December 26, 2019

TO: Board of Fire Commissioners
FROM: Independent Assessor
SUBJECT: QUARTERLY REPORT OF AUDITS

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SUMMARY

On February 19, 2019, the Board of Fire Commissioners (Board or Commission) requested that the Independent Assessor provide quarterly progress reports related to audits that are in progress and that are contemplated by the Independent Assessor’s office. This Report is prepared in compliance with that direction.

The Office of the Independent Assessor (OIA) is researching four reports; an audit examining the progress of recruits in Drill Tower classes 2013-1 through 2017-3, a review of the Los Angeles Fire Department’s (LAFD or Department) deployment of the Unmanned Aerial System (UAS), an assessment of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) cases from 2013 through 2019 and a review of Settlement Agreements, and a review of how the Department handled complaints of misconduct in 2019.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board approve the report.
DISCUSSION

Report 1
Recruit progress in specified drill tower classes

The Department is providing recruit testing information to the OIA and the OIA has begun synthesizing the information. When the OIA last reported to the BOFC regarding this audit, the Commission continued the report (BFC 19-130) to further consider the objective “Identify any nexus between Drill Tower performance and a recruit’s height/reach or weight.” That report is pending.

Report 2
The Commission requested that the OIA review the Department’s deployment of the UAS, quarterly.

Preliminary objectives for this report will be developed after more research is conducted. The OIA is gathering information for this report.

Report 3
2019 annual review of complaints of misconduct.

Preliminary Scope and Methodology
Review and assess cases filed and closed in the Los Angeles Fire Department’s Complaint Tracking System (CTS) and Discipline Tracking System in 2019.

Preliminary Objectives

A. Determine the number of cases filed annually 2009 through 2019.
B. Determine the number of complaints closed in CTS in 2019 and compare them with the statistics from 2017 and 2018.
   1. Determine the number of complaints by category.
   2. Determine whether a complaint was filed by a Department employee, an external complainant, or an anonymous complainant.
   3. Determine the number of complaints assigned to be investigated by Professional Standards Division (PSD), Chain of Command (Field), or the Alternative Investigative Procedure (Alternative Process).
   4. Determine the number of complaints by adjudication.
   5. Determine whether the subject was a sworn or civilian employee.
   6. Determine the status of sustained cases, including the number of settlement agreements.
C. Determine the number of cases awaiting a hearing before a Board of Rights.

Report 4
At the BOFC meeting on November 5, 2019, the Commission asked the OIA to review EEO cases from 2013 through 2019. The OIA is gathering the information related to all the relevant cases and will determine objectives for this report after a complete population of cases has been ascertained.

1 Objectives are subject to change based on the research.
Further, the Commission asked the OIA to assess the impact of settlement agreements since 2015, and the state of Education Based Discipline subsequent to implementation of the settlement agreement policy in June of 2017. The OIA and PSD are working to identify all relevant settlement agreements, the members involved, the coursework assigned and completed, and whether members re-offended since attending class(es). The preliminary objectives for this review will be determined after a complete population of cases has been identified.

I am available to provide any additional information the Commission may require.

Respectfully submitted,

SUE STENGEL
Independent Assessor
Board of Fire Commissioners

cc: Ralph Terrazas, Fire Chief