



# THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – April 8, 2022

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“How to handle stress like a dog: If you can’t eat it or play with it, then pee on it and walk away.”

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CAFMA Connect Episode 76: The Doug and Scott show returns 😊

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## The Chief's Desk

There is a lot happening within the Agency right now. Between supply chain issues, inflation, ambulance challenges, legislative efforts, and wage/benefit discussions there is a lot of information being passed around. Specifically related to wage and benefits, I've heard different accounts of information that are not accurate. My hope this week is to address those inaccuracies, and remind everyone that you have opportunity to reach out to Senior Staff for clarity on any point. We understand that you may or may not agree with our position, but at least you will have the correct information.

The Wage and Benefit Study that CAFMA commissioned was completed and submitted to us in December of 2020. Once received, we worked jointly through Labor/Management, as well as the Wage/Benefit Committee, to develop and implement a plan. That plan was implemented on July 1, 2021. To that end, the Wage Study is not three years old, it is less than 18 months old. Additionally, we are not two years into implementation of the plan, we are nine months into implementation. We will finalize the move to our new scale as agreed on July 1, 2022. That is one year from the initial implementation date.

As we worked together to develop the new wage scale, the Union Executive Board requested a two-year implementation. They hoped to avoid at least some of the compression that results from compressing a wage scale. Ultimately, the budget numbers for the current fiscal year did not lend itself to a one-year implementation, so the two-year request worked out well. In my opinion, I think a one-year implementation would have been better had we been able to accommodate all of the increases.

There was discussion as part of developing the plan regarding the number of steps a person would receive on day one. As with anything, there is a limit to the amount of money we are able to spend each year. To that end, we developed a transition plan that would provide as many steps as possible on July 1, which meant some did not receive an additional step at their evaluation. The question we had to ask was, if we only have the funds to increase a person, as an example, 10.5% this year, is it better to give them 7% July 1 so they can receive a step at their evaluation, or is it better to give them the full 10.5% on July 1? Simply put, receiving the full amount July 1 meant the person would earn more money for the year than if we waited to give them the other 3.5% at their evaluation. We did offer to break it up to avoid any confusion or feeling that any individual somehow lost out on a step for the year; however, all parties agreed that it was better to provide the funds up front.

Those who were already on the new scale received smaller increases and received a step with their evaluation. In short, they followed the standard model used by our agency.

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### **Upcoming Events:**

April 11: Policy Committee,  
Panel discussion AFCA, Possibly  
a trip to the Capitol

April 12: Speak at Veteran's  
Breakfast, Statewide Mutual  
Aid meeting, Possible trip to  
Capitol

April 13: Possible trip to Capitol

April 14: AFSA meeting, PV  
Council Meeting

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### **Board Meetings:**

April 18: Administration  
Budget work shop – 1300-1500

April 25: Administration  
CVFD – 1600-1630  
CYFD – 163-1700  
CAFMA – 1700-1830

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## **More than the tailpipe: Locating firehouse toxins**

**By: Sara Jahnke, Ph.D.**

There is often an underestimation of just how bad diesel exhaust is for health in general, and for firefighters specifically. Diesel exhaust is made of particulates and ultrafine particulates of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), nitro-PAHs, sulfates, nitrates and metals.

“Diesel exhaust poses a cancer risk greater than any other air pollutant, as well as causing other short- and long-term health problems,” according to Dr. H.E. Wichmann, Institute of Epidemiology, in a key toxicology [study](#).

Scientific literature on diesel exhaust particles has documented increased risks from the smallest amount of exhaust present in air pollution. Both animal and human studies suggest that diesel exhaust has a cardiovascular impact through altering blood pressure, heart rate and other functions.

Even more alarming, a [study](#) by Young and colleagues found elevated levels of endocrine-disrupting PFAS chemicals in turnout gear locker rooms and living areas. While debate continues about which contaminants embed in gear and how stable they are, data suggests that gear off-gasses post incident in the bay. Other activities in the bay, such as working with extraction tools, can also contribute to ambient contaminants.

[Firerescue1.com](http://firerescue1.com)

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## **Chief's Desk Continued**

There is no way to implement a plan like this that makes every person completely happy. That said, what we did was an effort to improve pay and benefits across the board for the organization. We are a tax supported entity that does not produce and sell a product that can have a banner year. In short, we have limited funds based on property taxes which cannot outperform expectations, unlike a sales tax.

We have heard recent comparisons regarding raises for teachers or for Town of Prescott Valley employees, etc. Those are not relevant comparisons. For example, teachers in the state rank 49<sup>th</sup> in pay across the nation and have not received significant raises in years. Our Agency received significant increases last year as we corrected based on the Wage and Benefit Study while the teachers did not – to our knowledge.

I had a lunch meeting with the Town Manager of Prescott Valley on Wednesday this week. He said that part of their COLA this year is an effort to align their personnel with the market – just as we started doing last year. Comparing where we are at this point in history with the teachers or the Town are not valid comparisons given they are working this year on what we started working on last year. In short, we

are a year ahead of them with the implementation of a pay scale that is commensurate with the market, and our focus is on maintaining at least the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile.

The other nugget of information I received from the Town Manager is that permit numbers are decreasing. This is not a result of lack of demand, rather it is a lack of resources, e.g. supply chain issues. A slowdown in new home building has a direct impact on our bottom line, especially given the limits placed on us under Prop 117. Without new growth, our projected annual net assessed valuation increase (NAV) is closer to 4%. The only way we see NAV's above 5% is with new development, i.e. the more roof tops, the better our return. This is one of the areas of concern that Senior Staff has been considering as we work on the budget for next fiscal year.

To that end, we have cut over \$2 million in spending and denied approximately \$146,000 in program improvement requests. This includes cutting two much-needed Non-Operations positions. Unfortunately, the cuts are akin to kicking the can down the road. Ultimately, we will need to purchase the items in the future, however the cost of those goods will likely be higher. That said, we need to maintain and build the Capitol Reserve.

Together, we can work to ensure a sustainable future for our organization. Those who have been here a while know the pain of wage freezes, as well as the frustration of the compression that accompanies long-term freezes. We do not want future generations of our CAFMA team to have to endure such harsh measures.

I think we all agree that the current economic environment in our country is a challenge, and the housing prices/rent in our area serve as a significant challenge for many of our folks today. In staff's opinion, we do need to consider some level of pay adjustment that fits within our financial and political means this next fiscal year. What that will be, I do not know. We know that there is a desire for a COLA v. what we had agreed to work towards last year, e.g. Acting Pay, PEHP contribution increase, etc.

The base budget this year includes the final transition into the new scale as was promised, and accounts for the ridiculous increases we are seeing in some of our fixed costs e.g. workers compensation, dispatch, etc. As I mentioned, we have made cuts to ensure sustainability and to make room for an additional wage adjustment. This has not been a record year for revenues as some of you may have heard. In fact, we are slightly below NAV revenue projections while expenses have soared in several areas. A challenge? Yes. That said, we have made the necessary adjustments to balance our budget and cover our expenses. It is certainly not where we would like to be, but just as many other organizations in the country right now, we will make it work.

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# March Response Report - 2022

Land Area: 369 sq. miles    Population: ~106,500    Fire Stations: 10 Full-Staffed

### Responses in District

TOTAL FIRE INCIDENTS	15
STRUCTURE FIRE	0
STRUCTURE FIRE; CONFINED	1
MOBILE HOME/PORTABLE BLDG	4
VEHICLE FIRE	0
BRUSH/GRASS/WILDLAND FIRE	7
TRASH FIRE/OTHER	3

**Fire is 1.27% of call volume**

TOTAL RESCUE & EMS	807
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**EMS is 68.04% of call volume**

OVERPRESSURE / OVERHEAT	0
HAZARDOUS CONDITION	13
SERVICE CALL	225
GOOD INTENT	90
FALSE ALARM/OTHER	36

**Other is 30.69% of call volume**

TOTAL INCIDENTS IN DISTRICT	1,186
INCIDENT RESPONSES BY CAFMA	1,321
TYPE-1 UNIT RESPONSES BY CAFMA	1,428

### Fire Loss Summary

Residential Fire Loss	\$32,350
Commercial Fire Loss	\$0
Vehicle Fire Loss	\$0

### Top 5 Call Types

741	EMS
117	Assist Invalid
59	Public Service
44	Cancelled en Route
25	Vehicle Accident w/Injuries

Average total # of calls per day	38.26
Average fire calls per day	0.48
Average EMS calls per day	26.03
Average all other calls per day	11.74

### Call Volume at PRC

	Month	Year-to-Date
PFD	822	2,588
CAFMA	1,186	3,618
GCFD	11	34
OD	11	34
WKFD	3	7

### Unit Responses

Unit	District	Total	Move Up
E50	154	167	21
E51	28	162	54
E53	191	192	7
E540	44	48	23
E54	146	150	1
E57	47	48	6
E58	168	171	1
E59	165	179	4
E61	114	116	8
E62	133	137	5
E63	52	57	28
TR50	1	1	0
B3	47	52	0
B6	33	36	0
Rescues	40	40	0

TYPE-1 ENGINES

### Calls by Municipality

Calls in Town of Chino Valley	193
Calls in Town of Prescott Valley	643
Calls in Town of Dewey-Humboldt	31
Calls in District, Unincorporated Areas	319
Calls Out of District	10

### Aid Agreement Summary

Aid Given to Prescott	138
Aid Received from Prescott	61
Aid Given to WVFD	1
Aid Received from WVFD	1
Mutual Aid Given	0
Mutual Aid Received	0