



STATE FIRE MARSHAL
Automatic Extinguishing Systems Advisory Committee
April 28, 2021

Meeting Minutes

Office of the State Fire Marshal
Zoom Meeting Conference Call
Meeting ID: 210 520 3211

MEMBERS PRESENT

Allen Quirk, California Association of Life Safety and Fire Equipment (CALSAFE)
Wayne Weisz, American Fire Sprinkler Association (AFSA)
Chip Lindley, Lindley Fire Protection
Stanley Smith, Sprinkler Fitters and Apprentices, Local 483
James Feld, University of California, Berkeley (retired)
Jason Hudgins, Walschon Fire Protection, Inc.
Darrell Hefley, Jorgensen Company
Edie Wade, Brooks Equipment
Peter Hulin, National Fire Sprinkler Association (NFSA)
Randy Dysart, National Association of Fire Equipment Distributors
Randy Roxson, Sprinkler Fitters Association of California
Shelley Merrell, Integrated Fire & Safety
Jason McBroom, Alpine Fire Protection District
Bryan Jonson, West Sacramento Fire Department
Jeff Awtrey, California American Fire Sprinkler Association (CAFSA)

OSFM STAFF

Al Adams, Committee Chairperson, OSFM
Vickie Sakamoto, Co-Chair, OSFM
Daniel Berlant, OSFM
Vikkie Raby, OSFM
Kemiko Tolon, OSFM
Elena Rich, OSFM
Joe Konefal, OSFM

Nissa Harvey, OSFM
Mike Goth, OSFM
Kevin Chan, OSFM

PUBLIC GUESTS

Amber Barrios, Associated Compliance & Training
Kim Stocking, Advanco
Rigo Vasquez, Advanco
Whitney Gonzales, California American Fire Sprinkler Association (CAFSA)
David Kerik, California American Fire Sprinkler Association (CAFSA)
Jerrelle Cox, Sprinkler Fitter Local 669
Jonathan Joseph, Symons Fire Protection
Jaime Knowles, California Association of Life Safety and Fire Equipment (CALSAFE)
John Holmes, Sprinkler Fitter Local 709
Leslie Clounts, American Fire Sprinkler Association (AFSA)
Mikey Owens, Sprinkler Fitter Local 669
Todd Barry, Sprinkler Fitter Local 669
Todd Golden, Sprinkler Fitter Local 709
Jeff Bridges, American Fire Sprinkler Association
Vahe Zohrabian, Hydraulic Fire Protection

I. Call to Order

A. Welcome

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Al Adams, at 9:33 A.M. PDT on April 28, 2021.

B. Roll Call/Determine Quorum

Roll call was conducted by Elena Rich and Chairperson Al Adams determined that a quorum of members was present.

C. Introductions

All attendees introduced themselves.

D. Approval of Minutes

Chairperson Al Adams asked for approval of the minutes of the February 16, 2021 meeting.

Member Allen Quirk requested a change in the meeting minutes. He wanted to clarify a comment he made under old business of the last meeting that he meant that after two tries, if failed, they should have to pay a fee for the third time and all subsequent tests.

It was moved by member Edie Wade to approve the minutes, motion second by member Stanley Smith. Motion was unanimously approved at 10:07 A.M. PDT.

E. Announcements

Chairperson Al Adams introduced Chief Daniel Berlant to give a few comments from the Office of the State Fire Marshal Executive Office. Chief Daniel Berlant discussed that the Office of the State Fire Marshal has changed to emergency teleworking and are slowing coming back and transitioning out of the COVID 19 pandemic. Chief Daniel Berlant highlighted Vickie Sakamoto and Vikkie Raby and all the staff that have been working on making improvements on GOVMOTUS. He mentioned that they are accepting online payments and the process has gone down from several months to once the electronic payment is received, the license can be issued. Chief Daniel Berlant also mentioned that, as part of the pandemic, the state has learned that they can allow their employees more flexibility and telework. He mentioned that they are looking and planning on merging a number of their buildings and are planning on moving the Office of the State Fire Marshal, Harvard location, to the new Resources Agency building. As part of that move, the state is rolling out a more flexible work schedule, so it is unlikely for the majority of their employees to be in the office five days a week.

Co-Chair Vickie Sakamoto mentioned that they did an update on GOVMOTUS and now has a search feature for anyone to search and validate that someone has a current license with the Office of the State Fire Marshal. She mentioned that you do not have to create a GOVMOTUS account to search, and you can search by license number or by name.

Co-Chair Vickie Sakamoto made an announcement regarding moving forward with the fee increase regulation package and are hoping to submit it to Code Development & Analysis Division around June.

Chairperson Al Adams mentioned the fee increase regulations package will be discussed at the next meeting, we want to make sure the figures are correct.

Chairperson Al Adams discussed GOVMOTUS being on the third phase of enhancements and are working on making the program better.

Chairperson Al Adams introduced Joe Konefal to give a brief report on his activities. Joe Konefal mentioned that they received complaints for the Automatic Extinguishing Systems (AES) program and their investigators, Mike Goth and Ernie Paez, are actively pursuing those complaints and are in the investigation state.

Chairperson Al Adams mentioned that we will be taking the OSFM's complaint form and post on our website.

Kemiko Tolon announced that there are new stickers for a Trainee, Apprentice, Multi-family, and Commercial license.

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. Title 19, Chapter 5.5 Revision

Member Chip Lindley addressed Section 923 (a) Exception 3: Pre-Engineered Systems. He mentioned that the issue they discussed was removing the term “water based” and they decided to eliminate it from the section.

Member Chip Lindley discussed Section 925.19, re-examination fee. He discussed the number of attempts that can be made. Initially, they had three attempts because the test was proven to be difficult and people were taking it over and over, but the test has been modified and now there is a relatively high passing rate. The group felt that three tests without any retest fee was excessive, so they agreed to drop it to two test attempts and if they do not pass, they would have to pay for a third time.

Chairperson Al Adams mentioned that there is a high pass rate because it is an open book test.

Member Chip Lindley discussed section 939.3 regarding out of state applicants who are applying for Sprinkler Fitter certification and currently, there is language in the code that says the applicant can obtain training from an approved apprenticeship program in California. He mentioned that they are trying to make the evolution of the applicant a little easier. Member Steve Fox came up with a solution to create an assessment committee to assess the person to determine if they have the skills necessary to be a licensed Sprinkler Fitter in California.

Chairperson Al Adams mentioned that every time that an application is denied because the panel thinks they are not qualified, they have a right to appeal. He also mentioned that they can take it up to an administrative law judge and that can be a lengthy and costly procedure. The administrative law judge will ask for the criteria that are used and where are they written in the regulations. Chairperson Al Adams said that if they are not listed in the regulations, then they can have a problem losing those appeals.

Member Chip Lindley mentioned that they would be using the Apprenticeship standards to qualify applicants.

Chairperson Al Adams asked Member Chip Lindley if they were ready to submit the Chapter 5.5 Revision to the committee for review. Member Chip Lindley said he would send it to the committee members to review.

Chairperson Al Adams asked Kemiko Tolon to set up a meeting for committee members to discuss the Chapter 5.5 regulations.

It was moved by member Stan Smith to arrange a regulatory meeting for 5.5 Revision, motion second by member Bryan Jonson. Motion was unanimously approved at 11:30 A.M. PDT.

Member Wayne Weisz discussed Continuing Education Unit (CEU) required credits and asked if the Office of the State Fire Marshal would recognize classes from the American Red Cross if they are not an approved provider?

Chairperson Al Adams said that is not something that they have discussed, but regulatorily, they are bound by current regulations, and it states that they must be on the provider list. He mentioned that could be brought up at the 5.5 Revision meeting.

B. AES Forms

Chairperson Al Adams introduced Member Shelley Merrell to discuss forms. Member Shelley Merrell asked if they wanted to keep the sprinkler inspections, five year and annual on two forms or condense them in one form.

Member Chip Lindley mentioned that he preferred the forms to be together, so people do not get confused and think that there is a stand-alone inspection.

Chairperson Al Adams mentioned that he wanted to hear the opinions from the local fire departments.

Member Jim Feld said that he did not think putting all the forms together would work because there are 20 quarters in 5 years and to make a form that has 20 quarters would create a huge document.

Member Shelley Merrell mentioned that an instruction sheet should be accompanied with the forms.

Chairperson Al Adams asked Member Shelley Merrell to send forms to Kemiko Tolon, so she can send them out to the Committee Members, and the forms will be finalized by the next meeting.

C. Partial Sprinkler Systems Follow-up

Chairperson Al Adams mentioned that James Carver brought up the issue about partial sprinkler systems, so the Office of the State Fire Marshal assigned staff to investigate.

Chairperson Al Adams asked Mike Goth to discuss his findings regarding partial sprinkler fitter systems. Mike Goth discussed that some businesses only had one sprinkler head and they were getting complaints from the business owners that they were paying for a C-16 contractor inspection for one sprinkler head. Mike Goth mentioned that they asked if there is anything that limits them from just requiring a five year instead of a one-year inspection. He mentions that in the regulations, there is nothing that exempts them from the inspections, except for NFPA 25 Section 1.3.2. Mike Goth said that from his research, it is not recommended to skip the annual and 5-year inspection due to safety.

Chairperson Al Adams asked what they are looking for Mike Goth said they are looking for input from the Office of the State Fire Marshal and the Committee. Chairperson Al Adams mentioned that it is up to the AHJ on how the systems should be inspected.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. NFPA 770 New System

Chairperson Al Adams introduced Jason McBroom to speak on the issue. Member Jason McBroom mentioned that he talked to Victaulic regarding the new technology. He mentioned that his concern was the inspection, testing and maintenance. Chairperson Al Adams asked Jason McBroom what he was recommending. Member Jason McBroom mentioned that it was just informational and that there is a new standard document out there.

IV. OPEN FORUM

Member Stan Smith discussed forming a sub-Committee for the approval of who is providing CEU classes.

Chairperson Al Adams mentioned that he did not see any issue with that but reminded that the Office of the State Fire Marshal will have the final decision making. He mentioned that he would talk internally with staff and come up with some suggestions.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Vahe Zohrabian mentioned that the Office of the State Fire Marshal Information Bulletin 18-011 was issued by Office of the State Fire Marshal on December 20, 2018, for Arc Flashes and according to this document (page 2), regulations need to be revised on page 39 because testers are at risk. He mentioned that the Office of the State Fire Marshal regulations put a burden on the industry and all he hears is improving enforcement and discipline, and not a solution to all the challenges created by the regulation. Vahe also discussed that regulations are not recognizing C-16 license holders from any state other than California and unions can live and work anywhere in the United States but not non-union the regulations are discriminatory. Vahe discussed that almost all non-union

Continuing Education Units providers are open to the public, however, the union is members only and there is no way to audit them. He also mentioned that budget deficit is created by enforcement of this regulation and there are not enough certificate holders.

VI. SCHEDULE FOR FUTURE MEETING

The next Committee Meeting is scheduled for July 28, 2021.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Al Adams asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

It was moved by Member Allen Quirk to adjourn the meeting; motion seconded by Member Peter Hulin. Chairperson Al Adams adjourned the meeting at 1:03 P.M. PDT.