

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

429



FROM: FIRE

SUBMITTAL DATE:
November 15, 2005

SUBJECT: County Fire Chief's progress report on implementing the audit recommendations proposed by CGR Management Consultants (CGR).

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors receive and file the Fire Chief's progress report regarding the implementation of the audit recommendations proposed by CGR.

BACKGROUND: On 2/1/05 (Item 3.2) the Board received and filed the management audit of the Riverside County Fire Department conducted by CGR Management Consultants (CGR). The Board instructed the Fire Chief to provide a progress report after a six month period. The attached report summarizes the recommendations that have been or will be implemented and identifies the proposed recommendations that will require further evaluation.

Departmental Concurrence


Craig E. Anthony, County Fire Chief

FINANCIAL DATA	Current F.Y. Total Cost:	\$	In Current Year Budget:	N/A
	Current F.Y. Net County Cost:	\$	Budget Adjustment:	N/A
	Annual Net County Cost:	\$	For Fiscal Year:	05/06
SOURCE OF FUNDS: N/A				Positions To Be Deleted Per A-30 <input type="checkbox"/>
				Requires 4/5 Vote <input type="checkbox"/>

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: Receive and File

County Executive Office Signature 

Dept't Recomm.:
 Consent
 Policy

 Per Exec. Ofc.:
 Consent
 Policy

Prev. Agn. Ref.: 2/1/05 Item 3.2 | **District:** ALL | **Agenda Number:**

3.1 _b



RIVERSIDE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT

210 West San Jacinto Avenue • Perris, California 92570 • (951) 940-6900 • Fax (951) 940-6910

Craig E. Anthony
Fire Chief

November 15, 2005

Proudly serving the
unincorporated
areas of Riverside
County and the
Cities of:

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Beaumont
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Calimesa
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Board of Supervisors
Bob Buster,
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Riverside County Board of Supervisors
County Administrative Center
4080 Lemon Street
Riverside, CA 92501

Subject: Report on Implementing CGR Management Consultants
Audit Recommendations

Dear Honorable Board of Supervisors:

Following is the report on implementing the audit recommendations proposed in the management audit of the Riverside County Fire Department by CGR Management Consultants.

A. Administration of the CDF Contract and Overall Management

Audit Recommendation: Appoint a County Contract Administrator

Primary responsibility/coordination: CEO's Office

Timing: Within one month

Resource requirements: Compensation cost of a policy level manager/analyst.

Comments: This is a requirement of the current contract. (1)

Fire Department Response: *The Contract Administrator was established in the CDF contract to identify the County representative to represent the County's interest to the CDF Region Chief. CDF anticipated that occasions could occur when the CDF Unit Chief would be placed in a conflicting position as the Unit Chief and County Fire Chief. Since potential conflicts are assumed to be at a policy level, CDF normally finds that contracting agencies designate the Agency Chief Executive Officer, or their designee, as Contract Administrator. The Executive Office has since appointed a Principal Management Analyst to fulfill this administrative need.*

Riverside County appoints the CDF Unit Chief as the County Fire Chief and department head. As a department head, the Fire Chief reports directly to the CEO and routinely interacts with the Board of Supervisors. In contrast, the CDF Unit Chief is several levels below the CDF policy level and infrequently has access to CDF policy making levels. The CDF policy level approves the contract rate structure, including administrative rate, staff benefit rate, and collective bargaining impacts.

Fire Department Recommendation: No action necessary.

Audit Recommendation: Develop key performance indicators and implement a performance reporting system.

Primary responsibility/coordination: County Contract Administrator/CEO Analyst, coordination required with Board members, CEO's Office and internally in the Department.

Timing: Reporting system should be implemented within six months.

Resource requirements: None anticipated other than personnel time.

Comments: This effort should encompass performance measurement reporting for the contract cities, although the County may desire some reporting that is not meaningful to the individual cities (2, 3 & 6).

Fire Department Response: *The implementation of the computer assisted dispatch system (CAD) in May allows for the detailed reporting of incident information. The CAD allows the reporting of response times by service area. The fire department is revisiting performance indicators; however the increasing impact of vacant chief officer positions continues to delay the completion of this task.*

Fire Department Recommendation: *The department is currently gathering details on response times to determine the areas of the county not meeting established response goals.*

Audit Recommendation: Support local CDF management's effort for CDF to adopt a new pay plan that contains internal equity for Division Chiefs.

Primary responsibility/coordination: County Contract Administrator

Timing: On-going until a new pay plan is approved by the State.

Resource requirements: Personnel time

Comments: If after a reasonable time the State does not adopt a new pay plan and there continues to be vacancies at the Division Chief level, the county may wish to explore providing supplement compensation to recruit and retain Division Chiefs (10).

Fire Department Response: *The salary inversion issue between CDF Battalion Chiefs and Division Chiefs (and higher classifications) has not been resolved. The salary inversion issue has resulted in the inability to fill Division Chief positions and the request for demotions from all existing Division Chiefs. Currently two Division Chief positions are vacant, with one vacant more than one year. In addition, the Fire Department has not proceeded with the establishment of three additional Division Chiefs to supervise 1) Emergency Command Center/GIS/Communication, 2) Emergency Medical Services/Safety/Training, and 3) Fire Marshal/Prevention. The Fire Department realigned the administrative duties of a CDF Deputy Chief under a County Deputy to meet county and state program needs. The salary inversion issue was result of the moving CDF Battalion Chiefs from non-represented to represented employees. The CDF Firefighter MOU, effective November 1, 2005, provides that Battalion Chiefs be paid 1-1/2 for the 31 hours of scheduled weekly work beyond the FLSA standard of 53 hours. Battalion Chiefs schedule work week is currently 84 hours. Effective November 1, 2005, Battalion Chief top step annual salary will be \$118,000 plus any unplanned overtime paid an hourly rate of \$35. The annual compensation for CDF Division Chief is \$97,006 without the ability to earn overtime.*

The salary inversion issue may ultimately result in significant changes to CDF compensation levels and duty week length. The ultimate resolution, and impact, of the salary inversion issue and potential impact on duty week length for all CDF suppression classes may not be determined until the new CDF Firefighter MOU is negotiated, which would be effective July 1, 2006.

Fire Department Recommendation: *The County needs to monitor the progress of the State in resolving the salary inversion issue and potential operational impacts to the fire department.*

Audit Recommendation: Support CDF's internal efforts to amend the Firefighter-II position specifications to include the duties of Public Safety Communication Officers while working to improve the selection and retention of PSCOs.

Primary responsibility/coordination: Contract Administrator

Timing: On-going until accomplished.

Resource requirements: Personnel time and expenses for a consultant.

Comments: This recommendation is designed to provide the option to use Firefighter-II's in the Emergency Command Center (ECC) when needed. As the cost for Firefighter-II's is substantially above that of the current Public Safety Communication Officer classification, this is not a recommendation to replace PSCO's with Firefighter-II's but only to have them available when the Department is unable to maintain its authorized PSCO staffing level. (11)

Fire Department Response: *The FF-II specifications need to be changed to allow emergency operations of light vehicles. The operation of light vehicles will allow FF-II's to respond breathing support vehicles to emergencies, when volunteers are not available. The use of FF-II's in the ECC is used on an overtime basis and is currently allowed in CDF. However, changing FF-II class specifications to allow fulltime assignment of FF-II's to the ECC is not recommended. The FF-II classification is a fire suppression classification not appropriate for fulltime assignment to the ECC. The Fire Department is working with County Human Relations to reduce PSCO vacancies. CDF is currently considering allowing FF-II's operate emergency light vehicles.*

Fire Department Recommendation: *The Fire Department needs to continue to aggressively fill county PSCO positions and monitor the status of allowing FF-II's to operate light emergency response vehicles.*

B. Planning and Capital Project Management

Audit Recommendation: Develop a comprehensive strategic plan by undertaking a systematic strategic planning process

Primary responsibility/coordination: Departmental management in coordination with the CEO's Office. Community input should be considered.

Timing: Within the next six to nine months.

Resource requirements: In addition to management's time it may be desirable to use consultant assistance.

Comments: This should be a systematic process and include an assessment of organizational strengths and weaknesses as well as address the policy options for fire and emergency services in the County. (4)

Fire Department Response: *Staffing and competing projects have not allowed the undertaking of "a systematic strategic planning process" to be initiated.*

Fire Department Recommendation: *The project needs to remain a high priority and initiated as soon as possible.*

Audit Recommendation: Develop a Long-Range Information Technology Systems and Communications Plan

Primary responsibility/coordination: Departmental management in conjunction with CDF and County IT organizations.

Timing: Within the next six to nine months.

Resource requirements: IT technical staff supplemented by outside resources as needed.

Comments: It is critical that the plan be developed and approved before the retirement of the current IT manager. (29)

Fire Department Response: *The Fire Department communication and technology section has seen a large turnover in staff. The new staff has made significant improvement in reestablishing management controls. The Fire Department plans to replace a CDF battalion chief position after January with a county managerial position to provide the direction and leadership in the information and communication section.*

Fire Department Recommendation: *Convert a CDF battalion chief position to a county position to supervise the communication and information technology sections and continue the aggressive progress in these areas.*

Audit Recommendation: Change procedures to use the County's Facility Management Department to manage the implementation of the Departments capital projects.

Primary responsibility/coordination: Departmental management

Timing: Beginning with the next capital project.

Resource requirements: None

Comments: As an alternative, the Department should obtain an exemption from Board Policy B-11 that requires Facility Management to implement capital projects. (8)

Fire Department Response: *The County Fire Department is now in compliance with Board policy B-11. All new capital projects are coordinated through Facilities Management with the exception of replacement stations for Mead Valley and Thousand Palms which are assigned to EDA.*

Fire Department Recommendation: *No action necessary.*

Audit Recommendation: Implement procedures for the competitive procurement of architects and engineers for use in the Department's capital program.

Primary responsibility/coordination: Departmental management.

Timing: For the design of the next capital project.

Resource requirements: Personnel time and minor expense for advertising.

Comments: The recommendation reflects the need to change the Department's procedures to comply with the newly revised Board policy (H-7) on the selection of professional firms. (9)

Fire Department Response: *The County Fire Department is now in compliance with Board policy H-7.*

Fire Department Recommendation: *No action necessary.*

Audit Recommendation: Provide funding on a priority basis for expansion/replacement of the Perris repair and maintenance facility.

Primary responsibility/coordination: Departmental capital planning unit and the CEO's Capital Projects Team.

Timing: As soon as practical

Resource requirements: Previous budget estimate for a new facility was \$1.5 million.

Comments: The prior plans for a new facility need revisited in view of the Department's current growth projects. (20)

Fire Department Response: *Master planning the Fire Department's current and long-term capital requirements has been approved in the capital improvement plan (CIP) and is actively in progress. This involves identifying the optimum location and required square footage needed to house a new administrative headquarters, emergency operations center, training facilities and expanded emergency command center.*

Fire Department Recommendation: *No action necessary.*

Audit Recommendation: Enhance Training Facilities

Primary responsibility/coordination: Departmental management/facilities management

Timing: Within the next 18 months.

Resource requirements: Potential capital costs as well as the cost of architectural/engineering services in addition to personnel time.

Comments: This action item encompasses the recommendation to establish two satellite training facilities and to enhance the Clark Training Center to be a more comprehensive facility. Assuming the satellite facilities can be accommodated on County owned land, the capital costs should be less than \$100,000 per site. (21 & 22)

Fire Department Response: *Evaluating the Training facility requirements will be included in the Master Planning process currently in progress; however, negotiations are on-going with Riverside Community College to locate a new resource center at CTC as approved in Bond measure "C". In the desert region, the College of the Desert is giving strong consideration to the co-location of training facilities at the new Thousand Palms site. This includes construction of a training tower in conjunction with the new fire station and a resource center serving as a satellite training site and other community needs.*

Fire Department Recommendation: *In progress.*

C. Human Resources Management, Training and Organization

Audit Recommendation: Develop an abbreviated training course on the County's disciplinary and grievance procedures in the County MOU's for State personnel who supervise County employees.

Primary responsibility/coordination: County HR in coordination with Departmental HR.

Timing: With the next six months.

Resource requirements: Personnel time

Comments: State personnel supervising County employees should complete this course within six months of becoming a supervisor of County employees. (12)

Fire Department Response: *Agree.*

Fire Department Recommendation: *This project is underway.*

Audit Recommendation: Upgrade 8 Firefighter-II's to Engineers

Primary responsibility/coordination: Departmental HR

Timing: As soon as practical.

Resource requirements: None

Comments: This should be accomplished within the normal promotion procedures. The thrust is to provide an adequate number of qualified engineers to provide backup engineers for the two Hazardous Materials units. (14)

Fire Department Response: *The upgrading of county fire engines from two person (one career operator and one seasonal employee) to a three career person response (one operator and two firefighter) has resulted in a disproportional number of firefighters to company officers (captain and engineers). This excess number of firefighters results in excessive overtime for company officers and increased firefighter overtime and staffing impacts as significant numbers of firefighters II (all FF-II are funded by local government) promote to limited term Engineers in State funded fire season wildland positions throughout the State. The loss of significant number of FF-II not only has County overtime cost impact but degrades operational readiness as limited term (seasonal) hires are required to fill behind the permanent local government FF-IIs during their 4 to 6 month absence.*

The Fire Department is converting 12 stations to a traditional fire service staffing ratio of an equal number of captains, engineers, and fire firefighters. The existing County Fire Department staffing ratio is two FF-II for each company officer. The Fire Department believes the staffing ratio change will be funded by decreased overtime usage. Also, the change will increase the professionalism and service

provided by the Fire Department. Additional stations conversions will occur as permanent FF-II attrition allows.

Fire Department Recommendation: *In progress.*

Audit Recommendation: Enhance the Training Program.

Primary responsibility/coordination: Department management/CEOs Office for concurrence in the change of staffing levels.

Timing: Within the next six months.

Resource requirements: Compensation for three Firefighter Captains and a clerical position and the purchasing of standardized training materials for each station. Estimated cost for the procurement of training materials and equipment is \$450,000.

Comments: This action item is the consolidation of the following recommendations: (15) Provide decontamination training to all engine companies, (18) Increase the Training Bureau staff by three Captains and a clerical support position, (19) increase the tenure of Training Captains in a Bureau to a minimum of four years to enhance continuity in training and (20) Provide each station with fully equipped standardized training library including audiovisual materials.

Fire Department Response: *This recommendation is under review.*

Audit Recommendation: Recruit and Hire and IT professional with the potential to become the IT unit manager.

Primary responsibility/coordination: Departmental HR.

Timing: As soon as practical.

Resource requirements: Estimated compensation is \$65,000 to \$85,000.

Comments: This individual needs to overlap with the current IT manager at least six months and hence needed to be hired at least six months before the retirement of the current incumbent. (26)

Fire Department Response: *Agree. The position will be funded by the converting of CDF battalion chief to a county position.*

Fire Department Recommendation: *In progress.*

Audit Recommendation: Augment the Fire Protection Planning and Engineering staff with a licensed Fire Protection Engineer

Primary responsibility/coordination: Departmental Human Resources in conjunction with County Human Resources.

Timing: Within the next six months.

Resource requirements: Recurring annual compensation cost estimated at \$100,000 including fringe benefits.

Comments: This will require the establishment of a new position classification in the County system. (30).

Fire Department Response: *The rapid growth and workload in the County requires a higher expertise than can be provided using CDF classifications. This position is necessary to meet development and permit demands served by the fire department. Draft classification and duty statement in under review by Human Resources*

Fire Department Recommendation: *In progress*

D. Operations

Audit Recommendation: Restructure the volunteer program to a Reserve Firefighter Program.

Primary responsibility/coordination: Departmental management

Timing: Within the next 12 months.

Resource requirements: Personnel time

Comments: Recommendation (17)

Fire Department Response: Currently the Fire Department is working with the volunteers to restructure the volunteer program. Volunteers are currently compensated for County work using the State payroll system. It is anticipated that within the near future the CDF payroll system will no longer be available. Fire Department staff and County Human Resources have drafted a program and are ready to move the County volunteer program into the County personnel system. Unlike the County, the State does not require a physical, drug or background test, therefore converting the volunteer program to the County would have a budgetary impact.

Fire Department Recommendation: In progress.

Audit Recommendation: Procure a "Vehicle Maintenance Management" system.

Primary responsibility/coordination: Departmental Finance with support from Information Technology and input from Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Unit.

Timing: Within the next six to nine months.

Resource requirements: A Vehicle Maintenance Management System is expected to cost between \$25,000 and \$50,000, depending on the specific configuration. In addition, there will be management and IT time required to develop the specifications and evaluate alternatives.

Comments: After the Department develops IT specifications, it should determine if adequate software is available within the County or elsewhere in CDF before acquiring a new system from a vendor. (23)

Fire Department Response: This is a needed improvement in managing the large fire department fleet. On selection of a new IT Manager, this project will be given top priority and will include County Fleet services in the evaluation process.

Fire Department Recommendation: In progress.

Audit Recommendation: Consolidate inventory purchasing and management.

Primary responsibility/coordination: Purchasing and material management personnel from both agencies.

Timing: Within the next six months.

Resource requirements: Personnel time.

Comments: The County and CDF should agree on a "lead agency" that would have the responsibility for all inventory purchasing and management. The lead agency should charge the other agency for items used. The amount charged for inventory usage should cover all costs of the lead agency. (26)

Fire Department Response: Effective July 1, 2005 the County has taken the lead responsibility for all inventory purchasing and management except for fires that fall under State responsibility (SRA).

Fire Department Recommendation: No action required.

Audit Recommendation: Modify operating procedures to provide a breathing support unit on all Hazmat Unit responses.

Primary responsibility/coordination: Departmental management.

Timing: As soon a practical.
Resource requirements: None
Comments: Recommendation (16)

Fire Department Response: *Agree, breathing support need to routinely responded to structure and hazmat emergencies. The Fire Department reviewing the operational benefits of utilizing light vehicles responding with spare air bottles instead of breathing support units with mobile air compressors. The transition of the Fire Department from 25 minute to 45 minute self contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) reduces the need for an on-site air compressor. The use of light vehicle with spare bottles presents a less costly alternatives and increased flexibility.*

Fire Department Recommendation: *The Fire department is finalizing the operational policy on breathing support units.*

E. Finance and Administrative Systems

Audit Recommendation: Formalize and consolidate parts purchasing
Primary responsibility/coordination: Departmental purchasing, County Purchasing and CDF Purchasing/Regional Administration.
Timing: Within the next six months.
Resource requirements: Personnel time.
Comments: This effort should be coordinated with the effort to reduce the number of purchase orders that are processed through the County on behalf of the Department. (22)

Fire Department Response: *This project is in progress. Additional staffing has been approved by the Executive Office and contracts for large commodity purchases are either in place or being negotiated. Purchase orders for communication and computer repairs have been significantly reduced.*

Fire Department Recommendation: *In progress.*

Audit Recommendation: Reduce the excessive number of purchase orders
Primary responsibility/coordination: Departmental Finance in conjunction with Central Purchasing and Finance.
Timing: Within the next six months.
Resource requirements: Personnel time
Comments: The thrust of this recommendation is to reduce the non-valued added activities involved in creating POs. (26)

Fire Department Response: *County procurement policy and procedures are under the authority of the Department of Purchasing. All purchases over \$200 require a purchase order according to current policy.*

Fire Department Recommendation: *No action required.*

Audit Recommendation: Review of new cost allocation plan
Primary responsibility/coordination: Departmental management/County Auditor.
Timing: Before implementing new cost allocations to bill the contract cities.
Resource requirements: Personnel time.

Comments: Board policy requires the Auditor's Office to review all cost plans that are used to bill County costs. (4)

Fire Department Response: *This project is in progress. In December 2004 an ad hoc committee made up of six contracting agencies was created to review the existing plan. The objective was to share information regarding the inequities in the current cost distribution plan and gain consensus to move to direct charging of all costs. Transfer of the utility accounts at city owned stations for direct payment by the city was completed as of August 15, 2004. A plan for allocating indirect costs that can not be assigned to a specific station will be completed and review prior to the 1st quarter billings.*

Fire Department Recommendation: *In progress.*

Audit Recommendation: Work with Transportation and Land Management to develop an integrated document management system and integrated fee collection system.

Primary responsibility/coordination: Departmental management in conjunction with Transportation and Land Management. County IT support may be desirable.

Timing: Within the next 12 months.

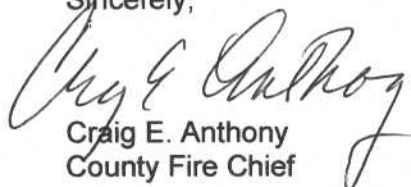
Resource requirements: An integrated document management system would be expected to cost \$400,000 to \$750,000. As the Fire Department would be a smaller benefactor of the system than Transportation and Land Management, the cost to the Department is estimated at \$100,000.

Comments: Consultant assistance in re-designing the permitting and fire plan checking process and in system selection and implementation may be desirable. (31)

Fire Department Response: *This project is in progress. The added complexity is the use of State Personnel which have to be charged against each case as if they were an outside vendor. Unlike County employees, their time and labor can not be easily tracked and recorded through the payroll system. It is the intent of the Department to actively participate with TLMA and other land use agencies in the procurement or re-design of a new fee collection system.*

Fire Department Recommendation: *In progress*

Sincerely,



Craig E. Anthony
County Fire Chief