

Message from the Chief

November 2013

This month, I want to share with you the attached letter that I sent to the President of the California Fire Chiefs Association. I felt it was important to address concerns of the fire service regarding our role in cooperative fire protection.



[California Fire Chiefs Association Letter](#)

It should not come as a surprise that during the economic challenges experienced over the last several years, there would be a corresponding rise in the number of inquiries from local governments requesting information or proposals from CAL FIRE for services. Many of these inquiries are just part of a local jurisdictions' due diligence to ensure they are delivering the most cost effective service to their residents. Public agencies are looking for models of good government and to leverage the financial benefits of working together to provide critical public safety functions.

However, some in the fire service believe CAL FIRE is aggressively recruiting cooperative agreements. It is important to understand, that while the Public Resources Code allows CAL FIRE to enter into cooperative agreements with cities, special districts and counties, there is a very stringent and formal process that must be followed. Above all, these cooperative agreements must be fully reimbursable and meet some very basic criteria that include, but are not limited to, mutual benefit to the local entity and the State, fiscal solvency of the local entity, and regional efficiency for the taxpayers.

CAL FIRE will continue to evaluate each of these requests to determine which are appropriate and beneficial to both parties. I fully support these agreements; however, they must be in the best interest of both CAL FIRE, the local partner agency and ultimately the taxpaying public. Despite the unfortunate negative comments we may read in the media, please know that you are highly-trained and extremely capable firefighters who are an important part of the integrated fire service in California. Your work ethic and professionalism speaks for itself. I am very proud of all of you.

Chief Ken Pimlott
Director