss  
|                | 3. Documented completion of CaSFT-219 Lead Instructor Task Book.  
|                | 4. Satisfactory performance as a Firing Coach at a CaSFT-219 or C-234 course or completion of CaSFT-219 Train the-Trainer Course.  
|                | 5. Completion of C-234 or CaSFT-219 |

| Adjunct Instructors and Firing Coaches | 1. Instructor 1A & 1B  
|                                       | 2. Completed C-234 or CaSFT-219.  
|                                       | 3. Qualified as a Single Resource Boss or greater with documented performance conducting multiple firing operations on wildland fires or prescribed fires. |
Student Comments on the Beta presentation of the enhanced S-219

Just have a few comments on the live fire portion of S-234/S-219. There is absolutely no way possible to teach in a classroom the experience and knowledge gained by actually conducting controlled burns. You learn firsthand how the success of the operation depends on a team approach with all members utilizing Situational Awareness. When one member of that team loses focus, that controlled burn becomes uncontrolled. To actually witness as well as take an active part in the planning and systematic procedures of burning a designated area, and keeping it “controlled,” must be done in a hands-on approach. Learning that you may need Structure gloves rather than wildland gloves when burning out an area, to carry flares and a file are an absolute must, to hydrate more than you can imagine and that grasses burn a little different with different temperatures are items that you learn through experience, not a classroom. Definitely the two VERY HOT days we spent in Vacaville, gave me a step up on what to expect, how to better prepare and how to do a very dangerous tactic in a relatively safe manner. Not sure how you could do this class without these two days, unless you are just checking a box.

Thanks Bruce

Bruce Barron
Division Chief Training
Central San Mateo County Training Division
Office: (650) 558-7611
Cell: (650)380-2799
bruceb@csmctd.org

To whom it may concern,

I am responding to the request for feedback on the new S-219 course, Ignition Operations.

I have been in the Fire Service for 22+ years and recently in the last 4 years, have I been trying to learn the critical aspects of wildland firefighting. Also, I am currently working on my ENGB task book. I have attended S-290 Weather, 40-hr version, and S-234 Ignition Operations, 36-hours, both with Pat Shreffler.

It is my belief that the S-290 40-hr class and a 36-hr S-219 are critical for the overall safety of wildland firefighting. It is my hopes that I can take both of these courses again. I feel that I would learn more with every course and become more aware in the fire environment. Requiring a 36 hr course would only help in Situational Awareness and cognitive recall processing during critical incidents. During my initial research of an S-234 course, I realized the necessity in taking the 4 day course in lieu of a 3 day course.

Sincerely,

Tyler Matcham
Captain, San Jose Fire Department

Chief Vail,

I was a student in the S-219 class (June 12-15, 2017) hosted by Vacaville FD. This course featured two days of lecture and two days of firing operations. I wanted to write and confirm the effectiveness of the four day class (with a minimum of two days being actual firing). I'm a local government Battalion Chief who has been in the Fire Service for 23 years. I had previously taken the S-234 course. My S-234 course consisted of lecture days and the demonstration of one firing device (by the instructor). After the lectures/demonstration, we took the written exam and were given
our certificates. To be fair, some firing had been planned but a weather change canceled the firing due to smoke management concerns. Never-the-less, I walked away with a valid S-234 course completion certificate.

What led me to the recent S-219 class was the professional unease I had with actual firing operations. Simply put, I knew that I was not qualified in the “real-world” to be involved with firing.

The lectures/case studies in the S-219 course were engaging. Where it really came together for me was over the two firing days. Working in small groups with an experienced instructor and progressing from simple to more complex firing was just what I needed. Also, the first firing day was a bit overwhelming. It was a good day, but that evening was when I could make some detailed notes, think over the experiences and let things sink-in. The second firing day things clearly came together for myself and many others in the class. We were all smoother in our tasks and more observant of our surroundings/fire behavior. The final live fire scenario (involving the entire class) went very well (according to the instructor cadre).

I know that two days of actual firing requires a significant amount of planning and site selection/preparation. However, I would offer the opinion that these final two days should be a requirement for the S-219 curriculum going forward.

Lastly, the generation now entering the fire service is very quick to absorb academic concepts but has in many cases have under-developed mechanical aptitude. Specific to firing, I believe the appropriate organizational response this changing dynamic is to make time and space (two days of firing) for the academic ideas to transition to actual operational/physical capability.

If I can provide further information/perspective on my experience please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank You,
Bennett Yendrey,
Battalion Chief, San Jose Fire Department

Chief Vail,

I am writing in regards to the recent S-219 class taught in Vacaville with Pat Shreffler. To start with a little background on myself, I worked for Cal Fire for 3 seasons in the San Mateo - Santa Cruz unit where I was involved in some firing operations, as well as initial attack and strike team operations. I now work for Santa Clara County Fire Department as a Firefighter/Engineer out of the Saratoga station which houses a Type 3 engine, which our department has its own strike team of. As for the firing operations I was involved with, it was either as a holding crew, or directed to grab a torch and walk "that way." Needless to say, limited experience coming into this class.

Coming into this class, the information presented throughout the entire 4 days truly drove home the idea of how inexperienced I am in these operations, as well as the majority of firefighters from local government and even state backgrounds. I truly would not feel comfortable after this class in a firing operation if live fire was not part of the curriculum. While classroom information is important, especially in reviewing how firing operations has seriously injured or killed firefighters, the field days is what really brought all the concepts together. I also understand that there are those who are for the live burns, but want to limit it to one day. I can honestly say that if the class ended after the first day of burning, I would not have the understanding and skill competency that I gained from this class having two days of burning.
I feel that the point of training is to apply the concepts learned to the real world. It is a place to safely make mistakes so that we can reduce those mistakes on a real incident and keep everyone safe. It is absolutely unsafe and a disservice to the fire service to give out these certificates to those who only attend classroom only training. I hope this email helps you make your case to SFT that 2 days of live burns is absolutely necessary for this class.

Thank you,

Logun Fagundes
Firefighter/Engineer
Santa Clara County Fire Department
Saratoga "C" Shift

Chief Vail,

I have just come back from attending the four day, S219 class, taught by Pat Shreffler and Matt Brown in Vacaville, CA. It was very well attended with a variety of departments, experience and ranks. The class room curriculum was a portion of review on tactics, weather and fire behavior and then continued in the risk management for firing and firing techniques. We then spent two hot days (upper 80's, lower 90's) in the field putting the learned class room portion to the real test.

Our class was broken into three squads, each with a Firing Coach, (Matt Brown, Dave Mclean and Jeff Ryder). Each squad member was given the opportunity to rotate into the positions for a firing operation. As the day(s) progressed, each scenario became more complex with the experience which live fire provides. With the input from the coaches, each squad member came away with a greater appriciation for live fire. Being able to experience live fire in a controlled yet often changing environment, due to topography and weather, we all felt that the need for live fire such as this class will only enhance our "toolbox" in the real world environment.

I have been in the fire service for nearly 27 years. Nothing has proven to me more for success as "live" training. Whether its a structure, a vehicle or a field of grass, hands on, real time training provides students, as well as the instructors a tremendous benefit. As discussed in class, it has been proposed that S219 or S234 be only a two day class. A two day class only provides the minimum. Live fire is a high risk but comes with high reward. The experience provides students with immediate feedback and results. At minimum, for those who want the responsibility to be able to put "fire on the ground", two days of live fire training should be the standard.

Respectfully,

Parker Patri, Captain
Santa Clara County Fire Department
14700 Winchester Bl.
Los Gatos, CA 95032
(408) 378-4010
parker.patri@sccfd.org
Hi Chief Vail,

I attended the recent course S-219 in Vacaville not as a student but as an Field Observer. I asked Pat Shreffler if I could attend after last year’s course that I attended as a student. The two days of hands on firing operations is by far the best training I have received in the fire service. I requested to return as an observer because of the high quality of instructors and the high desire of the instructors to teach the students in a high risk environment with high reward of improve knowledge, skills and abilities.

The instructors provided the students with a classroom teaching objectives to be safe and have the basic knowledge in firing operations. As we have all learned over the years is doing something (hands on training) provides retention of learning objectives. The two days of live fire in a highly controlled and a safe environment provided by Pat Shreffler, Matt Brown, Dave McLean and Jeff Ryder was outstanding.

I spent 6 years in the United States Marine Corps as an Aircraft Firefighter and using live fire in a controlled and safe environment taught me a young man the importance of saving lives and protecting myself. I have also severed the last 28 years in the California fire service and will continue to educate myself with Pat Shreffler and his instructors.

I encourage the continued use of live firing operation in the S-219 curriculum that Pat has developed in order to provide the necessary knowledge skills and abilities to save the lives of firefighters and the citizens we protect.

Respectfully,

Felipe Barreto
Battalion Chief, Training Division
Moraga-Orinda Fire Protection District

Chief Vail,

I am writing in regards to the proposed changes to the S-219 curriculum, specifically the live fire portion. I recently attended the S-219 class that was put on in Vacaville. The instructors Pat Shreffler, Matt Brown, Dave Mclean, and Jeff Ryder did an absolutely outstanding job at of putting together one of the best fire classes I have taken. Their ability to pass down their years of experience with firefighting and instructing was excellent.

I was shocked to hear that there was not a mandatory time set aside in the curriculum for live fire training. The two days that we spent in the field were truly the two most valuable days of the class. The ability to bring home the message of the class lies within those live fire days. As a soon to be California state certified instructor I am reminded of Thorndike's Laws of learning, all of which apply, but specifically:

The law of primacy: What you learn first, you learn best.

The law of intensity: The more real/life the training is, the better chance the students will remember.

Some may say partial knowledge is just as dangerous as no knowledge. I am by no means an expert of the topic after taking the class, but I do feel I have a competent understanding to the "safe beginner" level. I would not be able to say that without the live Fire training.

Thank you for your time and all the hard work you put forth for the fire service.

Sincerely,
Kyle Lely  
Engineer/Paramedic  
Sonoma Valley Fire and Rescue Authority  
Chief Vail,

Thank you for working on the S-219 curriculum, and providing the highest level of training for our bothers and sisters. I cannot stress enough how critical it is that S-219 have two days of live fire training. Hands on training is the foundation of the fire service and there is no substitute for it. Putting fire on the ground is a high risk, high reward skill that can provide tremendous benefits if applied properly.

I spent my first 5 years of my career working in the wildland environment for CDF and the Higgins Fire District, and have spent the last 12 with the city of Hayward. While employed with CDF I was able to put fire on the ground several times, and I have a greater wildland background compared to many of my peers from urban departments. I have been involved in a significant amount of initial attack fires and been out on numerous strike teams. My limited experience has provided me with the understanding of how much I still do not know.

As I move forward as a strike team leader trainee it is critical that I have an intimate understanding of firing operations. The recent 219 class I attended with Pat Shreffler, Matt Brown, Dave Mclean, and Jeff Ryder was the best class I have taken in the fire service, and I have taken several other very good classes. I learned a lot during the two days of lecture, but the first day of firing was when I really began to understand. On the second day of firing all of us began to operate as a functional firing teams, being coached and built up as we progressed. While I feel that I learned a lot over the four days, I also realize that there is so much more that I need to do to continue to work on my firing knowledge, skills, and abilities. **Two days of live fire should be the absolute minimum**, and we should be looking at the possibility of adding more live fire time, not less.

“Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it.” -George Santayana

History of firing has shown that firing is an irreplaceable skill for protecting life, property, and the environment. History has also shown that improper firing has contributed to loss of life, significant injury, and the destruction of property. Firing is a skill the fire service must get right, and creating a classroom only or one day firing class is negligent and irresponsible. If there is anything I can do to assist with this process, please do not hesitate to ask. I can come to the STEAC meeting as both a student and Training Officer if that would help.

Respectfully,

Ryan Hamre, Battalion Chief  
Training Division  
*Hayward Fire Department*
To whom it may concern,

I am responding to the request for feedback on the new S-219 course, Ignition Operations.

I have been in the Fire Service for 22+ years and recently in the last 4 years, have I been trying to learn the critical aspects of wildland firefighting.

Also, I am currently working on my ENGB task book.

I have attended S-290 Weather, 40-hr version, and S-234 Ignition Operations, 36-hours, both with Pat Shreffler.

It is my belief that the S-290 40-hr class and a 36-hr S-219 are critical for the overall safety of wildland firefighting.

It is my hopes that I can take both of these courses again. I feel that I would learn more with every course and become more aware in the fire environment.

Requiring a 36 hr course would only help in Situational Awareness and cognitive recall processing during critical incidents.

During my initial research of an S-234 course, I realized the necessity in taking the 4 day course in lieu of a 3 day course.

Sincerely,

Tyler Matcham
Captain, San Jose Fire Department