

COUNTY OF HAWAII FIRE COMMISSION  
FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT  
April 14, 2004

F-1 is participating as a panel member for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Peer Review process at Emmitsburg, Maryland from 4-12/16-04.

F-2 is attending a California/Nevada/Hawaii Forest Fire Council Conference on Kauai from 4-14/16.

INTRODUCTION OF 30<sup>TH</sup> RECRUIT CLASS, 2 NEW DISPATCHERS AND 2 NEW MECHANICS.

**Budget**

- FY 2004-05 Department budget review on March 11. Thanks to Commissioner Bowles for his testimony, as well as Commissioners Brazier, Whitney, and Matsuda, and Ron and Noni Sanford for their presence and support. Councilmembers were supportive of our budget, although they did express reservations with setting a 11.5% base of real property tax revenues for the fire department. Recent reports indicate the fire department budget represents 8% of real property tax revenue.

**Alternative Funding and Grants**

- Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP) in the Department of Homeland Security Assistance to Firefighter Grant program (formerly USFA Fire Act Grant): Grantwriters Keola Payao and Michael Hayashida submitted our proposal for a mobile Modular Live Fire Training Unit, which will provide invaluable training opportunities for both our paid and volunteer personnel.

Currently, our department utilizes structures scheduled for demolition to conduct live fire training exercises. However, long before the training exercise can even begin, the structure needs to be donated to our department, then approved for demolition by various County and State agencies. The owner must then take samples of man-made materials from the structure and send them to a laboratory at his own cost. If asbestos is found in any of the materials, the owner must pay a private contractor to have it removed.

This process is very discouraging to the homeowner and severely limits the amount of structures that are donated, which in turn severely hampers our live fire training exercises.

The acquisition of the Modular Live Fire Training Unit will circumvent this problem. In addition to supporting the training of our personnel, the use of this training unit will have a direct impact on the air quality of our environment. Utilizing clean burning fuel (propane), emissions and particulates will be minimal.

Total budget for this project if \$430,000. Federal request is \$301,000 (70%) with HCFD matching \$129,000 (30%).

- Department of Transportation, Safe Communities Grant:: Provides means of obtaining State grant funding for highway safety projects. Will be applying for funding to acquire 42 radio translucent spine boards to equip our medic units (3 per unit). Total cost is \$8,400.

### **Capital Improvement Projects**

- Puna Public Safety Complex: No new updates to report.
- Pahoia Fire Station: Conducted a site visit of a second possible site for replacement Pahoia Fire Station, which is State owned property on the makai side of Highway 130, approximately .2 miles (north) of the Ogasawara property. Submitted an assessment and evaluation report of both sites to the Mayor
- Fire Administration: Temporary Fire Admin relocation (former Public Works in County Building) pending asbestos clean-up in County Building. Site visits arranged following meeting for five possible future sites.

### **Promotions and Hiring**

- 30<sup>th</sup> Recruit Class: Family orientation held on 3-12-04. Class began on March 16, 2004. Right now they are well into the essentials—about Chapter 8 of 19. Everyone is passing at this point. Starting to get into skills: ladders, hose handling, CPR and First Aid. They are looking forward to their first paycheck.
- FEO and Fire Captain Internal Recruitments: Continuing to evaluate and establish fair and comprehensive selection process.

### **Operations Division**

- RMS Update: RMS Committee met on March 11, 2004 and discussed progress of NFIRS. In process of fine-tuning data to suit our needs.
- West Niles Virus: County preparing for proper disposal of dead birds that may be infected with the West Niles virus. Fire Department's role to identify designated pick up/drop off stations and assurance of safe and sanitary disposal.
- Flash Flood Conditions: EOC again activated during March due to heavy rains, resulting in flash flood conditions. Grounds saturated from prior storms.

### **Prevention Division**

- Preparation underway to provide adequate coverage for Merrie Monarch festivities to assure a safe and enjoyable event by all.

- 12 firefighters (including 2 inspectors) attended Origin of Electrical Fires-Arson Investigations course on March 29. Instructed by NFA in coordination with Honolulu Fire.

### **Training Division**

- Status of 28<sup>th</sup> Recruit Class: Began second rotation of assignments on March 17, 2004. One member on active duty in Iraq. All doing well.
- Status of 29<sup>th</sup> Recruit Class: Began their clinical rotations at stations in March for about five weeks before returning for EMT-I classroom training.
- Driver Competency Training Program Update: Of the 271 drivers, a total of 170 audits have been received to date.

### **Volunteer Division**

- Driver Training Class Update: Driver training completed for all priority companies, and Ocean View, Pepeekeo, North Kohala and Volcano are up and running again. In process of coordinating training for about 12 more smaller companies.
- The next Volunteer Fire Chief's meeting will be hosted by Fire Administration and be held on May 8, 2004 at the Training Room.

### **EMS Division**

- MICT Class: Targeted for September 2004. Conducted orientation briefing with 15 personnel who have expressed an interest. We plan to have a mentoring program for these candidates that will include one-on-one mentoring and tutoring, periodic lesson and skill training, and possible case study review. This will assist candidates prior to and during MICT class.

### **Fire Auxiliary Services**

- CADs. RMS link updates.

### **New Projects/Business**

- Status of Fire Commission Secretary Position. Have not yet heard anything from Mayor regarding this position.
- In preparation for the County's new financial computer system (FRESH), ongoing meetings and training being held.

- 2004 State Legislature Session update:
  - Senate Bill 2136: (Established a “public safety training academy” under the jurisdiction of the State Department of Public Safety.) Died in the Senate and therefore no longer on the legislative agenda.
  - Senate Bill 2399, relating to the funding of an emergency ambulance services in the Ocean View community. Heard in the House Finance Committee on 4-7-04. Written support provided by Fire Commissioners, Fire Chief, Councilmembers, Ocean View Volunteer Company, and Ocean View Community Association. The bill passed the Finance Committee however effective date amended to 2010. According to Senator Kokubun’s office, this was probably done as a strategy to keep the bill alive and to move it to the conference committee between the Senate and House. The effective date is debatable.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Employee Recognition and Awards dinner held on April 3, 2004, at the Royal Kona Resort. In addition to recognizing employees for service and promotion awards and retirement, also honored the memory of FRS Curtis Taosaka, and paid tribute to our five firefighters who are presently serving our country.

### **Public Relations**

- 3-27-04: American Red Cross Everyday Heroes Event, which recognized members of our community for their bravery and courage: Young boy honored for alerting his family to a fire, citizen recognized for playing proactive role in prevention of brush fire spread; Sayres honored for their contributions to the community over the years, including their support of the fire department rescue program.
- On 3-24-04, North Hawaii Public Safety Committee nominated FF Gabriel Lindsey for his longtime (30 years) service to the fire department and the North Kohala community.
- On 4-1-04, the Aloha Exchange Club recognized FEO Glen Honda as their FireFighter of the Year for his contributions to the department’s training program.
- Preparing for Emergency Medical Services Week May 16 to 22, 2004. 4<sup>th</sup> Annual EMS Week 5K Run/2.0 mile walk on May 22 at Liliuokalani Gardens in Hilo. Will be dedicated to the memories of Mandy Shiraki, Danny Villarios, and Ron Laubacher, who lost their lives while flying to the Big Island for a medical transport. We have commissioned a special commemorative T-shirt to honor our fallen brothers. Invitations will be mailed to Commissioners soon.

Agendize for May 12 Meeting:

- Dennis Iyo, re: Citizen Valor/Recognition Awards Program.
- Councilmember Elarionoff, re: Character First presentation.