

## ABSTRACT

### THE NEED FOR COMPANY OFFICER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN THE FIRE SERVICE

By

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December 2003

The purpose of this study was to examine available options for training and educating future company officers; to evaluate methods that fire departments commonly use to train and educate their future and present company officers; and to make recommendations for future and company officer development programs, processes, and/or requirements that could be implemented to prepare company officers for the job that they are expected to do.

A review of the literature and a survey were conducted to determine the needs as perceived by fire department personnel in the San Francisco Bay area. The results of this study demonstrated the need for a fire department to develop some form of company officer development training program for personnel aspiring to be company officers. One hundred percent of respondents to the external survey felt there was value in a formalized training program to assist potential company officer candidates to prepare for that position.

THE NEED FOR COMPANY OFFICER DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAMS IN THE FIRE SERVICE

A THESIS

Presented to the Department of Occupational Studies  
California State University, Long Beach

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science

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December 2003

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PROGRAMS IN THE FIRE SERVICE

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The company officer is probably the most important and most influential position within the chain of command in the fire service. Everyone employed by a fire department has a specific role and duties to perform. The firefighters do the basic work in the streets, while the chief officers perform the administrative functions that allow the firefighters to perform their duties and accomplish the goals and objectives of the organization. The company officer supervises those firefighters who work out of the fire stations, responding on the equipment to answer citizens' 9-1-1 requests for service. While chief officers performing administrative functions do not generally have many opportunities to interact with the public, company officers continually interact with the public. When members of the public calls 9-1-1, their primary point of contact and most significant reference to their fire department is that first responding fire apparatus and the company officer supervising the crew of firefighters. For this reason, company officers have the greatest impact on the level of service delivery for a fire department and the community it serves.

In the past, when fire departments promoted firefighters to the position of company officer, they could be reasonably certain that the newly promoted company officer had extensive fireground experience to bring to the position, in addition to real-life



experiences such as a background the mechanical or construction trades. However, that assumption is not necessarily true today. Many candidates are arriving at the academy with minimal life experience and limited mechanical and/or construction trade experience. On the other hand, while the experience level might be lower today than it was in prior years; the level of education that candidates bring into fire departments is higher than ever before.

With the incidence of fire activity decreasing nationwide, fireground experience is getting harder to come by. Some fire service professionals recognize their lack of fireground experience and are able to compensate by increasing their level of education, either through undergraduate or graduate degrees offered by colleges and universities or through certification programs offered by the California Fire Service Training and Education System, including certification as fire instructor, fire investigator, fire officer, and chief officer.

Proper preparation for individuals seeking promotion to the position of company officer is paramount, and it is emerging as an issue that departments must face in the immediate future. To be effective, officer training and development must be a cooperative project involving both the participation of employees and opportunities for advancement and support from employers.

#### Statement of the Problem

Currently, many California fire departments lack company officer development programs to prepare their newly promoted company officers and individuals who aspire to become company officers. In many fire departments, no specific educational or

training requirements have been established for individuals, either before or after they become company officers. Many individuals who have been promoted to company officer have properly prepared themselves. However, many candidates who have been promoted to company officer without adequate preparation are seeking additional training, and candidates who are contemplating participating in the promotional process are unsure of how to prepare to become a successful company officer. Such a key position in the fire service merits a specifically designed development program.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was (a) to examine available options for training and educating future company officers; (b) to evaluate methods that fire departments commonly use to train and educate their future and present company officers; and to make recommendations for future company officer development programs, processes, and/or requirements that can be implemented to prepare company officers for the job they are expected to do.

Specifically, answers were sought to the following research questions:

1. What methods are available for training and educating future company officers?
2. What methods or types of company officer development programs do fire departments commonly use to prepare their personnel?
3. What are the currently accepted minimum fire service training standards for the position of company officer?

4. How can fire departments partner with local colleges and universities to allow the firefighters to receive college credit, to offset costs, and to enhance the educational experience?

5. How effective are employee career development programs (such as company officer development programs) in preparing newly promoted company officers or future company officers for their responsibilities and duties?

#### Importance of the Study

Across the United States, the fire service appears to adequately prepare newly hired firefighter to perform the duties and responsibilities of an entry-level firefighter. Unfortunately, when firefighters enter the promotional arena and compete for company officer positions, there appears to be a large discrepancy in the quality of preparation that is offered for the future company officer, especially in the state of California.

The need for company officer development programs is critical, since the company officer is the position in the fire department with primary responsibility for ensuring successful response to public emergencies. When members of the public calls 9-1-1, they speak with the dispatcher who directs their call to the appropriate agency. While the dispatcher plays an important role in solving the specific problem with which the caller is requesting assistance, the company officer has the best chance at ensuring that service is provided at the highest level.

In the past, when individuals were promoted to company officer, they tended to have a vast amount of on-the-job experience, coupled with some type of life experience that typically included experience in the mechanical or construction trades, as well as

some form of military background. The problem that many fire departments are facing today is that many of their entry-level candidates do not have that background and experience.

The job of a firefighter has not become easier over the years. If anything, it has become more complex, more technical, and larger in scope. Prior to 1970, very few fire departments responded to anything but fire-related calls. Ambulances operated by private businesses or public agencies (which included funeral homes and hospitals) responded to Emergency Medical Service (EMS) calls. Hazardous Materials calls were almost nonexistent, and responses were simple; if gasoline was spilled in the street, the fire department came out to wash the gasoline into the storm drain.

Today, fire departments respond to a variety of emergencies unrelated to fire suppression. It is not because fire departments do not want to respond to fires. Most firefighters, when asked why they became firefighter, will respond simply that they want to fight fire. Better fire prevention methods and increased public education play a role in the decreasing number of fires. It has been said in the fire service that if a fire department does an excellent job at fire prevention, it will put itself out of business. On the surface, that statement has some validity. While firefighters enjoy the experience of combating a fire, they do not want to do it at the expense of life and property loss. If a community has a decrease in loss of life and property due to fire, that should reflect on the quality of a fire department. However, due to more increased scrutiny over budgets as a result of shifts in the economy and reductions of funding, fire departments of today are expected to justify their existence.

One way that many fire departments have justified their existence is by offering more services to their communities. These services include responding with paramedics and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) on EMS calls; providing ambulance transportation; responding to and mitigating hazardous materials incidents; responding to and mitigating technical rescue incidents (which can include confined space rescues, trench rescues, high-angle rescues, and water rescues); and providing various levels of public education services, such as senior or juvenile fire safety programs, water safety programs, and babysitter safety classes. Fire departments are still training and preparing for extinguishing fires; however, they find themselves taking on new roles and responsibilities within their communities.

In virtually every fire department, the company officer is either primarily responsible for assuring the quality in regard to the delivery of these various emergency and nonemergency services or for assisting in some way with the delivery of these services. Bachtler and Brennan (1995) noted, “As the fire service’s scope and mission have broadened the need for enhancements in both training and education have grown proportionately” (p. 326). Lastinger (1996) demonstrated how this shift ties into the importance of properly preparing company officers for their duties and responsibilities by noting that

company officers are responsible for turning a department’s mission statement into actions and assuring that the goals of the mission are met. The company officer has the responsibility of leading and directing the activities of a department’s personnel and resources. (p. 6)

Having properly prepared company officers to perform their duties and responsibilities prior to their promotion can benefit a fire department, the governing body, the community, the individuals within that community, and the fire service as a whole. These benefits may include decreased liability (resulting in potential cost savings) in human relations aspects, emergency scene operations, and routine activities; an increased level of customer service; an increase in productivity; and an overall increase in value in relation to the level of service being provided by the fire department.

### Limitations

A limitation of the survey developed for this study was that no space was provided for respondents to indicate their names or contact information. As a result, the researcher was unable to identify those fire departments that had not provided complete answers or had provided answers or information that might have warranted further clarification. Another limitation was that the surveys were not numbered. This eliminated the opportunity for follow-up with respondents who had not returned the survey. In regard to sampling size, a potential limitation could arise from only surveying 42 fire departments, all of which were located in the San Francisco Bay area. Had the sample size been increased and had the fire departments surveyed been more geographically diverse across the United States, varying results might have resulted.

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### Basic Assumptions

This study was based on the following basic assumptions:

1. That each of the respondents to the surveys understood each question and had the knowledge and ability to answer them correctly,

2. That each of the respondents had a basic understanding of the company officer development training (if any) that was being utilized in their department,
3. That each of the respondents answered the surveys objectively, and
4. That each of the authors of the reviewed materials performed accurate initial research.

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### Definitions of Terms

The following terms are defined in order to clarify their meanings in the context of this study:

#### Company Officer

The first-line supervisor position within the fire department (also known as a captain or lieutenant; an individual within the fire department who is in charge of supervising a crew of two to five firefighters; responsible for managing the actions of a crew assigned to a piece of fire apparatus during the assigned work period.

#### Fireground

A term used to describe the scene of a fire; a place where the firefighter is performing the duties and responsibilities most commonly associated with them. The fireground is the most dangerous area in regard to firefighter fatalities and injuries.

#### Fire Officer I

The fire officer, at the supervisory level, who has met the job performance requirements in the standard for Level I (NFPA 1021; National Fire Protection Association [NFPA], 1997).

### Fire Officer II

The fire officer, at the supervisory/management level, who has met the job performance requirements specified in the standard for Level II (NFPA 1021; NFPA, 1997).

### Fire Officer III

The fire officer, at the managerial/administrative level, who has met the job performance requirements specified in the standard for Level III (NFPA 1021; NFPA, 1997).

### Fire Officer IV

The fire officer, at the administrative level, who has met the job performance requirements specified in the standard for Level IV (NFPA 1021; NFPA, 1997).

### National Fire Protection Association

An international nonprofit association whose mission is to reduce the world-wide burden of fire and other hazards on the quality of life by providing and advocating scientifically based consensus codes and standards, research, training and education.

### NFPA Standard 1021: Fire Officer Professional Qualifications

NFPA 1021, Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications, was first published in the mid-1970s and describes, in the terminology of job performance requirements, four levels of fire officer qualifications: first-line supervisor, mid-level supervisor, manager, and executive officer (Levels I through IV). The standard acknowledges that not all departments require personnel certified at each level, but many of the performance items it discusses are required for an effective organization. The standard addresses both emergency response and routine performance requirements. NFPA 1021 also addresses certain fire officer positions related to the four listed above, most notably that of incident safety officer. The job performance requirements for this and other specialized



positions are designed to be used in a separate certification process. (Coleman & Granito, 1988, p. 157)

### Organization of the Study

The remainder of this thesis is organized as follows: Chapter 2 contains a review of the relevant literature; chapter 3 presents a description of the research design and procedures followed in conducting the study; and chapter 4 includes a presentation and analysis of the results. Finally, Chapter 5 includes the summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to examine available options for training and educating future company officers; to evaluate methods that fire departments commonly use to train and educate their future and present company officers; and to make recommendations for future company officer development programs, processes, and/or requirements that can be implemented to prepare the company officer to do the job that they are expected to do. This chapter contains a review of numerous sources, including articles from professional journals; industry-related textbooks; previous applied research reports on similar topics from the Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland; and information found using Internet search engines. The criteria used to select the sources included the words *training*, *education*, *fire officer*, *company officer*, *lieutenant*, *captain*, *officer development*, *career development*, and *company officer development*. The majority of sources were from a personal collection of archived professional journals and textbooks.

The purpose of this literature review was to gather and review relevant information on standards and other topics related to the development of professionally recognized fire service criteria to assist in developing a company officer training program; to discover what curricula other fire departments were using for their company officer

development programs; to investigate what methods other fire departments were using to create their company officer development programs; to determine what other fire departments were doing to evaluate funding mechanisms that might be available to control costs; and to research whether a company officer program could provide the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities that a new or future company officer could use to better perform their duties.

Based on a preliminary review of the literature, career development was identified as a critical management concept that can further develop employee potential, strengthen employee performance, and ultimately improve the effectiveness of an organization. An important component of career development that can tie in to a company officer development program is a career development guide. Coleman and Granito (1988) reflected:

Many departments have developed and distributed “career development guides” to their employees. These documents provide all personnel with a single source of information on preparing for examinations, testing procedures, prerequisites, and methods of selection. They provide personnel with a sense of perspective on their own career choices and provide a framework for career counseling and succession planning. When prepared and used carefully, a career development guide can produce better candidates for promotion and simultaneously improve the fire protection agency as a whole. (p. 275)

#### Training and Educating Methods

Training is not a concept that is limited to the fire service. Thach (1998) discussed 14 ways to groom executives. While a company officer is probably not considered to be the equivalent of an executive (i.e., a chief officer would be the equivalent to

an executive), some of the items that she mentions apply to fire service officer training.

Thach's 14 ways to groom executives were the following:

1. Executive coaching (by means of a professional coach).
2. Current job adjustments (adding responsibility to the present list of duties).
3. Self-study (This is one training mode that firefighters usually have no problem with).
4. Job rotation (Many fire departments already require individuals to rotate between suppression/shift assignments and management/staff positions).
5. Mentoring others (while done unofficially, this is probably still a widely untapped area).
6. Executive Master's of Business Administration (M.B.A.; for the company officer, this could be replaced with a Bachelor of Arts [B.A.] or Science [B.S.] degree).
7. Customer visits (in the fire service, it might be impractical to have the chief officer meet with actual customers to critique the company officer).
8. Supplier assignments (consists of executives spending some time with a supplier to learn about the business from the supplier's point of view—since this process would not apply to the fire service, perhaps spending time with company officers in other major fire departments could produce the same results).
9. Community involvement (this is an area in which many people lack experience; since the citizens within the communities pay salaries and set service levels, this is something that company officers need to have an understanding of and appreciation for).

10. Action learning (Thach presented this concept as something executives are taught and then expected to implement within a special project or task force).

11. External classroom (this is another area in which many fire service professionals have already been participating on their own time to better prepare themselves for the future).

12. Guest speaker series (sometimes it is best to have an expert on a certain topic come in to conduct training, as opposed to an internal person).

13. Team-building/Outward Bound types of programs (this area has not yet been explored extensively within the fire service. The Orange County Fire Authority in southern California is the only agency known to send their executives to such a program).

14. Internal classroom (when other methods fail, the traditional classroom still remains an effective means for training and educating personnel).

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Programs Being Utilized by Various Fire  
Departments

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In the past, on-the-job training was standard. Today, expecting firefighters to learn everything as they go, on the job, poses potentially serious liability risks. For various reasons, including reducing liability and promoting career development, many progressive fire departments have anticipated the need for company officer development programs. The typical method for providing a company officer development program is to have the newly promoted or soon-to-be-promoted company officers attend classroom sessions for from 1 to 6 weeks.

A group of fire departments in the Portland, Oregon, metropolitan area in 1995 developed a coalition to deal with the lack of company officer development. The result was a curriculum that spanned three 40-hour weeks. The coalition consisted of members from five different fire departments, who met to discuss and assess the training needs of their company officers. Their goal was to offer company officer training to their younger company officers or to those who aspired to be company officers. Ke-falas (1997) discussed the guidelines that the group adopted, which included

having instructors who are recognized as experts in their field, not being limited to only fire-related training, acquiring nationally recognized speakers, being able to duplicate the class each year, and create an atmosphere where students can interact and get to know each other. (p. 64)

The last reason was something to which they felt very committed. They felt that because these new or soon-to-be company officers were the future leaders of the department, “the relationships that are forged early in a career will make things go smoothly later on” (p. 64). The curriculum that they developed had four major divisions, with each having subdivisions as follows:

Emergency—which included Incident Command System principles, tactics and strategy, decision making, mass casualty, accountability, personal safety, water supply, wildland interface, preparedness, and fire cause determination

Education—which included fire prevention, public relations, building construction, protection systems, media, public education, instructor techniques, and interpersonal skills

Personnel— which included managing people, ethics, difficult people, expectations, diversity/EEO, team-building, progressive discipline, coaching, and accounting to managers

Administration—which included time management, communication, computer skills, law, report writing, budgeting, instructional skills, and continual improvement. (p. 62)

The King County Fire Training Officers Association (KCFTOA, 2002b) in the state of Washington implemented a company officer development program in 1996 because they believed in the development of the local firefighters who were holding positions as company officer at that time, as well as in the future. Their Web site provides a detailed program description and list of classes for their officer development academy. The program, which is called the KCFTOA Officer Development Academy, focuses on important competencies that are identified by the NFPA Standards 1021 for Fire Officer Level I and II. The academy consists of approximately six 1-week sessions over the course of a year. It is directed not only at the present company officer but also toward the acting company officer and the firefighter who desires to be promoted to the position of company officer. Classes are held in both north King County and south King County, with the idea of being able to standardize within the local region.

Classes for the 2002 Officer Development Academy included Instructor I, Color of Communication, Fire Investigations, Managing Company Tactical Operations, Incident Management System, Incident Safety Officer, Accident Investigation/Vertical Standards, Fire Inspection, Media Workshop, Leadership and Supervision, Strategic Management of Water, AWARE/Rapid Intervention Teams,<sup>1</sup> Risk

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<sup>1</sup>AWARE = Air/Water/A/Radio/Extrication rescue plan.

Management, Igniting Your Writing, Building Construction, and Fire Service Legal Aspects (KCFTOA, 2002a).

Upon completion of individual courses, students receive a completion certificate. If they complete all of the required courses, they receive a company officer achievement certificate that is signed by the presidents of both the King County Fire Chiefs Association and the KCFTOA. Each class is limited to 70 students. Applicants to the officer development academy are selected on the following criteria: (a) King County agency affiliates who are current KCFTOA members, (b) King County agency affiliates who are not current KCFTOA members, and (c) agency affiliates from outside of King County. The full cost for the 2002 academy was \$1,495.00 per student from within King County and \$1,795.00 per student from outside of King County (KCFTOA, 2002b)

Thomas M. Hawkins, Fire Chief of the Alexandria, Virginia, Fire Department developed the Leadership, Education, and Development Institute (LEAD) to provide a comprehensive training and education program for all department managers and to resolve company officer training issues. Hawkins (2000) appointed a group of employees in various stages of their careers and from various parts of the fire department to develop, implement, and ultimately oversee the LEAD Institute. Their first priority was to develop a set of principles that would guide the officer development program. They arrived at three conclusions:

1. The curriculum couldn't be abstract; it needed to be real. Each subject module had to provide real information that the students could use. Too



often, management training programs in the business world don't explain how to use the information.

2. All curriculum components must have end objectives that are specific and measurable. For 18 months, the team worked on the curriculum and its objectives so that desired outcomes would be established before instructors were selected.
3. Instructors must use innovative instructional techniques such as case studies, role-playing, group interaction and, of course, class participation. Boring lectures and insulting teaching techniques, such as reading aloud from a textbook, wouldn't be tolerated. In fact, some instructors have not been asked to return because their methods failed to meet this goal. (p. 68)

Newly promoted or appointed managers within the Alexandria Fire Department are required to begin the program at the start of the next session. While it would seem logical to proactively identify and place future company officers into company officer development programs prior to getting promoted, most departments tend to do so after promotion (Hawkins).

Information found on the Fire Department of New York's (2002) Web site regarding its First Line Supervisors Program indicated that New York State law mandates that anyone promoted to the position of company officer on or after April 1, 1985, must attend a mandatory, 4-week (160-hour) management/supervisory course. New York appears to be the only state that mandates that newly promoted company officers complete a compulsory management/supervisory course.

The majority of company officer development programs are primarily lecture based, with little or no hands-on training involvement. Dale (2002) discussed how one officer development program offered through Bates Technical College in Tacoma, Washington, is not just lecture based. The program is divided into four modules:

The Command 1 module provides a review of firefighting basics and principles of the incident management system. The focus on Command 2 is on strategy and tactics using a state-of-the-art simulator for single and three dimensional problems, and Command 3 addresses hazmat incident commander concerns. The Command 4 module is hands-on and addresses structure fires, the 10-20% of call volume that most fire departments respond to, but the circumstance that produces the most risk for firefighters. (p. 32)

The unique component of this program is that it puts the officer candidates in scenarios that are based on recent line-of-duty firefighter deaths that have occurred across the country. Those scenarios pair them with students from the college's ongoing 2-year fire technology degree program in a manner that is both effective and fun. For the adult learner, this is a definite plus.

Connealy (2000) discussed the officer school that was developed by the Houston Fire Department. The Houston Fire Department offers a 40-hour officer school for candidates on the captain, senior captain, and district chief promotional lists. The department's goal is to have candidates receive the training prior to promotion. The Houston curriculum consists of the following topics: leadership, management theory, customer service, group dynamics, the role of an officer, communication, training, human resource issues, conflict resolution, career development, the employee assistance program, resource management, organizational structure and principles, written operating guidelines, documentation and discipline, motivation, legal issues, testifying in court, job knowledge, overview of department commands, accreditation, and strategic planning. "Instructors for this program include the fire chief, the command staff, and various other individuals including the Assistant City Attorney and the employee assistance program coordinator" (p. 124-125).

In the early 1990s, the Santa Clara, California, County Fire Department offered a company officer development program. This program consisted of 80 hours of instruction over 2 weeks. The candidates who were allowed to take part in the training were newly promoted company officers. Discussions with captains who were promoted around the time of the program indicated that their entry into the program occurred anywhere from a couple of months to a couple of years after being promoted. A former captain supervisor stated that he was still waiting to attend his company officer development program 8 years after being promoted. Preferably, the program should be offered to the newly promoted captains and firefighters who aspire to be a captain (as opposed to individuals who have been in the position for some time). Although veteran captains would find such a program to be of value, newly promoted captains and the soon-to-be captains need the training first. Once they have received it, a process to provide each and every captain with a company officer development program could be initiated.

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#### International Company Officer Development Programs

Since fire departments are found across the world, it would be also be important and relevant to examine how (or if) other fire departments outside of the United States prepare their company officers for their positions. In *International Concepts of Fire Protection*, Schaenman and Seits (1985) pointed out that most countries use one of three ways to prepare fire officers for the position of company officer. An officer-candidate course could be taken prior to promotion; an officer's course could be taken immediately after their promotion; or a voluntary selection of courses and on-the-job

training could occur after promotion. Schaenman and Seits discussed company officer development in Hong Kong, New Zealand, and Japan. These systems share a number of similarities with U.S. fire departments in preparing company officers for their positions. Hong Kong requires officer candidates to receive 6 months of full-time training, after the successful completion of which they remain on probation as station officers for 3 years. When they are 6 months prior to the end of the 3-year probationary period, the officer candidates are required to return to school to take a 2-week training and evaluation course. At this point, they must successfully demonstrate their ability to command. Apparently graduation is not automatic, even at this point. It is only after they successfully complete the 3 years of probation that they become full-fledged company officers (known as station officers).

After Hong Kong firefighters are promoted to station officer, they are eligible to attend various specialty training courses at their training school. Virtually all station officers are required to attend fire prevention training. This training consists of an additional 8-week course that includes laws, regulations, and inspection training. Following this formal training, station officers then begin a 1- to 2-month apprenticeship, during which they are partnered with a fire prevention officer. Upon successful completion of this internship, the station officer is posted to the Fire Protection Bureau for approximately 3 years, prior to returning to supervise at a fire station (Schaenman & Seits, 1985).

Interestingly, Hong Kong candidates can enter officer candidate training in two ways: either the traditional way (up through the ranks) or via lateral entry if they have a

high school diploma or university degree. The majority of the officer candidates enter through the lateral entry process. However, just because individuals have the desire to become an officer candidate does not mean that they are guaranteed a position. They must first attend an intensive 2-week assessment course that is intended to weed out the candidates who do not have what it takes to become successful (Schaenman & Seits, 1985).

Schaenman and Seits (1985) pointed out that officer candidates in other countries are usually very young (18-30 years of age) and do not have any firefighting experience. This factor may explain the required 3-year probationary period. In contrast, in the United States it is typical for a company officer upon promotion to have a probationary period of 1 year or less (if any at all). The Hong Kong fire brigade feels that their training program has proven very effective in making good judgments about officer candidates.

Company officers in New Zealand are offered the opportunity to take a series of courses after promotion to the officer ranks; however, these courses are not mandatory. Similar to Hong Kong, the New Zealand policy is that station officers serve as fire safety officers in the fire prevention division. Potential fire safety officers must take three 2-week courses in code interpretation and application, public fire safety education, and fire investigation. While performing their fire investigation training, they are cross-trained with police officers (Schaenman & Seits, 1985).

Schaenman and Seits (1985) also described Tokyo training requirements for every level of officer after they are promoted. Lieutenants receive 8 weeks of training;

captains and battalion chiefs receive 4 weeks of training. Unlike Hong Kong, Tokyo does not allow for lateral entry. Individuals aspiring to the position of company officer or higher must promote from within the ranks.

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#### Minimum Standards

The California State Fire Marshal's *Fire Officer Career Development Guide* (1985) identifies 22 general performance requirements for the company officer that correlate to the NFPA 1021 Standard for Fire Officer Qualifications. In his applied research project entitled *Identifying and Evaluating Training Criteria for the Development of a Company Officer Training Program*, Ott (2000) listed the 22 general performance requirements:

1. Leadership
2. Community Relations
3. Fire Prevention
4. Fire Suppression
5. Fire Protection
6. Fire Hazards and Causes
7. Building Construction
8. Codes and Ordinances
9. Firefighting Strategy and Tactics
10. Chemistry
11. Safety Practices
12. Fire Investigation
13. Psychology
14. Human Relations/Management
15. English
16. Hazardous Materials
17. Technical Report Writing
18. Fire Protection Administration
19. Personnel Management
20. Sociology
21. Major Emergency Planning
22. Organizational Management (p. 302)

*Fire Department Company Officer* (International Fire Service Training Association, 1998) provides in-depth coverage of the following 22 areas of company officer responsibility:

1. Assuming the role of company officer,
2. Fire department structure,
3. Company officer's legal responsibilities and liability,
4. The company as a group,
5. Leadership as a group influence,
6. Elements of management and supervision,
7. Company level training,
8. Government structure,
9. Community awareness and public relations,
10. Public education program development and implementation,
11. Labor relations,
12. Budgeting,
13. Information management,
14. Fire department communications,
15. Fire and life safety inspections,
16. Fire investigation,
17. Pre-incident planning,
18. Incident scene communications,
19. Incident scene management,

20. Size-up and incident plans,
21. Action plan implementation, and
22. Firefighter safety and health.

The State of Florida has a Fire Officer Certification Program that consists of a seven-part instructional curriculum, followed by a test. Successful completion of the test entitles the student to a certificate of competency. In her applied research project for the National Fire Academy, Lewis (1998) identified the seven areas contained in this certification program:

**Fire Service Instructor: Methods and Techniques.** This course explores the methods and mechanics of adult learning principles and the use of media and visual aids.

**Company Officer:** This course provides a review of fire department organization and administration theory, leadership, communication, motivation, and group dynamics. It focuses on how to solve problems and situations encountered as a supervisor.

**Hazardous Materials I:** This course is based on the National Fire Academy's "Site Operating Practices" program.

**Hazardous Materials II:** This course is also based on the National Fire Academy's "Site Operating Practices" program, with a continuation of Hazardous Materials I.

**Firefighting Tactics and Strategy I:** This course covers the basics of fire scene management at the constantly changing incident. It also covers how to determine the best use of resources.

**Fire Prevention Practices:** This course studies fire inspection practices and activities, with emphasis on fire causes, construction and occupancy types, flame spread, and fire loads.

**Private Fire Protection Systems:** This course covers private fire systems such as sprinklers, standpipes, chemical extinguishing agents, and fire detection systems.



Each of the above seven courses represents 40 hours and three college credits. Once students complete the seven courses, they are eligible to take the test for Fire Officer I Certification. (pp. 10-11)

In his applied research project for the National Fire Academy, Kirin (1998) conducted a mail survey that asked respondents to rank the most important competencies for a fire officer to possess. The following were the most highly ranked competencies:

1. Communication skills
2. Emergency service delivery
3. Safety
4. Human resource management
5. Planning
6. Community awareness/public education
7. Organizational structure
8. Information management
9. Inspection, investigation, public education
10. Administration
11. Budget preparation
12. Government structure (p. 25)

The California State Fire Marshal's office (1997) has adopted three steps for certification leading to the position of Certified Fire Chief. The State Fire Training Policies and Procedures that govern fire training and education within the state of California specify the three steps: Certified Fire Officer, Certified Chief Officer, and Certified Fire Chief. This approach is in contrast to the four steps of certification discussed in the NFPA 1021 standard. However, all tasks specified in NFPA 1021 are included in California's three-tier system.

To become a Certified Fire Officer, an individual has to complete educational requirements, complete prerequisite requirements, and have a certain amount of experience. The eight courses that comprise the educational requirements are the following:

1. Fire Command 1A—Command Principles for Company Officers;
2. Fire Command 1B—Hazardous Materials for Company Officers;
3. Fire Instructor 1A—Instructional Techniques, Part 1;
4. Fire Instructor 1B—Instructional Techniques, Part 2;
5. Fire Investigation 1A—Fire Origin and Cause Determination;
6. Fire Management 1—Management/Supervision for the Company Officer;
7. Fire Prevention 1A—Introduction to Fire Prevention; and
8. Fire Prevention 1B—Fire Prevention Practices.

In addition to completing the eight required courses, candidates aspiring to become a Certified Fire Officer must also be certified by the California State Fire Marshal's office as a Firefighter II or be appointed to the rank of officer (lieutenant or higher) and have completed the I-300, Intermediate Incident Command System course. Lastly, to meet the experience requirement to become a Certified Fire Officer, candidates must have a minimum of 2 years in a California fire department as full-time paid firefighters or have a minimum of 4 years experience in a California fire Department as volunteers or part-time paid firefighters.

NFPA 1021 (NFPA, 1997) identifies six areas of escalating degrees of training, knowledge, and responsibilities for Fire Officer I, II, III, and IV certification as follows:

human resource management, community and government relations, administration, inspection and investigation, emergency service delivery, and safety.

Compton and Granito (2002) discussed the NFPA 1021 Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications:

NFPA 1021 was first published in the mid-1970's and describes, in the terminology of job-performance requirements, four different levels of fire officer qualification: first-line supervisor, midlevel supervisor, manager, and executive officer (Levels I through IV). These qualifications, or performance requirements, are common to most career and volunteer organizations. The standard acknowledges that not all departments require personnel certified at each level, but many of the performance items it discusses are required for an effective organization. The standard addresses both emergency response and routine performance requirements. (p. 157)

#### Partnership Programs

Partner arrangements between fire departments and local colleges and universities give firefighters opportunities to earn college credit for training. Most company officer development programs examined by the present study offered college credits for students who have attended and completed the training. This aspect may be a valuable bonus to provide to participants, especially for those departments that require a certain number of college credits per year of service for an educational incentive or promotion. For those seeking a fire science degree, some of these units might also be applied to their degree.

Bachtler and Brennan (1995) indicated in *The Fire Chief's Handbook* that there is a place in the fire service for a college degree. According to Bachtler and Brennan, "As firefighters aspire to higher positions, and seek promotions, the need for education becomes increasingly important. An associate's degree is required for many positions

as fire chief and is recommended for all” (p. 333). To implement these standards, a partnership between a fire department and the local community college is practically a necessity.

Fincher (1994) predicted that fire officers of the future will be better educated than in the past, as more candidates acquire degrees before coming into the fire service or earn them after they are employed. Fincher concluded, “This education will be essential to meet the ever-expanding responsibilities for prevention, response and mitigation of emergencies whose scope and seriousness will be beyond our wildest dreams” (p. 24).

The fire service is not the only industry facing the issue of newly promoted or future officers needing development programs. In 2001, the U.S. Army released a study conducted by the Army Training and Leader Development Panel (Sheftick). The study’s most important finding was that people, not new vehicles, are the most important part of the Army’s upcoming transformation. Two of this study’s recommendations were to allow additional time for officer professional development and to provide a basic training course for all new lieutenants before they go to their branch school. The Army’s Basic Officer Leader Course is now being tested in Fort Benning, Georgia. Newly promoted lieutenants from all branches would be required to attend the seven-week course in basic soldier and leadership skills before going to their branch school.

Additionally, the Army study recommended that in order to “level the playing field” for promotion to lieutenant colonel, all majors would attend an intermediate-level education course—a course similar to the Command and General Staff Officer

Course (CGSOC) at the Command and General Staff Officer College in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Apparently, in prior years, approximately half of the active-duty majors were given the opportunity to attend the CGSOC. General David Huntoon, deputy commandant of the Command and General Staff College, felt that someone who had attended this program was perceived to have a better chance at getting a promotion (Sheftick, 2001).

### Career Development Programs

There is also a question as to whether employee career development programs are of value in preparing newly promoted company officers or future company officers for their responsibilities or duties. On the surface, one would have to think so. Lytle (2001) suggested:

Recalling our first company officer experiences helps us determine how well we prepare new company officers. Were you, are you, ready? Do you possess the skills? Time on the job and a stack of certifications don't necessarily mean someone's ready to lead. The fire service has many good hands-on training programs for firefighters, engineers, and paramedics. We mentor, teach, train, and evaluate our people quite well—until they reach the company officer level. (p. 52)

That statement highlights a common problem within the fire service. Countless hours are spent on training newly hired firefighters, but investing time and money in preparing first-line supervisors is a much lower priority. While most people would agree that the newly hired, entry-level firefighter needs the necessary training that will be the foundation for his/her career, the fire service in general seems to have a problem in getting all of its key leaders to agree with the notion that the first-line supervisors need training, too. Matty (1998) felt that

helping a firefighter develop their skills and watching as that firefighter gets promoted and moves forward in his career can be very rewarding to the company officer and the department. A well-coordinated and scheduled officer development program allows all candidates to receive the training and confidence they need. The statement “No one ever taught me” will cease to exist, and the new employees will prepare well in advance of taking their turns in the hot seat. (p. 18)

Connealy (2000) discussed the reason why the Houston Fire Department developed its officer school:

The officers of the Houston Fire Department are critical to our organization’s success, as the department is much too large to manage from headquarters. Because we depend on them to implement our rules, policies, guidelines, and programs, there must be buy-in from the officers to implement the vision and mission set forth by the chief and command staff. These schools allow us to market our vision for the department by directly interacting with future officers. Our only cost for the 40-hour officer schools for the newly promoted, aside from placing members on training duty, is \$750 for instruction by a civil attorney and an educational consultant. (p. 125)

Smoke (2001) recalled a valuable story that illustrates the need for company officer development programs and also shows the benefits of putting a company officer through such a program:

For years, retired Fire Chief Morton Shurtleff of Milton, Massachusetts, taught an excellent officer development course for the National Fire Academy and the Society of Fire Service Instructors. He asked students what they feared most about their new jobs. The majority of students said their greatest fear was promotion without the benefit of some sort of officer training—and not just basic foreground command or scene size-up training. These students wanted discipline, counseling, grievances and other personnel issues—and with good reason. An effective company officer acts as coach, counselor, mentor, and more to their crew. (p. 56)

In regard to actually certifying fire officers as a form of legitimacy or proof of competency, Smoke (2001) added:

Most of us consider engineers and doctors professionals. How do they get there? They go to school, and after completing their education, they can legally practice their profession. Dr. Denis Onieal, superintendent of the National Fire Academy, often uses these professions as examples to illustrate a point: If those of us in the fire service want to be professionals, we must embrace a comparable education model, especially in regard to company officers. One way to accomplish this is through certification. Fire department leaders, should, at a minimum, strongly encourage (if not require) their company officers to complete some sort of officer certification. (p. 57)

In his article, “Company Officer Certification: A Minimum Standard for the Fire Officer,” Cavallari (1997) initially wrote about the same Florida Fire Officer Certification Program that Lewis (1998) later discussed in her applied research project. Cavallari felt that the program was a perfect way to bridge the gap between the firefighters who wanted to promote and the company officers who were responsible for leadership positions. He felt that “all leaders have a very specific duty: to motivate their personnel to accomplish the goals of the department/business” (p. 18); he believed that this program would be a perfect way to present the ideal ways to determine what motivates each person, as well as how to present the goals of the administration to personnel. His closing remark summed up a compelling reason to have a company officer development program: “As a firefighter gains this knowledge on his way to advancement, he will become more effective as a firefighter and more valuable as an employee” (p. 18).

The bottom line is that the company officer, as the first-line supervisor of a fire company, is the critical contact point for public requests for assistance in both emergency and nonemergency situations. On average, people do not call 9-1-1 more than a couple of times in their lifetimes. However, when they do call, it is critical to make

them feel that the best possible service is being provided to them. In his book, *Essentials of Fire Department Customer Service*, Brunacini (1996) stated that when Mrs. Smith (a fictitious person who represents the average person who calls for assistance) dials 9-1-1, she only cares about three things:

1. Quick response time—"It seemed you arrived as I was hanging up the phone."
2. Skillful performance that solved the problem—"Your firefighters were so calm and took charge. Everything got better after they arrived."
3. Positive personal treatment—"Everyone who responded was so kind, and I will never forget how nice they were to my family and to me." (p. 16)

If those three items can be remembered and incorporated into a company officer development program, the company officer, the fire department, and the citizens will be better served.



## CHAPTER 3

### PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to examine available options for training and educating future company officers; to evaluate methods that fire departments commonly use to train and educate their future and present company officers; and to make recommendations for future company officer development programs, processes, and/or requirements that could be implemented to prepare the company officer to do the job that he/she is expected to do.

#### Research Method

Descriptive and action research methodologies were used to determine answers to the research questions that were posed in chapter 1. Research and data collection began with a literature review from a personal collection of archived professional journals and textbooks. This was followed by a literature review through the National Fire Academy's Learning Resource Center. Articles from professional journals (including ones relating to the fire service); industry-related textbooks; previous reports of applied research on similar topics from the Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland; and information found on Internet search engines were reviewed for information relating to this study.

The research was descriptive in that a literature review was conducted to review literature that would be applicable to company officer development. In addition, a survey was conducted following standard action research methodology. The survey was designed to elicit objective responses from respondents in order to facilitate accurate and consistent data collection and analysis. This design produced more consistent data for answering the research questions and helped delineate criteria that could be used in the development of a company officer development program.

### Population and Sample

The sample for the study was the 42 fire departments around the San Francisco Bay area, excluding the Contra Costa Fire Department. The list of participating fire departments is presented in appendix A. The list of participating departments was developed using the 2003 edition of the *California Fire Service Directory* published annually by the California State Firefighters' Association. City, county, and state fire departments that primarily consisted of full-time paid firefighters and were located in Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo, San Francisco, and Santa Cruz Counties were targeted. Volunteer fire departments were not included because the curriculum and needs of a company officer development program for a volunteer fire department would be substantially different than those for a full-time fire department. Industrial fire brigades and private fire departments were also not included due to their tendency to have varying and unique roles and responsibilities compared to city, county, or state fire departments; those varying and unique roles and responsibilities would not be relevant to the purpose of this research.

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### Design of the Instrument

A 12-part survey instrument was used to sample the respondents of various San Francisco Bay area fire departments. These questions were limited to primarily yes and no answers, with some clarification permitted for certain questions. In particular, respondents were asked the purpose, components, and overall perceived quality of the current company officer development programs (if any) available to their fire department members. It was expected that the time to complete the survey would be less than 10 minutes. A copy of the survey instrument and informed consent letter are contained in appendix B. The survey was primarily comprised of forced-response types of questions.

The survey was administered to 3 individuals as a pilot prior to its distribution to participating departments. All 3 were individuals employed by different fire departments that were not being surveyed. One individual was a division chief assigned to the Training Division; 1 was a Fire Captain assigned to a fire station; and the 3<sup>rd</sup> individual was a firefighter assigned to a fire station. The pilot was administered to individuals serving in various ranks in order to elicit a variety of viewpoints, attitudes, and opinions. All 3 individuals completed the survey without difficulty, and their comments were incorporated into the final version of the survey, which was subsequently distributed to participating fire departments for completion.

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### Administration of the Instrument

The survey was mailed to 42 fire departments around the San Francisco Bay area on March 15, 2003. The plan was to allow respondents no more than 60 days to complete and return the survey.

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### Treatment of the Data

Prior to receiving any returned surveys, a template was created to tabulate responses as they were received. Each question and possible answer was put into a table format, with space below each question for comments that might be written in. As each survey arrived in the mail, the raw data were transferred to the table. After the data from each of the completed surveys were transferred to the results page, the survey was placed into a folder in a locked cabinet. A total of 32 (out of a possible 42) surveys were returned, for a return rate of 76%.

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### Analysis of Data

The data were tabulated and entered into an Excel spreadsheet; descriptive statistics were calculated for examination, evaluation, and analysis. The responses to each question were evaluated to determine the most frequent choice selected. Once the descriptive statistics were examined, it was determined that there were no obvious discrepancies within the data. The results from the data analysis are presented in chapter 4.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

Many California fire departments lack company officer development programs to prepare their newly promoted company officers and individuals who aspire to become company officers. In many fire departments, no specific educational or training requirements have been established for individuals, either before or after they become company officers. Many individuals who have been promoted to company officer have properly prepared themselves. However, many candidates who have been promoted to company officer without adequate preparation are seeking additional training, and candidates who are contemplating participating in the promotional process are unsure of how to become a successful company officer. Such a key position in the fire service merits its own development program.

The purpose of this study was to examine different options for training and educating future company officers; to evaluate methods that fire departments commonly use to train and educate their future and present company officers; and to make recommendations for future company officer development programs, processes, and/or requirements that could be implemented to prepare company officers to do the job that they are expected to do. This chapter contains the results of the data collected for this study.

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## Summary of Results

The goal of the survey was to determine whether fire departments in the San Francisco Bay area were using a company officer development program; and, if so, when it was offered, who was eligible to attend it, what was the duration, and what was the perception of the outcome of such training. Other goals of the survey were to find out whether company officers in each department were adequately prepared to perform the necessary skills of a company officer, what area company officers were best prepared to handle (administrative and personnel functions versus fire and EMS responses), and whether there was a need for a company officer development program. The final goal was to determine what content or curriculum should be contained in a company officer development program based on the opinion of the respondent.

A total of 12 questions were included in the fire department survey. Some questions required a yes/no response; the remainder required a forced response with anywhere from two to six possible choices. Some of the questions allowed respondents to elaborate on their answers (see appendix C).

### Size of Departments

The size of fire departments responding to the survey varied. Question 1 asked, “What is the total number of personnel employed by your fire department?” Twenty-three or 72% of the respondents answered less than 99. Eight or 25% answered 100-299. One or 3% answered greater than 300 (Table 1).

TABLE 1. Summary of Responses to Survey Questions 1-11 ( $N = 32$ )

| Question  | <i>n</i> | %    |
|---|----------|------|
| #1: Number of personnel employed in respondents' departments  |          |      |
| Less than 99  | 23       | 72.0 |
| 100-299   | 8        | 25.0 |
| More than 300   | 1        | 3.0  |
| #2: Whether person completing survey was the department's training officer                            |          |      |
| Yes   | 26       | 81.0 |
| No  | 6        | 19.0 |
| #3: Whether respondents' departments offered a formalized company officer development academy/program |          |      |
| Yes   | 15       | 47.0 |
| No  | 17       | 53.0 |
| #4: When company officer development academy (if any) is performed ( $n = 18$ )                       |          |      |
| Prior to getting promoted   | 10       | 56.0 |
| After getting promoted  | 8        | 44.0 |
| #5: Eligibility to attend department's company officer development academy ( $n = 21$ )               |          |      |
| Newly promoted officers   | 7        | 33.3 |
| Members on officer promotional list   | 7        | 33.3 |
| Anyone may attend   | 7        | 33.3 |
| #6: Length of company officer development academy ( $n = 15$ )  |          |      |
| 1 week  | 1        | 7.0  |
| 2 weeks   | 2        | 13.0 |
| 3 weeks   | 0        | 0.0  |
| 4 weeks   | 1        | 7.0  |
| 5 weeks   | 0        | 0.0  |
| 6 weeks   | 0        | 0.0  |
| Other   | 11       | 73.0 |

TABLE 1. (Continued)

| Question   | <i>n</i> | %    |
|--|----------|------|
| #7: Overall quality of respondents' department company officer development academy ( <i>n</i> = 14)  |          |      |
| Excellent  | 1        | 7.0  |
| Good   | 12       | 86.0 |
| Needs improvement  | 1        | 7.0  |
| #8: Opinion as to whether company officers in respondents' departments were better prepared to handle administrative functions versus fire and EMS incidents |          |      |
| Yes  | 2        | 6    |
| No   | 25       | 81   |
| Undecided  | 4        | 13   |
| #9: Opinion as to whether respondents' company officers were adequately prepared to perform the necessary skills of their positions                          |          |      |
| Yes  | 22       | 69   |
| No   | 7        | 22   |
| Undecided  | 3        | 9    |
| #10: Whether alternative training is provided if department did not offer a formalized company officer development academy                                   |          |      |
| Yes  | 23       | 72   |
| No   | 3        | 9    |
| #11: Whether there was value in a formalized training program to assist newly promoted company officer candidates to prepare for position                    |          |      |
| Yes  | 32       | 100  |
| No   | 0        | 0    |

*Note.* EMS = emergency medical service.



### Respondent Completing Survey

While the fire department training officer was the individual targeted to complete the survey, not every respondent was, in fact, the actual training officer. Question 2 asked, “Are you the department training officer?” Twenty-six or 81% of the respondents answered yes to this question; 6 or 19% answered no. Of the 6 respondents answering no, 4 respondents listed their rank as Fire Chief, 1 as Captain EMS/Fire Marshal, and 1 did not indicate rank (Table 1).

### Training and Educating Methods

Thach (1998) identified 14 ways to groom executives. The literature review and external survey suggested that fire departments, while not considered private businesses, are using many of the methods included in Thach’s list, specifically external and internal classrooms and job rotations. However, formal education in a classroom setting appeared to remain the primary method for delivering the company officer development curriculum.

Respondents to the survey listed a variety of training and education methods, including job rotations, formal education, and external classrooms. Only 1 respondent indicated that the newly promoted company officer was moved to a 40-hour week for a total of 5 weeks so that the individual could experience various administrative assignments, such as fire prevention, training, communications, and administration. Survey respondents indicated formal education in an internal classroom setting as the most common method for delivering a company officer development program.

### Programs Being Utilized by Various Fire Departments

Question 3 of the survey asked, “Does your fire department offer a formalized company officer academy or program?” Seventeen or 53% of the respondents answered no to the question; 15 or 47% answered yes (Table 1). While the question was not intended to elicit additional comments, some respondents offered additional comments such as the following:

Acting fire officer academy.

Career development, state CCO classes, and peer review and development.

We personally don’t offer an in-house officer academy. Through the San Mateo County Training Officers Association, a 40-hour course for new company officers is now offered. We will send future officers through upon their promotion.

The County of San Mateo’s Training Officers have a formalized academy that we participate in—we also (in-house) have a captain’s handbook and career development guide we teach.

### Program Delivery

Question 4 of the survey asked, “If your fire department does offer a company officer development program, when it is performed?” This question was intended to be answered by the fire department respondents who answered yes to Question 3, “Does your fire department offer a formalized company officer development academy or program?” Fifteen or 47% of the respondents had answered yes to that question. Of those 15 respondents, 10 answered “prior to getting promoted.” Eight respondents answered “after getting promoted” (Table 1). The discrepancy in the number of responses results from 3 respondents answering both prior to getting promoted and after getting

promoted. One respondent added, “We conduct one academy each year. Some students have promoted prior to the class.”

### Attendance Eligibility

Eligibility to attend company officer development-related training varied from fire department to fire department (Table 1). Question 5 on the survey asked, “Who is allowed to attend your company officer development academy?” Seven respondents answered “newly promoted officers”; 7 answered “members on the officer promotional list”; and 7 answered “anyone may attend.” While there should have been a total of 15 respondents answering this question based on their initial answer to Question 3, 5 respondents answered both “newly promoted officers” and “members on the officer promotional list”; 1 respondent answered both “members on the officer promotional list” and “anyone may attend.” One respondent added “acting captain eligibility” in addition to choosing one of the forced responses. One respondent added, “We allow 12 students.”

### Program Duration

Total length of commitment to company officer development programs varied from department to department (Table 1). Question 6 on the external survey asked, “What is the length of your company officer development academy?” One respondent indicated 1 week; 2 respondents indicated 2 weeks; and 1 respondent indicated 4 weeks. Other added responses were “10 days, 8 hours each”; “9 sections to complete, then oral board”; “self-paced, 1-year time limit”; “voluntary 6-month program”; “three part/2-year program”; “40 hours total, 5 days/8 hours over a 5-week period”;

“combined into career development”; “36 hours”; and “self-guided at this time.” One respondent checked “other” but did not specify an answer.

### Alternative Company Officer Development Training

Question 10 asked, “If your department does not offer a formalized company officer development academy, does your department provide other training and/or education to captains or potential captain candidates?” Twenty-two or 72% of the respondents answered yes to the question; 3 or 9% answered no. Six or 19% of the respondents did not answer the question (Table 1). Additional comments added by the respondents were the following:

CSFM training, acting captain program.

Starting acting captain program.

Officer simulations and drills, outside courses in command and management.

Continuing education incentive pay with continuing education units required.

We have pay incentives for training, and we try to host company officer training annually.

Acting captain course, also county fire company officer academy.

Outside educational opportunities are funded by the department.

We are in the beginning stages of offering acting captain training.

Acting company officer list, they shadow company officer and perform company officer duties.

10-day class on company officer skills development prior to each exam (every 2 years, open to any department member that is considering taking the exam).

Pay for education.

We offer three classes at our academy in Ione [California].

Some supervisory training. Optional company officers academy.

Ongoing officer training in-house.

Training curriculum from the State Fire Marshal agency, Industrial Emergency Council, firecourse.com, and the Contra Costa County Training Institute are highly recommended and endorsed by the fire district.

Upon promotion, new officers switch to 40-hour work week for approximately 5 weeks. During this 5-week period the new officer is rotated through fire administration, fire prevention, training, and communications. The purpose of the rotation is for the employee to get a grasp of what each division's roles and responsibilities are and how the company officer relates to these divisions. This is a good opportunity for the employee to discover why things are the way they are, and how to effectively promote change.

Company officer handbook delivered in class, in house.

### Minimum Standards

As discussed in chapter 2, the 1997 edition of NFPA 1021 identified six areas of escalating degrees of training, knowledge, and responsibilities for Fire Officer I, II, III, and IV certification. The State of California Fire Officer Certification training program has identified 22 responsibilities of a company officer.

Question 12 on the survey asked respondents to rate, on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = *Strongly Agree*, 2 = *Agree*, 3 = *Neutral*, 4 = *Disagree*, 5 = *Strongly Disagree*), the importance of 20 competencies, knowledge, skills, and/or abilities with respect to the successful functioning of a company officer. Respondents ranked the 20 competencies in the following order of their importance to the success of a company officer: customer service, leadership, strategy and tactics/emergency scene operations (tie), organizational rules/policies, ethics/diversity (tie), time management, discipline/report

writing (tie), employee counseling, written communication, management skills/oral communication (tie), instructional techniques, performance appraisals, computer knowledge, fire prevention, fire investigation, and budgeting (Table 2).

If a respondent indicated 5 or *Strongly Agree* for a competency, the response was assigned a value of 5. If a respondent indicated 4 or *Agree*, the response was assigned a value of 4. If the respondent indicated 3 or *Neutral*, the response was assigned a value of 3. If the respondent indicated 2 or *Disagree*, the response was assigned a value of 2. If the respondent indicated 1 or *Strongly Disagree*, the response was assigned a value of 1. The values for each item were then tabulated to determine the total point value for each of the competencies, and the competencies were placed in rank order from highest total point value to lowest. Median, mode, and average values were also calculated. See appendix D for a detailed summary of scoring for each competency.

### Partnership Programs

Bachtler and Brennan (1995) pointed out the growing importance of a college degree for promotion within the fire service and that partnership arrangements between fire departments and local colleges and universities give firefighters opportunities to earn college credits for training. However, none of the respondents to the survey specifically mentioned any partnership program with a local community college. This result may have been due to a lack of questions specifically designed to collect information about local partnership programs.

TABLE 2. Summary of Results for Survey Question 12: Ranking Items on Basis of Importance for a Company Officer ( $N = 32$ )

| Item                               | <i>n</i> | %  |
|------------------------------------|----------|----|
| <b>Time Management</b>             |          |    |
| Strongly agree                     | 15       | 47 |
| Agree                              | 16       | 50 |
| Neutral                            | 1        | 3  |
| Disagree                           | 0        | 0  |
| Strongly disagree                  | 0        | 0  |
| <b>Leadership</b>                  |          |    |
| Strongly agree                     | 26       | 81 |
| Agree                              | 6        | 19 |
| Neutral                            | 0        | 0  |
| Disagree                           | 0        | 0  |
| Strongly disagree                  | 0        | 0  |
| <b>Computer knowledge</b>          |          |    |
| Strongly agree                     | 4        | 12 |
| Agree                              | 21       | 66 |
| Neutral                            | 6        | 19 |
| Disagree                           | 1        | 3  |
| Strongly disagree                  | 0        | 0  |
| <b>Organization rules/policies</b> |          |    |
| Strongly agree                     | 17       | 53 |
| Agree                              | 15       | 47 |
| Neutral                            | 0        | 0  |
| Disagree                           | 0        | 0  |
| Strongly disagree                  | 0        | 0  |
| <b>Written communication</b>       |          |    |
| Strongly agree                     | 1        | 34 |
| Agree                              | 18       | 56 |
| Neutral                            | 3        | 10 |
| Disagree                           | 0        | 0  |
| Strongly disagree                  | 0        | 0  |

TABLE 2. (Continued)

| Item                   | <i>n</i> | %  |
|------------------------|----------|----|
| Oral communication     |          |    |
| Strongly agree         | 11       | 34 |
| Agree                  | 20       | 63 |
| Neutral                | 1        | 3  |
| Disagree               | 0        | 0  |
| Strongly disagree      | 0        | 0  |
| Discipline             |          |    |
| Strongly agree         | 14       | 44 |
| Agree                  | 17       | 53 |
| Neutral                | 1        | 3  |
| Disagree               | 0        | 0  |
| Strongly disagree      | 0        | 0  |
| Ethics                 |          |    |
| Strongly agree         | 19       | 59 |
| Agree                  | 9        | 28 |
| Neutral                | 4        | 13 |
| Disagree               | 0        | 0  |
| Strongly disagree      | 0        | 0  |
| Performance appraisals |          |    |
| Strongly agree         | 6        | 19 |
| Agree                  | 31       | 66 |
| Neutral                | 5        | 15 |
| Disagree               | 0        | 0  |
| Strongly disagree      | 0        | 0  |
| Fire prevention        |          |    |
| Strongly agree         | 2        | 6  |
| Agree                  | 20       | 63 |
| Neutral                | 10       | 31 |
| Disagree               | 0        | 0  |
| Strongly disagree      | 0        | 0  |



TABLE 2. (Continued)

| Item                     | <i>n</i> | %  |
|--------------------------|----------|----|
| Fire investigation       |          |    |
| Strongly agree           | 0        | 0  |
| Agree                    | 19       | 60 |
| Neutral                  | 11       | 34 |
| Disagree                 | 2        | 6  |
| Strongly disagree        | 0        | 0  |
| Instructional techniques |          |    |
| Strongly agree           | 8        | 25 |
| Agree                    | 20       | 63 |
| Neutral                  | 4        | 12 |
| Disagree                 | 0        | 0  |
| Strongly disagree        | 0        | 0  |
| Employee counseling      |          |    |
| Strongly agree           | 13       | 41 |
| Agree                    | 15       | 47 |
| Neutral                  | 4        | 12 |
| Disagree                 | 0        | 0  |
| Strongly disagree        | 0        | 0  |
| Management skills        |          |    |
| Strongly agree           | 8        | 25 |
| Agree                    | 23       | 72 |
| Neutral                  | 1        | 3  |
| Disagree                 | 0        | 0  |
| Strongly disagree        | 0        | 0  |
| Report writing           |          |    |
| Strongly agree           | 15       | 47 |
| Agree                    | 15       | 47 |
| Neutral                  | 2        | 6  |
| Disagree                 | 0        | 0  |
| Strongly disagree        | 0        | 0  |

TABLE 2. (Continued)

| Item                       | <i>n</i> | %  |
|----------------------------|----------|----|
| Strategy and tactics       |          |    |
| Strongly agree             | 23       | 72 |
| Agree                      | 8        | 25 |
| Neutral                    | 1        | 3  |
| Disagree                   | 0        | 0  |
| Strongly disagree          | 0        | 0  |
| Emergency scene operations |          |    |
| Strongly agree             | 22       | 69 |
| Agree                      | 10       | 31 |
| Neutral                    | 0        | 0  |
| Disagree                   | 0        | 0  |
| Strongly disagree          | 0        | 0  |
| Budgeting                  |          |    |
| Strongly agree             | 1        | 3  |
| Agree                      | 14       | 44 |
| Neutral                    | 16       | 50 |
| Disagree                   | 1        | 3  |
| Strongly disagree          | 0        | 0  |
| Diversity/harassment       |          |    |
| Strongly agree             | 17       | 53 |
| Agree                      | 13       | 41 |
| Neutral                    | 2        | 6  |
| Disagree                   | 0        | 0  |
| Strongly disagree          | 0        | 0  |
| Customer service           |          |    |
| Strongly agree             | 24       | 75 |
| Agree                      | 8        | 25 |
| Neutral                    | 0        | 0  |
| Disagree                   | 0        | 0  |
| Strongly disagree          | 0        | 0  |

### Career Development Programs

Question 7 on the survey asked, “How would you rate the overall quality of your department’s company officer development training?” Twelve or 80% of the respondents eligible to answer this question indicated the quality was good; 1 or 7% eligible to answer this question indicated excellent; and 1 or 7% of respondents eligible to answer this question indicated the program needed improvement. One respondent did not select any of the three forced choices but instead commented, “Can’t answer, we have not sent anybody through the new program yet.”

Question 8 on the survey asked, “As a general rule, are company officers in your department better prepared to handle day-to-day administrative and personnel functions than they are fire or EMS incidents?” Twenty-five or 81% of respondents answered no to the question; 2 or 6% answered yes; 4 or 13% were undecided.

Question 9 on the survey asked, “Are company officers in your fire department adequately prepared to perform the necessary skills of a company officer?” Twenty-two or 69% of the respondents answered yes to the question; 7 or 22% answered no; and 3 or 9% of respondents were undecided. One respondent added, “Because of fire officer certificate and in-house delivery of company officer handbook (training chief instructs).”

Thirty-two or 100% of respondents surveyed responded affirmatively Question 11, which asked, “Whether or not your department offers a company officer development academy, do you think there is value in a formalized training program to assist potential company officer candidates to prepare for that position?”

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine different options for training and educating future company officers; to evaluate methods fire departments are using to train and educate their future and present company officers; and to make recommendations of potential company officer development programs, processes, and/or requirements that could be implemented to prepare the company officer to do the job that he/she is expected to do.

#### Conclusions

The research presented in this study has demonstrated the need for a fire department to develop some form of a company officer development training program for personnel aspiring to become company officers. Regardless of how these programs are delivered, the literature review and the results of the survey suggested that a need exists for a company officer development training program for the newly promoted or soon-to-be promoted first-line supervisor in the fire service. One hundred percent of the respondents to the survey indicated that they believed there was value in a formalized training program to assist potential company officer candidates to prepare for that position.

The opinions of the respondents tended to vary regarding the content of such a program. This variance might be understood in the context of variations in the needs and responsibilities of company officers in small fire departments (i.e., fewer than 100 employees) compared with those of company officers in large fire departments (i.e., more than 300 employees).

Since the needs of a small fire department can vary from the needs of a large one, it might be in the interest of each department to design a training program to address the specific roles and responsibilities that the company officer will encounter while on duty. However, certain subjects such as diversity, ethics, customer service, time management and leadership could be offered on a regional basis, since those subject areas affect the company officers of all fire departments regardless of size.

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#### Recommendations

Based on the survey, the literature review, and the analysis of the results of this study, the following recommendations are offered to serve as a catalyst for the development of an effective, yet comprehensive, company officer training program for almost any fire department:

1. Obtain the support of the firefighters, the labor organization, and the fire chief in the creation of a company officer development program for any fire department member desiring to become a company officer.
2. Provide the required staffing and budget necessary to achieve the objectives. The fire department must provide a staff large enough to operate and maintain the program and develop the staff to the level of competency required to support the

program. In addition, the fire department must identify and earmark the full cost of career development in advance, including budgeting funds as needed.

3. Obtain the support of the local Fire Department Training Officers' Association in the creation of a company officer development program that can be used on a regional basis for the broader subjects, such as customer service, diversity/harassment, leadership, management, and time management.

4. For a curriculum that is customized for specific agency needs, such as organization rules/policies, computer usage, budgeting, fire prevention, and/or fire investigation, create an in-house type of program that can address these needs.

5. Utilize the NFPA 1021, Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications, as a document that will provide a guideline and template for the development of a company officer development program.

6. Incorporate the eight core courses required for Fire Officer Certification by the State Board of Fire Services into the curriculum of the company officer development program.

7. Implement an evaluation component to periodically evaluate the program against stated objectives and make revisions as necessary.

It is strongly suggested that the implementation of these recommendations begin immediately. Promotional examinations for the position of company officer usually occur every 1 to 2 years in most departments. Properly preparing personnel for the position of company officer prior to their date of promotion will help set them up for success rather than failure.

## APPENDICES

APPENDIX A  
LIST OF SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA FIRE DEPARTMENTS  
INCLUDED IN SURVEY



LIST OF SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA FIRE DEPARTMENTS  
INCLUDED IN SURVEY

Alameda Fire Department  
Alameda County Fire Department  
Albany Fire Department  
Aptos-La Selva Fire Protection District  
Berkeley Fire Department  
Burlingame Fire Department  
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection  
Central Fire Protection District (Santa Cruz County)  
Contra Costa County Fire Authority  
Daly City Fire Department  
East Contra Costa Fire Protection District  
El Cerrito Fire Department  
Emeryville Fire Department  
Foster City Fire Department  
Fremont Fire Department  
Half Moon Bay Fire Protection District  
Hayward Fire Department  
Hillsborough Fire Department  
Lawrence-Livermore Laboratory Fire Department  
Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department  
Menlo Park Fire Protection District  
Millbrae Fire Department  
Moraga-Orinda Fire Protection District  
Newark Fire Department  
North County Fire Authority  
Oakland Fire Department  
Piedmont Fire Department  
Pinole Fire Department  
Redwood City Fire Department  
Richmond Fire Department  
Rodeo-Hercules Fire Protection District  
San Bruno Fire Department  
San Francisco Fire Department  
San Mateo Fire Department  
San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District  
Santa Cruz Fire Department  
Scotts Valley Fire Protection District  
South County Fire Authority  
South San Francisco Fire Department  
Union City Fire Department

Watsonville Fire Department  
Woodside Fire Protection District

APPENDIX B  
INFORMED CONSENT FORM AND SURVEY

## INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I am a Fire Captain with the Santa Clara County Fire Department and am in the process of completing my Master's Degree in Emergency Services Administration from California State University at Long Beach. I am conducting research as a portion of my thesis paper. My problem is to determine the Need for Company Officer Development Programs in the fire service.

Besides the information I have obtained from various fire service and nonfire service- related publications, books, and Web sites, I realize the need to survey various San Francisco Bay Area Fire Departments to see what (if any) company officer development programs are in existence, as well as obtain information on whether such programs are of value to the fire service. Your completion of this one-time survey is voluntary, and you should not feel pressured in any way to participate.

All of your replies will be held in strict confidence. Participation or nonparticipation will not affect your status within the fire department. There are no direct benefits and no foreseen risks to subjects from participating in this study. If you choose to participate, you may withdraw at any time without consequences. If you choose to participate, you may leave any question unanswered without consequences and still remain in the study. Upon receipt of all of the surveys, I will tabulate the results by various methods, keeping the names and departments responding anonymous. The results will be portrayed in a general way, such as "75% of respondents felt that such an item was relevant (or not relevant) to the outcome."

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at (xxx) xxx-xxxx or by email at (xxxxxx). You may also contact my thesis advisor, Dr. Paul A. Bott at California State University, Long Beach, at (562) 985-8036 (or pabott@csulb.edu) if you have questions. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you may contact the CSULB Office of University Research at (562) 985-5314.

By completing and returning this survey which begins on the back of this consent letter, you acknowledge receipt of informed consent to participate in this research.

Please return the completed survey in the preaddressed stamped envelope provided, or fax the completed survey to: xxx-xxx-xxxx

I thank you in advance for your assistance with this survey. I am sure that it will benefit each of us in the future. If you would like a copy of the completed thesis, let me know and I will be happy to provide you with one.

Sincerely,

Steve Prziborowski

**COMPANY OFFICER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM SURVEY**

**1. What is the total number of personnel employed by your fire department?**  
(Check one)

- Less than 99                       100-299                       Greater than 300

**2. Are you the department Training Officer?**

- Yes             No

**3. Does your fire department offer a formalized company officer development academy or program?**

- Yes             No

***(NOTE: If you answered yes to question #3, continue answering questions #4-#7. If you answered no to question #3, then skip to question #8.)***

**4. If your fire department does offer a company officer development academy, when is it performed?**

- Prior to getting promoted                       After getting promoted

**5. Who is allowed to attend your company officer development academy?**

- Newly promoted officers     Members on the officer promotional list  
 Anyone may attend

**6. What is the length of your company officer development academy?**

- One week     Two weeks                       Three weeks                       Four weeks  
 Five weeks     Six weeks                       Other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

**7. How would you rate the overall quality of your department's company officer development training?**

- Excellent                       Good                       Needs improvement

**8. As a general rule, are company officers in your department better prepared to handle day-to-day administrative and personnel functions than they are fire or EMS incidents?**

Yes                       No                       Undecided

**9. Are Company Officers in your fire department adequately prepared to perform the necessary skills of a company officer?**

Yes                       No                       Undecided

**10. If your department does not offer a formalized company officer development academy, does your department provide other training and/or education to captains or potential captain candidates?**

Yes                       No

If yes, please briefly describe the training:



**11. Whether or not your department offers a company officer development academy, do you believe there is value in a formalized training program to assist potential company officer candidates to prepare for that position?**

Yes                       No

**12. Based on your opinion, please rank the following items on the basis of importance to the company officer based on the following scale:**

|                    |                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 = Strongly Agree | 4 = Disagree          |
| 2 = Agree          | 5 = Strongly Disagree |
| 3 = Neutral        |                       |

|                               |   |   |   |   |   |
|-------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| ● Time Management             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ● Leadership                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ● Computer Knowledge          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ● Organization Rules/Policies | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ● Written Communication       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ● Oral Communication          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ● Discipline                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ● Ethics                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ● Performance Appraisals      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ● Fire Prevention             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

|                            |   |   |   |   |   |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| ● Fire Investigation       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ● Instructional Techniques | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ● Employee Counseling      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ● Management Skills        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

(Prepared by Stephen C. Prziborowski.)

APPENDIX C  
SURVEY RESULTS



**COMPANY OFFICER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM SURVEY<sup>2</sup>**

**1. What is the total number of personnel employed by your fire department?**  
(Check one)

|                  |      |     |
|------------------|------|-----|
| Less than 99     | (23) | 72% |
| 100-299          | (8)  | 25% |
| Greater than 300 | (1)  | 3%  |

**2. Are you the department Training Officer?**

|     |      |     |
|-----|------|-----|
| Yes | (26) | 81% |
| No  | (6)  | 19% |

If you answered no, please list your rank/assignment.

Of the 6 respondents who answered no, the following ranks were reported:

- Fire Chief (4)
- Captain EMS/Fire Marshall (1)
- Did not state rank (1)

**3. Does your fire department offer a formalized company officer development academy or program?**

|     |      |     |
|-----|------|-----|
| Yes | (15) | 47% |
| No  | (17) | 53% |

NOTE: Some of the comments that respondents voluntarily added included the following:

- “Acting fire officer academy”
- “(1) Career Development, (2) State CCO classes, (3) Peer review and development”
- “We personally don’t offer an in-house officer academy. Through the San Mateo County Training Officers Association, a 40-hour course for new company officers is now offered. We will send future officers through upon their promotion.”
- “The county of San Mateo’s Training Officers have a formalized academy that we participate in— we also (in-house) have a “captain’s handbook and career development guide that we teach.”

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<sup>2</sup>Response frequencies are in parentheses, followed by percentage of total.

**4. If your fire department does offer a company officer development academy, when is it performed?**

Prior to getting promoted (10)  
After getting promoted (8)

NOTE:

- 3 respondents answered both
- 1 respondent added, “We conduct 1 academy each year. Some students have promoted prior to the class.”

**5. Who is allowed to attend your company officer development academy?**

Newly promoted officers (7)  
Members on the officer promotional list (7)  
Anyone may attend (7)

NOTE:

- 5 respondents answered both newly promoted officers and members on the promotional list
- 1 respondent added a new category: “Acting Captain eligibility.”
- 1 respondent stated, “We allow 12 students.”
- 1 respondent answered, “Both members on the Officer Promotional List and anyone may attend.”

**6. What is the length of your company officer development academy?**

One week (1)  
Two weeks (2)  
Three weeks (0)  
Four weeks (1)  
Five weeks (0)  
Six weeks (0)  
Other (explain)

NOTE: Answers provided after “Other” included:

- 10 days, 8 hours each
- 9 sections to complete, then oral board
- Self-paced, 1-year time limit
- 48 hours over 6 weeks
- Voluntary 6 month program
- Three-part/2-year program
- 40 hours total, 5 days/8 hours over a 5-week period

- Combined into career development
- 36 hours
- Self-guided at this time
- 1 respondent checked the “other” box and then left the space blank

**7. How would you rate the overall quality of your department’s company officer development training?**

|                   |      |
|-------------------|------|
| Excellent         | (1)  |
| Good              | (12) |
| Needs improvement | (1)  |

NOTE: 1 respondent wrote, “Can’t answer, we have not sent anybody through the new program yet.”

**8. As a general rule, are company officers in your department better prepared to handle day-to-day administrative and personnel functions than they are fire or EMS incidents?**

|           |      |     |
|-----------|------|-----|
| Yes       | (2)  | 6%  |
| No        | (25) | 81% |
| Undecided | (4)  | 13% |

**9. Are company officers in your fire department adequately prepared to perform the necessary skills of a company officer?**

|           |      |     |
|-----------|------|-----|
| Yes       | (22) | 67% |
| No        | (6)  | 22% |
| Undecided | (3)  | 9%  |

NOTE: 1 respondent added: “Because of fire officer certificate and in-house delivery of company officer handbook (training chief instructs).”

**10. If your department does not offer a formalized company officer development academy, does your department provide other training and/or education to captains or potential captain candidates?**

|     |      |     |
|-----|------|-----|
| Yes | (22) | 72% |
| No  | (3)  | 1%  |

If yes, please briefly describe the training.

NOTE: Answers provided by respondents included:

- “CSFM training, acting captain program”
- 6 (19%) respondents did not answer either yes or no
- 1 respondent marked yes, but did not elaborate as requested
- “San Mateo County Fire Officer Academy, SFM Level 2 tuition”
- “Starting acting captain program”
- “Officer simulations and drills, outside courses in command and management”
- “Continuing educational incentive pay with continuing education units required”
- “We have pay incentives for training and we try to host company officer training annually”
- “Acting Captain course, also county fire company officer academy”
- “Outside educational opportunities are funded by the department”
- “Outside training is encouraged and partial funding”
- “We are in the beginning stages of offering acting captain training”
- “Acting company officer list, they shadow company officer and perform company officer duties”
- “10 day class on company officer skills development prior to each exam (every 2 years, open to any department member that is considering taking the exam)”
- “Pay for education”
- “We offer 3 classes at our academy in Ione”
- “Some supervisory training. Optional company officers academy”
- “Ongoing officer training in house”
- “Training curriculum from the State Fire Marshal agency, Industrial Emergency Council, firecourse.com, and the Contra Costa County Training Institute are highly recommended and endorsed by the fire district”
- “Upon promotion, new officers switch to 40 hour work week for approximately 5 weeks. During this 5 week period the new officer is rotated through fire administration, fire prevention, training, and communications. The purpose of the rotation is for the employee to get a grasp of what each division’s roles and responsibilities are and how the company officer relates to these divisions. This is a good opportunity for the employee to discover why things are the way they are, and how to effectively promote change.”
- “Company Officer handbook is delivered in class in-house.”

**11. Whether or not your department offers a company officer development academy, do you believe there is value in a formalized training program to assist potential company officer candidates to prepare for that position?**

|     |      |      |
|-----|------|------|
| Yes | (32) | 100% |
| No  | (0)  | 0%   |

**12. Based on your opinion, please rank the following items on the basis of importance to the company officer based on the following scale:**

- |                    |                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 = Strongly Agree | 4 = Disagree          |
| 2 = Agree          | 5 = Strongly Disagree |
| 3 = Neutral        |                       |

| <u>Item</u>                 | <i>n</i> | %  |
|-----------------------------|----------|----|
| Time Management             |          |    |
| 1                           | 15       | 47 |
| 2                           | 16       | 50 |
| 3                           | 1        | 3  |
| 4                           | 0        | 0  |
| 5                           | 0        | 0  |
| Leadership                  |          |    |
| 1                           | 26       | 81 |
| 2                           | 6        | 19 |
| 3                           | 0        | 0  |
| 4                           | 0        | 0  |
| 5                           | 0        | 0  |
| Computer Knowledge          |          |    |
| 1                           | 4        | 12 |
| 2                           | 21       | 66 |
| 3                           | 6        | 19 |
| 4                           | 1        | 3  |
| 5                           | 0        | 0  |
| Organization Rules/Policies |          |    |
| 1                           | 17       | 53 |
| 2                           | 15       | 47 |
| 3                           | 0        | 0  |
| 4                           | 0        | 0  |
| 5                           | 0        | 0  |
| Written Communication       |          |    |
| 1                           | 1        | 34 |
| 2                           | 18       | 56 |
| 3                           | 3        | 10 |
| 4                           | 0        | 0  |
| 5                           | 0        | 0  |

| <u>Item</u>            | <i>n</i> | %  |
|------------------------|----------|----|
| Oral Communication     |          |    |
| 1                      | 11       | 34 |
| 2                      | 20       | 63 |
| 3                      | 1        | 3  |
| 4                      | 0        | 0  |
| 5                      | 0        | 0  |
| Discipline             |          |    |
| 1                      | 14       | 44 |
| 2                      | 17       | 53 |
| 3                      | 1        | 3  |
| 4                      | 0        | 0  |
| 5                      | 0        | 0  |
| Ethics                 |          |    |
| 1                      | 19       | 59 |
| 2                      | 9        | 28 |
| 3                      | 4        | 13 |
| 4                      | 0        | 0  |
| 5                      | 0        | 0  |
| Performance Appraisals |          |    |
| 1                      | 6        | 19 |
| 2                      | 31       | 66 |
| 3                      | 5        | 15 |
| 4                      | 0        | 0  |
| 5                      | 0        | 0  |
| Fire Prevention        |          |    |
| 1                      | 2        | 6  |
| 2                      | 20       | 63 |
| 3                      | 10       | 31 |
| 4                      | 0        | 0  |
| 5                      | 0        | 0  |
| Fire Investigation     |          |    |
| 1                      | 0        | 0  |
| 2                      | 19       | 60 |
| 3                      | 11       | 34 |
| 4                      | 2        | 6  |
| 5                      | 0        | 0  |

| <u>Item</u>                | <i>n</i> | %  |
|----------------------------|----------|----|
| Instructional Techniques   |          |    |
| 1                          | 8        | 25 |
| 2                          | 20       | 63 |
| 3                          | 4        | 12 |
| 4                          | 0        | 0  |
| 5                          | 0        | 0  |
| Employee Counseling        |          |    |
| 1                          | 13       | 41 |
| 2                          | 15       | 47 |
| 3                          | 4        | 12 |
| 4                          | 0        | 0  |
| 5                          | 0        | 0  |
| Management Skills          |          |    |
| 1                          | 8        | 25 |
| 2                          | 23       | 72 |
| 3                          | 1        | 3  |
| 4                          | 0        | 0  |
| 5                          | 0        | 0  |
| Report Writing             |          |    |
| 1                          | 15       | 47 |
| 2                          | 15       | 47 |
| 3                          | 2        | 6  |
| 4                          | 0        | 0  |
| 5                          | 0        | 0  |
| Strategy and Tactics       |          |    |
| 1                          | 23       | 72 |
| 2                          | 8        | 25 |
| 3                          | 1        | 3  |
| 4                          | 0        | 0  |
| 5                          | 0        | 0  |
| Emergency Scene Operations |          |    |
| 1                          | 22       | 69 |
| 2                          | 10       | 31 |
| 3                          | 0        | 0  |
| 4                          | 0        | 0  |
| 5                          | 0        | 0  |

| <u>Item</u>          | <i>n</i> | %  |
|----------------------|----------|----|
| Budgeting            |          |    |
| 1                    | 1        | 3  |
| 2                    | 14       | 44 |
| 3                    | 16       | 50 |
| 4                    | 1        | 3  |
| 5                    | 0        | 0  |
| Diversity/Harassment |          |    |
| 1                    | 17       | 53 |
| 2                    | 13       | 41 |
| 3                    | 2        | 6  |
| 4                    | 0        | 0  |
| 5                    | 0        | 0  |
| Customer Service     |          |    |
| 1                    | 24       | 75 |
| 2                    | 8        | 25 |
| 3                    | 0        | 0  |
| 4                    | 0        | 0  |
| 5                    | 0        | 0  |

(Prepared by Stephen C. Prziborowki.)



APPENDIX D

EXTERNAL SURVEY: RESULTS FOR QUESTION 12

TABLE D1. External Survey: Results for Question 12

| Rank            | Subject                     | Points | Average | Median | Mode             |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|--------|---------|--------|------------------|
| 1               | Customer Service            | 160    | 5.00    | 1      | 1                |
| 2               | Leadership                  | 154    | 4.81    | 1      | 1                |
| 3               | Strategy and Tactics        | 150    | 4.69    | 1      | 1                |
| 4 <sup>a</sup>  | Emergency Scene Operations  | 150    | 4.69    | 1      | 1                |
| 5               | Organization Rules/Policies | 145    | 4.53    | 1      | 1                |
| 6               | Diversity/Harassment        | 143    | 4.47    | 1      | 1                |
| 7 <sup>a</sup>  | Ethics                      | 143    | 4.47    | 1      | 1                |
| 8               | Time Management             | 142    | 4.44    | 2      | 2                |
| 9               | Discipline                  | 141    | 4.41    | 2      | 2                |
| 10 <sup>a</sup> | Report Writing              | 141    | 4.41    | 2      | 1/2 <sup>a</sup> |
| 11              | Employee Counseling         | 137    | 4.28    | 2      | 2                |
| 12              | Written Communication       | 136    | 4.25    | 2      | 2                |
| 13              | Management Skills           | 135    | 4.22    | 2      | 2                |
| 14 <sup>a</sup> | Oral Communications         | 135    | 4.22    | 2      | 2                |
| 15              | Instructional Techniques    | 132    | 4.13    | 2      | 2                |
| 16              | Performance Appraisals      | 129    | 4.03    | 2      | 2                |
| 17              | Computer Knowledge          | 124    | 3.88    | 2      | 2                |
| 18              | Fire Prevention             | 120    | 3.75    | 2      | 2                |
| 19              | Fire Investigation          | 113    | 3.53    | 2      | 2                |
| 20              | Budgeting                   | 111    | 3.47    | 3      | 3                |

<sup>a</sup>Tie.

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