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**FIRE DEPARTMENT**

RALPH M. TERRAZAS  
FIRE CHIEF

200 NORTH MAIN STREET  
ROOM 1800  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

(213) 978-3800  
FAX: (213) 978-3815

[HTTP://WWW.LAFD.ORG](http://www.lafd.org)

October 14, 2014

The Honorable Members of the City Council  
c/o City Clerk  
City Hall, Room 395  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Fire Department FY 2014-15 Interim Budget Request

Dear Council Members:

During my confirmation as Fire Chief on August 8, 2014, several Council members, and the President, United Firefighters of Los Angeles City, expressed concern over the Los Angeles Fire Department's (LAFD) staffing challenges resulting from reductions in the Fiscal Year 2011-12 Budget. The consistent message was the need to rebuild the Department and restore personnel to enhance public safety and firefighter safety.

With over 31 years experience in the LAFD, I am acutely aware of the importance of maintaining adequate staffing to ensure the provision of appropriate response times to both emergency and non-emergency calls, and of other essential public services such as fire life safety inspections. I further recognize that field operations cannot properly function without the sworn and civilian men and women of the Department who perform critical support functions. Their workload, also, has been negatively impacted by budget reductions. These organizational and budgetary challenges led to my identification of two of the top three priorities to be fulfilled during my tenure as Fire Chief: (1) Improving response times, and (2) Providing additional resources to the Department.

My third priority is for the Department to be comprised of a diverse and multi-cultural work force that is reflective of the communities we serve. Currently, the LAFD falls short of that goal in its gender and ethnic representation. My vision for achieving a more diverse work force is to use several strategies to attract qualified potential candidates into the firefighter selection process. Through my past experience, I have observed the success of tutorial programs in preparing firefighter candidates for the physical rigors of the Candidate Physical Abilities Test (CPAT) and the Drill Tower.

I am committed to re-instituting the tutorial programs, and to establishing a Youth Mentoring Program by partnering with local magnet high schools to introduce LAFD career opportunities to students.

It is noted that these priorities align with several of the Mayor's Priority Outcomes:

- Make our communities the safest in the nation
- Provide outstanding customer service to our residents and businesses
- Restore pride and excellence in public service
- Partner with citizens and civic groups to build a greater city

I have reviewed the FY 2014-15 Budget and determined that the Department cannot absorb the costs for the additional resources required to begin achieving my vision of enhancing services. I am, therefore, submitting for the City Council's consideration an Interim Budget Request amounting to approximately \$4.1M. The requested items are discussed below by Priority Category, and summarized in the Attachment. The salaries reflect six-months funding.

I recognize that adding new resources to the field will compound the current vacancy factor. To address that issue, I will seek to recall to duty retired firefighters to backfill vacant positions. Retired members may be recalled to duty for up to 90 days in a calendar year.

### **Resources/Support**

**1) Staffing for One Engine Company:** Add \$924,567 and position authority for 3 Captain I, 3 Engineer, 6 Firefighter III.

Eleven Engine Companies were closed with implementation of the Deployment Plan in FY 2011-12. One Engine Company (Engine 105) has since been restored. Approval of this request would restore a second Engine Company and provide an additional resource to respond to "All Risk" calls for service.

Numerous factors are considered in determining the best location to restore a resource, including:

### **Emergency Responses**

- Incident call volume
- Emergency response times
- Types of resources currently deployed
- Resource coverage and availability
- Types of emergency incidents

### Risk Assessment

- Risk factors within each district
- Density and age of the population
- Type and age of building construction within the districts
- Geographic location and size of the Fire Station district, terrain and access in and out of the district
- Significant fire hazards based on surrounding areas such as: Wildland Urban Interface with fuels, terrain, weather, and other relevant factors, referred to as Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ).
- Significant fire hazards based on fire history
- Significant increases in population and/or traffic patterns, such as areas with night clubs and entertainment venues

Fire Station 35 has the highest daily average responses to incidents, and is the district with the highest daily average number of incidents requiring calls for service. It is located in east Hollywood which encompasses several risk assessment factors: significant fire hazards based on surrounding areas (VHFHSZ); high property values; a high rise district that includes multi-residential buildings including multiple pre-1933 construction type buildings<sup>1</sup>, light industrial and high rise commercial; historical landmarks, such as Griffith Park and The Observatory; and several hospitals (Hollywood Presbyterian Hospital, Kaiser Sunset, and Children's Hospital). Fire Station 35's district, consisting of a relatively large coverage area of 4.1 square miles, is difficult to access with narrow streets and closures during Red Flag alert days affecting response times. Restoring an Engine Company at Fire Station 35 provides the best coverage to supply maximum water flow to the VHFHSZ and additional staffing to the areas identified in the risk assessment.

### **2) Emergency Incident Technicians (EITs):** Add \$214,374 and position authority for 3 Firefighter/EITs.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) requires that an Incident Commander have a staff aide to assist in providing for accountability, situation status, resource status, and emergency safety procedures that are required at every emergency incident. Seven of the 14 battalions operate without EITs due to deletion of the positions in FY 2010-11. While the Department developed alternate methods to assist the Battalion Chiefs at an incident in maintaining these critical command and control functions, none provided the required consistent expertise and continuity offered by an EIT, which has negatively impacted the efficiency of the command post and posed risks to firefighter safety. This request restores EITs to one battalion as part of a more long-term plan to add EITs, incrementally, in future year budgets.

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<sup>1</sup> Pre-33 buildings were Un-Reinforced Masonry (URM) constructed of bricks with lime and sand mortar and no steel reinforcement used prior to cement. These buildings have a high probability of collapse during and after a significant earthquake. Building codes were changed after the 1933 Long Beach Earthquake. All pre-33 buildings have been retrofitted but are identified as potential risks.

**3) Inspectors for Development Services:** Add \$459,901 and position authority for 5 Inspector II.

Since FY 2008-09, 22 Inspector positions have been deleted from the Budget, seriously hampering the broad range of inspection activities conducted by the Fire Prevention Bureau. An example, due to the recent economic recovery, is the increased workload in development services (e.g., plan checks and inspections) for new construction. The Department's goal has been to respond to inspection requests within 72 hours, which is still short of the ideal goal of inspections within 48 hours of a request. Unfortunately, developers have been waiting for up to seven days due to insufficient resources, which means projects are on-hold until the inspection is completed and sign-off is given. Each day's delay is extremely costly to the developer.

To support the Mayoral and Council One-Stop concept of providing centralized development services, it is proposed that three of the requested Inspector positions be co-located with the Department of Building and Safety (DBS) in its civic center office. Similarly, two Inspector positions would be co-located with DBS at the West Los Angeles and Valley satellite offices, respectively. Currently, Fire Department development services Inspectors are located in the civic center, only. Assigning LAFD resources to the satellite offices offers a significant convenience for the customer by eliminating the need to travel long distances in order to obtain project approval by both LAFD and DBS. Providing additional inspection staff, and placing them in strategic locations will improve the level of customer service and responsiveness the City strives for, particularly to an industry that is vital to job creation and local economic growth.

**4) Supply and Maintenance Division, Rescue Maintenance Unit:** Add \$215,182 and position authority for two Firefighter III and two Apparatus Operator on administrative duty.

Six sworn staff in the Rescue Maintenance Unit have been responsible for filling oxygen cylinders; annual testing and on-going repairs of vital breathing apparatus, air cylinders and face pieces for all field personnel; and providing logistical support to the field. The FY 2014-15 Budget deleted four of these positions (two Firefighter IIIs and two Apparatus Operators), requiring one Firefighter III and one Apparatus Operator to perform the work of six employees. Because assuming this workload was infeasible, the Department has retained the four deleted positions in Rescue Maintenance. These positions are requested for restoration, with funding, to reflect the necessary staffing to ensure life-saving breathing apparatus and related equipment are working properly and available to field personnel.

**5) Nurse Educators:** Add \$143,021 and position authority for two Nurse Educators.

Nurse Educators are responsible for the continuing education and training of the Department's certified Paramedics. They provide post incident training sessions and conduct the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services mandated EMS

courses. In addition, they provide remedial training to Paramedics whose skills have been identified as deficient. The Department is currently authorized three Nurse Educator positions which have been insufficient to fulfill the various training requirements for all Paramedics. Failure to provide timely and appropriate training to Paramedics exposes the City to risk and potential liability. The additional Nurse Educators will assist in meeting the training workload requirements, and establishing a more proactive Paramedic education program by regularly participating in ride-alongs with LAFD resources to identify training needs.

**6) Extractor Installations:** Add \$240,000.

A 2013 National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) study examined the mortality patterns and cancer incidence in approximately 30,000 firefighters. The study found higher rates of several types of cancers, and of all cancers combined, than the U.S. population as a whole. Firefighters are exposed to contaminants from fires that contaminate their personal protective equipment (PPE). Contact with soiled PPE increase the risk of contaminants being introduced into the body. Cleaning and decontaminating PPE through the use of extractor washing machines limits on-going exposure to carcinogens and other toxins that pose health risks. Of the Department's 108 facilities, only 38 are equipped with extractor washing machines. The Fire Foundation donated 14 extractor washing machines; however, the City must bear the electrical and plumbing installation costs.

**7) Staff Relocations/Build-outs/Expenses:** Add \$250,000.

The Department has been appreciative of the increasing number of administrative support positions authorized to be filled by the Managed Hiring Committee, and the addition of new positions authorized in the Budget, such as for the FireStatLA Unit. However, such growth has resulted in a space shortage in City Hall East. The Department will be discussing our space needs with the Office of the City Administrative Officer and the Department of General Services, in addition to potential moves that would provide greater efficiencies in Department operations. For example, the Fire Prevention Bureau, Construction Services and Hydrants and Access Units, currently in two separate buildings at Figueroa Plaza, should be co-located to provide a one-stop center for customers. The current location of the Professional Standards Division (PSD) in City Hall East has never been conducive to the number of authorized positions and the level of confidentiality required. Further, no funding was included in the FY 2014-15 Budget for expenses, such as modular furniture and computers, for the 15 additional positions (number of positions reflects proposed deletion of four authorities discussed below under "Four Bureau Concept") authorized to the four Geographic Bureau command structure. The Department has been assessing availability of space in existing fire facilities.



### Improving Response Times

1) **Add Second 24-Hour Assistant Chief to Four Bureau Concept:** Add \$406,486 and position authority on platoon duty for 3 Fire Assistant Chief and 3 Captain I Adjutant; reallocate 3 Firefighter III EIT to 3 Captain I Adjutant; delete 1 administrative duty Fire Assistant Chief; delete 2 Captain I; delete 2 Clerk Typist.

The FY 2014-15 Budget provides for implementation of the four Geographic Bureau command structure with a staffing configuration that includes three Fire Assistant Chiefs and three Captain I Adjutants on administrative duty, and one Fire Assistant Chief and one Firefighter III EIT on platoon duty to provide 24 hour coverage. The prior command structure provided 24 hour coverage by two Fire Assistant Chiefs. To enhance emergency response resources for public safety and accountability during emergency operations, it is proposed that a second platoon duty Fire Assistant Chief be substituted for the budgeted administrative duty position authority. Platoon duty Captain I Adjutants are also requested for consistency of administrative support staffing within the Geographic Bureaus.

Two Captain I and two Clerk Typist positions authorized in the FY 2014-15 Budget are proposed for deletion. The funding request reflects an offset of \$214,983 with deletion of these four positions. The duties will be performed by reassigning two existing EMS Captain I on administrative duty and two existing Clerk Typist positions from the Emergency Services Bureau.

2) **FireStatLA Unit:** Add \$105,000 and position authority for 2 Senior Fire Statistical Analysts.

The FireStatLA Unit, comprised of one Fire Statistical Manager and one Senior Fire Statistical Analyst, has been focused on validating data contained in the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system for the period from 2013 to the present. The validation process is critical to ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the data on response times and other metrics used to measure performance on responses to emergency and non-emergency calls. Because this process is extremely labor intensive, and must be recurring given the volume of calls for service received, the limited staff has been unable to begin mining and analyzing other data sets. The requested staff would enable the FireStatLA Unit to fulfill its objective to develop metrics, compile and analyze data sets, monitor performance and target improvements in the range of Department field and administrative operations (e.g., dispatching, inspections, training, workers' compensation, shops, fiscal management, etc.).

3) **Dispatch System Manager:** Add \$65,599 and position authority for 1 Captain I.

The LAFD is in the process of developing the Tiered Dispatch System (TDS) for medical dispatch protocols. This position would work closely with the Dispatch Quality Improvement Unit and the Medical Director to perform dispatch system data analysis,

including key metrics such as call processing time, response times, compliance with dispatch standards and policies, compliance with early recognition and provision of Pre-Arrival Instructions (PAIs), and the effectiveness of dispatch algorithm assignments for each dispatch category. Analysis of these and other dispatch related issues will determine the need for ongoing modifications of the TDS, and will improve the quality of dispatch protocols and the training provided to dispatchers.

### **Reflection of the Community/Services to the Community**

1) **Recruitment Staffing:** Add \$939,742 and position authority for 1 Captain II, 1 Captain I, 2 Firefighter III, 1 Senior Clerk Typist (funding request includes \$533,600 for 9,200 hours for Variable Staffing Overtime).

The requested recruitment staff would augment the currently assigned Captain I and Firefighter III. This team would implement a comprehensive strategy that includes:

- *Recruitment:* In addition to traditional outreach methods, such as attending community events for targeted recruitment efforts, social media will be used to advertise and promote LAFD career opportunities.
- *Mentoring:* A mentoring relationship will be established with prospective candidates and regular follow-up contacts will be made during the various phases of the Firefighter selection process to provide encouragement and positive reinforcement.
- *Preparation:* Information and training on the requirements of the Firefighter examination process will be provided. Practice sessions will be made available to prepare for the Candidate Physical Abilities Test (CPAT), written test and interview.
- *Youth Development:* In coordination with Council Districts and local magnet high schools, provide summertime and after-school Youth Development Programs, such as Fire Instruction Recruitment and Education (FIRE) Academy to provide training on leadership, communication skills, physical fitness and preparatory training toward a future career in the Fire Department. The requested Variable Staffing Overtime hours would be devoted to these programs and for the instructors to run the Academies twice a year.

2) **Community Liaison:** Add \$115,384 and position authority for 1 Captain I and 1 Public Relations Specialist.

The Community Liaison Office (CLO) is managed by the Public Information Director. The staff is comprised of one Captain II on administrative duty who serves as the Public Information Officer providing media relations and public information at emergency incidents, among other duties; and three Firefighter IIIs on platoon duty providing media phone interviews and creating numerous daily social media posts. The CLO is also

responsible for preparing news releases; coordinating news conferences; preparing public service announcements and coordinating related campaigns; and responding to requests for participation at community events by elected officials and the communities at-large.

Media attention on the Fire Department over the past several years has created a concurrent increase in calls from the media and public for information and interviews on a broad range of issues. The staff receives up to 300 calls per day on significant incidents, most of which go unfulfilled, placing the Department in a negative light. Further, the Captain II is the only sworn staff assigned to respond to media requests in the field on emergency incidents, and must be available 24/7 as such incidents occur at anytime. This single point of contact has presented logistical problems, particularly with simultaneous incidents. While the Public Information Director serves as back-up, he does not have a sworn fire service background and, therefore, cannot respond to technical questions that may be posed. The requested Captain I position would share the Public Information Officer duties with the Captain II. The Public Relations Specialist would assist the Public Information Director preparing news releases, media advisories, organizing press conferences, and providing oversight of content on the new LAFD.org website.

You have placed confidence in my ability to lead the Department toward fulfilling my priorities, enhancing public safety and firefighter safety, and to be more responsive to the community and your Offices. I believe this Interim Budget Request is necessary to provide the additional resources and funding to begin achieving those objectives. Therefore, it is recommended that City Council, subject to approval of the Mayor, instruct the City Administrative Officer to identify funds to transfer \$4,081,506 to Fund 100/Dept. 38 into the following accounts:

<u>Account No.</u>	<u>Account Title</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Account 001010	Salaries, General	\$ 232,286
Account 001012	Salaries, Sworn	\$2,463,350
Account 006020	Operating Supplies	\$ 490,000
Account 006010	Office and Administrative	\$ 142,270
Account 007340	Transportation Equipment	\$ 220,000
Account 001098	Overtime Variable Staffing	<u>\$ 533,600</u>
	Total	\$4,081,506



Honorable Members of the City Council  
Page 9

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (213) 473-9989.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ralph M. Terrazas". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

RALPH M. TERRAZAS  
Fire Chief

Attachment

**FY 2014-15 Interim Budget Request - Fire Department**

(10/9/2014)

Priority Category	Budget Package Title	Number of Positions	Number and Position Classification	Salary	Expense/ Equipment	Transport Equip	Six Months Total	*Full Year Total	Brief Justification for Request
Resources	Staffing for one Engine Company	12	6 Firefighter III; 3 Fire Engineer; 3 Fire Captain I	924,567	0	0	924,567	1,849,134	Eleven Engine Companies were closed with implementation of the Deployment Plan in FY 2011-12. One Engine Company (Engine 105) has since been restored. Request restores an Engine Company to Fire Station 35 based on evaluation of data and community risk assessment factors.
Resources	Emergency Incident Technicians (EITs)	3	3 Firefighter III EIT	214,374	0	0	214,374	428,748	Seven of 14 battalions operate without EITs due to the deletion of positions in FY 2010-11. Request restores EITs to one battalion as part of a multi-year phase-in plan.
Resources	Fire Inspectors for Development Services	5	5 Fire Inspector II	302,351	47,550	110,000	459,901	604,702	Since FY 2008-09, 22 Inspector positions have been deleted from the Budget which has seriously hampered the ability to conduct timely inspections. Three positions would be assigned to conduct inspections of new construction to meet the increased workload. Two positions would be assigned to the West LA and Valley satellite offices with Department of Building and Safety to create one-stop permitting and plan check services.
Resources	Supply and Maintenance Division, Rescue Maintenance Unit	4	2 Firefighter III; 2 Aparatus Operator on Administrative Duty	215,182	0	0	215,182	430,364	Four of the six positions dedicated to Rescue Maintenance were deleted in FY 2014-15. Restore four positions to reflect necessary staffing to ensure life-saving breathing apparatus and related equipment are working properly and available to field personnel.
Resources	Nurse Educators	2	2 Emergency Medical Services Educators	101,521	19,500	22,000	143,021	203,042	Additional Nurse Educators needed to meet workload needs providing continuing education to Paramedics on proper patient care, including post-incident and remedial training.
Resources Support	Extractor Installations			0	240,000	0	240,000	0	Los Angeles Fire Foundation donated 14 extractor washing machines to clean personal protective equipment (PPE) to limit ongoing exposure to carcinogens that pose health risks to firefighters. Funding is for the cost of electrical and plumbing installation.

Priority Category	Budget Package Title	Number of Positions	Number and Position Classification	Salary	Expense/ Equipment	Transport Equip	Six Months Total	*Full Year Total	Brief Justification for Request
Resources Support	Staff Relocations/Buildouts			0	250,000	0	250,000	0	Funding for relocation costs to meet various space needs and expenses for new staff in four Geographic Bureaus.
Improving Response Times	Add Second 24-Hr Assistant Chief to Four Bureau Concept	1	3 Fire Captain I Adjutant; 3 Fire Assistant Chief (Platoon Duty); Upgrade 3 Firefighter III EIT to Fire Captain I Adjutant; Delete 1 Fire Assistant Chief (Admin Duty); Delete 2 Fire Captain I-3 (EMS Captain); Delete 2 Clerk Typist (originally funded for 9 months)	406,486	0	0	406,486	863,759	Add staff for a second 24 hour Division Office to enhance response coverage during emergency operations. Upgrade 3 Firefighter III EIT to 3 Fire Captain I Adjutant for consistency of administrative support staffing within the Geographic Bureaus. Two Captains and two Clerk Typists proposed for deletion; duties to be performed by reassigning existing positions.
Improving Response Times	FireStatLA Unit	2	2 Sr. Fire Statistical Analyst	100,000	5,000	0	105,000	200,000	Additional staff would enable the FireStatLA Unit to fulfill its objective to develop metrics, compile and analyze data sets, monitor performance and target improvements in the range of Department field and administrative operations.
Improving Response Times	Dispatch System Manager	1	1 Fire Captain I	65,599	2,250	0	67,849	131,198	LAFD is in the process of developing the Tiered Dispatch System (TDS) for medical dispatch protocols. Requested position would work with Dispatch Quality Improvement Unit and Medical Director to perform dispatch system data analysis to determine modifications of TDS, and improve quality of protocols and training to Dispatchers.
Community	Recruitment Staffing	5	1 Fire Captain II; 1 Fire Captain I; 2 Firefighter III; 1 Sr. Clerk Typist; \$533,600 (9,200 hrs) for Variable Staffing Overtime	802,792	48,950	88,000	939,742	1,605,584	Requested recruitment staff would augment the currently assigned Fire Captain I and Firefighter III. Additional staffing would allow Department to implement a comprehensive strategy that includes: Recruitment, Mentoring, Preparation and Youth Development.
Community	Community Liaison	2	1 Fire Captain I; 1 Public Relations Specialist	96,364	19,020	0	115,384	192,728	Captain I and Public Relations Specialist would address significant workload responding to telephonic media and public requests for information, providing media relations at emergency incidents, and preparing news releases and media advisories.
	<b>Total Request</b>	<b>37</b>		<b>\$3,229,236</b>	<b>\$632,270</b>	<b>\$220,000</b>	<b>\$4,081,506</b>	<b>\$6,509,259</b>	

\*Full Year Total excludes one-time expense and equipment cost.