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FIRE CHIEF

March 16, 2022

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS  
FILE NO. 22-030

TO: Board of Fire Commissioners

FROM:  Kristin Crowley, Fire Chief

SUBJECT: ARSON/COUNTER-TERRORISM SECTION OVERVIEW

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 Withdrawn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

As requested by the Los Angeles Fire Department Board of Fire Commissioners, the Fire Department is providing an overview of the organizational goals and objectives for the Arson/Counter-Terrorism Section (ACTS). ACTS is part of the Homeland Security Division within the Emergency Operations Bureau. The goals delineated on the attached maximize efficiencies, promote safety and a positive work environment.

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Board:  
Receive and file this report

Board report prepared by Battalion Chief Roy Paige, Arson/Counter-Terrorism Section.

Attachment

# LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT



## ARSON/COUNTER-TERRORISM SECTION 2022

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Arson Counter-Terrorism Section is committed to determining the origin and cause of fires within the City of Los Angeles. To investigate and apprehend those responsible for criminal fires and increase safety through collaboration with our public partners and our community.

## **ETHOS**

Our Code of Ethics is the standard of behavior that the Los Angeles City Fire Department expects our members to adhere to in their daily activities and dealing with others. The Code of Ethics cannot foresee every situation that might arise. Rather, it identifies guiding principles to help the Arson/Counter-Terrorism Section members make decisions consistent with the LAFD's organizational values and reputation.

The Los Angeles City Fire Departments, Arson/Counter-Terrorism Section prides itself on integrity and fostering open communication with area partners and the community. Being honest, forthright, and consistent in our dealings with others fosters a positive work environment. When the Arson/Counter-Terrorism Section members practice and promote ethical behavior, the section benefits.

## **Arson/Counter-Terrorism Section (ACTS)**

The Arson/Counter-Terrorism Section reports annually on fire-related incidents within the City of Los Angeles. ACTS staff are specially trained Firefighters who utilize the most up-to-date techniques in fire investigation to reduce the frequency of fires incidents and actively pursue individuals responsible for setting fires within the City of Los Angeles.

Injuries and unfilled vacancies have significantly impacted the Arson/Counter-Terrorism Section staffing level. Currently, we are staffed with six (6) members making up the day unit working a 4/10 schedule, three (3) supervisors, and four (4) members assigned to A-unit 1. A-unit 1 is the only 24-hour arson unit for the City and is staffed with two members per day.

The typical staffing level consists of eighteen (18) investigators and three (3) supervisors. Of these eighteen (18) members, twelve (12) members are assigned to the day unit working a 4/10 schedule. The remaining six (6) members are assigned to A-unit 1.

The members of the ACTS investigate hundreds of fires each year that are determined to be intentionally set, incendiary in origin, or accidental. Incendiary fires are responsible for a large percentage of the annual fire loss within the City of Los Angeles and result in several fire fatalities each year.

**The following is a list of strategic goals and objectives for the LAFD Arson/Counter-Terrorism Section:**

- 1. Develop an environment where employees are safe, valued, respected, informed and involved. Promoting a sense of team, pride and accountability.**
  - ACTS supervisors will schedule time to develop relationships with ACTS members
  - ACTS supervisors will work with and respond to incidents with ACTS members to better understand their strengths and weaknesses
  - ACTS supervisors will be present and willing to stay after hours
- 2. Develop an Effective and Fair Evaluation system for the Arson Section.**
  - All ACTS members to receive an annual evaluation outlining their performance, conduct, proficiency and behavior.
  - ACTS will develop a mentorship program to assist in the growth and development of members in the section.
- 3. Improve staff competency by investing in them.**
  - ACTS will continue to send members to specialized training to enhance their professional abilities.
  - ACTS supervisors will encourage ACTS members to advance their formal education and expand their technical expertise.
- 4. Develop a Computerized system to Support ACTS Case Management.**

The new system will reduce inefficiencies and leverage information technology to our advantage.

  - ACTS will be working with Information Technology Bureau (ITB) to develop a new robust computer case management system to meet the increasing needs of the Arson Section
- 5. Develop a Basic Fire Investigation and Report Writing Program for Company Officers.**
  - Utilize outside resources to assist in development and delivery (Course was initially rolled out in August 2021 outside vender)
  - ACTS will work with LAFD in-service training to develop the training program