

I MINA 'TRENTAI KUATTRO NA LIHESLATURAN GUAHAN

Informational Briefing

REPORT	STANDING COMMITTEE / SENATOR	DATE	DATE FILED	NOTES
Informational Briefing	Committee on Housing, Utilities, Public Safety, and Homeland Security	4/18/17 9:30 a.m.	5/19/17 11:01 a.m.	Committee Report on Informational Briefing with the Guam Fire Department



OFFICE OF SENATOR TELENA CRUZ NELSON

CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING, UTILITIES, PUBLIC SAFETY & HOMELAND SECURITY
I MINA'TRENTAI KUÁTTRO NA LIHESLATURAN GUAHAN | 34th GUAM LEGISLATURE

May 16, 2017

The Honorable Benjamin J.F. Cruz
Speaker
I Mina'trentai Kuáttro na Liheslaturan Guáhan
163 Chalan Santa Papa
Hagátña, Guam 96910

VIA: The Honorable Michael F.Q. San Nicolas
Chairperson, Committee on Rules

RE: Committee Report on Informational Briefing Guam Fire Department

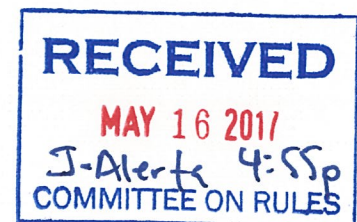
Dear Speaker Cruz:

Transmitted herewith is the Committee Report on an Informational Briefing for the Guam Fire Department with agenda items to include: Personnel, Overtime, Promotions, Policy Change. This informational briefing was held on April 18, 2017 at 9:30 a.m.

Sincerely,

Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

2017 MAY 19 AM 11:01





OFFICE OF SENATOR TELENA CRUZ NELSON

CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING, UTILITIES, PUBLIC SAFETY & HOMELAND SECURITY
I MINA'TRENTAI KUÁTTRO NA LIHESLATURAN GUAHAN | 34th GUAM LEGISLATURE

Committee Report

on

Informational Briefing
April 18, 2017 at 9:30 a.m.

Guam Fire Department:
Personnel, Overtime, Promotions, Policy
Change

GUAM CONGRESS BLDG. 163 CHALAN SANTO PAPA HAGÁTÑA, GUAM 96910

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I MINA'TRENTAI KUATTRO NA LIHESLATURAN GUAHAN | 34th GUAM LEGISLATURE

May 16, 2017

MEMORANDUM

To: All Members
Committee on Housing, Utilities, Public Safety, and Homeland Security

From: Senator Telena Cruz Nelson 
Committee Chairperson

Subject: Committee Report on Informational Briefing for the Guam Fire Department

Transmitted herewith for your consideration is the Committee Report on an Informational Briefing for the Guam Fire Department with agenda items to include: Personnel, Overtime, Promotions, Policy Change. This informational briefing was held on April 18, 2017 at 9:30 a.m.

This report includes the following:

- Notices of Informational Briefing
- Copy of the Informational Briefing Agenda
- Informational Briefing Sign-in Sheet
- Copies of Submitted Testimony & Supporting Documents
- Related News Reports
- Committee Report Digest

Please take the appropriate action on the attached vote sheet. Your attention to this matter is greatly appreciated. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Si Yu'os Ma' a s e'!

First Notice of Informational Briefing: Tuesday, April 18, 2017 at 9:30 a.m

Office of Senator Telena C. Nelson <senatortcnelson@gmail.com>

Tue, Apr 11, 2017 at 1:45 PM

To: phnotice@guamlegislature.org, joey.sannicolas@gfd.guam.gov, daren.burrier@gfd.guam.gov,
christine.baletto@doa.guam.gov

April 11, 2017

MEMORANDUM

To: All Senators, Media, and Stakeholders

From: Senator Telena Cruz Nelson, *Chairperson*

Subject: **First Notice of Informational Briefing: Tuesday, April 18, 2017 at 9:30 a.m**

Buenas yan Håfa Adai! Please be advised that the Committee on Housing, Utilities, Public Safety, and Homeland Security will be conducting an informational briefing on Tuesday, April 18, 2017 in the Legislature's Public Hearing Room on the following:

9:30 a.m. Informational Briefing

- **Guam Fire Department: Personnel, Overtime, Promotions, Policy Change**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals requiring special accommodations or services or for more information on this briefing, please contact the Office of Senator Telena Cruz Nelson via email senatortcnelson@gmail.com or call 989-7696 or 969-7679

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The Office of Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

Committee on Housing, Utilities, Public Safety & Homeland Security

I Mina'trentai Kuåttro na Liheslaturan Guåhan

34th Guam Legislature

Guam Congress Building, 163 Chalan Santo Papa, Hagåtña, Guam 96910

T: (671) 989-4678/7689/7696



Second Notice of Informational Briefing --- Tuesday, April 18, 2017 at 9:30 a.m

Office of Senator Telena C. Nelson <senatortcnelson@gmail.com>

Thu, Apr 13, 2017 at 2:01 PM

To: phnotice@guamlegislature.org, joey.sannicolas@gfd.guam.gov, Daren Burrier <daren.burrier@gfd.guam.gov>, christine.baletto@doa.guam.gov

April 14, 2017

MEMORANDUM

To: All Senators, Media, and Stakeholders

From: Senator Telena Cruz Nelson, *Chairperson*

Subject: **Second Notice of Informational Briefing --- Tuesday, April 18, 2017 at 9:30 a.m**

Buenas yan Håfa Adai! Please be advised that the Committee on Housing, Utilities, Public Safety, and Homeland Security will be conducting an informational hearing on April 18, 2017 in the Legislature's Public Hearing Room on the following:

9:30 a.m. Informational Briefing

- **Guam Fire Department: Personnel, Overtime, Promotions, Policy Change**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals requiring special accommodations or services or for more information on this briefing, please contact the Office of Senator Telena Cruz Nelson via email senatortcnelson@gmail.com or call 989-7696 or 969-7679

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The Office of Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

Committee on Housing, Utilities, Public Safety & Homeland Security

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34th Guam Legislature

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Second Notice GFD.pdf

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CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING, UTILITIES, PUBLIC SAFETY & HOMELAND SECURITY
I MINA'TRENTAI KU'ATTRO NA LIHESLATURAN GUAHAN | 34th GUAM LEGISLATURE

For Immediate Release
April 18, 2017

SENATOR NELSON

(*Hagåtña*, Guam) On Tuesday morning, Senator Telen Cruz Nelson conducted her first informational briefing with the Guam Fire Department (GFD) to discuss areas of concern to include Promotion, Policy Change, Overtime, and the Hiring of New Personnel.

“We learned that GFD is planning to hire 40 new firefighters to eliminate the burden of overtime that current firefighters are faced with. Currently, a firefighter works a mere 120 hours per pay period with 106 hours being the standard hours worked, any thing above that is considered overtime - paid a time and a half. We want to help the Guam Fire Department hire new personnel so that firefighters can spend more time with their family, and not be burdened with working over time,” stated Senator Telen Cruz Nelson.

Senator Nelson also stated, “ We also learned that recently, there has been changes in regards to promotions that all firefighter would have to be certified using NAFPA and PRO Board Standards. Thus, one of the main reasons why I called this informational briefing, to let it be known that these certifications have to be met and that all personnel is given the opportunity and ample time to fully attain these certifications.”

I also want to provide the opportunity for more firefighters, for a more diversified community

In the upcoming weeks, we look forward to a thorough presentation and update on Pro Board Courses Availability, Post Requirements, Advanced EMT incentive pay offered to Hazmat, Rescue, and ALS; Overtime 120 hours, anything above is a time and a half; and Equal Opportunity Employment.

This briefing is ongoing and is scheduled to resume in May.

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For more information, please contact the Office of Senator Telen Cruz Nelson at (671) 989-7696.
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OFFICE OF SENATOR TELENA CRUZ NELSON

CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING, UTILITIES, PUBLIC SAFETY & HOMELAND SECURITY
I MINA'TRENTAI KUÁTRO NA LIHESLATURAN GUAHAN | 34th GUAM LEGISLATURE

Committee on Housing, Utilities, Public Safety and Homeland Security

Informational Briefing

9:30 a.m.

Tuesday, April 18, 2017

AGENDA

- Informational Briefing from Guam Fire Department: Personnel, Overtime, Promotions, and Policy Change

I Mina'trentai Kuáttro Na Liheslaturan Guåhan
 Committee on Housing, Utilities, Public Safety, and Homeland Security
 Office of Senator Telena Cruz Nelson
 Informational Briefing Sign-in Sheet

Tuesday, April 18, 2017 • 9:30 a.m. • Public Hearing Room

Informational Briefing, Guam Fire Department: Personnel, Overtime, Promotions, and Policy Change

NAME	AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION (IF ANY)	CONTACT NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS
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Daniel J HATTIC	GFD	642-3424	
Michael K. Unanue	GFD	649-8805	michael.unanue@gfd.guam.gov
Daren Burrier	GFD	478-3474	daren.burrier@gfd.guam.gov
Ronald Castro	GFD	646-8810	
Alan Concepcion	GFD	646-8810	
Ignacio Campos	GFD	646-8810	
Edward Ateno	GFD	657-3473	



OFFICE OF SENATOR TELENA CRUZ NELSON

CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING, UTILITIES, PUBLIC SAFETY & HOMELAND SECURITY
I MINA'TRENTAI KUATTRO NA LIHESLATURAN GUAHAN | 34th GUAM LEGISLATURE

COMMITTEE REPORT DIGEST

I. OVEVIEW

The Committee on Housing, Utilities, Public Safety & Homeland Security began an Informational Briefing with the Guam Waterworks Authority (GWA) on Tuesday, April 18, 2017, 9:30 AM in *I Liheslatura's* Public Hearing Room on the increase of water and wastewater rates.

Public Notice Requirements

Public Hearing notices were disseminated via e-mail to all senators and all main media broadcasting outlets on April 11, 2017 (5-Day Notice), and again on April 13, 2017 (48-Hour Notice).

Senators present

Senator Telena Cruz Nelson, Chairperson
Senator Mary Torres, Member
Senator Biscoe Lee, Member

Panel:

Chief Burrier, Acting Fire Chief, GFD
Mr. Mike Uncangco, Assistant Chief, GFD (his left)
Mr. Joey Manibusan, Assistant Chief, GFD (his right)
Mr. Art Stanley, Firefighter I, GFD (way right)

Signed-in:

Mr. Joey Manibusan
Mr. Art Stanley
Mr. Joseph Sablan
Ms. Vivian Perez Quichocho
Mr. Daniel J. Hattig
Mr. Michael F. Uncangco
Mr. Darren Burrier
Mr. Ronald Castro
Mr. Alan Concepcion
Mr. Ignacio Campos
Mr. Edward Artero
Mr. Jeff Chaco

II. SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY & DISCUSSION

Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

The purpose of this informational briefing is to address some of the concerns that I have received from fellow firefighters within the organization. The concerns are the upcoming promotion system, POST requirements, and also the new standardized training for the PRO board that you guys put into place. Some of the concerns that they had was that they weren't given a fair opportunity to take the courses, and that the seniority of the ranking structure, they feel that perhaps that this promotion system might negate them even if they are senior in rank up to the next level of promotion. Another thing we will address is your advanced EMT incentive pay, and that is the gist of it. So if you could just go ahead and start with the measures that you took, you know the transition for the Blueprint 2020, the transition that you've done, the SOP's that you have put in place in respect to the promotion system, and the information that was duly put out, that the required courses are needed for a promotion.

Chief Burrier

In regards to our PRO board training, our approach basically is as it started with our National Registry EMT certification program that we did to get our people updated to national standards, and that just parlayed into getting our training in the fire side of the house to the national standards also, so we went into the PRO Board certification, and with our Blueprint 2020 that came out when the fire chief Joey San Nicolas first took office, was a vision statement and a plan of how we are going to proceed as a fire department, and that was incorporated into the administrative rules and regulations and according to 8506 as an adjunct, it was distributed to all the stations for all personnel to review and they were encouraged to review and become familiar with it and that is the progression of the department to this date. After that, he went on deployment for about a year and returned and we established on a memorandum dated February 27th, 2014, that the SOP, we had draft SOP's set up there was book one and book two, and with that memorandum established also book 3, and those SOP's Chapter 4 established the PRO Board training and certifications that would go towards promotions.

Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

Okay, just to reiterate again, Chief, there was a Memorandum put out by Chief San Nicolas informing the firefighters that the requirements for promotion was issued out on February 24th 2017. Is that correct?

Chief Burrier

That is correct.

Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

Okay, please continue.

Chief Burrier

They have established the SOP's we were to follow, SOP, standard operating procedures for the Department is every firefighter's responsibility to become familiarized with them and how we operate our operations and that was affirmed in that memo for establishment of the SOP's as part of the Administrative Rules and Regs also, so as we progress forward we started doing PRO board classes on a regular basis in a timeline as we have, we started classes officially in August 2014. We had a grant that allowed us to have all these initial courses paid for. Our first course was HAZMAT operations, a lot of those courses were conducted at station houses, and we were able to certify 198 people at HAZMAT operations, and that helped us initiate our HAZMAT response team that we have at the Agat Fire Station.

Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

Pardon me, may I have a copy of the timeline you have right in front of you.

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Chief Burrier

Yes.

Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

Okay.

(gives timeline to make a copy)

Chief Burrier

So with this, an MOU was signed in 2014 with GCC and GFD in order to bring the training and formatted training to all the firefighters, we then started developing the courses and holding courses in classrooms. Most of the training, because we can't do all this training while they are on duty, most of this training occurred in a classroom area, which would require them to attend training in an off duty time. It takes a level of commitment coming from the firefighter also in order to obtain the training and complete their training. Offering the training, and of course there is questions whether the training was available to everybody who needed their training, so the first priority of our training matrix is that if we had a Firefighter I who was trying to get a Fire Officer I certification, he would not be the priority because he would not be eligible at that rank. We would offer it out to all those individuals first who would benefit from that training. The course would be held, and if there happened to be no shows, absences, because attendance is mandatory, and we need to make sure we have a certain amount of people in the classes, then if a Firefighter I and a Firefighter II showed up into a class and we had open seats, we would pull them in. It was not necessarily allowing Firefighter I's or firefighters who would not benefit from these classes to attend these classes, it was just a matter of having empty seats that we needed to fill, and we have no problem training those who were wanting to be trained.

Then as we progressed, we did some more training in 2015, and after 2015, we had to continue and then focus again on the national registry certifications. They were up for renewal, that's a continuing process, all these trainings are continuous. In 2016, we started another round of courses in October. We would address any gaps that we had, and then starting January we had a hold on our courses because the PRO Board organization in Saipan that we fall under had a review from the PRO Board organization, and until they completed it and set up their new curriculums, and now we are getting ready to have some more courses come second half of May.

Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

To address the training available for the officers, there were some concerns that were brought up that the HAZMAT group that is in the fire that they received trainings during working hours and that other groups weren't given the same opportunity. Can you please explain what has been done to ensure that the firefighters all had an equal opportunity to receive this training?

Chief Burrier

Well, Firefighter Art Stanley, who is in structure III for the department, he's the primary instructor for HAZMAT. What he did is that he actually went to each and every station, training people that were on duty. The majority of the training was HAZMAT Operations; we have 198 operation personnel that have been certified in HAZMAT operations. That's the fruit of his labor. There's other courses done at one of the HAZMAT stations: in HAZMAT tech they have currently 107 personnel, in HAZMAT IC, we have another 75, and HAZMAT awareness we have another 82 certified. These courses were offered out there in HAZMAT section ordered in order to get their HAZMAT up and running. Since then we have handled all the rest of the courses in the classroom setting. It is mainly the HAZMAT, we made sure we reached as many people as we could, and beyond the amount of people we needed for HAZMAT units. Then the other HAZMAT the tech courses, were focused on the personnel that were actually assigned to the unit, and then we offered HAZMAT tech courses in the classroom, and most of the courses for that were classroom available.

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Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

Just to be clear, Firefighter I Art Stanley went to all the fire houses to offer this training, there was no preferential treatment to specific personnel.

Mr. Darren Burrier

For a matter of information, I was mentioning to you that my updated roster of 214 in operating personnel, uniform personnel, we have all but 10 personnel who have received some training in PRO board. We have made quite a dent in our training capabilities, in getting to all our personnel we want to get 100% compliance, we are setting up our programs, even fine tuning them even more in order to provide the training in a formatted and progressive manner. Initiating the course as it is, we had to offer the courses we had, get to as many people as we could, and then revisit it again and continue to do it until we get 100% compliance and all the personnel at a PRO Board certification to where, when they do apply for promotions, they should have all their certifications behind them. Yes, it is an initial step that we're doing now, it's been ongoing since 2014, it's been in the works since 2012, and progressing it forward, we have a nationally certified manpower organization they are comparable to fire departments in the United States, they are comparable to our brethren in the Fed Fires on island, and having that makes them better firefighters and makes us a better organization. We are not looking at any preferential treatment for anyone, we want everybody to get the training, we want them to have the training available to them in the future to where they go for promotions they have that base line set up. Anything beyond that, will be available to them if they meet the conditions to get there.

Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

Another concern was some firefighters were under the impression that a flyer was sent out. (Holds flyer) This is the flyer that was handed out, and it says in this flyer, "Curriculum will include the soon to be agency requirements as it pertains to the upward mobility career development program. This tiered approach is needed to advance in certification. Challenges will begin in January with courses to follow. There is no material provided for the challenges with the exception of materials loaded to station emails."

A lot of the firefighters were under the impression that although the promotion system will be taking place, the language where it says the soon to be agency requirements does not specifically say that these requirements will be effective for promotion on such a date. In the memorandum that you stated February 27th, 2014, the first thing in the paragraph was the mention of a certain SOP. Can you please state what that SOP is? Can you just go ahead and read that memorandum?

Chief Burrier

The SOP is Chapter 4 general administration, required licenses and certifications, Code 1 4.13, is to establish departmental policy ensuring that all fire department members understood and comply with departmental requirements concerning required licenses and certificates. Fire department members of all ranks shall process a valid Guam operators license, required licenses or certifications for a firefighter, which includes the NFPA 1001, Firefighter II emergency medical technician, and driver operator according to NFPA 1002. Those outline the PRO Board certification and it goes on through the different ranks.

Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

From that memorandum, do you feel that is enough fair notice and the firemen understood that you must have these classes to be promoted or to be considered for the next rank?

Chief Burrier

Yes I do, because any time we establish a SOP, under administrative rules and regs that is what we operate by. All firefighters understand that when we operate while we're on duty, that is what we are to follow. It's basically our bible; it tells us how we perform our jobs.

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Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

Did all levels of the chain of command acknowledge the receipt of the SOP and the updates?

Chief Burrier

Yes, they were distributed to all the stations for review, and there also was a period before this that they were sent out for any comments in order to send them back. As it states in our draft, this draft is a living document. If there is anything that needs to be adjusted that is unclear, it can be addressed at that time with the proper notices. There has been no comments that we have received on these in order to address this or to eliminate these requirements. It was all agreed upon. They were all reviewed at the stations during class trainings that they have there.

Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

Okay, and you have your fire requirements for promotion that D.O.A. is now vetting. Is that correct?

Chief Burrier

That is correct.

Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

And how many positions are currently open and available that D.O.A. are vetting for and what are their ranks.

Chief Burrier

We have openings for Firefighter II position, the fire lieutenant, the fire captain and Battalion Chief and we also have an opening for the assistant chief. (27:00)

Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

One position each?

Mr. Mike Uncancgo

What's over at DOA right now, we have one Deputy Fire Chief position, One Assistant Fire Chief, Six Battalion Fire Chief, Ten Fire Captains, Sixteen Fire Service Specialists, Ten Firefighter II and 45 Firefighter recruits.

Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

Thank you. Can we discuss some of the requirements? I understand that you have given the firemen the requirements for the promotion, and now DOA is vetting just the minimal requirements. Is that correct?

Chief Burrier

Correct. In the job announcement that comes from DOA, in order to initiate that DOA sent out last year a comment period for the new qualifications for the promotions. They sent out on their notice on their webpage we put it on our webpage and made it known for review and for comment. Any issues anybody wanted to make, make a comment on those new conditions. They did that, posted for ten days as required, then we proceeded forward. When the announcements came out, DOA provided the minimum requirements in the Job Announcements for the positions.

Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

Can you give us, the people, specifically, the timeline for these job announcements and the comment period?

Mr. Mike Uncancgo

Are you asking for the period of time the announcements were sent out?

Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

Yes. What is the time period for each announcement and the comment period and when it open and when it closed.

Mr. Mike Uncancgo

Okay, on the announcement, that's a done deal already that's DOA who sends out the announcement. On the fire service specialist it was announced on February 16th, 2016, and was closed on December 12th 2016. On the fire captain, it's the same dates again. The battalion chief had the same dates, beginning and ending. The firefighter II is just recently announced in January, and they closed on February 20th. The deputy fire chief was announced on January 25th and closed on February 15th. The assistant Fire Chief was just announced on March 31st and will be closing on April 21st.

Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

Okay, thank you Assistant Chief Uncancgo. The next thing I'd like to address is the process after DOA vets the minimum requirements.

Chief Burrier

After that, we have an approved subjective interview for the ORA board that DOA has approved and signed off on. We will be doing a subjective interview as we have always done, but under new guidelines. The other side of it that we are still developing and we are going to completing soon is the objective portion, where we look at any extra certifications pertaining to the job and if they have certifications beyond what is required and education beyond what is required and also looking at years of service and experience performing certain duties. We do know that, especially with our shortage of manpower, we have lieutenants performing the jobs of fire captains, and knowing what their assignments been, we'll be able to give them the certain qualifications for those years they spent doing that. Once we complete that matrix, we'll forward it to DOA to review to get a, as you say, a blessing that it's a good process, then we will finalize that before we get ready to do these interviews and we will be using that. All the firefighters will get credit in our internal process of anything additional that they have.

Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

So you are currently developing a promotional points system within GFD?

Chief Burrier

Yes.

Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

Okay. Then once it is complete, you sent it to DOA? DOA confirms if it's legitimate and legal, and then you will move forward with the interview process and the Board process?

Chief Burrier

That is correct.

Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

Who is a part of your board? Who will be part of your promotion board within your organization?

Chief Burrier

Well, depending on the rank that is being interviewed. It'll be two separate boards, the subjectives will stay subjective. They'll do an oral interview based on the subjective criteria. Then we'll have another group that's going to be convened to review the point system matrix, because they will have information that is coming from the file of each candidate. We don't want to cross any thoughts on that barrier, we wanna keep the subjective and objective separate.

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They will be comprised of a senior supervisor but also part of their peer group of where they are entering in. So a Firefighter II will see a Fire Lieutenant on their board as well as a fire captain, and a fire captain will see a battalion chief and an assistant chief. That way the assistant chief would be chairing it and the battalion chief, where they are trying to come up into, will be the ones reviewing it.

Senator Nelson

Okay, very good. And the time and grade of each position held, will that be part of your promotional point system as well?

Mr. Darren Burrier

Yeah, we'll look at the time and grade of their position held and also whatever capacity they were performing. For example, a lieutenant customary position is that of driver operator of an engine company, and the fire captain is the officer in charge. As we have a loss of people through retirement, we have lieutenants performing the duties of the officer in charge, and we would give them internal point credits for that experience.

Senator Nelson

And this is to reassure that this promotional point system that you are developing will be put in place before you begin the interview for the current vetting that DOA is doing for promotions, correct?

Chief Burrier

Correct.

Senator Nelson

I would like to open it up to my colleagues if they have any questions? Senator Lee?

Senator Biscoe Lee

Thank you Madam Chair, and thank you gentlemen for joining us. I also want to extend my thanks to the entire Guam Fire Department, your staff, your administration, the dispatchers, everybody who makes up the fire family, so thank you very much for all the work you do day in and day out. I have a number of questions I wanted to ask. First off, I apologize if you have already discussed this. With regards to the next fire cycle, Chief Uncancgo mentioned 45 recruits. Do we have a timeline for that fire cycle?

Mr. Uncancgo

We're targeting June. It all depends on DOA. DOA still has to conduct the examinations and evaluations, and we're not certain when that will be done.

Senator Biscoe Lee

I see, so we're waiting on funding? The Department of Administration to set aside funding for this?

Mr. Uncancgo

No, basically it's to establish a list.

Senator Biscoe Lee

To establish a list based on the applicants that you already received?

Mr. Uncancgo

Yes, Ma'am. Based on examinations and evaluations of the applicants.

Senator Biscoe Lee

Based on that, let's say everything falls into place and they begin in June. How long will the fire cycle's training take until graduation?

Chief Burrier

It's just up to them, and the reason it's up to DOA is they are getting ready to move forward with a first round of testing. So they will be sending out notices shortly.

Senator Biscoe Lee

That would be the written?

Chief Burrier

Yes, according to the information we have received from DOA they are preparing for that portion, so they should be sending out eligibility letters to those personnel. We're looking at a timeline, because we are still discussing with GCC in getting that completed, so a more realistic timeline is to be coming. We want June, but it may be mid July to the beginning of August. It would be a maximum of 6 months, as with any academy. If we could complete certain academic trainings, and move into field work by having them out in the field and having field training officers, then we'd be able to see them, helping at the stations prior to the 6 months. It's just a matter of how the academic portion of the training progresses and getting the field training officers because we need to have all of them, also have some on the job training prior to exiting the academy.

Senator Biscoe Lee

Understood. And all of these recruits upon graduation would also be required to complete the PRO Board certification as well. This is the first time that is going to happen.

Chief Burrier

That is correct. First time so with this academy, there's a lot of firsts in this academy. They have to complete all the fire PRO Board certifications. They have to become nationally registered EMTs prior to graduation. They have to complete the POST requirements prior to graduation. Failure of any of the academic requirements and POST requirements and obtaining national certification could all affect the graduation of the certain recruit.

Senator Biscoe Lee

And I just want to thank you all in advance for keeping the chairwoman abreast to all of the different changes. If the timeline moves out, we would like to be aware and we would like to know because I know there are a number of firefighters who are leaving, retiring and there is also different scenarios going on. We just want to make sure that we're aware.

Chief Burrier

Yes, getting these 45 on board will be a great advantage for us, but then we'll be needing to do it again next year because we have lost that many people before we have been able to recruit.

Senator Biscoe Lee

I'm not sure if you are aware of the number, but if anyone in the panel could give us a number of the people who applied.

Chief Burrier

It's been told to me by DOA that over one thousand one hundred applied.

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Senator Biscoe Lee

One thousand one hundred for 45 slots.

Chief Burrier

Yes.

Senator Biscoe Lee

Are all promotion requirements and certifications offered to all firefighters sufficiently.

Chief Burrier

Yes.

Senator Biscoe Lee

And you were mentioning that the fire lieutenant will have a fire captain and a battalion fire chief sitting on that board.

Chief Burrier

Yes so customarily if a fire lieutenant is going for fire captain the fire captains will be do and conducting the interview, and the fire battalion chief will be chairing it, overseeing it, but it's that peer group he will be entering in that will be doing the interview process.

Senator Biscoe Lee

Okay, that's helpful. And one more question about the fire cycle: we have one identified, the next one is identified, again, if all the stars align will begin in June or July, right?

Chief Burrier

Yes.

Senator Biscoe Lee

What are our plans for twenty-two, twenty-three, twenty-four, do we have succession planning? Are we anticipating having a fire cycle every year?

Chief Burrier

We have been putting in our request, yes. And hopefully we will be able to continue on because we need to meet manpower needs, and the 45 we are bringing in doesn't fill the hole yet. We lost a lot of people in the last few years, and we have lost more than 45 people. So bringing them on board, it would be ideal to see another cycle come up, but we do know that we'd have to look at all the fiscal management and government operations to figure out how to get one going.

Senator Biscoe Lee

I have a question about grant writing. It is my understanding that a number of fire equipment that we have seen recently come on board, new engines, new ambulances, I guess were in part from grants that were awarded and were written several years ago. I wanted to ask if you have anybody on staff who is currently devoted to just grant writing and focusing on all of the different fire grants and federal fire money that might be available to assist GFD to make sure that we have the resources, the training and the equipment that we need to make sure that we are keeping our community safe.

Chief Burrier

Well currently we have Firefighter Kevin Riley who is also our PIO, a majority of his work is also in the grant writing. He handles a lot of the grants. We actually have a grant going in right now, we are trying to purchase some extrication tool sets. That is right, Jaws of life, because we need new ones, badly. There is also our SCBA bottles and harnesses, it is also a vital piece of equipment we are working to replace right now. He is currently actively working with GSA on completing that purchase order and getting that out.

Senator Biscoe Lee

I just feel like the PIO job and that job are two huge responsibilities. Is there anybody else in the Department that is giving Riley a lift?

Chief Burrier

Well, Firefighter Art Stanley also assists. I have in my office, at training; I have Firefighter II Erik Castro who helps write grants. We just completed one for OHS also for additional extrication equipment because the rescue extrication equipment has been outdated. Also for the equipment to go onto the fire trucks. Ideally it would be great to have a dedicated staff to do that.

Senator Biscoe Lee

Is that included in the next budget cycle?

Mr. Uncancgo

Yes.

Senator Biscoe Lee

Additional staff? Specified grant writing staff.

Chief Burrier

Yes.

Senator Biscoe Lee

I just feel like that's a real missed opportunity for us. It's an incredible return on our investment if we are able to identify one staff member for a certain amount of money we can potentially bring in millions of dollars to our island.

Chief Burrier

That is correct, and we have identified one in our new budget. I do know it's been awhile since we have had an actual grant writer dedicated for that within the department. So we do what we can in the fire department. We take on multiple jobs, because it's for the benefit of the mission. We do what we have to do, and we try to make it the best we can.

Senator Biscoe Lee

Understood. Thank you so much for answering those questions, and I look forward to supporting that position, especially, because I know that it will help to really bolster some of the efforts that you guys are already doing. So again, thank you so much, and thank you Madam Chair.

Senator Telena Nelson

We would like to move forward to the POST requirements. The physical fitness test will be implemented for the first time in September. I would just like to make sure that the chain of command and all personnel throughout the ranks are ready to take the test, that the administrative has been put into place for those on profile, or whatever

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supplemental activity for them that is required. Some concerns are that if they are on profile and they don't meet the physical requirements that there is a possibility that they will lose a certain incentive pay. What are the plans that you have put into place to ensure that the organization is ready for the POST in 2017.

Chief Burrier

With our platoons that operate out there in the field and even our office personnel, we have had regular POST activities, basically we have our personnel go out with their station OIC's, with their commanders. I myself have personally completed the POST training with a group of them. They do on a regular basis, to see how they stand completing it, and those who need additional help to get physically fit to complete the POST requirements satisfactorily, we have been working with them. I do know we are above 95%, I don't have the exact numbers, but we have a high number of passing with the new modified POST requirements.

Senator Telena Cruz Nelson

And who will be conducting the testing?

Chief Burrier

We identify a person within the department who is going to be the official POST. We have personnel like Captain Soriano, the head of our rescue commander. He's been spearheading most of the POST program, giving the guidelines to the others. He's been attending the other trainings with the other groups making sure that they understand the compliance of it so when we actually do the actual testing I do anticipate he is going to be actively involved with that phase of it.

Senator Nelson

And if you have someone that requires medical attention like someone with high blood pressure, perhaps an individual with high cholesterol and that limits him to perform and pass the POST, do you have a mitigation plan in place?

Chief Burrier

We have a few fire personnel in that position. Administratively we are already discussing with them and working with them and their physicians and making sure that anything we are able to do to assist them in keeping their position, we will be able to accommodate reasonably in order to keep them employed. When we get to the end of that, we will be able to see exactly where we stand and how we are able to deal with them.

Senator Nelson

And have you worked with or spoken with the POST commission regarding the medical needs of some individuals and some of the possibilities that they might lose some incentive pay because they are not able to perform their job one hundred percent.

Chief Burrier

I haven't directly talked to the POST Board. Chief Manibusan has been our person on that POST Board.

Senator Nelson

Chief?

Mr. Manibusan

Good morning Ma'am. The POST Commission in accordance with the adopted rules for Fitness testing is basically modeled after the United States Air Force fitness program which does incorporate sections that address profiles. Let's say someone is in a profile, they will be waived certain portions or components of the fitness exam. If somebody has

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a shoulder problem, they will be waived from the pushups, but then they will have to do the sit ups and other components, provided that the profile is temporary in nature and not permanent. In the event an individual within the fire department or any law enforcement public safety agency does have a permanent physical disability, that will be addressed with the Department of Administration and they do have in place procedures that address those concerns.

Senator Nelson

What are those procedures?

Mr. Manibusan

They can either keep them on under the American Disabilities Act if it's possible or in the case of the fire department, obviously with the nature of our job such as fire suppression or EMS, that has to be addressed with the physician that is on contract or assigned by the DOA and we will take it from there. Every case will be taken on the nature of the profile.

Senator Nelson

For example, if I'm a firefighter and I am unable to run because I have bad knees, I am not able to perform one hundred percent of my job. What is put in place to prevent me from losing my incentive pay, my job position, etc.

Mr. Manibusan

In the event that someone in the fire department has a permanent disability, the fire department will take every step available to try to accommodate persons with disabilities which is right in line with federal law. In the event that the individual cannot be accommodated, the government of Guam will take every step available to make sure the individual is not left without a job. So they will be reclassified and assigned to a position that they can still properly function in.

Senator Nelson

So, if I'm not able to perform my job as a firefighter because of my physical limits, it is the government of Guam's duty to ensure that I have a job elsewhere?

Mr. Manibusan

The government will take every step available to attempt to accommodate persons with disabilities, if they are classified as a person with disabilities.

Senator Nelson

Will I still be in the organization or will I be transferred out and will my pay change?

Mr. Manibusan

I do not have the answer for that, Ma'am.

Senator Nelson

Can we please get some answers for that, Chief? Just for clarity.

Mr. Manibusan

Well that would be with the Department of Administration and with the physician, and again it will be on a case by case basis depending on the nature of the profile.

Senator Nelson

I think it would be good for firefighters to know the possibilities of whatever may come from this POST.

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Mr. Manibusan

At this point I can safely say that if they are unable to perform the duties of a firefighter they will be reclassified to a position that is not a firefighter position. That is to protect the employee as well as the fellow firefighters.

Senator Nelson

Will that impact the pay?

Mr. Manibusan

Of course it will impact the pay.

Senator Nelson

Okay, thank you. Senator Torres?

Senator Torres

Chief, I was very excited to hear that you are at about a 95% compliance rate for POST requirements. That is outstanding and I would like to commend your department for being on the ball with that. With everything, I've been following the POST requirements and I know that they made some modifications to it in regards to measurements and distances and things like timing, which is reasonable, but to be at this point about 95% is commendable and I just want to note that.

Chief Burrier

We were at about 95% with the modified POST and we were at 80-85% with the actual POST, so the modified POST does benefit. Taking consideration that they are not active duty military, we are a paramilitary organization, the modified is more reasonable for expectations for them to be able to perform their jobs and of course back to addressing also the issues with restrictions. If they have disabilities or physical limitations, we want to do whatever we can to accommodate them but the nature of the job is we are there to save lives and also other firefighters have to depend on their fellow firefighter to be there for them. It is no fault of theirs that the situations happen to them and we want to do everything we can to accommodate them the best we can. If we are able to develop a non-firefighter position within the department that needs to be filled and re-establish it, we can do that. If we can accommodate them if we don't have the availability to get them reclassified to an organization to maintain the employment that is what we would do. We want to do what is for the best benefit of them because they are firefighters, they are still with us. And it is true, in regards to their pay. We know it will affect their pay because it would affect their hours. Whether it affects their hourly, we cannot answer that because it is also tied with the public safety pay and we do not know whether it will be a condition of reclassification or not, if they would lose that.

Senator Torres

Public trust and confidence is always number one and we understand the nature of the job, but congratulations though, thank you.

Senator Nelson

Chief, if you can get clarity on that so the firefighters will know what to anticipate and it is good that they are aware of that information. Something concrete, not "something is in place for this", but "this is what is in place for you." I would like to move forward now to discuss incentive pay for advanced EMT's. Can we talk a little bit about advanced EMT, the role, the requirements and how many are there?

Chief Burrier

The advanced EMT is one of our three main specialty units. The requirements for any of the three specialty units are above and beyond a regular firefighter. Specifically on the advanced EMT they must go to additional schooling, that

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lasts up to a year where they not only go to the 24 hour shift and study during work time, but then they have to spend more time away from their family and show up to class the next morning at 8 o'clock and stay in class till 5 o'clock and then during time in getting their field training, they would have to do duties at emergency rooms at the hospitals and do other duties until 10 or 11 at night. So the sacrifice that they take to obtain an advanced level certification is great. The family sacrifice is a lot for the absence of this firefighter additionally on top of going to the Fire Academy and then coming out and then committing themselves to that year long training. What is the benefit of advanced life support? We have two advanced license units and those on any given days are managed by two people. These advanced EMTs, and currently we have about 25 personnel that are certified, but operationally, we have less than twenty, and I say that because I am an advanced EMT and fire chief Joey San Nicolas is an advanced EMT, but we are not operational on those units. We don't assign ourselves to those units. No one can replace these guys in the job position. No one else can be reassigned to that unit and do what they do. These guys are able to do advanced assessments. They are able to administer IV solutions. They are able to intubate patients, to establish a path in their airways during cardiac arrest. They are able to administer up to 17 different medications in order to stabilize and revive a patient. Perform advanced cardiac life support codes, while en route to the hospital. Doing all this in the back of a moving ambulance, with sharp needles and doing other procedures puts them at a great risk. The ambulance is moving in traffic, it's turning corners, doing sudden stops, they have to be aware of their surroundings and at the same time be very aware of the patient condition and what they are going to have to ask the physician to do next or do on their own, according to standing orders. Currently they are allowed 15% incentive pay by law that was established back in 1989 in order to help maintain EMT certified personnel in the fire department. That 15% is an inequitable majeure, it is a nice majeure. It keeps people in the ambulance because the ambulance itself, they do more responses at different hours of the day than any other unit in the department. It is inequitable because the higher in hourly pay you get, the more of the 15% you get because it is a percentage. I would like to see for the advanced EMT's and even for the other specialty units like the rescue unit and the HAZMAT unit to have an additional pay for training, certifications and incentive, because they need to obtain additional training and certifications that costs money that is not part of the program budget, but is required for their position that they voluntarily tackled and are maintaining for an extra stipend of \$150 per pay period in order to help offset all the sacrifice they do and also to help bring in more personnel into that unit because as it is with the advanced EMT unit we are down to below 20 operationally and we are getting ready with GCC to put on another advanced EMT course, and we are not getting enough interested personnel to take that course because they are only getting the same incentive as the person in the ambulance.

Senator Nelson

So are you saying that they should receive that they should get 150 dollars on top of the 15%?

Chief Burrier

No, I believe the 15% being inequitable we can re-look at what can be administered to the ambulance personnel as an additional training and incentive because being assigned to the EMS Bureau is a lot more work in regards to responses and what is expected and we do rotate them through it while they are assigned to that unit, and give them a certain level stipend. We can look at doing a study on it, looking at \$50 or \$75 or \$100 a pay period but advanced life support \$150 per pay period in order to allow them to still maintain their advanced cardiac life support certification, their PAL certification, their Neonatal certification, and any additional training that would be required of them to keep them up to speed on what they need to do.

Senator Nelson

So this would replace the 15% incentive?

Chief Burrier

Yes. It would be a proper and equitable incentive in certification pay that we can apply to all units including rescue and HAZMAT because for the HAZMAT, the amount of training and certification that they have to go through to get to their operational level is a lot, and the continued training that they still perform at the station is very commendable, I mean I see training videos coming out of that program on a weekly basis. The rescue unit, what they do and what they have to be certified between sea and land rescue is also great. Then obtaining their SCUBA certifications on top of that they bear themselves.

Senator Nelson

So currently ALS is the only team that is assigned the 15% incentive?

Chief Burrier

Anyone assigned to the ambulance, and the ALS working on the ambulance. The ALS works on the ambulance. They are on the Intercept unit that will intercept all the critical care patients, and then they get on the back of that ambulance.

Senator Nelson

And HAZMAT and rescue do not receive that 15% incentive?

Chief Burrier

HAZMAT and rescue do not receive anything, only those assigned to the ambulance and ALS.

Senator Nelson

So we are looking at HAZMAT, ALS, Rescue, and those assigned to the ambulance receive that \$150 dollar incentive pay and we will get rid of the 15%?

Chief Burrier

Yes, I would see that just on the ambulance itself that ALS, the EMTs will be a little lower, because of the level of certifications required.

Senator Nelson

And is this every pay period?

Chief Burrier

Yes.

Senator Nelson

I believe Senator Lee has a question on hazardous pay?

Senator Biscoe Lee

Thank you, Madam Chair. Actually, Chief Burrier, you hit on a number of questions I was going to ask, but I was just going to want for the record if you could restate, the out of pocket, certifications and training fees that firefighters would have to get. You were talking a little bit about SCUBA certifications, all the different things that firefighters would have to pay out of pocket. Can you list those for us?

Chief Burrier

I can list those for you, it is not part of any firefighter training to obtain SCUBA certification, on top of that, getting to advanced, rescue level, and Divemaster level, that would all be born on the rescue, the personnel assigned to rescue. It's the dedication to their job, that's what it is. They spend money on it. They do it and they get their own gear, unless we are able to purchase, but they do all this out of pocket because of their dedication to their job and

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wanting to do that job for the people of Guam. It's a big expense. If anybody has taken a scuba diving course, they know it's not cheap, same thing with advanced EMT. With ACS certification and the PAL certification, that is every two years they have to obtain this. It costs money for them to obtain the certification, to buy the books for it, to get updated for it. In order to obtain a lot of CU's that the advanced level needs, they have to go online and pay for the courses to get the certificates so a lot of them get the CU's to continue it. The HAZMAT also, there is a lot of certifications within HAZMAT because of the technical aspect of responding to a HAZMAT situation. They have to obtain more certifications beyond that is required for promotions and then that costs money for them, and then their recurring training.

Senator Biscoe Lee

So in addition to the HAZMAT training, do they have all of the gear that they need to address any hazardous material situation?

Chief Burrier

Yes, they do.

Senator Biscoe Lee

And GFD provides all that gear?

Chief Burrier

We have the gear that we provide and we purchase, and we also have agreements with CST with the National Guard. They have the equipment and basically it becomes a mutual aid thing. We have a response, they respond. They are a part of the response plan and when they come they hand over the equipment for us to use for that purpose. We have full capabilities with our HAZMAT unit, we just want to make sure that to get firefighters to that level that we incentivize that along with their dedication. I think it's very important; it is kind of a reward system. We help them to be able to afford certifications and at the same time help them with that dedication that we recognize it and incentivize it and we can see the continuing of this program. I don't want to see any of these special programs go by the wayside because firefighters just don't see the incentive to hop on board.

Senator Biscoe Lee

I am also concerned that while a majority of folks do want to take these certifications and have this training in their back pocket, I am also concerned that maybe their fellow firefighter is not as motivated? It just makes it difficult in these situations. You are only as strong as your weakest person.

Chief Burrier

With our training program we have developed now within the department, we are outreaching. We are putting on training all the time. One of the comments from the firefighter within the last two years was they thought it was too much training, and I would rather hear that then there is no training. So the more you train your personnel, the more you educate them, you see the morale increase and the incentive to want to become better. We are putting it out there and making it part of the program and at the same time finding there is work place satisfaction knowing what you are doing and the department is doing what it can to support you. Now, when you get to the specialty units of course, you are going to have people who have a little bit more drive for that certain area. Somebody who is going for rescue may not want to go for advanced EMT, it's a different aspect, it's medical. You are dealing with more emergency medicine issues, rescue is more technical with rescue techniques, rope rescue, underwater rescue, search patterns, there is all kinds of things there. HAZMAT has to deal with, you don't know, you don't see it. You are walking into something where you can get contaminated by fumes if you aren't careful with what you are doing. It all depends on the firefighter his desire, his dedication and where he finds himself the most valued. Of course you are going to find those who are happy being a firefighter and becoming the best firefighter they can be. There is nothing wrong with

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that, and that is the best part of the fire department. There is a place for everyone to be able to exercise how they feel they can serve the best. We need to be all around. We can't just focus on one individual, so having everybody have the incentive to be able to go out there to be the best they can and even pick a specialty, but still be able to come back and do the other job. That's what we want.

Senator Biscoe Lee

Excellent. Thank you, Chief. You mentioned SCUBA, ALS certifications, HAZMAT certifications, and CEU's have to pay for their own books. Are all of these certifications available here on island? Obviously, there is SCUBA certification available on island, but are there others like Advanced Rescue or Advanced HAZMAT certifications that are only available off island?

Chief Burrier

There are some courses that are only available off island. One of them that I am pursuing for personnel to go to next year would be the Urban Rescue program in Florida. It's a two day course. It's PRO Board, and needs PRO Board certifications and everything. It's conducted in Dade County, and they do Urban Rescue procedures and Mercy Medical Management. It's a wide spectrum, we will send a few of our people there every year in order to get training. With rescue, yes, we would have to find a way to pay the incentive and then budget for that kind of training. As far as the advanced EMT, GCC is forming an advanced EMT course, and that's another reason to get that incentive going. We need to get more personnel to take that course. It's a paid for course. We have 24 slots to fill and we want to get as many of those slots filled as we can. From there, we want to work with GCC to get the paramedic program going. To get us to paramedic level, it's a lot of hard work and GCC is working towards their accreditation to get that. We wanna be able to provide the highest level of paramedic care to the people of Guam.

Senator Biscoe Lee

How many paramedics do we have on the Guam Fire Department.

Chief Burrier

We have zero. We have advanced EMTs who operate as paramedics. We have special certifications on top of the EMT, so the EMT course is going to be about a year. Two semesters total. After that, we do specialty training to get them to the level we currently operate at.

Senator Biscoe Lee

So everybody has EMT B?

Chief Burrier

The EMT B went by the wayside in 2012. National Registry renamed those again. EMT is your EMT Basic, Mercy Medical Technician. Then you have your advanced EMT, and that level used to be EMT I and EMT I 98, which is no longer. Then you have your paramedic. There's three levels that receive national accreditation through the national registry EMT, and those are those.

Senator Biscoe Lee

Okay, thank you. One last question. We're talking about training and just being able to be as responsive as possible to our community, and it has really been heart wrenching these last few days hearing about all the recent drownings and issues with water safety on our island. We also operate with tourism as our number one economy here on Guam, so we wanna make sure that our local community is safe in the water, as well as our visitors. Can you talk to me about any plans or if there have been any discussions about putting a more visible rescue base in Tumon where our visitors and our community use the beach most often. That's where a majority of us go to swim and play and we just have, to

my understanding, two lifeguard towers there that I believe are manned by the Department of Parks and Recreation. I just want to know if you have a plan.

Chief Burrier

As far as I know we haven't had any plans of putting a rescue unit down in Tumon. I do know Parks and Rec has a responsibility for their lifeguards at Matapang and Ypao. They do have a good lifeguard program and they have contributed greatly to saving lives in Ypao and Matapang. They have called us. They have responded out. They brought back in persons who were drowning, near drowning with CPR. They are able to resuscitate. They have been very active in doing this. The other part of the lifeguard program that is not really seen is some of the hotels like PIC actually have a guard at their beach. Their job is to observe their area and observe the area within eyeshot of where they are at. They do carry a certain responsibility for their own personnel and their own programs. It would probably be nice to see more lifeguards throughout the whole beach of Tumon, but that would be a Parks and Rec thing to plan out.

Senator Biscoe Lee

So, in addition to the Parks and Rec lifeguards and the kind of like a public private partnership with some of the lifeguards in some of the hotels, you mentioned Pacific Islands Club, let's say there is a near drowning or drowning on the beach. How long would it take GFD to respond to somebody in Tumon?

Chief Burrier

Our average response time to Tumon because you are looking at between Dededo Fire Station and the Tamuning Fire Station. Typical response time down there from the station is between 5-10 minutes. You're looking at getting out of the station within 2-3 minutes and then being down at that location, especially depending on that we understand where it's at, they are usually down there within 6-10 minutes. They're down their pretty quick.

Senator Biscoe Lee

But it also kind of depends on the time of day, right? Traffic and other-

Chief Burrier

Traffic and everything. The other benefit is it is a usual route of returning to station for three of our northern medics. That's also another advantage we do have is if there is a call, we could have a unit within close proximity at any given time.

Senator Biscoe Lee

Yeah, they might be en route back to the station and right in that area.

Chief Burrier

Yeah, they'll be on their way back to Dededo, Astumbo, and Yigo and they'd be in that area.

Senator Biscoe Lee

Thank you, Chief. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Senator Nelson

Thank you, Senator Lee. We would like to move forward now with overtime? Could you just discuss your current hourly structure, the overtime hours are accredited to the firefighters, if it's every firefighter that receives overtime and is there a plan in place to decrease the amount of overtime with the upcoming cycle for the firefighters coming in, having more staff on hand?

Chief Burrier

I'll defer that to Chief Uncancgo who handles staff.

Mr. Uncancgo

I'm trying to remember what you just asked...

Senator Nelson

Do you want me to ask again?

Mr. Uncancgo

No, It's okay. Every firefighter is scheduled to work 120 hours. Out of that 120 hours, 106 hours is their standard pay, regular pay. Any hours in excess of 106 is paid at time and a half, which is over time. That means in a normal given pay period, a firefighter will get 106 hours regular pay and 14 hours overtime. Because of our extreme shortage of man power, we have what's called an RDO cancel, personnel being recalled in on their days off due to the extreme shortage. Now, I just want to point out that for the last 4 years, we lost about 60-70 personnel through retirements, resignations and other means and other ways. That has impacted us tremendously because now we are averaging, and this is on top of the 14 hours, now we are averaging approximately 149,000 dollar expenditures on overtime. That's due to recalling the personnel in. Based on our analysis, if we do have these 45 recruits on board out there on the field, that \$149,000 will be completely eliminated. For us to reduce our overtime we need to increase our personnel, and that, like I said, is in the works in itself. Every year, and I keep saying this \$149,000 that we average spending above what is normally done may increase in the coming months due to personnel retiring from service. The only way we can stop this from happening is additional personnel. Now, in regards to availability of funding, we do have funds available to pay for this. That's because people are resigning and retiring so the lapse that is created through that is paying for the additional overtime. So we have no issues right now in regards to additional funding for overtime.

Senator Nelson

Just some delay challenges on getting these personnel hired.

Mr. Uncancgo

Yes, Ma'am. It's quite difficult, even to the point right now. It's difficult recalling personnel in to come in. People are just overburdened. They are burnt out and everything. We have a plan in the Department and that is basically not only to recruit these 45 personnel but to promote personnel up and above their position because we do lack a lot of supervisory positions. If all these plans, everything goes as planned, then we foresee another 60-70 recruit vacancies after we are done with all the promotions itself.

Senator Nelson

Senator Torres?

Senator Torres

I think the scheduling of the hours, the formula of 120 hours per cycle with 14 hours being at overtime, you know, as I read the law, my initial impression of it was that should be the exception and not the rule but in fact it has been the rule for probably 15-20 years on Guam. I think that has to be addressed because you would think that in any sound scheduling it should be straight hours and overtime is always the exception to the rule. It's a very unusual situation on Guam, but I think part of the problem, too, Chief is not so much the scheduling but the leave also. The way the law prescribes that leave is also docked when a firefighter takes leave, is that correct? Because the firefighters are only allowed to take, were only allowed to dock a firefighters leave per day at a maximum of nine hours per day, is that correct? Even though they work a 24 hour schedule?

Mr. Uncancgo
Yes, Ma'am.

Senator Torres

You mentioned that you have enough money to pay the 106 plus the 14 hours of overtime per pay period, but are you running into any issues with the expenditure of accumulated leave? Because annually we are also capped at what we can transfer into our leave bank annually.

Mr. Uncancgo

Well we do have a lot of personnel with excess leave right now, but any time an individual wants to retire or plans on retiring he normally takes the excess leave and sets the date of retirement at the 320 hour cap.

Senator Torres

So you aren't running into any situations where, because you mentioned a lot of people are retiring. Are you running into situations where the cashing out of any leave is a problem?

Mr. Uncancgo

No, we don't have those problems at all.

Senator Torres

Okay, because I would think that every year there is an excess of leave that can't be transferred out.

Mr. Uncancgo

Yes, that's right. It's only 320 hours, anything in excess of 320 hours, 100 hours is transferred to your sick leave, all others you use or lose basically.

Senator Torres

But I wonder though if that leave policy in itself should be examined because in most other jurisdictions, it's an hour for hour. You take leave, you charge back your leave bank one hour, but in the instance of the fire department that doesn't apply so that's a little unusual also and maybe I would recommend that we have another meeting because when you think about the formula and what sound practices are in other areas and in other fire departments in other jurisdictions the charging of the leave bank is really unusual and what's resulting is the firefighters having to forfeit that excess leave that they can't otherwise burn up which doesn't make sense.

Mr. Uncancgo

Yes, ma'am. I have to admit that 9 hours provision has been law since 1974 in itself. At that particular time, firefighters were working 120 hours but were only being compensated 90 hours. That 30 hours that firefighters were not compensated they were given that 9 hour leave deduction, so it was more like in exchange of 30 hours of nonpayment I will only deduct you nine hours of leave.

Senator Torres

Since you have then rectified it in a later statute that addressed that, I think what we missed was fixing the leave. I think that I would invite us to maybe look at that because there has to be rhyme and reason to what we are doing.

Mr. Uncancgo

Yes, as a matter of fact, ma'am, if I'm not mistaken under then Governor Camacho in 2004, I did submit, I was the Fire Chief then, I did submit a proposal in to start deducting hour per hour because we were getting paid hour per

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hour. However, the plan was put on hold because the issue of accrual came up that retirement disagreed and some senators disagreed with because we feel that with the 9 hours if we are gonna get deducted 9 hours, then our accrual should increase from your regular 8 hours. You see on an 8 hour employee, anyone over 15 year, you get one day of leave for every pay period you work, which is 8 hours. We were proposing that not one day but 16 hours of accrual every pay period for a firefighter that's to make things equal. However, like I said, retirement was totally against it. There were some senators that were for it; some were against it, and it just never went forward.

Senator Torres

But since one was rectified, I think it might be a good idea to just go back.

Mr. Uncancgo

Yes, Ma'am.

Senator Torres

Thank you very much.

Senator Lee

Thank you, Madam Chair. I didn't necessarily have a question, just a comment. I just wanted reiterate my request that you please keep the chairwoman abreast to any changes or any movement to push back the upcoming cycle because as you mentioned chief that's kind of what's putting a damper on things in the department. You mentioned that some folks are having difficulty when they have their RDO cancelled, and I can just imagine you know, being on a 24 hour shift and having your day off and then your next RDO is cancelled and you're really, especially a lot of the families anticipate that day off so as much as we can really try to push that to move forward. I'm sorry I did actually have one question about the fire cycle. You mentioned that over a thousand individuals applied. Do you know how many individuals were female?

Mr Burrier

From where?

Senator Lee

Were female.

Chief Burrier

I do not have that number. This is all at D.O.A. right now. Yes, we have been continuously contacting them. Asking them for updates, where it's at, where the process is. It has not been an easy process for them because the amount of applicants and the process, we have also changed our testing pattern. We got the written test we also have what's called the fire recruit aptitude abilities test. Basically, it's fashioned after the firefighter abilities test that's set up to recruit firefighters in the states. We modeled after that and we have that program, which was part of the whole initial getting us all ready, in order to have a test that is more towards actual operational needs and what they need to know coming in and what we need them to be able to do to come in. I believe the way the test is set up now we would probably see a better participation for the female portions. We didn't make it gender friendly; it's gender neutral because we are not favoring one over the other and it's equitable for the skill requirements and every recruit applicant will receive from DOA the pamphlet that we developed in order to prepare them for this seven stationed time course so they'll be able to be exercising and preparing themselves to actually take this aptitude test. To me, that will probably be the most difficult portion of it but it's more real world for us and then once we get them into the Fire Academy they will be expected to increase their physical performance and do our in-house 1047 course which is a couple more added on.

Senator Biscoe Lee

That sounds interesting. Maybe we can get the chairwoman and the committee to participate in the physical fitness test and give it a try and see if it's stringent enough.

Chief Burrier

Once DOA is ready, we'll set it up and invite everyone down.

Senator Biscoe Lee

Just for the record, I know there has been a history, there has been a female firefighter within GFD. Are there any now?

Chief Burrier

There is currently one. Firefighter Jessica Sanchez and she is soon to retire from my understanding.

Senator Biscoe Lee

Great. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Senator Nelson

Gentlemen, I'd like to thank you very much for coming in today. Just a couple things to recap. The PRO Board, the courses availability to ensure that your promotion points are in place before the next upcoming promotion system that is currently being vetted by DOA, and to ensure that all the firemen and firewoman, there's just one, interesting, receive the Promotion board point requirement system and that will also include time and grade for the current ranking structure. The number two is the POST requirements, to have a solid concrete answer about what should happen to some of those that are currently facing medical challenges and addressing their job opportunity and their pay. The third one would be the advanced EMT incentive in lieu of the 15% specifically for advanced EMT we will do an incentive pay for HAZMAT, Rescue, and Advanced EMT of \$150 and I'm thinking that would come out of the FLAME fund. The fourth item is the overtime, something that we will look at as well, to address the leave and the fifth one is equal opportunity employment. About 30 days, if that's enough time to have those answers solidified, we will meet again and we will discuss what the organization has developed and its course of action forward.

Mr. Mike Uncancgo

Ma'am, what's the pending info on the overtime that you are requesting?

Senator Nelson

As addressed with the law, the nine hours of leave, an perhaps taking a look at the current overtime structure, if that's possible. Your organization will help us determine that or not and Senator Lee has one last question before we close.

Senator Biscoe Lee

Not really a question, but if you could just let the audience know and folks listening at home, you have a Muster coming up?

Chief Burrier

Yes, we have a fire muster coming up on this coming weekend at the Agana Shopping Center. The organizers for the fire muster are the federal fire this year.

Senator Biscoe Lee

On Saturday and Sunday?

Chief Burrier
Yes.

Senator Biscoe Lee
Saturday and Sunday. So we want to invite the public to check it out. You'll have some equipment on sight?

Chief Burrier
Yes, we will have some equipment on sight. Of course all the fire department including Saipan is coming over to participate.

Senator Biscoe Lee
Excellent, okay, great.

Senator Nelson
Oh, right on, good job, and federal firefighters will be there as well as Rota, Tinian and Saipan firefighters and air force.

Senator Biscoe Lee
So Navy, Andersen, Fedfire, Saipan and the airport, and GFD at Agana Shopping Center. Okay, we'll be there, thank you.

Senator Nelson
Thank you, Senator Lee. Please come out all the public and support our firemen. I'd like to thank all of you here today. I'd like to thank the Guam Firefighters for doing such an exceptional job at saving our lives, thank you very much. There have been many occasions where they have been called over to our house so thank you for responding with care and compassion and professionalism, so we will meet again within 30 days to solidify these five hours we have discussed and a course of action forward.

Chief Burrier
Thank you, Madam Chair.

Senator Nelson
Thank you and have a good day. Happy Easter.

The Informational Briefing was adjourned at 10:59 am.

III. FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- The PRO Board certifications, according to Chief Burrier, prioritize those who are eligible for promotion with that particular training. GFD must continually work towards making sure all firefighters are aware of what is required of them in order to get promoted, as well as allowing all firefighters the fair and equal opportunity to training as well as promotion with all promotion points and time and grade of their current position taken into account.
- POST fitness requirements may impact firefighters with medical conditions. GFD must clarify what the procedures are for firefighters with disabilities and medical conditions and how these firefighters are being protected. The modified version of the POST requirements is also found to have helped firefighters comply

with fitness requirements. In the event that, a firefighter is able to perform their duty despite not reaching the POST requirements, consequences should also be clarified.

- Chief Burrier has suggested an alternative to the current incentive pay for advanced EMT's to encompass more specialties within the fire department. Chief Burrier also found the 15% incentive pay of the advanced EMT's paycheck to be inequitable. He suggested a 150 dollar incentive pay per paycheck as an alternative, and to also give that incentive pay to the rescue division and the HAZMAT division. It is important that we find out exactly what difference this will make for the GFD budget as well as to find the opinion of the firefighters at GFD on this incentive pay.
- The issue with accruing and taking leave was not fixed alongside the salary fix allowing firefighters to get paid 120 hours instead of 90. Senator Torres points out that it doesn't make sense that the firefighters aren't allowed to claim hour for hour leave. Another problem was that the cap on leave may not be fair to the firefighters. Senator Torres discussed that when they shall reconvene, discussion on how to fix the leave issues should also occur.
- **Lack of women historically in the fire department and what are the barriers is also another issue to look into.**



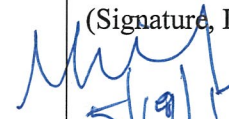
COMMITTEE ON RULES

Senator Michael F.Q. San Nicolas, *Chairman*
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COMMITTEE REPORT CHECKLIST

Part ___ / ___

INFORMATIONAL BRIEFING on Guam Fire Department <i>Personnel, Overtime, Promotions, Policy Change</i>		
(A) PUBLIC HEARING	(1) HEARING NOTICES SR §§ 6.04(a)(1) and 6.04(a)(2), Open Government Law (5 GCA, Ch. 8)	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (a) Five (5) working days prior (ALL Senators & ALL Media)	Date and Time of Notice: 4/11/17 1:45pm
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (b) Forty-eight (48) hours prior (ALL Senators & ALL Media)	Date and Time of Notice: 4/13/17 2:01 pm
	(2) Date and Time of Hearing: 4/18/17 9:30am	3) Location: Public Hearing Room, Guam Congress Building
(B) COMMITTEE REPORT	(1) Committee Report filed with COR? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Date & Time:
	(2) COMMITTEE REPORT COMPONENTS	
	(a) Front Page Transmittal to Speaker	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	(a)(1) COR Chair Signature Line	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	(b) Title Page	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	(c) Notice of Public Hearing & Other Correspondence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	(d) Public Hearing Agenda	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	(e) Public Hearing Sign-in Sheet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	(f) Written Testimonies & Additional Documents	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
	(g) Committee Report Digest(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(h) Related News Reports (optional)	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	
(i) Miscellaneous (optional)	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	
(j) Committee Report Checklist(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
(C) COR Action	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CMTE Report duly filed <input type="checkbox"/> CMTE Report non-conforming for acceptance; Return to Committee	COR CHAIR (Signature, Date & Time)  5/19/17 10:21

