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April 22, 2014

Honorable Paul Krekorian
Chair, Budget and Finance Committee
c/o Erika Pulst, Legislative Assistant
Office of the City Clerk

Dear Councilmember Krekorian:

I express my appreciation to the Mayor for the Fiscal Year 2014-15 Proposed Budget that adds \$11 million to fund critical areas, including restructuring the Department into four Regional Geographic Bureaus, continuing the Recruit Training program with funding for 140 new recruits, and authorizing civilian staffing to support Department operations. It is also noted that two months funding of \$1.67M is provided to continue the Ambulance Augmentation Plan. As you know, in an effort to reduce response times and enhance the delivery of emergency medical services (EMS), the Plan was initiated in May 2013 by reassigning 22 sworn positions per day from fire suppression task forces to staff 11 Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulances. Through a series of actions (C.F. 13-0545; 13-0545-S1; 13-0600-S149), Council supported funding overtime costs to retain staff resources on fire apparatus with the redeployment to additional ambulances. The Mayor's Budget Team indicates that over the first quarter of FY 2014-15, it will work with the LAFD to assess data on response times, EMS incidents and other outcomes. Through funding in the Mayor's Proposed Budget, a Standards of Coverage Study will be completed that may result in staffing reconfiguration recommendations. The combination of these efforts will identify the appropriate funding in FY 2014-15 for continuation of the Ambulance Augmentation Plan and retention of fire resource staffing.

I also wish to recognize your continuing strong support, along with the Chair, Public Safety Committee, for providing additional funding in order to meet the Department's critical needs for increasing sworn and civilian staffing levels, establishing an appropriate equipment/apparatus replacement cycle, and replacing technology that is obsolete with state-of-the-art. As you perceptively calculated and so informed at the April 11, 2014, Joint Meeting of the Public Safety and Budget and Finance Committees, the LAFD has been "woefully" underfunded and, at 40 cents per day, the high quality services provided is the cheapest on a per capita basis of all large metropolitan fire agencies. While the Proposed Budget places the LAFD in a much better position toward restoring its resources that had been deleted in prior fiscal year budgets, there are several areas that require discussion and attention to enhance the Department's ability to provide its core services. These are listed below, in priority order (see Attachment for summary listing).

- 1) **Recruit Training** – Add funding of \$3,826,102: approximately \$3.7M to modify the current Recruit Training plan in the Proposed Budget, and \$100,000 for targeted recruitment efforts. The Proposed Budget provides funding in the amount of \$3,588,686 for two 20-week classes of 70 Firefighter Recruits projected to start at Drill Tower 81 in February and June 2015. The Department recommends accelerating the hiring schedule to reduce the impact on the current field staffing shortage by conducting three Recruit Training Academy classes during FY 2014-2015. Two classes would be held at Drill Tower 81 with 60 recruits in each class and one class at Drill Tower 40 with 45 recruits. The number of recruits at Drill Tower 81 would be reduced from 70 in the Proposed Budget to 60. The reduced class size would provide a more conducive learning environment and establish a more appropriate instructor/student ratio, which could, potentially, enhance the graduation rate. The table below shows the proposed Recruit Training Academy classes, contingent upon completion of the Firefighter examination process by the Personnel Department:

Location	Academy Start Date	No of Recruits
DT81	12/2014	60
DT40	3/2015	45
DT81	4/2015	60

Funding in the amount of \$100,000 is requested to develop a targeted recruitment program to promote interest in the fire service in under-utilized communities.

- 2) **Safety Equipment Replacement** - Add \$3,651,266 to purchase mandated safety equipment including air cylinders, escape canisters, and the first year of a three-year plan to purchase a second set of turnouts for each sworn member.

The Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) air cylinders and escape canisters allow fire personnel to safely enter Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) atmospheres (e.g., structure and automobile fires, hazardous materials incidents) to perform lifesaving fire protection and rescue measures. The escape canisters are used in the event of a firefighter entrapment situation while in an IDLH atmosphere where the air cylinders are depleted of air. The canisters provide firefighters an additional 15 minutes of survivability from the effects of smoke and toxic gases, including carbon monoxide, while help is coordinated and arrives.

The air cylinders have a service life of 15 years and were purchased in 2000. The escape canisters have a service life of 5 ½ years. The purchase of the cylinders and escape canisters cannot be phased-in over several years because they will all reach expiration in 2015. The second set of turnouts will enable compliance with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 1851 that requires bi-annual technical cleaning of turnouts in addition to routine cleaning from post incident contamination.

2014-15 Budget Requests			
SCBA Air Cylinders, Escape Canisters and Second Set of Turnouts			
Item Requested	Estimated Cost Per Unit	Quantity	Total
1) Air Cylinder	\$ 589	2200	\$1,295,800
2) Escape Canister	\$ 125	3500	\$ 437,500
3) Second Set of Turnouts	\$1,793	1070	\$1,917,966
TOTAL			\$3,651,266

- 3) **Supply and Maintenance Division, Rescue Maintenance Unit** – Add position authorities for two Mechanical Helpers and restore position authorities for one Firefighter III and one Apparatus Operator on Administrative Duty. No additional funding is requested.

Current Rescue Maintenance Unit staffing provides 24-hour/7 day per week coverage by sworn personnel. The Proposed Budget redeploys two Firefighter IIIs and two Apparatus Operators back to the field, thereby reducing the sworn staffing level by 50%. Because the remaining staff will be unable to meet the workload demands (e.g., filling oxygen cylinders; annual testing and on-going repairs of vital breathing apparatus, air cylinders and face pieces for all field personnel; providing logistical support to the field), the Department requests restoration of one Firefighter III and one Apparatus Operator on Administrative Duty, and the addition of two Mechanical Helper positions. The request provides a blend of civilian and sworn personnel on an administrative schedule that is more cost effective by eliminating constant staffing overtime.

- 4) **FireStatLA Section** – Add \$228,264 for nine months funding in the amount of \$153,264 and position authorities for one Battalion Chief and one Senior Clerk Typist, and \$75,000 for contract services to continue the FireStatLA consultant. To implement FireStatLA, the FY 2013-14 Budget authorized a Fire Statistical Manager and a Senior Fire Statistical Analyst. In addition, the LAFD retained the services of Dr. Craig Uchida of Justice and Security Strategies, Inc., to produce *“Operationalizing FireStatLA: An Implementation Plan”* (January 2014).

With validation of the data sets by Dr. Uchida, and through compliance with the protocols contained in the Implementation Plan, pilot FireStatLA meetings were held on March 31 in North Division and on April 17 in South Division. The LAFD’s experiences developing the data sets, preparing the materials for discussion, and coordinating and scheduling the platoon duty staff to attend these FireStatLA meetings supported Dr. Uchida’s recommendation for appropriate level command staff and staff support in order to successfully implement FireStatLA. The Battalion Chief position would provide the operational knowledge and internal presence to link the Chief Officers and Captains in the field with the FireStatLA Section. This inter-connection is necessary to ensure Department-wide cooperation and buy-in of the process, thus successfully managing the transition of FireStatLA from the pilot phase to an institutional model.

The Senior Clerk Typist would fulfill the very labor-intensive clerical tasks required to prepare for each meeting, which cannot be absorbed by existing support staff. (Due to the shortage of support positions in the Department, document preparation for the pilot meetings was performed by detailed sworn personnel.) The contract funding would provide continuation of Dr. Uchida's subject matter expertise for technical assistance in validating the appropriateness of the extracted data and conclusions drawn from the data analysis.

- 5) **Emergency Incident Technicians (EITs)** - Add nine months funding in the amount of \$1,307,707 for 12 Emergency Incident Technicians (EIT) on platoon duty in four identified high activity Battalions. PA Consulting recommended restoration of the EIT positions that had been deleted in prior fiscal year budgets.

The EIT position is a critical part of the command and control function that routinely takes place at most significant emergency incidents. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) requires an Incident Commander to have an assistant nearby to provide the tracking, situation status, resource status, accountability, and emergency safety features that are expected at every emergency incident. The lack of a position to maintain command and control has negatively impacted the efficiency of the command post, and added risk to Firefighters working in and around dangerous environments.

In addition, EITs function as adjutants to the Battalion Chief, managing and supervising the Battalion's day-to-day administrative operations, and developing and maintaining relationships with key community representatives within their respective district. With implementation of FireStatLA, the EITs will also be responsible for managing and providing appropriate follow-up with Fire Station Captains, on behalf of the Battalion Chief, regarding performance metric improvements. The requested 12 positions is part of a two-phase plan, with restoration of nine EIT positions to be requested next fiscal year.

- 6) **Additional Staffing for Four Regional Bureau Organizations** – Add nine months funding in the amount of \$1,418,489 and position authorities for four Public Relations Specialist II, four Captain II (Bureau Adjutant), four Senior Clerk Typists (in place of the Clerk Typists in the Proposed Budget), salary differential from four Captain Is to four Captain I Paramedics, and overtime for one Assistant Chief and one Emergency Incident Technician position.

Consistent with the PA Consulting recommendation, the former Emergency Services Bureau will be transitioned to four regional bureaus: Valley Bureau, West Bureau, Central Bureau, and South Bureau. Placed regionally in the communities in which they serve, this new approach creates a more hands-on service delivery system to ensure that each community is receiving the highest level of fire protection and life safety services available from the Department. This model also results in alignment with the LAPD operational Bureaus. Such alignment will enhance public safety in planning for unified responses in disasters and other major incidents.

While the 19 positions in the Proposed Budget are a step in the right direction, the Department requests funding and additional position authorities as described below for successful implementation of this new model:

- a) **Four Captain I Paramedic (Bureau Medical Officer)**
Over 80% of the Department's workload involves the delivery of emergency medical services. The Captain I Paramedic will assist the Bureau Commander with oversight of the emergency medical service delivery network. This includes engaging the medical community physicians, nurses, and hospital staff to ensure seamless service delivery.
 - b) **Four Public Relations Specialist II (Public Affairs Officer)**
These civilian positions are critical to establishing and fostering positive and productive Fire Department community relations. By partnering with community leaders, civic organizations, Neighborhood Councils, block associations, and concerned individuals, the respective Bureau Commander and Public Affairs Officer will develop solutions to problems and seek opportunities to enhance services.
 - c) **Four Captain II (Bureau Adjutant)**
The Captain IIs will serve as the Deputy Chiefs' Adjutants with responsibility for all aspects of assisting the Bureau Commander in managing the Bureau Office staff; preparing correspondence and other communications; reviewing work products prepared by Bureau Office staff; assisting in policy development and execution of administrative policies and practices; communicating with staff of elected officials and external agencies; and acting as safety member during emergency activities.
 - d) **Four Senior Clerk Typists (replacing four Clerk Typists in the Proposed Budget)**
These positions would provide clerical support to the entire Bureau Command Office, including Command staff, Captains, and civilian positions. Given the level of duties and responsibilities, including Bureau activities to support FireStatLA, the position allocations are more appropriate for the class of Senior Clerk Typist.
- 7) **Technology: Staff Support and Replacement of End-of-Life Infrastructure** – Add \$536,711: \$76,711 and position authority for one Programmer Analyst IV position, and \$460,000 to replace end-of-life infrastructure.
- a) Add nine months funding in the amount of \$76,711 and position authority for one Programmer Analyst IV to support the Network Staffing System (NSS). NSS, one of the most critical applications used in the LAFD, automatically staffs the 106 fire stations and specialized work locations to ensure proper staffing levels. The system tracks, calculates, and reports electronically to PAYSr for payment of all sworn employees' Compensated Time Off, overtime, and Fair Labor Standards Act time. In addition, it tracks sworn certifications required as a condition of employment, on- and off-duty training, next-of-kin notifications, daily activities, and other essential functions at fire stations. Because this system was developed in-house, only one dedicated position, a Senior Systems Analyst II, has been the key to the continuing development, implementation, and maintenance of NSS. This single point of failure is a tremendous risk for a public safety department. The requested Programmer

Analyst IV position is essential to sustaining this application, providing the additional resources to enhance and modernize the user interface, and building additional functionality to integrate with future automation projects (e.g., FD-Time, FLSA compliance, position control, and FireStatLA). During FY 2014-15, the Department will explore the availability of, and cost to transition to, off-the-shelf software that would be more conducive to technical support by City IT personnel.

b) LAFD Virtual Server Environment and SAN Replacement - \$460,000

Servers for Virtualization (End of Life) (4 at \$45,000 ea)	\$180,000
Virtual Server Software (End of Life)	\$100,000
Storage Area Network (End of Life)	\$180,000

These items are inclusive of the current Virtual Server Environment which provides the backend IT infrastructure supporting the entire LAFD business operations (User Accounts/Profiles, Business Application, Databases, and Network storage). This environment is end of life, can no longer sustain the computing demands of the Department's operations, and desperately needs replacement. The Virtual Server software is two versions behind, and upgrading is dependent on new hardware. The Storage Area Network (SAN) vendor informed all customers that the SAN reached end of life as of March 31, 2014, which means no additional software/firmware upgrades will be available. If this system fails, computer access to critical LAFD business applications and data will be inaccessible.

- 8) **Public Relations Section** – Add nine months funding in the amount of \$144,546 and position authorities for one Captain I and one Public Relations Specialist II. The Department is professionalizing its communications efforts with the media and the public. To that end, the Proposed Budget adds one Public Information Director II and deletes funding and authority for one Battalion Chief. A successful public relations program, however, also requires sufficient staffing to properly address media inquiries and to disseminate information to the public in a timely and effective manner, which could be achieved with the two additional positions.
- 9) **False Alarm Program** – Add \$500,000 to fund a Request for Proposals (RFP) to develop a system to automate tracking and billing for responses to false fire alarms. Program implementation costs are contingent on proposals received from the RFP and a determination of whether it would be more cost beneficial for the billing process to be performed by City employees or contracted out. The false fire alarm fees would be established by ordinance and provide full-cost recovery for on-going implementation costs.

MICLA Funding for Fleet Replacement - MICLA funding in the amount of \$20.3M for fleet replacement was included in the Proposed Budget. The Department requested \$30M in an effort to, incrementally, put the Department back on track with the fleet replacement cycle.

The Department utilizes about 1225 apparatus to deliver emergency services to the public. During budget discussions for FY 2001-02, Council concurred with the LAFD that a replacement schedule would be appropriate to avoid degradation of the Department's fleet. The replacement

cycle includes the radios mounted in apparatus, as well as the handi-talkie radios used by Firefighters to communicate at emergencies. No other City Department has an apparatus replacement cycle that is as long as the Fire Department's (15-years for heavy apparatus). With the economic downturn, the City has been unable to fund the scheduled replacement cycle, as summarized in the below table.

MICLA Five Year History Fleet Replacement Budget			
	<u>Budget Year</u>	<u>Amount Requested</u>	<u>Adopted Budget</u>
1)	2013 – 2014	\$27,227,867	\$ 20,766,000
2)	2012 – 2013	\$23,949,862	\$ 19,075,000
3)	2011 – 2012	\$26,697,548	\$ 6,826,792
4)	2010 – 2011	\$26,262,174	\$ 6,111,838
5)	2009 – 2010	\$27,388,972	\$ 0
Five Year Total		Requested: \$131,526,423	Received: \$52,779,630
Five Year MICLA Shortfall..... \$78,746,793			

The \$20M provided in the Proposed Budget, rather than the \$30M requested, results in increasing the average age of the fleet and the number of apparatus beyond the Department's replacement cycle. In turn, the Department's parts and repair budget is further stressed.

The chart below shows the average age of apparatus, the number of apparatus beyond the replacement cycle and the age when apparatus should be retired for the most common apparatus types utilized by the Department.

Apparatus Type	Count	Beyond Cycle	% Beyond Cycle	Average Age	Replacement Cycle
Ambulance	225	106	47.1%	5.6	6
Pumper	197	57	28.9%	11.5	15
Aerial Ladder Truck	57	18	31.6%	12.5	15
Command	60	39	65.0%	10.8	6

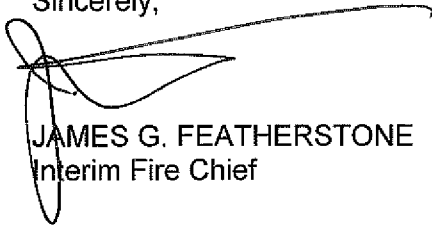
Honorable Paul Krekorian, Chair

April 22, 2014

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Again, I thank the Mayor for supporting the LAFD and providing a significant increase in the Department's FY 2014-15 Budget. While I understand that the City is still facing significant financial challenges, I appreciate your consideration of my requests to enhance public safety if additional funding is available. My staff and I look forward to discussing these issues with the Budget and Finance Committee and with the City Council.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James G. Featherstone", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

JAMES G. FEATHERSTONE
Interim Fire Chief

Attachment

FY 2014-15 Proposed Budget

Priority List for Response Letter to the Budget and Finance Committee

Priority #	Service/ Program	Description	Estimated Additional Cost
1	Recruit Training	Add \$3.7 million to provide funding for two classes of 60 Recruits at Drill Tower 81 and one class of 45 Recruits at Drill Tower 40 for a total of 165 Recruits. Modify from current proposed budget Item No. 30 which funds two classes of 70 Recruits for a total of 140 recruits. Add \$100,000 to develop a targeted recruitment program to promote interest in fire service in under-utilized communities.	\$3,826,102
2	Safety Equipment	Safety Equipment - add funding as follows: a) \$1,295,800 to purchase 2,200 Air Cylinders, b) \$437,500 to purchase 3,500 Escape Canisters, c) Second Set of Turnouts - Year 1 of 3 Year Plan \$1,917,966.	3,651,266
3	Rescue Maintenance Unit	Add position authority with no additional funding for two Mechanical Helpers and restore one Firefighter III and one Apparatus Operator on Administrative Duty.	0
4	FireStatLA Section	Add nine months funding for one Battalion Chief, one Senior Clerk Typist and \$75,000 for contract services for the FireStatLA Section.	228,264
5	Emergency Incident Technician (EIT)	Add nine months funding for 12 Firefighter III/Emergency Incident Technicians (EIT).	1,307,707
6	Four Regional Bureau Organization	Add nine months funding and authority for four Public Relations Specialist II, four Captain II (Bureau Adjutant), salary differential for four Captain I/Paramedics instead of Captain I, salary differential for Senior Clerk Typist instead of Clerk Typist and overtime for Assistant Chief and Emergency Incident Technical and overtime funding for Four Regional Geographic Bureaus.	1,418,489
7	Technology	Add nine months funding for one Programmer Analyst IV to support the Network Staffing System; add funding to replace end of life technology infrastructure.	536,711
8	Public Relations Section	Add nine months funding and authority for one Fire Captain I and one Public Relations Specialist II.	144,546
9	False Alarm Program	Add \$500,000 to fund a Request for Proposal to develop a system to automate tracking and billing for responses to false fire alarms.	500,000
Total			\$11,613,085