

Public Hearing – CONFIRE  
Assembly Bill 2561 Compliance Report  
April 22, 2025

PRESENTED BY: DAMIAN PARSONS

# Agenda

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- Introduction & Background
- Position Vacancy Status
- Recruitment Efforts
- Retention Strategies
- Hiring Process Obstacles
- Q&A

# About AB 2561

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- Enacted to improve transparency in public agency hiring
- Require annual public hearing on:
  - Staffing levels and vacancies
  - Recruitment and retention efforts
  - Barriers to hiring qualified personnel

# CONFIRE Overview

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CONFIRE (Consolidated Fire Agencies)



Provides dispatch services, mutual aid coordination, and support for fire agencies in San Bernardino County



Staffed by technical specialist, dispatchers, finance and administration personnel

# Position Vacancy Status (5008)

Position	Authorized	Filled	Vacant	Vacancy Rate
Call Taker	14	10	4	28.57%
Communications Manager	3	0	1	33.33%
MIS Director	1	0	1	100%
BG Public Service Employee	4	3	1	25%
Information System Analyst 3	3	2	1	33.33%
Fiscal Specialist	2	1	1	50%
Administrative Secretary I	1	0	1	100%

# Position Vacancy Status (5010)

Position	Authorized	Filled	Vacant	Vacancy Rate
Cont Emergency Communications Nurse Per Diem	4	2	2	50%
Cont Emergency Communications Nurse	12	4	8	66.66%
Emergency Communications Nurse Manager	1	0	1	100%
Emergency Communications Nurse	4	0	4	100%

# Position Vacancy Status (5020)

Position	Authorized	Filled	Vacant	Vacancy Rate
Dispatcher	4	0	4	100%
Finance Manager	1	0	1	100%
Executive Assistant	1	0	1	100%
Executive Director	1	0	1	100%
Deputy Exec. Director	1	0	1	100%
Buyer	1	0	1	100%
Executive Assistant	1	0	1	100%
Supervising Dispatcher	1	0	1	100%

# Vacancy Threshold Within Bargaining Units

When vacancies in a bargaining unit exceed 20% of authorized full-time positions, the following data highlights units above this threshold.

Position	Bargaining Unit	Total Vacancies	Total Applicants	Avg time to hire
Call Taker	ESU	4	833	35+ days
Dispatcher	ESU	8	121	35+ days
Communications Manager	Teamsters	1	22	35+ days
Emergency Communications Nurse	NRP	4	26	35+ days
Emergency Communications Nurse Manager	NRP	1	9	35+ days
MIS Director	Special Districts / Fire District Exempt	1	30	35+ days

On average, it takes over 35 days to complete the hiring process—from recruitment (14 days), salary determination, and conditional job offers to background checks, drug testing, and final job offer and onboarding.



# Recruitment Efforts

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- Bringing recruitment efforts in-house
- Expanded outreach to local colleges and training programs
- Use of additional recruitment websites
  - Indeed
  - ZipRecruiter
  - LinkedIn
- Obtained our own Department of Justice account to process background checks
- Adding SmartHire to screen/test new applicants
- Continuous posting for high-turnover rolls

# Retention Strategies

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- Competitive pay and benefits
- Career pathway development (Call Taker → Dispatcher → Supervising Dispatcher → Emergency Communications Manager)
- Shift flexibility
- Staff recognition

# Hiring Process Obstacles

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- Lengthy background check and clearance process
- Limited applicant pool
- Job postings on CONFIREs NeoGov site generating significant candidate pools
- High stress/workload nature of dispatch role
- Competition with other agencies offering higher starting pay

# Solutions and Future Plans

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Working to shorten hiring timelines



Increased investment in internal training



Reviewing job requirements to expand eligibility



Ongoing assessment and adjustment of recruitment strategies

# Questions and Comments

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- Public Comment Session

- Please submit general written comments to the Clerk of the Board, Liz Berry, at [Lberry@confire.org](mailto:Lberry@confire.org).
- For inquiries related to hiring or open positions, please contact HR Generalist, Nicole Lemez, at [Nlemez@confire.org](mailto:Nlemez@confire.org).

