

LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT



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FIRE CHIEF

March 18, 2024

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
FILE NO. 24-031

TO: Board of Fire Commissioners

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

SUBJECT: FIRE PREVENTION INSPECTION ACTIVITY – CALENDAR YEAR 2023

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 Withdrawn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

This report outlines the fire prevention activities for calendar year 2023 for the sections in the Fire Prevention & Public Safety Bureau (FPB, or the Bureau), excluding the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) Section.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board:
Receive and File.

DISCUSSION

This report covers inspection activity for all of the Bureau’s responsibilities, except for the inspections and other activities of the CUPA Section. The CUPA Section operates on a Fiscal Year cycle, in accordance with its enabling legislation in the California Health & Safety Code. A separate report on CUPA will be presented to this Board in the first quarter of the 24-25 fiscal year.

FPB analyzes data pulled from its fire prevention activity software programs, Fire Prevention Application (FPA), Brush Next Generation, and Fire Inspection Management System (FIMS) on a weekly basis. FPB also analyzes data from the Department’s Network Staffing System to determine the numbers of hours lost due to vacancies and time off.

Through these analyses, FPB assesses the Bureau’s progress toward completing all of its assigned inspections and re-inspections in a calendar year. Additionally, the Bureau uses this data to inform decisions on personnel reallocation and for budget requests for additional personnel and resources.

Starting in 2023 and continuing through 2024, the Bureau is migrating inspection data processing from FPA to FIMS 2.0. The FIMS software provides live dashboards and customizable reports on a wider variety of aspects of the inspection process. The transition to FIMS in all FPB Units is nearing completion. The final phase of the transition will roll the full functionality of FIMS to Fire Stations, at which point all elements of the Fire Department will use one software program and database to conduct fire prevention inspections.

TOTAL INSPECTION PERFORMANCE BUREAU-WIDE

Fire Prevention & Public Safety Bureau Inspections Completed for Calendar Year 2023 Total Inspection Load = 18,465			
Quarter	Inspections	Percentage of Annual Goal	Re-Inspections
1st	4,273	23%	1,263
2nd	3,856	21%	958
3rd	3,879	21%	985
4th	4,133	22%	982
Total	16,141	87%	4,188

The Bureau completed inspections on approximately 87% of its 18,465 assigned occupancies.

The completion percentage of 87% was accomplished by an inspection workforce operating at only 74% of its authorized strength, as indicated in the Fire Inspector Lost Time Report, below.

Three units, the Central Industrial Unit, the Public Assemblage Unit, and the Cannabis Unit, posted completion percentages below the 87% average for the entire Bureau. Notes on those units' completion rate are included in each unit's Section report.

FIRE INSPECTOR LOST TIME REPORT

FIRE PREVENTION & PUBLIC SAFETY BUREAU FIRE INSPECTOR LOST TIME REPORT TOTAL AVAILABLE HOURS = 320,320				
Off-Duty Reason	Number of Hours Lost	Number of Hours Available	Percentage of Hours Lost	Percentage of Hours Available
Vacant Position	40140	320320	12.53%	
Vacation Time Off	16878		5.27%	
Holidays Off	15802		4.93%	
IOD	10748		3.36%	
NIOD	5672		1.77%	
Total	83568	320320	26.09%	73.91%

The Lost Time Report shows the amount of time where a Fire Inspector is unavailable to work. The report shows only the most common causes of time off. All other causes of time off would likely amount to approximately 0.5% of total hours and have an insignificant effect on this report.

The total number of hours is based upon 2080 work hours per year, per Inspector, with a total authorized count of 112 Inspector I's and 42 Inspector II's. (10 hours/day X 4 days/week X 52 weeks/year X 154 Inspectors = 320,320 Inspector Hours/Year).

Vacant position hours are based upon the vacancy count of 14 Inspector vacancies on January 1, 2023, and then adding new vacancies by date, in accordance with the DROP exit report. Vacancies were removed from the count when new Inspectors were promoted into existing

vacancies. The difference between total available hours and staffed hours was calculated for each of the 208 workdays in the year and totaled for this report.

The other off-duty reasons listed above were calculated by running NSS reports Department-wide on the number of hours taken off for each of the reasons, filtering the reports for Fire Inspectors, and totaling the results.

INDUSTRIAL & COMMERCIAL SECTION Inspections

The Industrial & Commercial Section is under the command of a Battalion Chief and is responsible for ensuring compliance with the fire code for all industrial and commercial occupancies that are over four stories tall, and/or have over 40,000 square feet under one roof, and for ensuring compliance with the fire code as it relates to brush clearance for all parcels in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.

During most of the 2023 calendar year, the Central Industrial Unit (CIU) carried vacancies in 7 of its 8 authorized positions. Inspectors in other units worked overtime to conduct inspections in CIU to mitigate the effect on inspection completion rates. Even with the efforts of Inspectors working overtime, CIU was not able to complete all of its inspections.

CIU transitioned to the new FIMS software during the 4th quarter of 2023, making CIU the first unit to transition inspection data from FPA to FIMS while actively conducting inspections. During the transition, some data did not transfer properly to FIMS and our Inspectors used both systems to document inspection, exacerbating the data mismatch. The errors caused the inspection count in the chart below to be artificially low in the 3rd and 4th quarters for CIU. As of this report, FPB is working to clean the mismatched data and enter the missing data. The lessons learned from the rough transition experienced by CIU are being applied to the transition of the programs for the other units.

Industrial & Commercial Section Inspections Completed for Calendar Year 2023											
Unit	Quarter (Goal = 25% completion)								District Total	Complete	Percent Complete
	1 st		2 nd		3 rd		4 th				
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%			
Central	465	24%	257	13%	183	9%	154	8%	1,953	1,059	54%
Harbor	194	24%	194	24%	219	27%	211	26%	819	818	100%
High-Rise	178	24%	181	24%	224	30%	170	22%	756	753	100%
Valley	650	27%	485	20%	440	18%	652	27%	2,432	2,227	92%
West	318	23%	317	23%	260	19%	424	31%	1,372	1,319	96%
Total	1805	25%	1434	20%	1326	18%	1611	22%	7,332	6,176	84%

Re-Inspections

The following data was collected from FPA and reflects the completed re-inspections for the 2023 calendar year:

Industrial & Commercial Section Re-Inspections Completed for Calendar Year 2023				
Unit	Quarter			
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Central	147	113	79	44
Harbor	174	150	136	91
High-Rise	163	155	145	185
Valley	313	259	205	244
West	6	42	42	43
Total	803	719	607	607

**INDUSTRIAL & COMMERCIAL SECTION
Brush Inspections**

The following data was collected from the Brush Next Generation (Brush NG) program and reflects the stats for 2023 calendar year for the total private, government and DWP parcels.

Brush Inspections Completed Calendar Year 2023							
	Total Parcels	Pass (Completed)	Pass %	1st Notice Fail (Non- Compliant)	1st Notice Fail %	Completed	Percentage Complete
Private Parcels	154,247	142,695	93%	11,552	7%	154,247	100%
Gov't Parcels	3,283	1,581	48%	1,702	52%	3,283	100%
DWP Parcels	473	426	90%	47	10%	473	100%
MRCA Parcels	643	145	23%	498	77%	643	100%
Totals	158,646	144,847	91%	13,799	9%	158,646	100%

The following data reflects the completed re-inspections for the 2023 calendar year:

Brush Re-inspections Completed Calendar Year 2023							
	Total Parcels	Pass (Completed)	Pass %	2nd Notice Fail	Fail %	Completed	Percent Complete
Private Parcels	11,552	9,501	86%	2,051	14%	11,552	100%
Gov't Parcels	1,702	1,446	85%	256	15%	1,702	100%
DWP Parcels	47	0	0%	47	100%	47	100%
MRCA Parcels	498	0	0%	498	100%	498	100%
Totals	13,799	10,947	79%	2,852	21%	13,799	100%

PUBLIC SAFETY SECTION

The Public Safety Section is overseen by a Battalion Chief and is responsible for ensuring compliance with the fire code during maintenance and enforcement inspections of all public assemblage occupancies, schools, churches, institutions and filming locations.

The Public Assemblage Unit (PAU) enforces the Fire Code and provides Uniformed Fire Safety Officers for special events requiring a Temporary Change of Occupancy. The unit also inspects all Public Assemblages and all apartment buildings between 4 and 6 stories in height.

Inspectors in PAU tend to have more seniority by average than those in other units. As a result of the number of Inspectors who retired in 2023, PAU experienced a much higher experience drain than did most other units. The remaining senior Inspectors had to allocate extra time to train the incoming Inspectors on the intricacies of working with promoters and event production staff when preparing for special events. The amount of time allocated to training and mentoring incoming Inspectors, along with the time lost to inefficiencies created when an Inspector transfers into a new assignment, and the vacancy rate of the unit combined to effect PAU's inspection completion percentage for this calendar year.

The following data was collected from FPA and reflects inspections for the calendar year 2023:

Public Safety Section Inspections Completed 2023											
Public Safety Section	District Total	1st Quarter Goal = 25%		2nd Quarter Goal = 25%		3rd Quarter Goal = 25%		4th Quarter Goal = 25%		Overall Complete	Overall Goal= 100 %
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Film	482	99	21%	85	18%	120	25%	178	37%	482	100%
Institutions	895	221	25%	196	22%	217	24%	220	25%	854	95%
Public Assemblage	2,297	515	22%	461	20%	521	23%	309	13%	1,806	79%
Schools & Churches	3,784	754	20%	865	23%	909	24%	798	21%	3,326	88%
Valley Public Safety	2,070	509	25%	487	24%	379	18%	602	29%	1,977	96%
Totals	9,528	2,098	22%	2,094	22%	2,146	23%	2,107	22%	8,445	89%

Re-Inspections

The following data was collected from FPA and reflects the completed re-inspections for the 2023 calendar year:

Public Safety Section Re-Inspections Completed				
Unit	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter
Film	0	0	0	0
Institutions	116	17	38	32
Public Assemblage	56	36	102	55
Schools & Churches	212	113	153	162
Valley Public Safety	61	65	70	84
Total	445	231	363	333

FIRE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES SECTION

The Fire Development Services Section is overseen by a civilian Senior Fire Protection Engineer and is responsible for ensuring compliance with the fire code during plan reviews, new construction inspections and tenant improvement inspections.

The electronic plan check procedure has continued to provide virtual counter access to its customers allowing for increased digital plan submissions, reduced exchange of physical plans, and streamlined communication and permit processes across city entities.

Hydrants & Access Unit				
# of Plan Reviews	1 st Quarter	2 nd Quarter	3 rd Quarter	4 th Quarter
		965	908	589

Plan Check Unit Turn-Around Time		
Service Requested	1 st & 2 nd Quarter	3 rd & 4 th Quarter
Expedited Service	9 Days	6 Days
Non-Expedited Service	40 Days	34 Days

The following data was collected from the Fire Inspection Management System (FIMS) and reflects the status of field inspection requests and scheduling:

Field Inspection Unit Inspections Completed by Time Goal and Geographic Bureau Area												
Area	# of Inspections Requested				Scheduled Inspection Date							
					Next Working Day				Within 48 hours			
	Quarter				Quarter				Quarter			
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
Central	339	378	416	364	70%	76%	85%	70%	76%	84%	90%	78%
South	235	244	253	212	80%	81%	81%	76%	89%	89%	87%	83%
Valley	227	212	283	292	73%	83%	82%	68%	82%	92%	93%	77%
West	238	240	301	211	84%	79%	87%	90%	87%	88%	92%	95%
TOTAL	1,039	1,074	1,253	1,079	77%	80%	84%	76%	84%	88%	90%	83%

The goal is to complete a scheduled field inspection within 48 hours of request by customer.

ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION

The Administrative Section is overseen by a Battalion Chief and is responsible for ensuring compliance with Regulation 4 (Reg. 4) testing, unwanted alarm tracking, illegal storage, court hearings and criminal filings concerning fire/life safety violations. The Legal Unit works closely with the City Attorney's Office to bring building owners into compliance for all fire/life safety violations.

In 2023, the Oil Wells Unit and Cannabis Unit were re-allocated from the Industrial Commercial Section to the Administrative Section.

The Cannabis Unit is responsible for inspecting and enforcing the Fire Code in all legally-permitted cannabis retail occupancies. The unit reported their annual inspection rate to be 85%, just below the average for the Bureau as a whole. The unit has an authorized staff of 4 Inspector I's; however, the unit carried 1 Inspector I vacancy (25% of regular staffing) for 9

months in 2023. Many the cannabis retailers inspected by the Cannabis Unit have significant Fire Code violations caused by the extra security measures they build into their stores. In some cases, the store is connected to an illegal grow or extraction operation, causing the Inspector to spend time building a Legal Packet and referring the store to the Legal Unit for prosecution. The Cannabis Unit performed re-inspections on approximately 34% of its total inspections, which is a high percentage of re-inspections.

The following data was collected from FPA and reflects inspections for the calendar year 2023:

Administrative Section Inspections Completed 2023											
Unit	District Total	1 st Quarter Goal = 25%		2 nd Quarter Goal = 25%		3 rd Quarter Goal = 25%		4 th Quarter Goal = 25%		Complete	Percent Complete
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Cannabis Unit	562	152	27%	131	23%	114	20%	80	14%	477	85%
Oil Wells Unit	1,043	218	21%	197	19%	293	28%	335	32%	1,043	100%
Totals	1,605	370	23%	328	20%	407	25%	415	26%	1,520	95%

Re-Inspections

The following data was collected from FPA and reflects the completed re-inspections for the 2023 calendar year:

Administrative Section Re-Inspections Completed 2023				
Unit	1 st Quarter	2 nd Quarter	3 rd Quarter	4 th Quarter
Cannabis Unit	4	8	14	40
Oil Wells Unit	11	0	1	2
Totals	15	8	15	42

Legal Unit

Legal packets are submitted by a member of the FPB or a member of a fire station. There has been a dramatic increase in legal cases submitted as the department emphasizes compliance and holds building owners accountable for deficient fire protection systems and outstanding fire/life safety violations.

2023 Annual Totals - Legal Unit						
Quarter	Legal Packets Submitted & Processed	Excessive Storage Cases Processed	Unwanted Alarms Referrals		Reg 4 Testers Processed	Illegal Cannabis Warrants Served
			Processed	Completed		
1st	62	5	23	22	59	116
2nd	61	1	13	10	53	108
3rd	25	9	24	1	59	107
4th	64	4	19	4	42	99
Total	212	19	79	37	213	430

The majority of the Reg. 4 hearings relate to fire protection systems out of compliance and overdue anniversary dates provided by The Compliance Engine (Brycer).

2023 Annual Totals - Reg. 4			
Quarter	Legal Packets Submitted & Processed	Hearings Processed	Hearings Completed
1 st	62	73	73
2 nd	61	21	21
3 rd	25	16	16
4 th	64	31	31
Total	212	141	141

R1/R2 Inspection Program

All multi-family residential apartment buildings in the state of California consisting of 3 or more units, up to 15, shall be inspected by the local fire authority. The following data reflects the compliant and non-compliant inspections for calendar year 2023:

R1/R2 Inspections Completed 2023						
Total	1 st Quarter		2 nd Quarter		Overall Complete	Percent Complete
	#	%	#	%		
56,486	54,915	97.2%	1,571	2.8%	56,486	100%

FPB Referral Form

To streamline communications between field resources and the FPB, a referral form has been utilized to expedite assistance and direction in mitigating fire prevention concerns in the field. The following data reflects the number of referral forms collected during the 2023 calendar year:

FPB Referral Form - Research Unit				
Form Type	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter
Automatic Alarms	23	13	24	19
Illegal Habitations	7	5	4	2
Cannabis	4	7	4	6
Excessive Storage	3	5	5	4
Miscellaneous	35	36	35	36
Total	72	66	72	67

CONCLUSION

To demonstrate our commitment to fire/life safety, the FPB continues to direct focus to fire prevention inspections as a priority Department-wide. Our focused approach and accountability measures both within Emergency Operations and the FPB are providing positive results.

As we seek opportunities to improve efficiency and enhance service levels, we continue to rely on the commitment of all involved.

Board report prepared by David A. Perez, Deputy Chief, Fire Prevention & Public Safety Bureau.