

December 4, 2012

LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT



BRIAN L. CUMMINGS
FIRE CHIEF

November 15, 2012

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
FILE NO. 12-196

TO: Board of Fire Commissioners
FROM: Brian L. Cummings, Fire Chief
SUBJECT: MANAGED HIRING PROCESS

FOR INFORMATION ONLY:	<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 Withdrawn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

For Information Only

Background: For approximately five years, the City Council has maintained a hard hiring freeze to address the City's continuing fiscal challenges. Departments wishing to fill vacancies must submit requests to the Managed Hiring Committee (MHC), composed of one representative each from the Mayor's Office, the Office of the City Administrative Officer, and the Office of the Chief Legislative Analyst. A written request to the MHC includes identification of the funding source, a workload analysis of the position, the vacancy rate within the respective unit, and the vacancy rate of the classification within the department as a whole. Moreover, the MHC considers the department's budgetary status (i.e., whether it is on budget or a deficit is projected), as well as the City's overall fiscal condition, in deciding if the request should be approved.

The MHC meets approximately twice per month to review requests to fill vacancies. Committee actions consist of approving a request, disapproving a request, or placing a request on hold, usually to obtain additional information. Once a request is approved, a department is authorized to fill a vacancy through certification of an eligible list, an emergency appointment when an eligible list is not available, or a transfer from another department.

Attached is a list of the Department's Managed Hiring Approvals between February 2011 and October 2012, including the 60 sworn vacancies recently approved to be filled, as discussed below.

Summary: The Board of Fire Commissioners requested a staff report to discuss the impact of the managed hiring process on the Department.

On October 26, 2012, the Managed Hiring Committee approved the filling of 60 sworn positions out of 65 vacancies as of September 30, 2012. Seventeen of these unfreezes were for Fire Inspector positions. The MHC also advised the Department to submit, in January 2013, a request to fill all anticipated sworn vacancies for the remainder of the Fiscal Year. At that time, the MHC would review the request taking into consideration, as noted above, the Department's budgetary status and the City's fiscal condition.

Provided below is a list of civilian vacancies and the operational impacts of not filling these positions.

Supply and Maintenance Division

- 1 Auto Body Builder Repairer
- 1 Automotive Supervisor
- 1 Equipment Repair Supervisor
- 1 Heavy Duty Equipment Mechanic
- 1 Warehouse and Tool room Worker

The inability to fill vacancies in the Supply and Maintenance Division has resulted in delayed service, or no service at all, to emergency apparatus; increased apparatus out-of-service rates; and increased overtime expenditures.

Fire Prevention Bureau

- 1 Fire Protection Engineering Associate IV

Maintaining the Fire Protection Engineering Associate IV position vacant increases the plan review process for new construction by three to four weeks. This position is a critical part of the city's permit process, and with 60 new major projects in the queue, the review, and approval process is significantly delayed.

Professional Standards Division

- 1 Special Investigator II

Not filling this vacancy has inhibited the Department's ability to reduce its backlog of alleged misconduct investigations and EEO complaint investigations, and to comply with the recommendations of the 2006 Controller and Personnel audits, and the 2010 Independent Assessor's audit for the Department to improve its investigative and disciplinary processes.

The Department provides a core service to the citizens of Los Angeles which is accomplished through the support of civilian staff. The civilian support function represents a very small percentage of the Department work force which has continued to shrink due to budget cuts. As a result, employees have been required to do more with less. Filling all of the above civilian vacancies, however, would result in a deficit to the Department's Salaries General Account. Moreover, it is projected that the Department will have a year-end deficit of approximately \$5.2 million due a shortfall in the Constant Staffing Overtime Account. The Department intends to address the shortfall through a combination of new revenue sources and transfers from anticipated surpluses in the Salaries General, Sworn Salaries, and Variable Staffing Overtime accounts. Therefore, the Department will continue to request only the most critical civilian vacancies for unfreeze to avoid increasing the projected deficit as it works toward achieving a balanced budget at year-end.

Board report prepared by Norma Gutierrez, Personnel Director II, Personnel Services Section.