

June 6, 2017

LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT



RALPH M. TERRAZAS
FIRE CHIEF

May 16, 2017

TO: Board of Fire Commissioners

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
FILE NO. 17-061

FROM: *RMT* Ralph M. Terrazas, Fire Chief

SUBJECT: COUNCIL MOTION - UNIFORMED FIRE SAFETY OFFICER
GUIDELINES FOR FILM LOCATIONS

FINAL ACTION: ☐ Approved
☐ Denied

☐ Approved w/Corrections
☐ Received & Filed

☐ Withdrawn
☐ Other

SUMMARY

As per the attached City Council Motion dated March 28, 2017, (Council File Number 17-0329) the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) was directed to report on current Uniformed Fire Safety Officer (UFSO) guidelines, and the LAFD's decision-making process for requiring UFSOs for filming activities. In response, the LAFD will post the UFSO guidelines on the LAFD's website.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board:

Transmit this report to the Mayor and City Council.

DISCUSSION

The Fire Chief has the authority to require a UFSO to be present whenever the Chief determines it is essential for safeguarding and maintaining the high level of public safety that is expected by the public, elected officials, and LAFD. Guidelines and procedures have been put in place because of the unique safety challenges in enforcing codes and regulations at filming locations.

The following documents were used in determining when a UFSO is hired or a spot check is required: productions using pyrotechnic special effects, as defined by California Health and Safety Code SS 12532, and other special effects, such as flame bars, propane cannons, and other large fire scenes where flammable liquids and gases are used; California Fire Code (CFC) Chapter 48, Motion Picture and Television Production Studio Sound Stages, Approved Production Facilities and Production Locations; California Health and Safety Code Sections 12500-12726, California Health and Safety Code Sections 12500-12726; the CFC Chapter 24, Tents, Entire Chapter as adopted by the State Fire Marshal's Office; Title 19 California Code of Regulations, Chapter 6; CFC Section 104.8; "Filming in California, by California State Fire Marshal Motion Pictures and Entertainment Unit; Fire Safety Officer Manual, and the California Film Commission (Production Alerts). The LAFD's "Fire Prevention and Public Safety Bureau's "General Hiring Guidelines for Uniformed Fire Safety Officers" was developed out of the fire/life safety requirements outlined by the documents referenced above.

Multiple meetings were held with representatives from the LAFD and the Motion Picture Association of America, Film LA, the Mayor's Office, and the United Firefighters of Los Angeles City to discuss the UFSO hiring guidelines and possible cost saving measures for the Film Industry. In response to concerns from all parties to streamline the filming process, the LAFD has modified two criteria that previously required a full-time UFSO, and now requires only a spot check from the LAFD. The LAFD understands the importance of transparency and educating the industry of hiring guidelines for UFSOs and spot check criteria. The ability to post the UFSO hiring guidelines on the FilmLA website is actively being discussed. Within the near future a decision will be made and communicated regarding a final disposition. The LAFD will continue to keep an open dialogue for any changes to the UFSO hiring guidelines and procedures.

Board report prepared by Kristin Crowley, Acting Deputy Chief, and Jerome Boyd, Battalion Chief, Fire Prevention and Public Safety Bureau.

Attachments

MOTION

Film production is the City of Los Angeles' signature industry, and a myriad of efforts have been taken over the years to ensure the industry remains in Los Angeles. However, policies designed to relieve some of the burdens the film industry faces need to be compatible with other City policies that ensure public safety. Steps should be taken to ensure that safety regulations for filming activities is robust, but not onerous.

The Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) grants the Fire Chief the authority to require a Uniformed Fire Safety Officer (UFSO) be present whenever the Chief determines it is essential for the safeguarding of life and property from fire, explosion, panic or other hazardous conditions which may arise in the temporary use of an occupancy and/or premises. Often, the Fire Department requires that UFSOs be present at film locations. UFSOs are paid for by the person or entity that is required to have a UFSO present. The determination for whether or not a UFSO is needed at a production location is made by LAFD's Film Unit, based on a set of safety guidelines.


Certainty in costs and permitting goes a long way in ensuring the solvency and success of a film production. A production's success, in turn, creates economic benefits for the City of Los Angeles and the region. Therefore, LAFD's guidelines on when UFSOs are required should be made public so that film productions can better identify the budgetary and safety needs of their production. Both film industry representatives and LAFD Uniformed Fire Safety Officers have demonstrated a willingness to have open discussions that support filming in Los Angeles without jeopardizing the public safety of our residents, local communities, and participants in film shoots. There is a mutual interest in finding common ground.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Fire Department (LAFD) be directed to report on its current Uniformed Fire Safety Officer (UFSO) guidelines, and on the Department's decision making process for requiring UFSOs for filming activities.

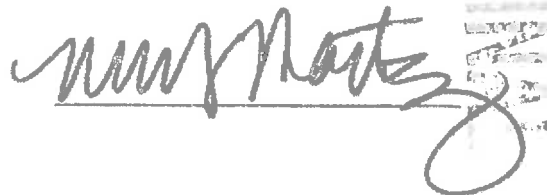
I FURTHER MOVE that the LAFD, in consultation with the United Firefighters of Los Angeles City and the Motion Picture Association of America, be directed to report on possible cost-saving measures such as "spot-checks" which can allow a UFSO to stop by a production rather than be on a full assignment.

I FURTHER MOVE that Film L.A. be requested to report on their interpretation of all public safety guidelines/requirements pertaining to filming activities, as well as report on the feasibility of making these guidelines available to the public on the Film LA website.

PRESENTED BY:


MITCH O'FARRELL
Councilmember, 13th District

SECONDED BY:





LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT
Fire Prevention and Public Safety Bureau
General Hiring Guidelines for Uniformed Fire Safety Officers

Building Type	Fire Protection	Time Period	Assignment	Notes and Exceptions
Commercial Buildings				
Commercial Building	Nonsprinklered	During Business Hours	UFSO	
		After Business Hours	UFSO	
		Generator	UFSO	
	Sprinklered	During Business Hours	UFSO	
		After Business Hours	Case-by-Case	
		Generator	Case-by-Case	
	Alarm In Bypass		UFSO	
	Exceeds Occupant Load		UFSO	
	Sets Built are Impeding Fire Protection Systems		UFSO	
Special Effects		UFSO		
Vacant Building - No Public Impact		Case-by-Case	Unless Management requests UFSO	
Office Buildings				
High-Rise	Nonsprinklered	During Business Hours	UFSO	
		After Business Hours	UFSO	
		Generator	UFSO	
High-Rise/Low-Rise	Sprinklered	During Business Hours	UFSO	Only if Fire Protection or Occupants are Impacted and/or Mgmt Request
		After Business Hours	Case-by-Case	Unless Fire Protection or Occupants are Impacted and/or Mgmt Request
		Generator	Case-by-Case	
Rooftop/Basement Activity	Greater than 10 or more people and only 1 Exit		UFSO	
	Less than 10 people		Spot-Check	Unless Management requests UFSO
	Generator		UFSO	
Residential Buildings				
High-Rise Residential	Public/Occupants Impacted - Special effects - Prod. Company > 150 people		UFSO	
	No Impact		Spot-Check	No Impact, Isolated/not using common area's, No Red Flag
	Generator		Case-by-case	
Multi Residential	Public/Occupants Impacted - Special effects - Prod. Company > 150 people		UFSO	
	No Impact		Spot-Check	No Impact, Isolated/not using common area's, No Red Flag
	Generator		Case-by-case	
Single Family Dwelling	Public/Occupants Impacted - Special effects - Prod. Company > 150 people		UFSO	Unless Owner requests UFSO

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Requirement for standby fire safety officers shall be determined by the fire code official on a case-by-case basis. LAMC 57.4511.4

Building Type	Activity	Assignment	Notes and Exceptions
Buildings - MISCELLANEOUS			
100 Extra's and/or Cast and Crew over 150	Exceeding posted occupant load and exit requirements	UFSO	
	Not exceeding occupant load and exit requirements	Spot-Check	Unless Management requests UFSO
All Buildings with Non-Compliance Fire & Life Safety Notice		UFSO	
All Buildings in Legal		NONE	NO Filming Activity Allowed in Building
Audience Show	300 or more in audience	UFSO	
	Audience Platform	UFSO	
	Exceeding posted occupant load and exit requirements	UFSO	
	Mosh Pit	UFSO	
	Special Effects requiring UFSO	UFSO	
	Unusual or complicated audience exiting	UFSO	
Basement	Greater than 10 or more people and only 1 Exit	UFSO	
	Less than 10 people	Spot-Check	Unless Management requests UFSO
	Generator	UFSO	
Churches	Alarm In Bypass	UFSO	
	# of Extra's	UFSO	
	Special Effects	UFSO	
	NO Public Impact	Spot-Check	Unless Management requests UFSO
Schools	During School Hours	UFSO	
	Alarm In Bypass	UFSO	
	# of Extra's	Case-by-Case	
	Special Effects	UFSO	
	NO Public Impact	Spot-Check	Unless Management requests UFSO
	After Hours	Spot-Check	Unless a UFSO is requested
Underground Parking	Greater than 10 or more people and only 1 Exit	UFSO	
	Less than 10 people	Spot-Check	Unless a UFSO is requested

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Activity		Assignment	Notes and Exceptions
Any additional permits as required by the fire code official		Miscellaneous	
Beaches	Public Impact	UFSO	
	NO Public Impact	Spot-Check	Unless Mgmt requests UFSO
Brush Area	With Generator	UFSO	
	RED FLAG	UFSO	
	Greater than 20 people	UFSO	
	Less than 20 people	Spot-Check	Unless Mgmt requests UFSO
Drones (UAS)		UFSO	
Griffith Park	Generator	UFSO	
	NO GENERATOR, Less than 20 people, Flat Land, Golf Course, Travel Town, Merry-Go-Round	Spot-Check	Unless Park Office requests UFSO
	Special Effects	UFSO	
	Crews greater than 150 people	UFSO	
	Red Flag	UFSO	
	No Public Impact at: Travel Town, Merry-Go-Round, Golf	Spot-Check	Unless Park Office requests UFSO
Helicopter Activity	Landing, Take-off, Refueling, Flying Below 500'	UFSO	
LAFD Helipads	Filming	UFSO	
	Still Photo's - Cast/Crew Greater than 5 People	UFSO	
	Still Photo's - Cast/Crew Less than 5 People	Spot-Check	Unless Mgmt requests UFSO
Minors on Set	With Special Effects	UFSO	
Music Video	Public Impact with Special Effects	UFSO	
	Public Impact with Crews Greater than 150 People	UFSO	
	NO Public Impact	Spot-Check	Unless Mgmt requests UFSO
San Pedro Harbor Area	Public Impact	UFSO	
	NO Public Impact	Spot-Check	Unless Mgmt requests UFSO
Sidewalk	Public Impact with Special Effects	UFSO	
	Public Impact with Crews Greater than 150 People	UFSO	
	NO Public Impact	Spot-Check	Unless a UFSO is requested
Stunts		Case-by-Case	

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Activity		Assignment	Notes and Exceptions
		Special Effects	
Candles (25 or less)		Spot-Check	No impact / isolated
Pyrotechnic Effects that use:	Black Powder Lifters, Prima Cord, Lighting Machines, Lycopodium, Magnesium, or Aluminum or more than 10 squibs per take (shot near people and explosions.)	UFSO	L.A.M.C. 57.4803.2a Additional Permits Case by Case (Miniature) Small amounts
	Body Burn	UFSO	L.A.M.C. 57.4803.2b Additional Permits
	Fire Performers	UFSO	L.A.M.C. 57.4803.3 Live Audience
	Flammable or combustible liquids, gases, and dust	UFSO	L.A.M.C. 57.4803.2c Additional Permits
	Hot Work	UFSO	L.A.M.C. 57.4803.2b Additional Permits
	Open Flames	UFSO	L.A.M.C. 57.4803.2b Additional Permits
Safe and Sane Fireworks		Spot-Check	No impact / isolated with small fire bar (3 ft. or less 2ft in height)
Squibs: 15-or-less squibs on objects and no potential injury		Spot-Check	Three body hits, three times (three film takes) not around face or head.
Practical Effects	Practical Stoves, Smoking, Bar-B-Q's	Case-by-case	Required Special Effects Permit, 315 Special Permit (LAFD Film Unit)