

RALPH M. TERRAZAS

November 30, 2020

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS FILE NO. 20-094R

TO:	Board of Fire Commissioners
FROM:	Ralph M. Terrazas, Fire Chief

SUBJECT: PARAMEDIC STAFFING PROJECTIONS SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT

FINAL ACTION: —— Approved	—— Approved w/Corrections	Withdrawn
—— Denied		Other

SUMMARY

The Board of Fire Commissioners requested a Supplemental Report to the Paramedic Staffing Projections Report (File No. 20-094) that was presented during the November 17, 2020 meeting. This Supplemental Report provides additional details regarding the methodology used to estimate the number of anticipated paramedic vacancies over the next two years.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board: Receive and file.

FINDINGS

The following is the current number and percent of licensed paramedics by rank:

RANK	NUMBER	PERCENT
Deputy Chief	4	44.4
Assistant Chief	6	35.3
Battalion Chief	26	37.7
Captain II	38	21.2
Captain I	166	39.5
Apparatus Operator	23	15.4
Engineer	112	24.7
Inspector II	17	45.9
Inspector I	52	48.5
Helicopter Pilot	5	22.7
Fireboat Pilot	1	20.0
Fireboat Mate	1	6.7
Firefighter III	847	41.6
Firefighter II	31	1.5
Total	1329	37.8

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The percentage of firefighter/paramedics (FF/PMs) on recent promotional lists has varied from approximately 25% for Captain Is to 65% for Inspectors. Given the number of vacancies to be filled for the rank of Captain I, Engineer, Apparatus Operator, and Inspector, the estimated percent of FF/PMs who will leave the FF/PM position in the field as a result of being promoted is 30%. This estimated percentage serves as the basis for our calculations regarding projected paramedic vacancies resulting from the promotional process.

The estimated number of new paramedics from FFs in the field who go to paramedic school is based upon the availability of 45 seats at the UCLA Paramedic School each fiscal year, divided over three classes (September, January, and May).

FY 20-21

Current Classes – Too early to count August 2020 – 19 members in Didactic January 2021 – 18 members in prep class May 2021 – 8 members (20 interested in program already) All 45 spots are filled.

FY 19-20

September 2019 - 19 members,

16 passed – 1 Failed, 1 Leave of absence (in internship now), 1 Pending Completion of National Registry Exam

January 2020 – 7 members (Finishing internship now)

May 2020 - Class Cancelled by UCLA due to COVID 19

Used 25 out of 45 spots, but the May class was cancelled.

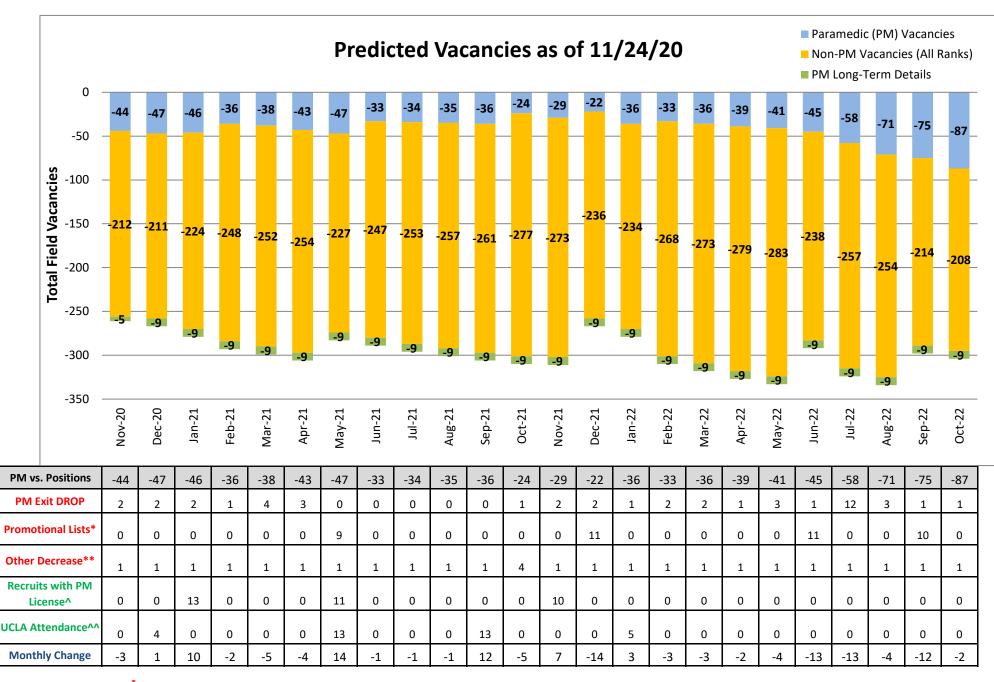
Over the past five years, the aggregate rate of FFs successfully completing UCLA Paramedic School, passing the National Registry Exam, and being assigned to a paramedic assignment in the field is 82%.

Long term projections for paramedic vacancies are analyzed by the EMS Bureau and Planning Section. The anticipated vacancies are illustrated on Attachment #1, which provides the Department a thorough snapshot of the status of paramedic staffing. The Fire Chief evaluates the information and directs appropriate mitigations to occur. Examples may include, requesting additional paramedic training positions from the paramedic training institutions or adjusting timelines for assignment to paramedic positions by members recently completing their probationary period.

CONCLUSION

Minimizing paramedic field vacancies is important to minimize assign hires and last-minute details, both of which adversely impact morale and our level of service. Our ongoing efforts to address the working conditions in the field, refining our dispatch accuracy, adding BLS ambulances, adding rotational stations by upgrading BLS engines to ALS assessment engines, allowing paramedics to downgrade calls, and changing our culture have been successful to keep the number of paramedic vacancies to a manageable level.

Board Report prepared by Marc Eckstein, M.D., MPH, Medical Director, EMS Bureau Commander:



Notes:

Promotions are estimates

Includes 15 FFPM/YR for new ALS resources AND misc loss (MFC, EITs, Early Retirement, etc.)

Assumes 80% of paramedic-licensed recruits successfully complete probation and LA County accredidation

Projected FF/EMT graduating from UCLA PM School; Goal = 45 FF attend per Fiscal Year with 90% retention)