

LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT



KRISTIN M. CROWLEY
FIRE CHIEF

September 12, 2024

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
FILE NO. 24-091

TO: Board of Fire Commissioners

FROM: *JH* Kristin M. Crowley, Fire Chief

SUBJECT: FY 2024-25 INTERIM BUDGET REQUEST – FIREBOAT OPERATIONS

FINAL ACTION:	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved w/Corrections	<input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn
	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied	<input type="checkbox"/> Received & Filed	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

SUMMARY

The Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) is submitting an Interim Budget Request for a total of six (6) Fire Captain I platoon duty positions to be assigned to Fire Boats 1 and 5 in its Marine Operations. The positions are requested for the period January 1, 2025 through June 30, 2025. LAFD has a total of five fireboats serving the Harbor/Port of Los Angeles (POLA) district. This staffing request will add a supervising Fire Captain on each of the three platoons operating Fireboats 1 and 5, increasing staffing levels for these vessels from 9 to 12 staff members each.

This staffing augmentation will enhance overall fireboat safety and efficiency in the operation of the entire fireboat fleet. The Fire Captains will play a crucial role in ensuring that the boat crews are well-trained and supervised, and that the fireboats are properly maintained and operated. This investment will help the LAFD deliver the highest level of fire safety services throughout the port complex and the harbor community, ensuring an ongoing commitment to public safety. The cost of the positions for a six-month period is \$1.04 million including \$717,796 in salaries and \$323,927 in related costs. The full cost of the positions will be billed to the Harbor Department for reimbursement as part of LAFD's regular billings to the agency for Harbor support. The Harbor Department has allocated funding for these positions within its FY 24-25 Budget.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Board receive and transmit to City Council, and that the City Council, subject to the approval of the Mayor, authorize the following:

1. Resolution authority for the following positions from January 1 through June 30, 2025, subject to allocation by the Civil Service Commission:

Positions
6

Class Title/Code
Fire Captain I, 2142-1

- Appropriate funds in the amount of \$717,796 from Fund 100/58, Reserve Fund, to the following accounts within Fund 100, Department 38:

Account	Title	Amount
1012	Salaries, Sworn	\$ 498,138
1030	Sworn Bonuses	\$ 10,440
1093	Overtime Constant Staffing	\$ 209,218
	Total	\$ 717,796

- Authorize the City Administrative Officer to make technical corrections that may be necessary to implement the intent of this action.

DISCUSSION

Within the Harbor District, LAFD provides both marine and land-based services which include fire suppression, emergency medical care, technical rescue, and hazardous materials mitigation. Through its marine services, LAFD operates, maintains and staffs five fireboats. These fireboats are continuously available through 24/7 operations with the rotation of three separate fireboat platoons. The staffing level for each fireboat is shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1: TOTAL CURRENT FIREBOAT STAFFING

Position	Fire Boat #1 (Dive)		Fire Boat #2		Fire Boat #3 (Dive)		Fire Boat #4		Fire Boat #5 (Dive)		Total	
	Per Platoon	Total	Per Platoon	Total	Per Platoon	Total	Per Platoon	Total	Per Platoon	Total	Per Platoon	All 3 Platoons
Fire Captain II	-	-	1	3	-	-	1	3	-	-	2	6
Fireboat Pilot	-	-	1	3	-	-	1	3	-	-	2	6
Fireboat Mate	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	5	15
Fire Engineer	-	-	2	6	-	-	2	6	-	-	4	12
Firefighter (FF) III	-	-	3	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	9
FF III (Diver)	2	6	-	-	2	6	-	-	2	6	6	18
Total	3	9	8	24	3	9	5	15	3	9	22	66

Two of these vessels, Fireboats 2 and 4, are larger vessels which are each supervised by a Fire Captain and operated by a crew that includes a Fireboat Pilot, a Fireboat Mate, and multiple Fire Engineers and Firefighters. The remaining vessels, Fireboats 1, 3 and 5, are smaller units whose primary purpose is to conduct dive operations. These are supervised by a Supervising Mate (Fireboat Mate) who operates and pilots each dive vessel, supervises the overall dive operations including the two Firefighters that serve as divers, and coordinates with other agencies during emergency operations.

The addition of six Fire Captain positions will allow supervision for two of the three smaller dive vessels, Fireboats 1 and 5. Fireboat 3 will not require additional staffing as this vessel works together with Fireboat 4 and is under the supervision of that Captain.

As shown in Table 2, this request will increase the total staffing levels on the fireboats from 66 to 72 sworn personnel.

TABLE 2: TOTAL REQUESTED FIREBOAT STAFFING WITH 6 NEW FIRE CAPTAINS

Position	Fire Boat #1 (Dive)		Fire Boat #2		Fire Boat #3 (Dive)		Fire Boat #4		Fire Boat #5 (Dive)		Total	
	Per Platoon	Total	Per Platoon	Total	Per Platoon	Total	Per Platoon	Total	Per Platoon	Total	Per Platoon	All 3 Platoons
Fire Captain I (new)	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	2	6
Fire Captain II	-	-	1	3	-	-	1	3	-	-	2	6
Fireboat Pilot	-	-	1	3	-	-	1	3	-	-	2	6
Fireboat Mate	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	5	15
Fire Engineer	-	-	2	6	-	-	2	6	-	-	4	12
Firefighter (FF) III	-	-	3	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	9
FF III (Diver)	2	6	-	-	2	6	-	-	2	6	6	18
Total	4	12	8	24	3	9	5	15	4	12	24	72

In terms of staffing justification, LAFD has determined that the responsibilities assigned to the Supervising Mates are onerous, particularly during emergencies, as it is too difficult to pilot and operate the vessels while concurrently supervising dive activities, managing emergency operations, and coordinating with other agencies. Therefore, to ensure the safe and effective operation of the dive boats, the new Fire Captains will assume the overall operational supervisory duties of the vessels, including the supervision of all onboard staff and coordination with other agencies during standard and emergency operations. The Fireboat Mates can then focus efforts on operating and piloting the vessels.

Additionally, Fireboats 1 and 5 are stationed closely to the outer harbor of the Port, allowing these vessels to rapidly respond to emergencies occurring within the outer harbor, and in many instances serving as the first-on-scene water-based resource. As first responder vessels, LAFP has indicated that the inclusion of Fire Captains is essential to effectively operate and supervise the vessels during these emergencies.

In addition to their supervisory responsibilities aboard the fireboats, Fire Captains serve as primary leaders and supervisors within the overall fire command, providing administrative support and community relations outreach while also overseeing the training and development of staff, and the maintenance and readiness of the fireboats. Following are some of the primary responsibilities of the Fire Captains that provide water-based fire services and supervision:

Leadership and Supervision

- Command the fireboat and lead the crew during operations.
- Oversee daily activities and training of fire boat personnel.
- Ensure all crew members adhere to safety protocols and standard operating procedures.

Emergency Response

- Direct firefighting operations on water, including fire suppression and search and rescue missions.
- Coordinate with other emergency services and agencies during maritime incidents.
- Assess emergency situations and develop strategic plans for effective response.

Incident Command

- Take charge of the scene during multi-agency maritime incidents.
- Communicate effectively with command centers and other responding units.
- Implement incident action plans and adjust tactics as necessary during operations.

Equipment Maintenance and Readiness

- Ensure the fireboat and all equipment are maintained and in operational condition.
- Conduct regular inspections and drills to maintain readiness.
- Manage the inventory of firefighting and medical supplies on the boat.

Training and Development

- Conduct training sessions for the crew on fire suppression techniques, maritime safety, and rescue operations.
- Mentor and evaluate the performance of crew members.
- Keep up to date with advancements in firefighting technology and techniques.

Administrative Duties

- Prepare and maintain logs, reports, and records related to boat operations and incidents.
- Manage schedules and assignments for fire boat personnel.
- Ensure compliance with local, state, and federal regulations pertaining to maritime operations.

Community Relations

- Engage in public education and outreach programs regarding fire safety and maritime hazards.
- Represent the fire department at community events and meetings.
- Foster positive relationships with local marinas, harbor authorities, and the maritime community.

Concerning Harbor Department due diligence, that Department has secured funding for these six positions within its FY 24-25 Budget. Additionally, City services to the Harbor are codified within MOU 1956 which became effective in June 1997. In accordance with

that MOU, service level changes shall be authorized by the Harbor Department by written amendment to the MOU. LAFD will work with the Department to effect those changes.

CONCLUSION

The addition of six Fire Captains for Fire Boats 1 and 5 aligns with LAFD's primary Strategic Plan Goal to "Deliver exceptional public safety and emergency service." This additional staffing will enhance the overall safety and efficiency in the operation of the entire LAFD fireboat fleet, and assures that the boat crews are in a position to optimize their responsibilities and capabilities in the field. This ensures that the Port of Los Angeles and surrounding community remains safe.

Board report prepared by Emilio Rodriguez, Fire Administrator, Administrative Services Bureau.

Attachment

2024-25 Budget Program Request

Department:

Fire

Name of Request:

Harbor Fire Captains

Continued or New?

New Request or Expansion of Existing Service for 2024-25

Positions:

Workday Position Number	Quantity	Class Title	Class Code	Reg, Sworn, Reso, As-Needed, or Hiring Hall	Sworn-Reg	Wages & Count Salary	Salary Savings Rate (%)	Number of Months Funding Requested	Net Salary	General Fund	Total All Special Funds	Special Fund A	
New	6	Fire Captain I (PD)	2142-1		\$ 166,046	0.0%	6	\$ 498,138	100	0.00	1.00	XXX	
TOTALS											0.00	1.00	1.00

Budget:

Acct	Account Name	General Fund 100	Total All Special Funds	Special Fund A XXX	Special Fund B XXX	Special Fund C XXX	Special Fund D XXX	Special Fund E XXX	Special Fund F XXX
001010	Salaries General	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
001012	Salaries - Sworn	\$ 498,138	\$ 83,023	\$ 83,023	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
001030	Sworn Bonuses	\$ 10,440	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
001093	Overtime Constant Staffing	\$ 209,218	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL:		\$ 717,796	\$ 83,023	\$ 83,023	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

Pension/Health (Add/Delete Rate): \$ 323,927
 Applicable CAP rate: 0.00%
 Estimated Related Cost Reimbursement from SFs (CAP Rate): \$ -
 General Fund Revenue (Change): \$ -