

From: j.mason@centralcoastfire.net
Sent: Thursday, January 6, 2022 4:42 PM
To: 'William Ewing'
Cc: 'Mike Burt'; 'Paul Rimola'; 'karlkowalski09@gmail.com'; 'bpankey@centralcoastfire.net'
Subject: RE: Staffing changes

Good Afternoon Will,

Thank you, I am well and did survive the holidays as I hope you did as well. That said I am not sure what COVID scare you are concerned with, as responders in Lincoln County we have had to deal with exposures, quarantines, and precautions for nearly two years and has become a regular practice to follow guidelines both state and federal as we encounter these issues. However, you state other reasons for the need to maintain personnel at the Bayshore station which I believe the oversight committee will need to review. I would like to take this opportunity to point out that the initial request to combine staffing came from Seal Rock as a result of a response which Seal Rock staff responded to, as a single responder, in a vehicle not suitable for the situation in which the responder felt was unsafe.

You mention this will be an ease of stress locally about perception. I am curious about your concern for safety considering the acceptance of placing a person alone, in an Engine weighing upwards of 40K pounds, at all hours of the day and night, responding with no one to assist them until the next unit arrives on scene. As an incident commander and fellow responder I have responded on many of Seal Rocks emergencies and have always been greeted with gratitude and appreciation of our response. I have never had a member of either community ask which station did we respond out of.

I am not going to claim default on behalf of the IGA, but I will point out this decision defeats the primary purpose of the IGA. I was made aware that yesterday Seal Rock left their District unstaffed. Instead of calling a foul I instead increased the staffing readiness in Central Coast until staffing was returned to normal as that is what the IGA is ultimately for. To permanently separate the crews would leave me to ask the oversight committee what the purpose of the IGA is for.

You mention your volunteers will be responding which I think is great! However the mindset of restricting them on medical calls due to training and licensure makes me confused as to why they would be permitted to respond on fire calls without proper training and certification? It seems to me the methodology is one in the same.

As a manager who has dealt with cross manning of apparatus in my career I share your thoughts of flexibility that split staffing provides. Of course this was splitting a four person engine into two groups of two. This allowed for the responders to still develop a plan and have clear communication while responding together in a vehicle. Separating someone to a single entity does nothing to bolster planning and communication but merely shuts the opportunity down until arrival on scene or vice versa clutters up the radio making it difficult for resources to communicate.

Ultimately the decision of where your staff responds from is your responsibility and I will respect that. I have the approval to modify my Districts Serial Levy to allow for the hiring of an additional firefighter starting with the SAFER Grant process this year. I was already going to request my Boards approval to increase the hiring to two additional firefighters tonight at our special meeting. If approved and our grant is successful we will have enough staffing to maintain two personnel on an Engine 24/7. This does not mean that I do not appreciate or want the IGA with Seal Rock but it does alleviate my concerns for safety for my District when it comes to a responder responding by themselves. I feel it is important to allow the oversight committee to discuss this change and I will ask my Board to communicate with your Board during the meeting we have tonight to see if a meeting of the oversight committee can be arranged. I request that you do the same when possible. Thank you for keeping me up to date as this process progresses.