



## **2014 Annual Report Volunteer Committee**

Ronny J. Coleman – Chairperson

### **Overview**

The CSFA Volunteer Committee has continued working on the restoration of the CSFA's image, role and relationships and support for those members who work within agencies that have essentially volunteer firefighters. We have also been working with departments that are classified as combination. Over this last year, we have actively been involved with over 100 volunteer fire departments for various reasons.

We have approximately 25 active members on the committee. This involvement has come about as a result of more activity in the area of compliance with state and federal laws regarding human resource issues, training and education policies and procedures and recruitment and retention activity.

### **Activity**

There were many specific activities that were continued from the 2012 calendar. The first was the Recruiting and Retention Workshops. The Volunteer Committee has now sponsored and delivered additional workshops. These workshops have included San Diego and Calistoga. Due to a change in direction by the Board of Directors, the Volunteer Committee was removed from the management of 3 events. They included Calaveras, Yosemite and San Diego. The last event under the current plan that will involve the Volunteer Committee will be conducted in Downieville during the last weekend of September.

### **Training**

The Volunteer Committee has also continued working with California State Fire Marshal, State Fire Training to increase the availability of training information to volunteer fire officers. Working with FSTI, the committee has created a Memorandum of Understanding at the local government level that has resulted in the distribution of hundreds of basic firefighting manuals. FSTI now has MOUs with approximately six counties based upon our interaction with them at the local level.

### **Deemed to Comply**

Working with Deputy Chief Tim Marrison from Los Banos, we followed up on our workshop from last year on how to comply with the DMV provisions. A change to the regulations was passed this year that resolves an issue for the qualifications of the training instructors. A communications was sent out to the volunteer fire service and numerous reactions occurred that were favorable to our work.

## **Field Trips**

As Chair of this Committee, I have been invited to participate in several volunteer firefighter academy graduations and fire chief monthly meetings. These have mostly been connected to the communities that are part of our MOA arrangement but not exclusively. During one of these field trips, I was able to coordinate the installation of a fire sprinkler system in a volunteer department that was remodeling. This occurred in Fieldbrook California.

## **Surplus Equipment**

The surplus equipment program continues to remain active. Among our most recent successes was the transfer of Rescue Squad equipment overseen by Chief Tom Forster from Plumas Eureka. Richard Brown continues to operate the surplus equipment program with a minimum amount of fiscal impact. Chief Tom Forster has accommodated a series of equipment acquisitions also.

## **Troubleshooting**

As a result of being in the field with the recruiting and retention workshops and the follow-up with our training opportunities, we are receiving an increase in the number of telephone inquiries asking for assistance. Currently we average three to five inquiries per week.

Many of these issues now center on hiring practices. A lesser number involves training and education requirements. We have also received inquiries regarding the SRA fees and individuals seeking assistance in organizing the governance of their local volunteer fire departments.

An increasing number of calls are focusing on human resource issues. During the last year we worked with the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) on the issue of IRS mandatory benefits rulings and also assisted several departments faced with problems between their Fire Chief and the Elected Board of Directors. Some of this activity involved the Federal Department of Labor (DOL) with respect to rulings by them on pay status for volunteers. As a result of the contacts with the NVFC, there was interaction on several national initiatives regarding volunteers. I personally sat in on about six teleconference over the year to keep track of various initiatives.

Lastly, we were involved in conducting a survey of volunteer fire departments with respect to compensation equity for volunteer fire departments when responding on statewide mutual aid calls.

## **Database**

The committee continued with the creation of a database that provides specific information about the volunteer fire service. We currently have approximately 200 fire departments that are totally volunteer in this system. We are pursuing the continued creation of this data in anticipation of the development of an information network to support those entities that are totally or mostly volunteer in their organizational structure. This will include combination departments.

As we proceed forward with each workshop we add approximately 20 departments to the systems per session. We have also developed a training and education database of these departments that is being used as part of our needs assessment for future opportunities.

## **Summary**

If the Board of Directors has any specific suggestions or questions, please feel free to forward that information to me at [ron@fireforceone.com](mailto:ron@fireforceone.com). In the event that you have any volunteer fire department

in your respective area that is experiencing difficulties in administration or resource management, please advise them to contact our committee for assistance.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ronny J. Coleman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'R' and 'C'.

Ronny J. Coleman