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September 9, 2015

The Honorable City Council
City of Los Angeles
200 N. Spring Street, Room 395
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Honorable members:

Recruitment of Female and Minority Firefighter Candidates

On May 21, 2015, City Council adopted the Fiscal Year 2015-16 Budget (C.F. 15-0600), and instructed departments to report on various issues. The Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) was instructed to report on efforts it is undertaking to increase the number of female and minority recruits, including the establishment of realistic recruitment goals.

The LAFD is currently hiring from an eligible list that was established from a filing period that opened on July 11, 2014; the filing period was July 22 through July 24, 2014. There was virtually no advertising/recruiting campaign, but over 10,000 applications were filed.

This report will outline the short-term strategies being implemented to maximize the success of the current list, and identify the long-term strategies for enhancing recruitment going forward.

Stratified Random Sampling (SRS) is currently used to establish the candidate pool eligible to take the written examination. The initial SRS for the October 2014 examination included 300 candidates, with an 80% appearance rate. Due to a drop in the appearance rate to 63% on subsequent tests, the SRS has been increased incrementally to the current sampling of 700 candidates in July 2015.

The ultimate goal of the LAFD recruitment effort is to increase the number/percentage of female and underrepresented candidates entering the testing process. The newly approved and funded Firefighter Recruitment Section will focus on increasing the awareness of women and other underrepresented groups to a career in the Fire Service. The Section will further ensure that candidates are aware of, and utilize, all programs and tutorials available to assist in successfully navigating the hiring process.

Fundamentally, it is important that the Section increase the number of female and other underrepresented candidates entering and graduating from the Training Academy and completing probation. In summary, the overarching goals of the Firefighter Recruitment Section are as follows:

1. Recruitment Outreach
2. Development of Preparation Programs
3. Development of Youth Programs

The aforementioned goals will assist the Department to develop and maintain a recruitment system that attracts qualified candidates and implement institutional betterments that will ensure success in the hiring and retention of women and other underrepresented groups.

The following Recruitment Strategies have been identified and developed, and will be ongoing in the LAFD's endeavor to recruit and retain a diverse workforce:

Mentors - The Firefighter Recruitment Section is assigning mentors to all underrepresented candidate groups in an effort to increase the appearance rate at the written examination. This is accomplished with existing Recruitment Staff and assistance through the affinity groups (i.e., Stentorians, Los Bomberos, and Women in the Fire Service).

Tutorials - All candidates are notified of Department-provided tutorial programs: Written Preparation, Oral Interview Preparation, and Practice Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT).

Physical Fitness and Conditioning - The Candidate Assistance Program (CAP) is provided to help prepare firefighter candidates for the physical challenge of completing the training academy paired with the knowledge of best practices for success.

Outreach - All underrepresented candidates are contacted via telephone or email and encouraged to access Department programs in an effort to provide additional opportunities to gain knowledge relative to the selection process.

Data - Test attendance has dropped incrementally since firefighter testing has started. It is the objective of the Firefighter Recruitment Section to identify the reasons attendance has decreased by utilizing surveys to collect and analyze candidate data and determine how the Department can maintain candidate interest in the Firefighter examination process.

Literature - Provide written information on navigating the hiring process. The LAFD hiring information is provided to all candidates and available through the LAFD Recruitment website (<http://joinlafd.org>).

Firefighter Recruitment Section - The Fiscal Year 2015-16 Budget provides six months funding for a newly created Battalion Chief position, with enhanced staffing of one additional Captain, two additional Firefighters, and one Senior Clerk Typist.

Formalized Outreach Strategy - Coordinated effort with improved outreach and communications at Community Colleges and Universities. To obtain the most viable candidates, there is an emphasis on the athletic programs (specifically female collegiate and graduating male scholarship athletes), and recruitment from fire science, fire technology, and fire academies.

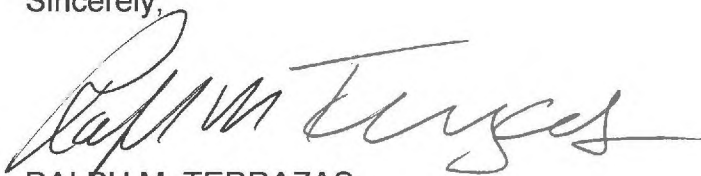
Media Campaign - Develop an online presence, including targeted Public Service Announcements (PSA) that will precede the next filing period, including Firefighter Recruitment Expos, community, faith-based, and career day outreach.

Field Training - Recruitment training video and printed materials will be provided for all field resources, i.e., Fire Station banners, apparatus magnets, literature, etc.

Candidate Tracking - Continue to utilize and enhance the utilization of the candidate tracking system and the sharing of information to increase efficiency within the Firefighter Recruitment Section.

The most effective way to impact hiring of underrepresented groups, including women, is to maximize examination turnout of available candidates from each SRS. The Firefighter Recruitment Section will have a major impact by concentrating on the goals and implementing the recruitment strategies identified in this report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ralph M. Terrazas". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

RALPH M. TERRAZAS
Fire Chief