

The consolidation of the South Placer Fire District and Loomis Fire District

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CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I hereby certify that this paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another.

Signed: _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "P. D. A.", written over a horizontal line.

Abstract

The South Placer Fire District (SPFD) had been administering a contract for administrative services for Loomis Fire District (LFD) the Districts were two years into a three-year contract when this research was conducted. It had been proposed to work toward the possibility of consolidating the two Districts. The problem is despite a current successful contract to provide administrative services to the LFD by SPFD both Districts employees and governing boards have concerns about consolidating the two Districts. The purpose of this research is to identify why consolidating the two Districts creates concerns with members of both Districts. Descriptive research methods were used to answer the following questions a) How have comparable Districts been successful with their consolidation efforts? b) What are the concerns of the employees of SPFD with consolidating the Districts? c) What are the concerns of the employees of LFD with consolidating the Districts? d) What are the concerns of both SPFD and LFD's governing boards regarding consolidating the Districts? The procedures utilized included multiple documented interviews of SPFD employees, LFD employees, SPFD board members, LFD board members, and chief officers from agencies that experienced successful consolidations. Additional procedures included four separate surveys of SPFD employees, LFD employees, SPFD board members, and LFD board members. The results indicated how comparable agencies have successfully consolidated Fire Districts and identified the concerns of the employees and boards of both SPFD and LFD. Recommendations included a) conduct a thorough and comprehensive consolidation feasibility study, b) form a consolidation guidance committee, c) establish an internal consolidation communication plan, and d) establish an external consolidation communication plan.

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Today's fire service is a dynamic network of agencies that provides needed critical services to communities throughout the nation. The common mission of these institutions is centered on protecting the lives of those that live in these communities. This mission is at times saddled by economic, political, cultural, and territorial differences between agencies tasked with the same mission. In the current tough economic times, many organizations are finding a way to work through these differences and are considering the consolidation of services. "This is not a new concept; it has been utilized for many years. It is simply a model that decreases the inefficiencies of two or more autonomous fire entities by combining them into one single, more efficient one" (Kraus, 2014, p. 21).

Although not a new concept it can be a complicated proposal to deliver to members of fire service agencies. The fire service is rich in tradition there is pride in each organization in most every community across the nation. Many members of modern day fire agencies are just like their predecessors and are unwilling to see the potential benefits of consolidating services even when the proposal is a win for both organizations. There can be many reasons for fire agency members to resist change and become so set in their ways including the status of their agency either career or volunteer, differences in training, staffing, or cultural differences (Johnson, 2015, p. 553).

The problem is despite a current successful contract to provide administrative services to the Loomis Fire District (LFD) by South Placer Fire District (SPFD) both Districts employees and governing boards have concerns about consolidating the two Districts. The purpose of this research is to identify why consolidating the two Districts creates concerns with members of both Districts. The research questions utilized to answer the stated problem are as follows. a) How

have comparable Districts been successful with their consolidation efforts? b) What are the concerns of the employees of SPFD with consolidating the Districts? c) What are the concerns of the employees of LFD with consolidating the Districts? d) What are the concerns of both SPFD and LFD's governing boards regarding consolidating the Districts? The Descriptive method of research was used to conduct this research. The approach was encompassing, using internal interviews, external interviews, internal surveys, and a thorough literature review.

Background and Significance

SPFD and LFD have a long history of cooperation and working together to provide services to the southeast region of Placer County. SPFD covers approximately 36 square miles and serves a population nearing 30,000. LFD protects approximately 18 square miles, and its population is approaching 12,000. The Districts share a border that spans about 7 miles. Both agencies are Special Districts operating under the California Special Districts Act of 1984.

Currently, SPFD is executing an administrative contract to provide services to LFD that provides for full regulatory oversight of the LFD. Also included in the administrative contract is personnel supervision, budgeting, planning, vehicle maintenance and shift work Battalion Chief coverage. In addition, SPFD's Fire Chief is responsible to the LFD Board of Directors and has full administrative responsibility for LFD.

LFD was formed in 1930 as a volunteer organization and remained that way until the mid-1980's when they hired their first paid personnel to respond to the increasing demands of medical calls within the District. LFD is responsible for fire protection to the majority of the Town of Loomis and the adjacent unincorporated area surrounding their District. LFD has unique characteristics and significant hazards including a vast area of urban wildland interface,

Interstate 80, major underground high-pressure gas lines and two Pacific Railroad tracks that bisect the District.

LFD operates out of one staffed station and one unstaffed station that is used for housing the reserve apparatus and general storage. Station 28 is LFD's staffed station that operates on the 48/96 shift schedule with a captain, engineer, and an apprentice firefighter. The schedule has the employees working two days on and four days off on a three platoon rotation. The personnel at the station cross staff a type one structure engine and a type III wildland engine which they responded to 1,317 calls for service in 2015 74% were medical, 10% fires, 16% were other calls including false call and service calls. Staffing is augmented with a reserve firefighter program which has been in place for the past eight years. Currently, there are six reserves required to be on shift two days a month and participate in training every Thursday evening. The reserve program is troubled with high turnover and is in the process of being examined for long term sustainability.

SPFD was formed in 1952 and was administered as part of the Citrus Heights Fire District (CHFD). CHFD operated a paid Fire District and brought a paid administrative staff to SPFD to oversee volunteer operations. The chief officers of SPFD were all paid chiefs of the CHFD this aspect of SPFD's origination led the District to be a well-organized agency from its inception. In 1962, SPFD formally ended its agreement with the CHFD over a dispute between chief officers. The chiefs that were working at SPFD became the first full-time paid personnel of the organization.

SPFD currently operates out of four staffed stations and one volunteer station. SPFD operates three advanced life support (ALS) engine companies, one ALS truck company and two ALS transporting ambulances. These crews also cross staff wildland apparatus assigned to each

station during the wildland firefighting season. SPFD also works a 48/96 work schedule on the same rotation as LFD. SPFD responded to 2400 calls for service resulting in 6,000 apparatus responses. Of the 2400 calls 75% were medical, 13% fires, 12% were other calls including false call and service calls. The community is characterized as a bedroom community with high-end value homes and very light commercial development. The average square footage for residential homes is over 6,000 square feet with many homes over 12,000 square feet in size.

Notwithstanding the wildland urban interface threat, there is a minimal risk due to high hazard infrastructure.

Station 15 is minimum staffed with three personnel a captain, engineer, and paramedic firefighter they respond a type one engine and cross staff a grass unit for wildland assignments. Station 16 is the newest station in the District the District was forced to move the full-time personnel out to other stations during the recession in 2010. Station 16 is currently staffed by volunteers until the District can support staffing the station financially.

The Headquarters Station 17 is staffed with five a captain, engineer, and firefighter makes up the minimum staffing for the truck company while one additional firefighter/paramedic and one apprentice firefighter /emergency medical technician (EMT) staff an ALS ambulance. The ambulance crew responds when in quarters on the truck to structure fires leaving the ambulance unstaffed. This allows for a five-person truck company at times increasing effectiveness of the truck company operations. Also, the crew at this station cross staff a wildland brush unit assigned to the station.

Station 19 is staffed with three personnel a captain, ALS engineer, and an intern firefighter. These personnel cross staff a type one engine and a type three wildland engine.

Station 20 is staffed with two personnel a Captain and a Paramedic Engineer. The two personnel at station 20 cross staff three apparatus an ALS Ambulance, type I engine, and a grass truck.

Comparing the two Districts fiscal operations SPFD being the larger agency and operating five stations has a current operating budget of \$8.1 million and a total budget of \$9.6 million. SPFD has a contingent reserve policy of 5% of its operating budget and has designated reserve accounts for apparatus, facilities, and major equipment totaling 1.3 million. LFD operating one station has an operating budget of \$1.4 million and a total budget of \$1.7 million. LFD has a contingent reserve policy that matches SPFD's that is 5% of its operation budget and has designated reserve accounts for apparatus, facilities, and major equipment totaling \$1.5 million.

Funding for the Districts varies significantly SPFD having had paid personnel from literally their beginning put the agency in a good position for future funding. In the late 1970's in California voters passed Proposition 13 which set property tax rates and limited yearly increases to 2%. The tax rate was set at 12.5% or 12.5 cents on every dollar of property tax collected on homes within the District. LFD, on the other hand, was a predominate volunteer District and when the tax rate was set for LFD it was set at 2.1% with LFD receiving just 2.1 cents on every property tax dollar generated in their District.

These two funding streams worked well for both Districts until the mid-1980's when the demands of emergency medical services (EMS) made it apparent that there was a need for around the clock staffing. Both Districts went to the voters and asked them to pass a special tax for fire and EMS services. SPFD's special tax was approved by over two-thirds majority and was set at \$70 per inhabitable structure. LFD was successful and passed their special tax at \$98 per inhabitable structure. These funding streams worked fine for both agencies until there

became a demand for three person staffed engines and ALS care. SPFD's property tax revenue has grown significantly over time due to construction and population increases within its boundaries while LFD has seen limited population growth within its borders.

LFD in the early 2000's was failing fiscally and spending their reserves to operate on a daily basis. Once again LFD went to the voters to assess another special tax and failed twice at the ballot box over four years to secure additional funding. In 2007, LFD tried a different strategy and put to the voters an engineered assessment and started a serious marketing campaign to boost support for the assessment. LFD was successful and passed an engineered assessment with a yearly cost of living increase attached. This assessment was for \$200 per residence and was adopted just before the recession hit the United States (U.S.) economy.

In 2014, LFD put a request out for proposals to area agencies that were interested in administering their District. Their current part-time Chief was resigning, and they were looking for another option rather than hiring a full-time Chief. They realized that the work of running the agency was more than one part-time Chief could handle.

SPFD was successful in obtaining the contract and since that time has worked with the employees of LFD to make operations more efficient between the two agencies. There has been a significant move to mirror job descriptions, policies and procedures, and day to day emergent and non-emergent operations. Currently, LFD has one year left on the administrative contract for services with SPFD. SPFD is currently working toward a consolidation between the two agencies and LFD can see the benefits of moving toward this possibility after working so closely with SPFD over the past two years. The administrative workload of running two agencies operationally combined while keeping the administration's separate including two boards and

two board meetings a month is not a long term viable solution to LFD's management and operational leadership needs.

If the two districts were not to consolidate or to cease continuing toward that goal SPFD would have to renegotiate the terms of the contract for services before extending the contract past the year that is remaining. To effectively administer both agencies as combined operationally but separate administratively is straining the effectiveness of SPFD's administrative team. An additional staff chief officer would be needed with responsibilities over training and EMS in addition to being on site at LFD to oversee and administer LFD's separate programs and administrative needs.

This research is directly connected to the Executive Leadership (EL) course curriculum in many areas. The author believes that the most pertinent information can be found in Unit Four and focuses on thinking politically. "Thinking politically involves recognizing that competing interests and expectations exist within organizations" (Executive leadership, 2015, p. 4-4). By thinking politically, the leadership of both agencies will be prepared to contend with the concerns of all stakeholders and efficiently effect consolidation between the two agencies. By consolidating SPFD and LFD fire and EMS services will be streamlined and more efficient providing for increased abilities and service to the community, region, and State.

The problem is both Districts employees and governing boards have concerns about consolidating the two Districts this is directly linked to three of the five strategic goals within the United States Fire Administration's (USFA) strategic plan for fiscal years 2014-2018. The most common correlation can be made to goal number two, "Promote Response, Local Planning and Preparedness for All Hazards" (Strategic plan, 2014, p. 9). By consolidating the two Districts

local response, capabilities, and efficiencies will be increased improving the region's preparedness for response to all hazards.

Literature Review

The Fire service throughout history has looked internally to its regarded forefathers to help guide them into the future this has bred traditions that have held the profession back from reaching its full potential (Wallace, 2006, p. 244). “Over the past few years, leading departments have been changing this cycle by turning to the business world for new methods of management” (Wallace, 2006, p. 244). There are many reasons the business world has been engaging in mergers some of them include expansion, diversification, synergetic gains, and financial factors (Gaughan, 2002, p. 8). Fire service leaders that research what has worked for other agencies and reach out for help when they don’t know the answer can build support for the organizational change being presented (Johnson, 2015, p. 565).

Across the nation, there are many different types of cooperative efforts for fire agencies to consider. There are also many different terms used to describe consolidation from regionalization, mergers, contract for service, administrative contract, and everything in between. No matter what the process is called consolidation may be the right choice to improve the level of service provided (Kraus, 2014, p. 21).

Some successful regionalization efforts realized thru consolidation include the Orange County Fire Authority in California which protects 1.3 million people throughout the unincorporated areas and 23 cities throughout the County. The Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue Authority (TVFRA) consolidation effort protects 500,000 citizens in three counties and nine cities in the State of Oregon (Johnson, 2015, p. 554). The TVFRA through their consolidation efforts were able to reduce their citizen’s tax rates within four years of the completion of the

consolidation process. Also, TVFRA was able to cut 25 redundant positions achieved through retirements of personnel other significant savings in apparatus and personnel equated to a \$1.2 million savings in five years (Jenaway, 2014, p. 34). There are many different reasons why agencies initiate some type of consolidation usually for fiscal reasons, but the end goal is to increase services while reducing the duplication of effort seen locally with neighboring agencies (Kraus, 2014, p. 23).

Joint operating agreements are an informal option that allows agencies to share services while keeping their identity. A few of the most common services shared under joint operating agreements are training and prevention duties. Although it is not uncommon in emergency services to draft joint operating agreement that includes fire and EMS operations ("Interlocal cooperation," 2014, p. 1).

An administrative consolidation usually consists of one agency overseeing another agency's administration functions leading both agencies under one chief keeping operations separate (McGrath & McGrath, 2016, p. 2). The City of Arroyo Grande Fire Department (AGFD) and the City of Grover Beach Fire Department (GBFD) located in California entered into an administrative agreement where one agency provided the prevention officer and the other the training officer. This administrative agreement was their first step toward a successful consolidation (Hubert, Adams, & Perrault, 2009, p. 2).

In an operational consolidation both fire agencies will combine their administrative and operational functions of both departments and work as one agency (McGrath & McGrath, 2016, p. 2). This can be accomplished by formal agreement between both agencies it is important to realize that each agency is considered a legally separate entity in an operational consolidation (Cuomo, n.d., p. 3). In a full consolidation "two departments legally become a single legal

agency with taxing authority and boundaries becoming invisible” (McGrath & McGrath, 2016, p. 2). In the private sector, consolidations work the same as it would when fire agencies consolidate. “For example in 1986, the computer manufacturers Burroughs and Sperry combined to form UNISYS” (Gaughan, 2002, p. 7).

When two agencies consolidate in a merger one agency is absorbed into the other and then provides fire protection services to the new larger territory now making up the new organization (McGrath & McGrath, 2016, p. 2). In corporate America, a merger takes place when two businesses or cooperation’s combine and only one of the businesses survives (Gaughan, 2002, p. 7). “In a merger, the acquiring company assumes the assets and liabilities of the merged company. Sometimes the term statutory merger is used to refer to this type of business transaction” (Gaughan, 2002, p. 7). Mergers are equivalent to the two agencies entering into a permanent agreement that can be compared to marriage while the cooperative relationships of consolidation and contracts are akin to dating (Snook, Johnson, & Wagner, 1997, p. 19).

The fire chiefs will have to keep in mind that both governmental entities and elected governing boards will have to approve the final consolidation documents after they have been thoroughly reviewed by both agencies legal counsel (Kraus, 2014, p. 57). In Kraus’s book, he suggests that there is added value to placing lawyers onto the consolidation committee from the very beginning to advise the fire chief and the elected officials along the way (Kraus, 2014, p. 50).

One advantage of having many different types of consolidation types and levels is that agencies can start in one form of an agreement and increase the level of commitment as the community and other stakeholders adjust to the new way of operating (Hubert, Adams, & Perrault, 2009, p. 1). “Increasing the level of cooperation among two or more providers has

elements of logic, science, and money as well as very human elements such as past relationships, culture, and choices about levels of service”(Johnson, 2015, p. 554).

In Chief Michael Kraus’s book, he talks about taking the concept of regionalization slowly and moving the process along in incremental steps that may take several years to realize a full consolidation (Kraus, 2014, p. 22-23). There are so many different ways to consolidate organizations and what works for one consolidation may not work for another and may even be a complete failure even if the effort seems identical to a previous successful merger (Swinhart, 2013, p. 36).

No matter how thorough the efforts to make sure both agencies cultures are compatible there will always be cultural issues that come to the forefront in a consolidation or merger. It is critical to win the hearts and minds of the employees at all levels within the agencies undergoing the consolidation (Protiviti, 2014, p. 4). “ Cooperative service spells fear for many fire departments and elected officials, fear of the future, fear of losing identity, and fear of losing control” (Snook, Johnson, & Wagner, 1997, p. 1).

When considering consolidation, the agencies must take into account the underlying cultures of the agencies involved in the process. Relatively small items to non-fire department personnel like the color of the apparatus, department patch, and name of the organization can cripple organization support of the consolidation effort (Cuomo, n.d., p. 6). “Such issues as the name of the new organization, the color of emergency apparatus and the selection of an individual to head the organization, among many others, can derail consolidation discussions” (Jenaway, 2014, p. 7).

“The more diverse the operational cultures, the more difficult it is to blend the organizations into a single culture” (Johnson, 2015, p. 557). The job of the firefighter has many

similarities across the nation, but the distinct ways the job is done varies within each agency the fact that the situation is similar is not a guarantee that organizational cultures are compatible for consolidation (McCurdy, 2011, p. 41). Firefighters can become emotional and departmental morale may be affected negatively if it is feared that the department may lose its identity (Jenaway, 2014, p. 8).

“The very word consolidation still has the tendency to raise a level of anxiety in so many. Some view it as the greatest money saver of all times or the best method to improve services; others the loss of their power or job” (McGrath & McGrath, 2016, p. 1).

One of the major questions that need to be answered before moving forward in a consolidation effort is directed at the agency fire chiefs and their level of commitment to the effort of consolidation. The fire chiefs need to be the champions of the process and if they are not the effort will not be successful (Kraus, 2014, p. 47). “Believe it or not, some are more interested in keeping their status quo agency intact than actually trying to improve service and be efficient as possible for their citizen-customers” (Kraus, 2014, p. 47).

“As the old maxim states, “those who have power are loath to surrender it.” This is true, too in local government. Many a convincing argument to consolidate services of local governments has wilted under the heat generated by the competing resolve to maintain fiefdoms of power and retain the status quo” (Flaherty, 2005, p. 30).

In the case of the AGFD and the GBFD, a major contributing factor in their successful consolidation was the level of commitment of all personnel at all levels to put the community’s interests before their own (Hubert et al., 2009, p. 3).

Leaders involved in consolidating agencies should keep a close ear to the ground and listen to what the informal talk regarding the proposed consolidation is saying. These informal

conversations are opportunities to infuse factual information about the consolidation or merger directly into the informal conversation (Adolph & Pettit, 2009, p. 11). “If they don’t get their information from the fire chief they will get it somewhere else” (Kraus, 2014, p. 55).

It is important to keep all employees updated on the consolidation process if diligence in communication is not practiced the rumor mill will take over and employees will begin to make assumptions as to what is going on in the process (Protiviti, 2014, p. 4). “ I think the biggest obstacle is communication, you can send all the information out to the labor groups but if there is not a dollar sign attached to it they will not read it” (D. Zimmerman, personal communication, April 21, 2016). It is of the utmost importance for the fire chief to be out in front of the organization enabling the troops and giving them opportunities to ask questions about how the process is going to work and give input into the consolidation process (Kraus, 2014, p. 53). The support of outside agencies and elected officials is critical to a successful consolidation but without the chiefs of the departments involved unconditional support and confidence in the effort there is little chance of success (Jenaway, 2014, p. 8).

There are many defining moments in a merger or consolidation the big moments like deciding the organization's name can sometimes be less important to the success of the new organization than deciding the morning shift start time (Adolph & Pettit, 2009, p. 13). By analyzing the agencies differences, a consolidation can be made stronger by taking the best from each agency and blending those into the new organizational culture (Johnson, 2015, p. 556). Many may feel a loss of control when their agency is consolidated with another there may be another layer of government between the fire chief and the local government leaders. Consolidation could lead to having some of the elected officials having to ask rather than tell the fire chief what they need from the new consolidated fire agency (Johnson, 2015, p. 556).

AGFD and GBFD found that one major advantage of working together toward a consolidation is the opportunity to drop jurisdictional boundaries and reduce response time in their case (Hubert et al., 2009, p. 2). “We soon discovered that when people have an emergency, most of them are much more concerned with how quickly a fire engine shows up at their home or business than which city’s name is on the side of it” (Hubert et al., 2009, p. 2). Swinhart (2013) in his research identified that both the literature he studied and research completed showed that consolidations lead to increased levels of service. “I think the community will see a tighter nit better trained Fire District with more consistency and a better level of service” (D. Fuller, personal communication, May 4, 2016).

In the past Governor of New York Andrew Cuomo’s report on consolidating fire agencies he states some of the major advantages of consolidation include improved response times, maximizing purchasing power, centralizing management, reducing administrative costs, savings to the taxpayer, and standardizing procedures for operations and training (Cuomo, n.d., p. 6). The major area of savings in many consolidations is predominately encountered due to the restructuring of the agencies staffing and administration. The savings will be different in almost every consolidation effort depending on the actual reduction in positions achieved (Stefko, 2010, p. 6).

When consolidating fire service organizations saving money is often one of the most predominant goals of the consolidation along with increased levels of service, and greater efficiencies throughout the new organization (Curtis, 2012, p. 29).). Consolidation makes agencies stronger by improving efficiencies, better utilization of resources and can decrease the duplication of effort within the organization (Snook et al., 1997, p. 17).

Another possible advantage to consolidation comes from making the agencies more financially diverse adding a broader mix of tax revenue enables the new organization to weather the next economic downturn with a more diverse portfolio (Johnson, 2015, p. 556). “Any partnering or regionalizing of fire agencies be they municipal, or districts will show financial benefits over time. By combining the concepts of sharing revenue, sharing costs and reducing duplications, a more efficient, merged agency will evolve”(Kraus, 2014, p. 33). Revenue sharing is one method fire districts and municipalities may consider when land is being annexed into a city. By signing a revenue-sharing agreement, both agencies can take advantage of the district’s special tax and the municipality’s sales tax (Kraus, 2014, p. 32).

In the case of the Township and Borough of Chester, NJ when considering consolidation their police personnel belonged to the same union but negotiated their contract separately. In the consolidation effort, it became apparent that this fact would make for an accelerated process of obtaining a single bargaining agreement with the new combined association (Stefko, 2010, p. 25). “From a labor perspective, advance and even informal consultations with unions during the deal process may reduce execution risk” (Protiviti, 2014, p. 4). In Sarasota County, Florida during their County consolidation effort the labor groups worked under their existing separate labor contracts until they expired. This process took nearly three years for all employees of the new agency to be working under the same contract (Jenaway, 2014, p. 37).

It is recommended that legal counsel is utilized to give their opinions on both agencies labor contracts and their advice for moving the consolidation forward (Johnson, 2015, p. 560). When consolidating, labor unions often perceive that when two labor agreements are present the best terms out of each can be picked to make the new organizations labor agreement (Johnson, 2015, p. 560). “This is rarely the case, and the common practice is that the surviving entity

agreement is opened to deal with the nuances brought on by the cooperative effort” (Johnson, 2015, p. 560).

It is imperative to get the support of the labor unions and associations before moving too far in the process it is critical to at least have the majority of the labor unions or associations membership behind your effort (Kraus, 2014, p. 49). “In fact, it is so important that if your Fire Leadership/Management does not have a good relationship with the Labor Associations, you are probably wasting your time talking about fire regionalization” (Kraus, 2014, p. 113). Labor support of the consolidation was of such importance in the case of the Modesto Regional Fire Authority (MRFA) that Chief Kraus would not move forward with the process until there was an advisory vote held giving support to the regionalization effort (M. Kraus, personal communication, May 2, 2016).

When two organizations consolidate, there will be a new governing board makeup for the new agency. “Most elected officials volunteer as elected officials to improve their community, so it’s very likely they are also proud of their role and organization” (Johnson, 2015, p. 560). Many strategies can be used like increasing the size temporarily of the board then decreasing through attrition and time the size of the board. Some other strategies include determining if any board members would like to step down, drawing straws to determine board composition, and having the board vote on members to be assigned board positions (Johnson, 2015, p. 560).

California has an individual statewide agency that oversees any governmental agency consolidation or merger called the California Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). “LAFCO has the statutory authority to require local entities to consolidate, merge, or annex, should they deem it advantageous. Only the voters can overturn their dictum” (Johnson, 2015, p. 554). LAFCO has three primary purposes, discourage urban sprawl, encourage orderly

governmental boundaries, and to preserve open space and agricultural lands (California Senate and Finance Committee, 2013, p. 1).

LAFCO has been given regulatory authority over cities and special district boundaries (Senate Governance, 2013, p. 1). As illustrated in their official guide LAFCO has the authority to regulate the following types of organizational changes "annexations, detachments, city incorporations and disincorporation's, special district formations and dissolutions, mergers, consolidations and creation of subsidiary districts, and reorganizations, which combine two or more of these changes of organization in one proposal" (Senate Governance, 2013, p. 2).

In summary conducting the literature review of the current publications and research on consolidating fire service delivery systems enabled the author to identify the components of successful consolidations and the typical concerns of both labor and management on a broad scale when considering consolidation. The literature review influenced the research methods used in regards to successful consolidations and the concerns of the employees and governing boards. The interview and survey questions asked to complete this research were compiled with assistance from the information gained from completing the review.

Procedures

The descriptive method of research was utilized to complete the research within this applied research project. The writing style of this work conforms to the American Psychological Association (APA) sixth edition. The purpose of this research is to identify why consolidating the two Districts creates concerns with members of both Districts. This author utilized the Learning Resource Center at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg Maryland during his participation in the Executive Leadership class November 9, 2015, through November 20, 2015. Multiple internet search engines were utilized to find information that was related to this

research. The author's local library Orangevale Community Library as well as his work and personal library collections were instrumental in collecting information for this research.

There were four research questions asked to answer the stated research problem a variety of research methods were utilized. The research methods included a thorough literature review, eight documented personal interviews, and four surveys. The thorough literature review revealed pertinent information that is contained within the review and found throughout this research project. The work of others has been properly cited and credit conveyed to the authors in the reference section of this document.

To answer the first research question, how have comparable districts been successful with their consolidation efforts three documented personal interviews were conducted. These interviews were with Chief Officers that were instrumental in completing successful consolidations. The first interview was conducted with retired Deputy Chief Geoff Miller of the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District (SMFD) located in Sacramento County, California (CA). Deputy Chief Miller was selected because of extensive experience as a Chief Officer during a twenty year period of consolidating fire districts in Sacramento County CA. Chief Miller was the training officer for the Citrus Heights Fire District a seven station District when they were successful with their first merger in 1984. By the year 2000, Chief Miller was the Deputy Chief of a 43 station District covering two cities, 16 communities and the unincorporated area of Sacramento County making the SMFD. The interview was taken in person on April 27, 2016, at a local restaurant in Folsom CA. Chief Miller was presented with 14 questions and the interview lasted 46 minutes (see, Appendix A). The second interview conducted was with retired Fire Chief Michael Kraus of the Modesto Regional Fire Authority (MRFA) located in CA. Chief Kraus was selected to be interviewed because of his experience as the Chief during the

regionalization of the City of Modesto, Salida Fire District and the Stanislaus Fire Wardens Office to form the MRFA. Chief Kraus authored a book that shared his experience throughout the process titled Regionalizing Fire Service Delivery Systems. This author utilized Chief Kraus's book in his literature review and connected with Chief Kraus using the social networking medium LinkedIn. A phone interview was arranged on May 1, 2016, and Chief Kraus was asked 14 questions lasting 53 minutes (see. Appendix B). The third interview was with Fire Chief Dave Roberts of the El Dorado Hills Fire District (EDHFD) located in El Dorado Hills, CA. Chief Roberts was selected due to his success at annexing the neighboring Latrobe Fire District and executing a successful contract for services with the Rescue Fire District that adjoins their opposite border. Chief Roberts is active throughout El Dorado County continually looking for opportunities to improve service levels by combining services. Chief Roberts was interviewed in person at a restaurant in El Dorado Hills, CA on May 3, 2016, he was asked 14 questions, and the interview lasted 42 minutes (see, Appendix C).

The second question asked, what are the concerns of the employees of SPFD with consolidating the Districts. This question was answered by distributing a survey to all the employees of the SPFD using the Survey Monkey on-line survey program. Additionally, two documented personal interviews were conducted with questions that paralleled the survey questions sent to all employees. The first survey request was sent to SPFD employees in January 2016 with a reminder email sent to non-responsive employees in March 2016. Out of the 50 employees that were sent surveys, 38 responded before the deadline to respond in April 2016. The first documented personal interview was with Fire Captain Darren Zimmerman of SPFD. Captain Zimmerman was selected to interview due to his position as the President of the South Placer Firefighters Association, International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) Local 3809. The

interview took place in this author's office on April 21, 2016, located at SPFD Station 17 in Granite Bay (CA). Captain Zimmerman was asked nine questions, and the interview lasted 23 minutes (see, Appendix D). The second interview was with Battalion Chief Jason Brooks also of SPFD. Chief Brooks was selected as he is the President of the South Placer Fire Administrative Officers Association (SPFAOA) and has been with SPFD for over 26 years and he was a part-time employee of LFD over 15 years ago. Chief Brooks was interviewed in this author's office at SPFD Station 17 in Granite Bay (CA) he was asked the same nine questions that were presented to Captain Zimmerman. The interview with Chief Brooks lasted 19 minutes (see, Appendix E).

The third question asked, what are the concerns of the employees of LFD with consolidating the Districts. Two methods were used to answer this question a survey identical to the survey sent to the employees of SPFD was distributed to all LFD employees. The second method was a documented personal interview with the LFD employee's leadership. The interview was conducted with Fire Captain Devin Fuller, who represents the Loomis Firefighters Association (LFA) as their President. Captain Fuller was chosen because he has been a member of the LFA since its inception and represents their interests in negotiations with LFD. The nine interview questions asked were identical to the interview question asked to SPFD employees. The interview took place in person at LFD Station 28 in Loomis, CA on May 4, 2016, and lasted 18 minutes (see, Appendix F). The survey was distributed in January 2016 to all LFD personnel including line staff, administrative and prevention employees via Survey Monkey. There were 18 survey invitations sent in March 2016 a reminder email was sent to non-responsive employees, and the survey was closed in April 2016. The questions closely resembled the survey questions asked to the employees of SPFD, 15 survey responses were received.

The fourth research question concentrated on the concerns of the governing boards of LFD and SPFD in regards to consolidating the Districts. To answer the question, two documented interviews were conducted, and two surveys were executed. The first survey was distributed to the governing Board of SPFD through an on-line survey tool offered through Survey Monkey in January 2016. There were five requests sent, and all responses were received within the original timeline. The second survey was sent to the governing Board of LFD utilizing the same Survey Monkey surveying program also in January 2016. The five Board members of LFD responded to the survey request within the original request timeline. Both surveys contained questions that were identical to the survey questions sent to the employees of both Districts' in the previous questions. The first interview was with Michael Delaurentis of the SPFD. Mr. Delaurentis was selected because he is the Board President of SPFD. Mr. Delaurentis has been on the Board at SPFD for the past 15 years and has helped govern the agency through many difficult times including the recession that began in 2009. The interview took place in this author's office on April 14, 2016, at SPFD Station 17 in Granite Bay, CA the interview lasted 24 minutes (see, Appendix G). The second interview was with Russ Kelley of LFD. Mr. Kelley was selected because he is the President of the LFD Board of Directors. Also, Mr. Kelley is very active in the Loomis, CA community and has ties to the Town Council and many civic organizations within the Town. The interview took place in this author's office on April 14, 2016, at SPFD Station 17 in Granite Bay, CA the interview lasted 17 minutes (see, Appendix H). Both interviews contained nine questions, and they were identical to the interview questions that were asked of the three employees in questions two and three.

While conducting this research, limitations or perceived limitations have been identified within the procedures used in areas of this work. Research question one received input from a

Chief Officer that was involved in a merger that ultimately was with an agency that was not comparable in size to LFD and SPFD. The size of the agency being merged did not eliminate the concerns of the employees affected rendering the information gained from this interview useful. Research question two received a 76% return or 38 out of 50 employees replied that were sent surveys. Responses to this survey were considerably less than expected even after the survey was resent to those that had not replied to the original request. The data that was received was thoroughly completed and the comments sufficient enough when correlated with the documented personal interviews to address the concerns of the SPFD employees.

Results

To complete this research, the descriptive method of research was used to answer the four research questions established within this applied research project. The information compiled from this research has made it possible for the author to share the findings to each of the four research questions.

Research question one:

How have comparable Districts been successful with their consolidation efforts?

This research question was answered utilizing the information gained from three documented interviews completed with Deputy Chief Geoff Miller of SMFD, Fire Chief Mike Kraus of MRFA, and Fire Chief Dave Roberts of EDHFD. All three interviews were recorded and later transcribed and analyzed revealing valuable information as to how Districts have been successful with their consolidation efforts.

All three chiefs were asked what position they were in when their agency was consolidated, and there were a variety of answers received. Chief Miller stated that the training officer position was the most interesting position he was in during a consolidation because he

had the most direct line of communication with both groups of employees that were forming the new agency (G. Miller, personal communication, April 27, 2016). Chief Kraus was the Interim Chief of The City of Modesto Fire Department (MFD) until the merger was made official with MRFA and then he was promoted to Fire Chief (M. Kraus, personal communication, May 2, 2016).

When asked to describe the main reason your organization decided that consolidation was a viable option the Chiefs responses were similar. It seems reducing duplication of effort having many organizations with their own administrations was a common answer between all three Chiefs. “It always been something we are interested in because we have always felt that thirteen Fire Districts within El Dorado County were just too many agencies causing a lot of redundancy and duplication of effort” (D. Roberts, personal communication, May 4, 2016). “The message and the goals were to reduce duplication, and increase efficiencies we truly believed that was why we were in the regionalization effort, and we stuck with that message” (M. Kraus, personal communication, May 2, 2016). “Economy of scale we had already proven through the smaller mergers that when you consolidate you don’t need four chiefs, four deputy chiefs, four training officers, and fifteen battalion chiefs” (G. Miller, personal communication, April 27, 2016).

The Chiefs were asked if there was support within the line personnel for the consolidation initiative. This question was answered differently by all three Chief Officers each had different experiences with their line personnel during their consolidation effort. Chief Miller stated that his personnel knew that a larger agency meant greater opportunity for promotion and in the long run increased efficiencies made for a better running agency they had seen the benefits of consolidation first hand (G. Miller, personal communication, April 27, 2016). Chief Kraus had to do an aggressive education campaign with his personnel which he ultimately asked for an

advisory vote from them before moving forward with the effort. The advisory vote came back with an overwhelmingly positive vote to move forward with the merger (M. Kraus, personal communication, May 2, 2016). In the EHFD, Chief Roberts stated his personnel were unsure of the effort and that at best there was half of the personnel for the annexation. Some felt that merging with another agency would take promotion opportunities away from them and didn't agree with losing seniority to an individual from a smaller agency (D. Roberts, personal communication, May 4, 2016).

Every organization over time develops its own unique culture the Chiefs were asked if there were major cultural differences between the agencies they were engaged with consolidating. Chief Miller stated that EMS delivery was the major cultural issue when consolidating Sacramento County Fire District (SCFD) and American River Fire District (ARFD). ARFD was not a transport agency, and although it was the norm for SCFD it would have been detrimental to the merge if ARFD would have been forced to change operations so drastically (G. Miller, personal communication, April 27, 2016). Chief Kraus stated in his regionalization effort many cultural issues caused consternation between the three agencies that were coming together. The major issue was with Modesto Fire being a full-time unionized Fire Department and Salida being a non-union combination District with many active volunteers. Also, there was a big concern from the City of Modesto that the name of the new agency had to still have Modesto incorporated in the agencies new name, ultimately the agency was called the Modesto Regional Fire Authority (M. Kraus, personal communication, May 2, 2016). Chief Roberts was also dealing with a full-time Union agency merging with a mainly volunteer organization. "There was a whole lot of their not as good as we are type of attitudes going on from both Districts" (D. Roberts, personal communication, May 4, 2016).

The Chiefs were asked what were some of the major concerns of the employees and if they were addressed before the consolidation. In SMFD case, there was concern from the crews about being moved from nice areas of the District to areas that were not nice within the new agency. These concerns fixed themselves naturally when the bidding process was enacted shortly after the merge and those that wanted to rotate stations or work with certain people were able to bid to where they wanted to work (G. Miller, personal communication, April 27, 2016). Chief Kraus's employees had many concerns from, retirement systems, the name of the agency, inequities in pay, and fear of lost jobs. All of these concerns were addressed before moving forward with the regionalization effort (M. Kraus, personal communication, May 2, 2016). In the EDHFD, the primary concerns were focused on the level of training of the smaller agency of Latrobe Fire District. After the standard of training was dealt with by coming up with a training plan, the level of service was the next concern of the employees (D. Roberts, personal communication, May 4, 2016).

The three Chiefs were asked how they planned to restructure the governing boards after a successful merger. There are many ways to restructure a Board after a consolidation that can work but in SMFD it is usually a political process with members stepping down, and the remainder from the two Boards would come together to make a seven-member Board (G. Miller, personal communication, April 27, 2016). In summarizing Chief Kraus's response, he stated they didn't have a process with the new regional agency we decided that the original three organizations would have a standing seat and as agencies joined the Authority we would grow the board to five members. Those last two seats would rotate through the new agencies to occupy, but the originating agencies would have standing seats on the governing board (M. Kraus, personal communication, May 2, 2016). Unique to the EDHFD when they annexed

Latrobe the Fire Board didn't want to have a representative on the Board. Members of the Latrobe Board ended up being on an advisory committee to the EDHFD Board of Directors (D. Roberts, personal communication, May 4, 2016).

When asked if there was cost saving predicted and if after the merger the savings were realized the Chiefs had very different responses. Chief Miller in SMFD stated that the mergers saved money by reducing the administrative positions needed and thus immediately or shortly after that savings were realized (G. Miller, personal communication, April 27, 2016). Chief Kraus shared that the promise to the employees was not to get rid of any personnel that the reduction of personnel would happen through attrition. So immediately the savings didn't become apparent it took a time to realize the savings predicted. Chief Kraus stated an unofficial number of two million dollars being the amount saved by the regionalization effort one year after his retirement (M. Kraus, personal communication, May 2, 2016). In the EDHFD Chief Roberts stated it was never about saving money for our agency it was about doing the right thing and with Latrobe failing financially we would be servicing that area even if we didn't consolidate (D. Roberts, personal communication, May 4, 2016).

All three Chiefs were asked how quickly the employees were integrated after the consolidation was official. SMFD instantly became a District with over 40 stations a large agency and they decided to conduct an immediate staffing bid. Initially, crews tried to stay together but with retirements, there was a lot of integration and the two groups were forced to blend through necessity (G. Miller, personal communication, April 27, 2016). Chief Kraus stated that they immediately integrated crews into the agency but did not force movement between crews this happened naturally when employees became used to each other they combined on their own (M. Kraus, personal communication, May 2, 2016). As the Latrobe Fire District didn't

have many full-time employees, the integration was instant for the paid personnel. The volunteer firefighters were given time to meet the minimum training requirement, and if they didn't complete those in one year they were asked to resign (D. Roberts, personal communication, May 4, 2016).

When asked if there was an agency that gained more than the other in their consolidation effort the Chiefs answered similarly. "The big merge was pretty even there were no obvious winners or losers. Obviously, the smaller Districts gained a lot when Sacramento County and American River were consolidating. But that last merge between the two was pretty even" (G. Miller, personal communication, April 27, 2016). Chief Kraus identified the smaller agency of Salida as the clear winner in the merge the increases included pay increases for employees, increase in staffing, and the increase of resources with the full response force of MRFA at their disposal (M. Kraus, personal communication, May 2, 2016). "It was Latrobe that gained more as far as services to the citizens. The employees that came over from Latrobe also gained in wages and benefits as well as the level of training and quality of equipment" (D. Roberts, personal communication, May 4, 2016).

The Chiefs were asked what had been the major realizations of the merger for the new organization and would they pursue consolidation again if they had the choice. Chief Miller shared that one of the biggest realizations is that even after a successful consolidation effort that merged 26 agencies and spanned 16 years to accomplish in 2000 today there is still a small contingent of us and them throughout the agency (G. Miller, personal communication, April 27, 2016). Chief Kraus went back to the original intent of the consolidation effort, and that was to reduce duplication and increase efficiencies with the result of increasing the level of service to the community "we did that they were realized" (M. Kraus, personal communication, May 2,

2016). Chief Roberts stated that the major realization is that there was a lot of work to affect the annexation by all involved in the process. The level of service to all communities was increased, and the EDHFD secured their future by staying out of the City of El Dorado Hills campaign and the possible shifting of funds to the new City (D. Roberts, personal communication, May 4, 2016). All three Chiefs believe that their consolidation effort was positive for their organizations and the community they serve and would take on the effort again if faced with the opportunity.

Research question two:

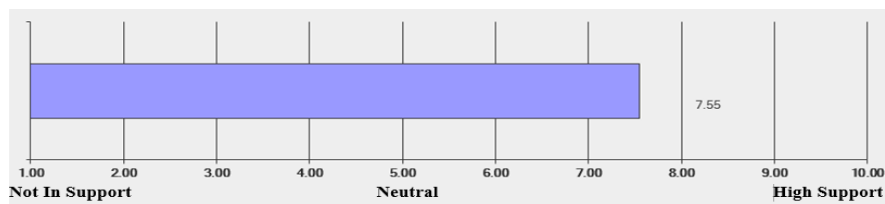
What are the concerns of the employees of SPFD with consolidating the Districts?

This research question was answered utilizing a survey distributed to all employees of the SPFD including full-time line personnel, volunteers, office staff, apparatus maintenance personnel, and administrative chief officers. Also, interviews were conducted with Captain Darren Zimmerman, President of Local 3809 International Association of Firefighters and Battalion Chief Jason Brooks, President of the South Placer Administrative Officers Association. The questions asked in the interviews and surveys paralleled each other, and the results are expressed below.

Survey question one:

Were you initially in support of the current administrative contract for services between LFD and SPFD?

Figure 1



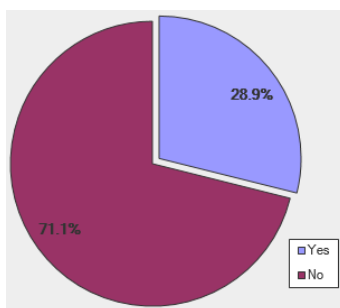
There were 36 responses, nine or 25% were in high support of the initial administrative contract. While 33% or 12 respondents were neutral, the remainder of the responses were spread

across the rating scale with the lowest rating being a three by one respondent. There were nine personnel that gave a rating of ten. The average rating was 7.55 on a ten scale.

Survey question two:

Do you believe that the Administrative Contract for service is and effective way to operate long term?

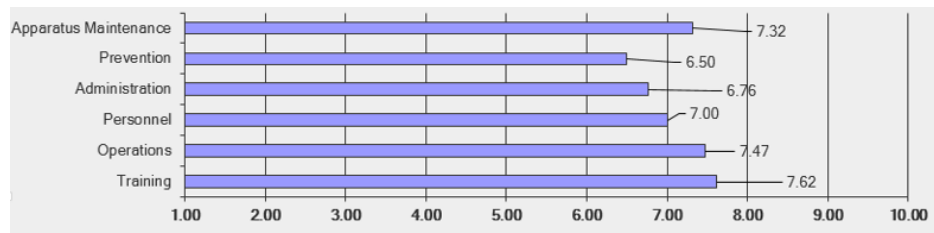
Figure 2



71.1% or 27 of the 38 responses indicated no to the stated question while 28.9% or 11 responded yes. There were 12 comments left with the majority stating that long term the contract for administration services is not the way to operate. “Sustainable is the key word will it last forever no, at some point things are going to change. I think for the short term yes it is sustainable” (J. Brooks, personal communication, April 20, 2016). The contract can be a long term solution, but it has to be at a level of compensation that is commensurate with the services that LFD is receiving (D. Zimmerman, personal communication, April 21, 2016).

Survey question three:

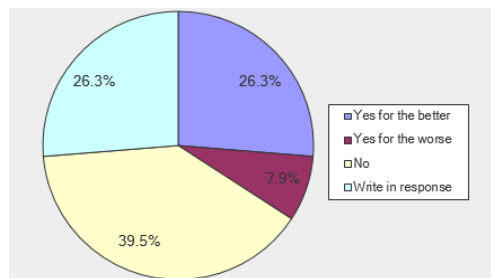
In each of the following areas rate how you feel each is functioning within the current contract between LFD and SPFD?

Figure 3

There were 37 responses to rate the six areas that are being administered under the contract for services. Training realized the highest rating of a 7.62 with ten responses indicating that training was excellent while the lowest score was a two with one respondent indicating training was poor. Operations received an overall score of 7.47 on a ten scale followed by apparatus maintenance at 7.32. Personnel was rated by the 37 respondents at an even 7. Many of the write in elaborations stated that SPFD employees believe that the LFD crews are getting the better end of the arrangement in regards to all six rated areas. The two lowest rated areas included administration rated at 6.76 and prevention rated at 6.5 overall.

Survey question four:

Has your opinion of the administrative contract changed in the last year and a half of working with a contract for services?

Figure 4

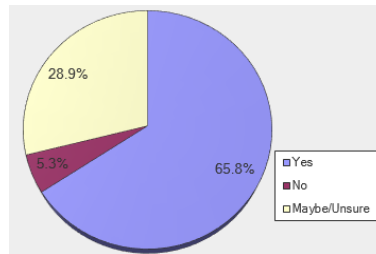
Out of the 38 responses 10 or 26.3% responded yes for the better while three or 7.9% answered yes for, the worse. There were 39.5% or 15 respondents that have not changed their position on the administrative contract. While ten or 26.3% choose to write in a comment with

six commenting remarks that equate to no change in opinion and five remarks equating to change for the worse.

Survey question five:

Do you think that LFD and SPFD can both benefit from consolidation?

Figure 5

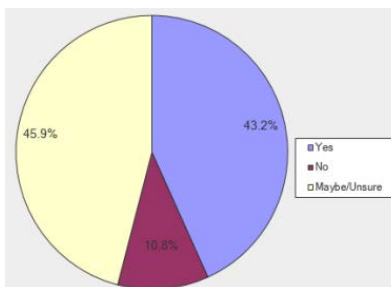


The majority of the 38 responses equating to 25 or 65.8% responded yes and two respondents or 5.3% responded no to the stated question. There were 11 or 28.9% of respondents who answered maybe/unsure. There were 16 write-in responses to the question with varying suggestions and comments. “The number one benefit is to get rid of redundancy, and you have purchasing power together” (D. Zimmerman, personal communication, April 21, 2016).

Survey question six:

Do you feel there are cost savings that can be realized by consolidating the two Districts?

Figure 6



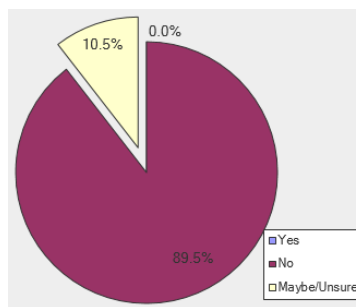
There were 37 responses to this question and 17 or 45.9% responded with maybe/unsure and 16 respondents answered yes. There were also four or 10.8% that felt there would not be any cost savings realized. There were 11 write-in comments with new ideas for cost savings and

comments indicating that more information was needed to make an informed decision. The District will have increased financial stability and will be more efficient by not duplicating positions after consolidation (J. Brooks, personal communication, April 20, 2016).

Survey question seven:

Do you believe that SPFD may lose it's identity with the community if the two Districts are merged?

Figure 7

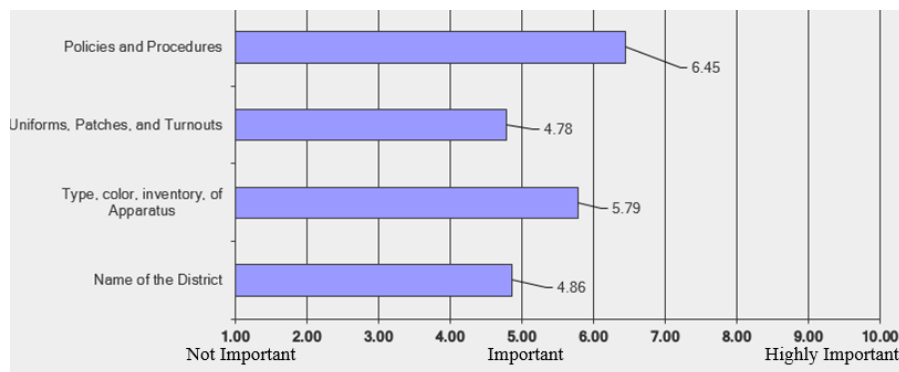


89.5% or 34 respondents answered no and four or 10.5% of the respondents answered maybe/unsure. 15 of the 38 respondents left write in responses explaining their position on this question. It appears that the majority of the write-in responses state that SPFD does not have a close identity with their community.

Survey question eight:

Please rate the following District characteristics by how important they are to you personally?

Figure 8

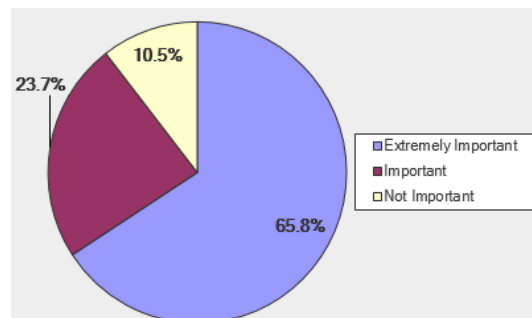


The responses revealed that the policies and procedures of the SPFD are the most important out of the four targeted areas in this question. Out of 38 responses, the average rating was 6.45 on a ten scale ten being highly important and one being not important. Type, color, and inventory of apparatus received an average rating from the 38 respondents of 5.79. The name of the District received an average overall rating of 4.86 and uniforms, patches, and turnouts averaged 4.78 on a ten scale. Eight respondents left comments stating their concerns regarding the targeted areas they felt strongly about.

Survey question nine:

How important do you feel is the cooperation and input of the labor groups to the success of the two Districts consolidating?

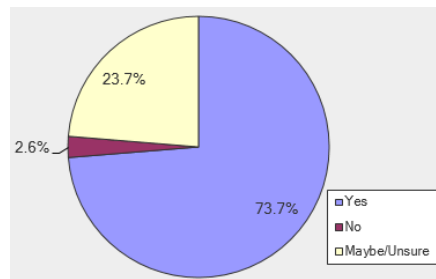
Figure 9



65.8% or 25 of the responses gathered indicate that including labor organizations is extremely important while 23.7% or nine indicate that it is important, and 10.5% or four respondents believe input from labor organizations is not important. 12 respondents left comments that indicate there is a large disparity of views between employees.

Survey question ten:

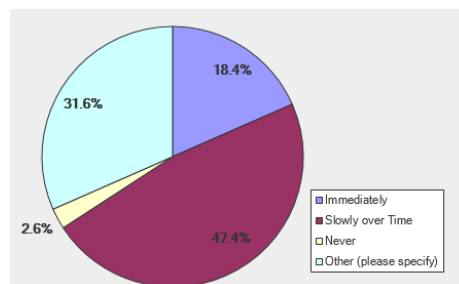
Do you believe that duplication of effort can be reduced if the two Districts consolidated?

Figure 10

Of the 38 responses, 28 or 73.7% answered yes while one or 2.6% answered no and nine or 23.7% selected maybe/unsure. There were eight comments with many stating that the administration will see the greatest decrease in duplication effort. By having workgroups established the duplication of effort will be decreased, and the savings in money and reduced workload will be realized with a larger agency (J. Brooks, personal communication, April 20, 2016).

Survey question eleven:

How quickly do you think personnel should be integrated after a merger has been approved?

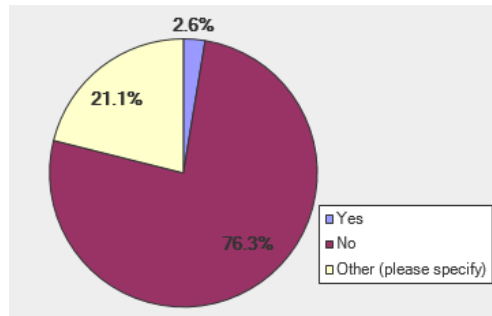
Figure 11

18 or 47.4% of the responses indicate that personnel should be integrated slowly over time while seven or 18.4% think that integration should take place immediately after a consolidation. 2.6% or one showed that integration should never take place and 31.6% or 12 left write in responses stating their ideal personnel integration scenario. Some write in responses suggest letting the current bid process work and let time and seniority handle the integration process.

Survey question twelve:

Do you have any concerns about a potential consolidation between LFD and SPFD that have not been addressed in the previous questions?

Figure 12



Of the 38 responses 29 or 76.3% indicated no and 2.6% or one respondent indicated yes to the stated question. Eight or 21.1% answered other and left write in remarks that ranged from administration needs to keep the crews informed to there needs to be standardized testing requirements for LFD employees.

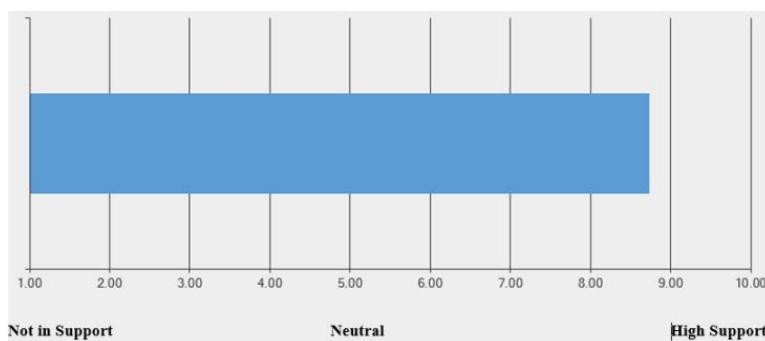
Research question three:

What are the concerns of the employees of LFD with consolidating the Districts?

This research question was answered utilizing a survey distributed to all employees of the LFD including full-time line personnel, volunteers, and office staff. Additionally, an interview was conducted with Captain Devin Fuller, President of the Loomis Firefighters Association. The questions asked in the interviews and surveys paralleled each other, and the results are expressed below.

Survey question one:

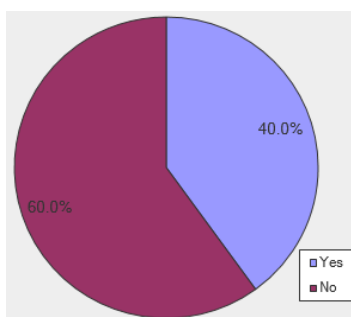
Were you initially in support of the administrative contract for services between LFD and SPFD?

Figure 13

There were 15 responses, seven or 46% were in high support of the initial administrative contract. While 20% or three respondents were neutral, the remainder of the responses were spread across the upper end of the rating scale with the lowest rating being the three neutral responses. There were seven personnel that gave a score of ten. The average rating was 8.73 on a ten scale

Survey question two:

Do you believe that an administrative contract for service is an effective way to operate long term?

Figure 14

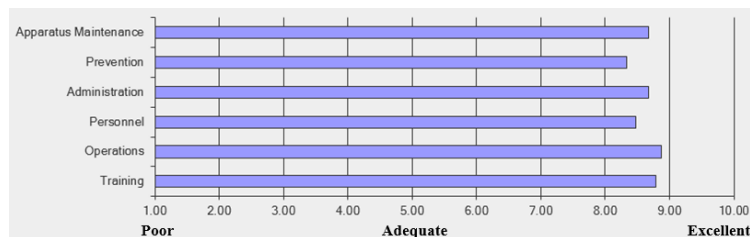
60% or nine of the 15 responses indicated no to the stated question while 40% or six responded yes. There were three comments left with two stating that consolidating the Districts would be the most effective. The contract for services is not as sustainable as a consolidation of

the Districts would be there is too much work in the contract for SPFD (D. Fuller, personal communication, May 4, 2016).

Survey question three:

In each of the following areas rate how you feel each is functioning within the current contract between LFD and SPFD?

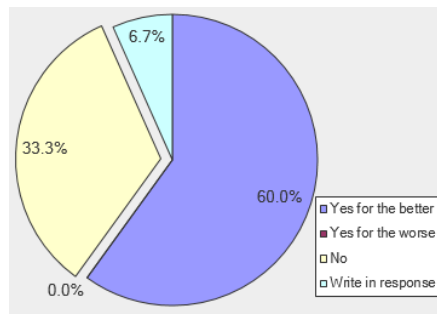
Figure 15



There were 15 responses to rate the six areas that are being administered under the contract for services. Operations realized the highest rating of 8.87 with nine responses indicating that operations were excellent while the lowest score was a 5.0 indicating training was adequate. Training received an overall rating of 8.79 on a ten scale followed by a tie between apparatus maintenance and administration at 8.67. Personnel was rated at an average of 8.47 and prevention received the lowest average ranking of 8.33 on a ten scale. Many of the write in elaborations stated that LFD employees believe that the training and operational support they are receiving is a great benefit to them overall. Some comments have revealed that the culture change for LFD working with a larger agency has taken a little time for the LFD employees to adjust.

Survey question four:

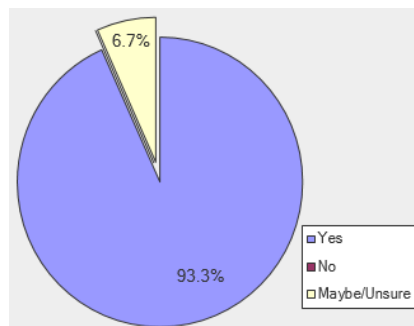
Has your opinion on the administrative contract changed in the last year and a half of working with a contract for services?

Figure 16

Out of the 15 responses 9 or 60% responded yes for the better while 0 responded yes for, the worse. There were 33.3% or 5 respondents that have not changed their position on the administrative contract. There was one write in comment stating “the longer the contract is observed, the better we all get at it”.

Survey question five:

Do you think that LFD and SPFD can both benefit from consolidation?

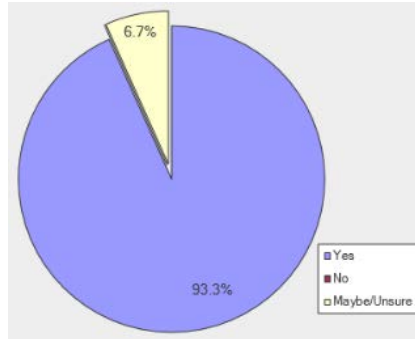
Figure 17

The majority of the 15 responses equating to 14 or 93.3% responded yes and zero respondents answered no to the stated question. There was one or 6.7% of respondents who answered maybe/unsure. There were three write-in responses to the question with various positive comments and ideas. For LFD, it would be the increase in available resources in operations and for the line personnel, it would be the ability to work at different stations and have an avenue for career advancement (D. Fuller, personal communication, May 4, 2016).

Survey question six:

Do you feel that there are cost savings that can be realized by consolidating the two Districts?

Figure 18

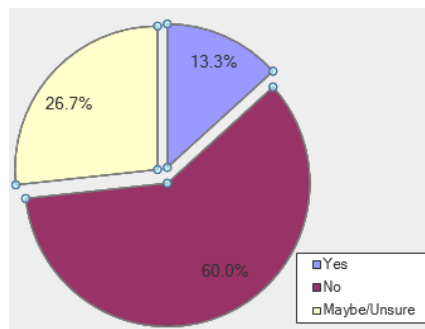


There were 15 responses to this question, and 14 or 93.3% responded yes, and zero respondents answered no. There was also one or 6.7% with a response that answered maybe/unsure. There were five write-in comments that gave their comments and suggestions on where the cost savings would be created by consolidating.

Survey question seven:

Do you believe that LFD may lose its identity with the community if the two Districts were merged?

Figure 19



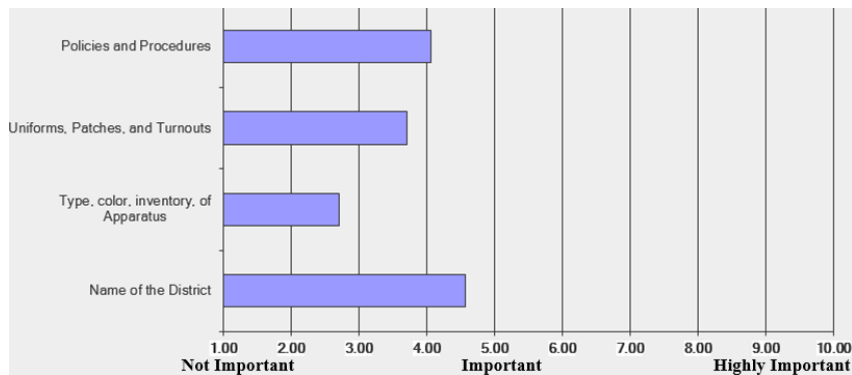
60% or nine respondents answered no and two or 13.3% of the respondents answered yes. Four or 26.7% of the 15 respondents answered maybe/unsure. Six employees left write in responses explaining their position on this question. The majority of replies indicate that LFD

has a strong community connection with a varying range of suggestions from posting serving Loomis on the side of the apparatus to gaining community support for the merger before it is initiated.

Survey question eight:

Please rate the following District characteristics by how important they are to you personally?

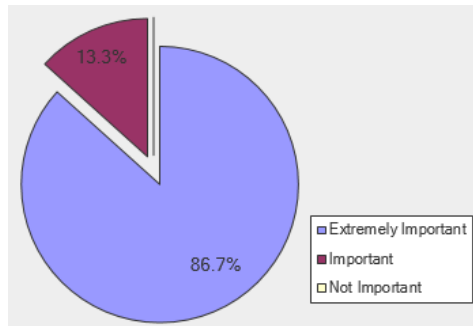
Figure 20



The responses revealed that the name of the District is LFD most important issue out of the four targeted areas receiving an average rating of 4.57 on a ten scale by the 14 employee surveys. Policies and procedures received an average rating of 4.07 and uniforms, patches and turnouts received an average rating of 3.71. Type, color, and inventory of apparatus received an average rating from the 14 respondents of 2.71 on a ten scale. There were five comments left by employees explaining their ratings of the four areas.

Survey question nine:

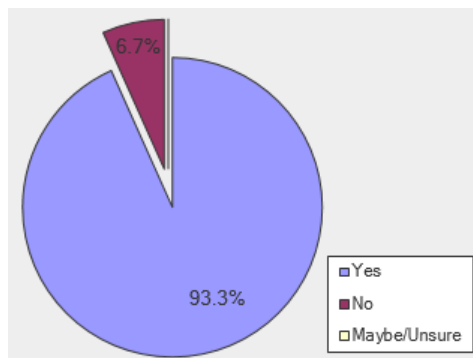
How important do you feel is the cooperation and input of the labor groups to the success of the two Districts consolidating?

Figure 21

86.7% or 15 of the responses gathered indicate that input from labor is extremely important while 13.3% or two responses indicate that it is important. There were no responses indicating that labor input was not important. There was one comment left by respondents.

Survey question ten:

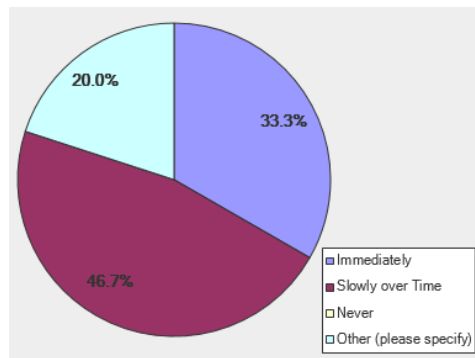
Do you believe that duplication of effort can be reduced if the two Districts consolidate?

Figure 22

Of the 15 responses, 14 or 93.3% answered yes while one or 6.7% answered no to the stated question. There were no significant comments left by respondents. “ I think in the long term you will see more consistency between the agencies handling SOG’s and SOP’s and overall operational efficiencies” (D. Fuller, personal communication, May 4, 2016).

Survey question eleven:

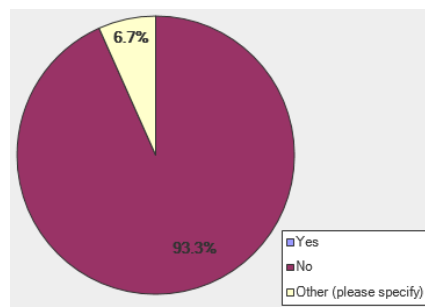
How quickly do you think personnel should be integrated after a merger has been approved?

Figure 23

Seven or 46.7% of the responses indicate that personnel should be integrated slowly over time while five or 33.3% think that integration should take place immediately after a consolidation. 20% or three left write in responses stating their ideal personnel integration scenario.

Survey question twelve:

Do you have any concerns about a potential consolidation between LFD and SPFD that have not been addressed in the previous questions?

Figure 24

Of the 15 responses 14 or 93.3% indicated no to the stated question. One respondent or 6.7% answered other and left a comment stating there should be a broader consolidation to improve efficiency and effectiveness within the area.

Research question four:

This research question was answered by distributing two surveys one to the Board of LFD and one to the Board of SPFD. Additionally, two documented personal interviews were conducted with the Presidents of each Board. The questions in the interviews and surveys were similar to each other and paralleled the questions asked the employee groups in the previous research questions.

What are the concerns of both SPFD and LFD's governing Boards regarding consolidating the Districts?

Survey question one

Were you initially in support of the current administrative contract for services?

Figure 25

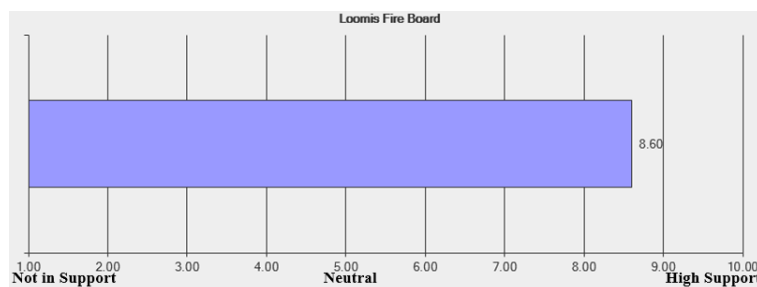
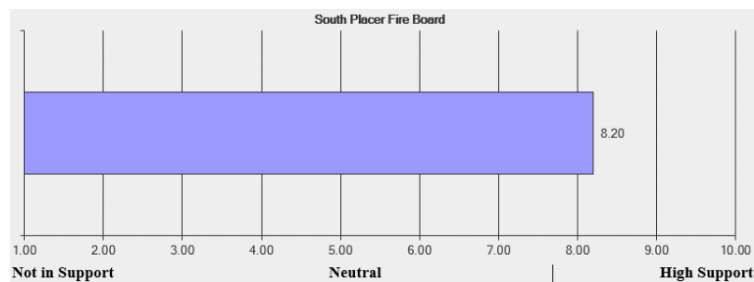


Figure 26



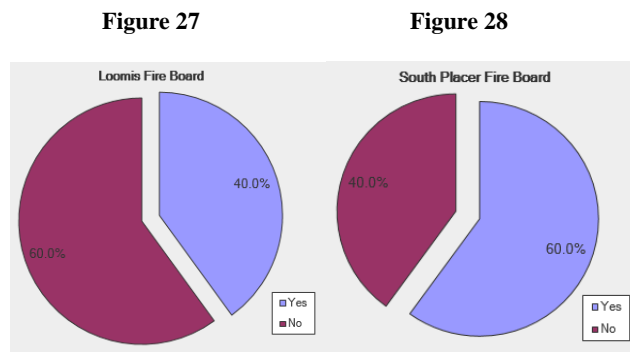
All five members of the LFD Board responded to this question the average rating was 8.6 on a ten scale with ten denoting high support and one signifying the respondent was not in support. Two board members indicated they were in high support and the remainder signified

they were in support or neutral to the current administrative contract. Two Board members left comments describing their participation with the contract for services.

The SPFD Board responded with an average rating of 8.2 with one respondent in high support and the other four ratings falling between neutral and high support. All five members of the board replied to the question there were no comments received.

Survey question two:

Do you believe that the administrative contract for services is an effective way to operate long term?



Three or 60% of the LFD Board answered no to the stated question while 2 or 40% answered yes. All members of the Board participated in the question, and two respondents left comments stating their views on how effective the contract is in comparison to the increased effectiveness of a consolidation. “I do not know I think it is working well I have no problems with it whatsoever. However, I think long term we need to get it together in one place if we can” (R. Kelley, personal communication, April 16, 2016).

The SPFD Board members all answered this question, and two or 40% of the responses indicated a no response while three or 60% answered yes to the administrative contract for services being an effective way to operate long term. Two comments were left by SPFD Board members stating their differing opinions on the effectiveness of the contract long term. “I see

growing work in the contract that will continue to grow over time providing duplicate services to two Districts” (M. DeLaurentis, personal communication, April 14, 2016).

Survey question three:

In each of the following areas rate how you feel each is functioning within the current contract between LFD and SPFD?

Figure 29

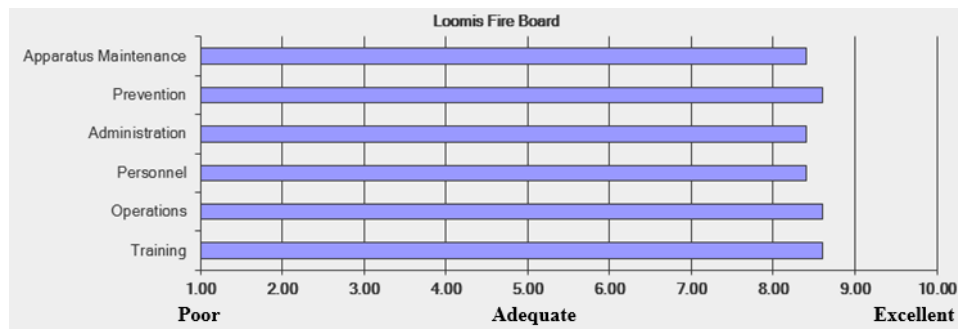
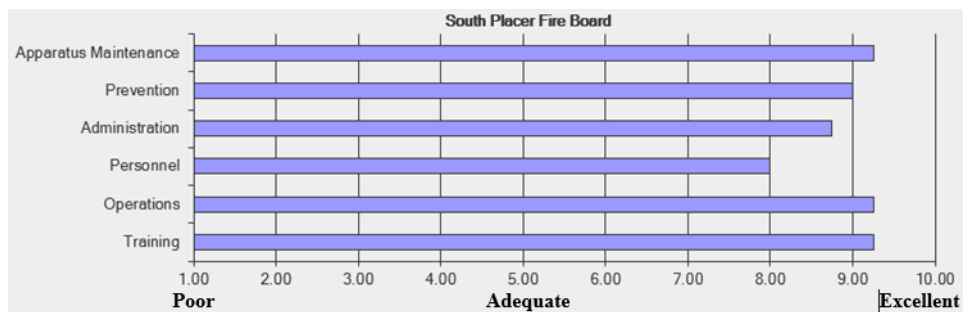


Figure 30



The LFD Board survey revealed that training, operations, and prevention had the highest average rating of 8.6 on a ten scale with a ten rating being excellent and a one denoting a poor functioning area. Personnel, administration, and apparatus maintenance received the average rating of 8.4 on the same scale. There were two write-in comments explaining the individual Board members viewpoints as to how the functions of the Districts are performing.

The SPFD Board survey results show that training and operations received the highest average rating of 9.25 on the ten scale. Apparatus maintenance received an average rating of 9.0

and administration received an average rating of 8.75. Personnel received the lowest average rating by the SPFD Board of an 8.0 all individual ratings throughout this survey were higher than a 5.0 which indicates that performance is above adequate in all areas according to the SPFD Board. There were four write-in comments indicating the concern about the workload on the current administration and acknowledging not knowing all the information to make an informed rating in some areas.

Survey question four:

Has your opinion of the administrative contract changed in the last year and a half working with a contract for services?

Figure 31

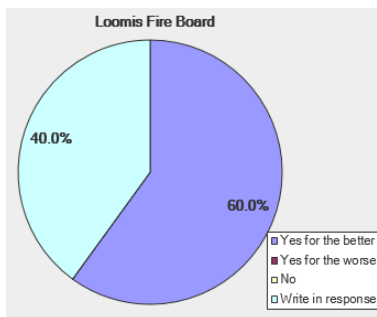
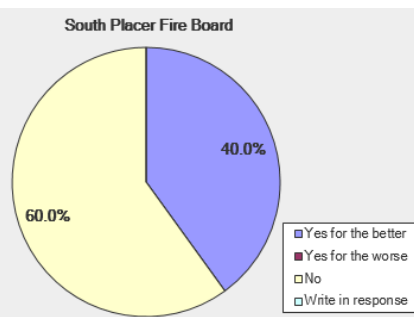


Figure 32

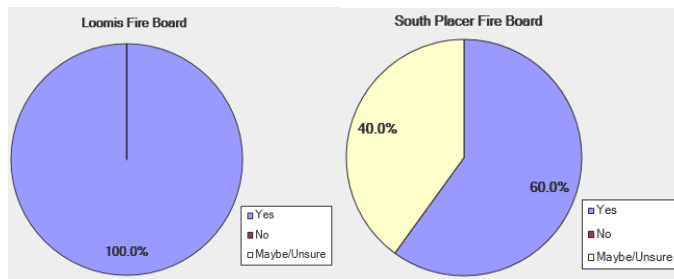
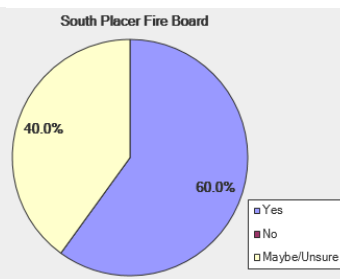


In response to the stated question, three or 60% of the LFD Board answered yes for the better while the remaining two Board Members or 40% left write-in responses with one or 20% abstaining from answering and one or 20% equating to a no response.

40% or two of the five SPFD Board Members responded yes for the better while three respondents answered no their opinion had not changed. There were no write-in comments associated with the SPFD Boards survey response to this question.

Survey question five:

Do you think LFD and SPFD can both benefit from consolidation?

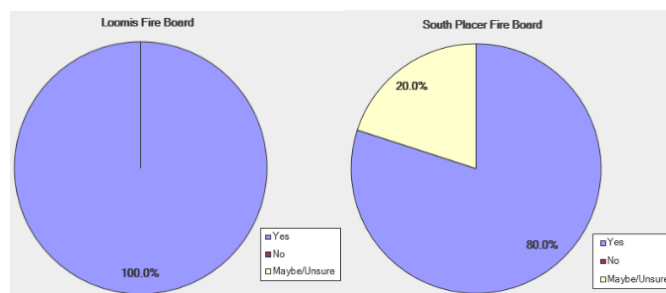
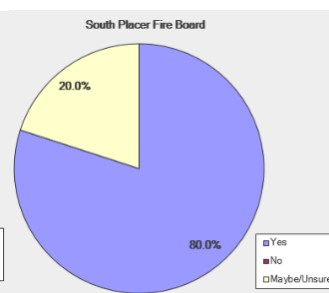
Figure 33**Figure 34**

All five of the LFD Board Members or 100% answered yes that both Districts can benefit from consolidation. There was one write-in comment that mentioned the commitment to the community to keep expenses in line with income. The biggest efficiency will be able to purchase together and save money as a larger organization (R. Kelley, personal communication, April 16, 2016).

SPFD Board responses were three or 60% believed that both Districts could benefit while two or 40% answered maybe/unsure. There were no comments received from the SPFD Board in regards to this question. We will see less duplication of effort and have increased efficiencies due to not duplicating administrative positions also there will be increased operational benefits with having more resources (M. DeLaurentis, personal communication, April 14, 2016).

Survey question six:

Do you feel that there are cost savings that can be realized by consolidating the two Districts?

Figure 35**Figure 36**

100% or five of the LFD Board members answered yes to the stated question regarding their feeling that cost savings can be realized by consolidating the two Districts. Two write-in responses focused on how duplication of effort has been reduced and efficiencies between the two Districts have been increased under the contract for administrative services.

80% or four of the SPFD Board members answered yes that cost savings can be realized by consolidating the two Districts. 20% or one Board member answered maybe/unsure to the stated question. There were three write-in responses with two write-in responses stating that with the thin administration they do not know if the savings will be long term. “There will be some economy of scale benefits we will not need two chief’s, assistant chiefs nothing too dramatic as far as cost savings are concerned”(M. DeLaurentis, personal communication, April 14, 2016).

Survey question seven:

Do you believe that the Fire Districts may lose their identity with the community if the two District’s merge?

Figure 37

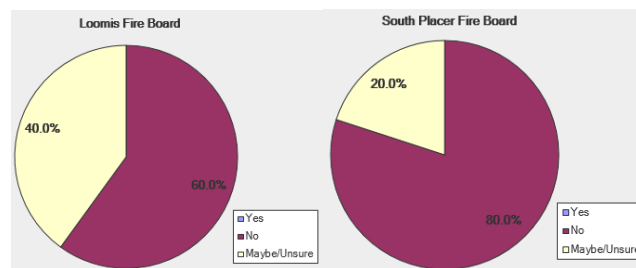
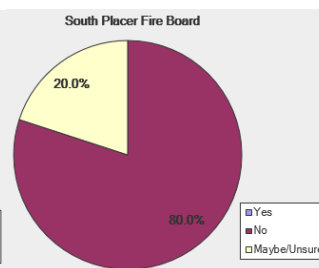


Figure 38



60% or three of the respondents from LFD answered no to the stated question while 40% or two responses indicated maybe/unsure. There were three write-in responses with two responses containing ideas about marketing the consolidation to the public and coordinating the messages sent out to both communities.

Four or 80% of the five SPFD Board Members responded no to the stated question while one or 20% responded maybe/unsure. There was one write in response that was unrelated.

Survey question eight:

Please rate the following District characteristics by how important they are to you personally?

Figure 39

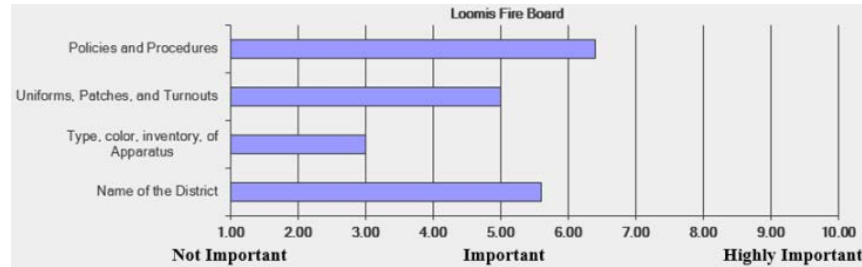
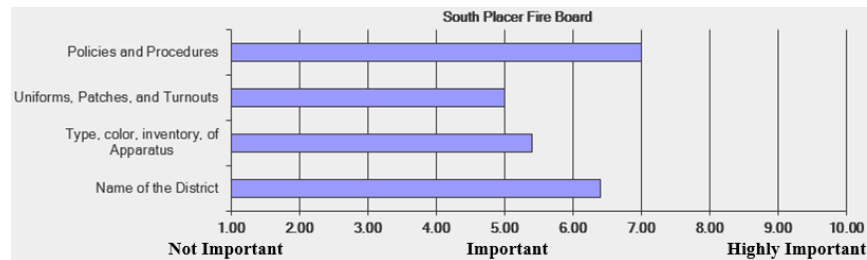


Figure 40



Out of the four LFD characteristics rated the policies and procedures were rated the most important with an average rating of 6.4 on a ten scale with ten being highly important and the rating of one being not important. Followed by the name of the District, which received a rating of 5.6 on the ten scale. Uniforms, patches, and turnouts received a rating of 5.0 while type, color, and inventory of apparatus received the lowest average rating of 3.0. All five Board Members responded to these questions. There were two write-in comments to this question.

Out of the four SPFD characteristics rated the policies and procedures were rated the most important with an average rating of 7.0 on the ten scale. Name of the District was rated the second most important with an average rating of 6.4. Type, color, and inventory of apparatus were rated at 5.4 on average while uniforms, patches, and turnouts received the lowest average rating of 5.0. All five SPFD Board Members responded to this question. There were no write-in comments.

Survey question nine:

How important do you feel is the cooperation and input of the labor groups to the success of the two Districts consolidating?

Figure 41

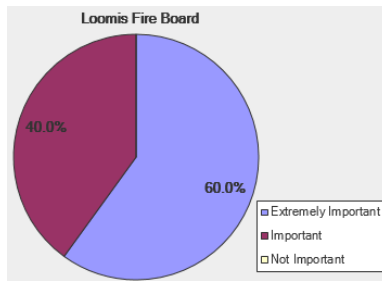
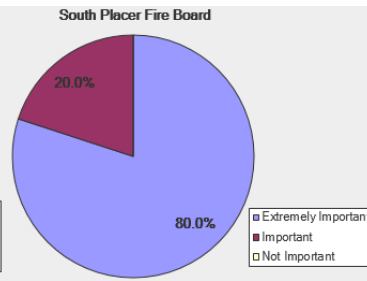


Figure 42



Out of the five LFD responses three or 60% rated cooperation and input from the labor groups as extremely important and two or 40% of responses indicated that the input received would be important. There was one write in response stating that this will involve respect for others to achieve.

The SPFD Board Members answered the question with 80% or four responses indicating that input from labor organization was extremely important, and 20% or one response indicated that it was important. There was one write in comment stating that the community should be 100% involved in the process and that it should probably go out to a vote of the community.

Survey question ten:

Do you believe that duplication of effort can be reduced if the two Districts consolidated?

Figure 43

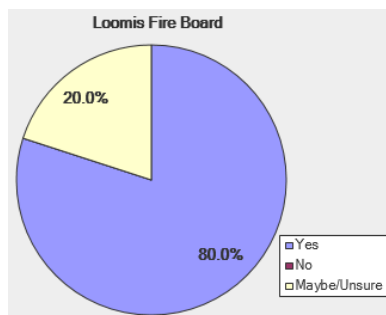
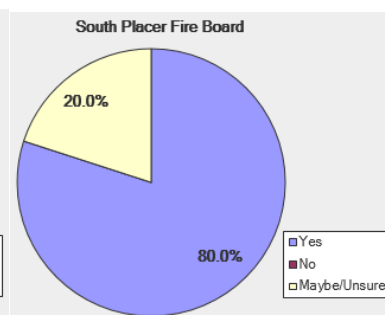


Figure 44

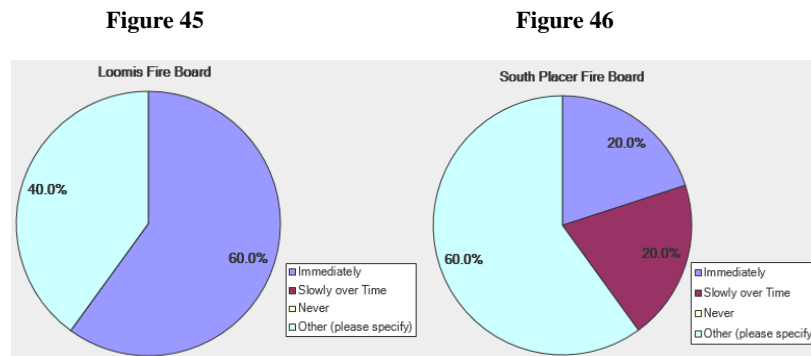


The LFD Board responded with 80% or four members answering they believe that duplication of effort can be reduced while one Board Member or 20% stated maybe/unsure on the survey. Two write-in comments stated a larger agency can respond to administrative needs better and that a study on the benefits of consolidation would be helpful.

The SPFD Board members responded to this question with the same percentages as the LFD Board. There were two different write in comments the first comment suggested the savings would only be in the reduction of efforts that were still duplicative since the Districts have been in a contract for administrative services. The second comment stated “I am all about saving money, just not on the backs of us or our funds. It would have to be a win/win”.

Surveys question eleven:

How quickly do you think personnel should be integrated after a merger has been approved?



Out of the five LFD Board responses three or 60% think the personnel should be integrated immediately. While two or 40% responded other and left write in comments as to what they thought about integrating personnel. One write in response stated that the decision should be made by consensus and the other stated we have done much work within the current administrative contract so it should not be as disruptive if we move a faster on the integration.

The SPFD Board responded with one or 20% answered integration should take place immediately, and one or 20% responded slowly over time. The remaining 60% or three

responses were other with write in explanations. Two of those responses equated to slowly over time, and one stated that we are already integrated with LFD.

Survey question twelve:

Do you have any concerns about a potential consolidation between LFD and SPFD that have not been addressed in the previous questions?

Figure 47

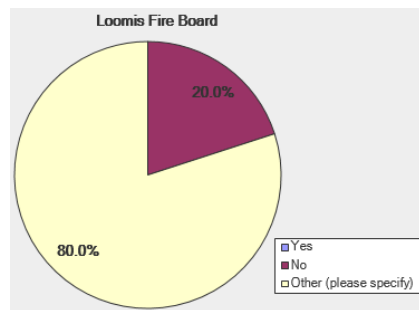
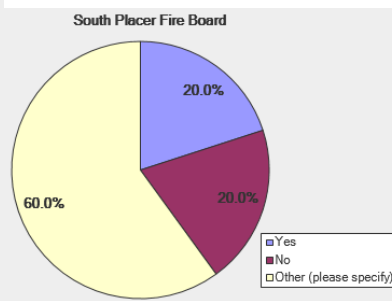


Figure 48



LFD Board members responded with one Director or 20% stating no that they do not have any concerns that have not been addressed in the previous questions. Four or 80% responded that they did have concerns and choose the other response choice with write-in explanations. Concerns that were identified in the write-in responses included what would be the composition of the new Board of Directors for the merged agency, how do we address the different tax rates within the two Districts and we should not assume to have all the answers at this point in the process.

SPFD Board members responded with one Director or 20% stating no that they do not have any concerns that have not been addressed in the previous questions. One Director or 20% responded yes that they did have concerns but did not leave a write-in response clarifying the concern. Three Directors or 60% responded that they did have concerns and choose the other response choice with write-in explanations. Concerns that were identified in the write-in

responses included what is the financial impact, how do we combine the budgets, and how do we combine the Boards.

Discussion

By completing this descriptive research and thoroughly reviewing available recent literature this author has determined how some comparable organizations have completed successful consolidations and what many of the concerns of the employees and governing boards are of both SPFD and LFD. Many fire agencies are considering consolidation as it is a possible way to improve the use of resources, increase internal programs, increase financial stability and provides opportunities for growth (Jenaway, 2014, p. 5).

In regards to the specific issue of SPFD and LFD and their proposed consolidation effort, they are fortunate that there have been many fire agencies that have been successful in their consolidation attempts. This research has identified that the consolidation process is not a new idea it can be replicated if the leadership of the organizations are true to themselves and the public they serve. “By combining the concepts of sharing revenue, sharing costs and reducing duplications, a more efficient, merged agency will evolve. Moreover, the most important point, better, more fiscally efficient service is delivered to the citizen-customer” (Kraus, 2014, p. 33).

While conducting interviews with chief officers that had successfully consolidated fire agencies it was clear that all had put in significant work to achieve their organizational goals. All Chiefs stated that the outcomes were worth the effort and that they would initiate the process again if they were to have to do it over again.

I totally think our mergers were the right thing to do and would do it all over again if we hadn't done it back in the day. The learning opportunities that employees receive from

now being a part of a larger agency are priceless (G. Miller, personal communication, April 27, 2016).

The fire chiefs need to be the champions of the process and if they are not the effort will not be successful (Kraus, 2014, p. 47). These leaders will need to be able to act like politicians, counselors, accountants, and lawyers to successfully lead through such a large organizational change and still remember that the increased service to the citizens is the purpose behind their effort (Johnson, 2015, p. 565). This research has identified that a successful consolidation effort can only be accomplished by having strong leaders that are not afraid to get out in front of their organizations and lead. The administration and governing bodies of both SPFD and LFD will need to gain support for the proposed consolidation effort by leading the organizations through the process.

In the interviews, all three chief officers stated that their agencies decided to move forward with their consolidation efforts to increase efficiencies and reduce duplication of effort. Through the literature review process, these two outcomes of consolidation were sought after or realized in the majority of the literature analyzed. Consolidation makes agencies stronger by improving efficiencies, providing better utilization of resources and can decrease the duplication of effort within the organization (Snook et al., 1997, p. 17). McCurdy (2011) states in her research that the reasons for consolidation can be different between individual efforts, but the most common are reduced costs and increased efficiencies.

Through the research, the current contract for administrative services being provided by SPFD to LFD was analyzed.

The accountability built into a contract is often attractive to municipalities or agencies that are reluctant to give up control of their fire service until they have attained some

level of comfort that the new provider shares similar values and is capable of delivering on stated promises (Snook et al., 1997, p. 19).

In all four surveys conducted with the employees and the governing boards of both SPFD and LFD they were asked four questions regarding the current contractual and operational relationship between the two Districts. All surveys showed an initial support rating indicating a moderate to high level of support for the administrative contract. Two years into the contract the support has dropped for the contract in only the SPFD employee group. It is apparent from survey comments that this decrease in support in the SPFD employees is due to a perception of inequities in the contract and increased effort exerted by SPFD employees and administrators to manage the contract for service.

Three out of the four survey groups indicated that the administrative contract was not feasible over the long term while the SPFD Board survey indicated by a light margin that it would be a feasible long term solution. One advantage of having many different types of consolidation types and levels is that agencies can start in one type of an agreement and increase the level of commitment as the community and other stakeholders adjust to the new way of operating (Hubert, Adams, & Perrault, 2009, p. 1). The results show that despite the perception of a feasible contract for service the majority of all employee groups and governing boards think the administrative contract is not a long term solution. This is most likely due to the SPFD employee group's perception of inequities in workload, and the LFD employees desire to move forward with consolidation as the contract for administrative services is working well for LFD. "I just think the contract is more work for South Placer we should consolidate and move forward as one agency" (D. Fuller, personal communication, May 4, 2016).

Throughout this research, there has been a multitude of benefits to consolidation identified by numerous sources and interviews conducted. There are many reasons why consolidation may be right for fire service agencies including improved use of scarce resources, increased opportunities to expand, and the opportunity to increase the organizations tax base (Jenaway, 2014, p. 5-6).

In all four surveys conducted with the employees and Boards of SPFD and LFD, they were asked if they think the Districts can benefit from consolidation. The responses were almost unanimously yes for both the employees and the Board of LFD. While the SPFD employees and Board had just 60% of respondent's answer that they thought there were benefits to consolidation. By analyzing the write-in responses of the SPFD employees and Board, it is not clear to them, or they are unsure what the benefits of consolidation would be to them or the organization. The point is also made by SPFD employees in the comments to the survey that the administration has not communicated the proposed benefits so at this time it is all speculation. It is important to keep employees updated on the consolidation process if diligence in communication is not practiced the rumor mill will take over and employees will begin to make assumptions as to what is going on in the process (Protiviti, 2014, p. 4). It is clear that if the consolidation efforts continue beyond the administrative contract, it will be imperative to make all information regarding the process as transparent as possible for all employees.

It can be surmised through the research that SPFD's employees are skeptical of the ability of LFD to fund the needed increases in salary and benefits to affect a consolidation without subsidizing LFD with SPFD funds. "If this is not done before the consolidation with LFD money, then SPFD will be subsidizing LFD and that will create animosity between the labor groups" (D. Zimmerman, personal communication, April 21, 2016).

When dealing with labor associations, consolidations can bring on many concerns including pay, minimum staffing, seniority issues, and paid versus volunteer firefighters each issue must be dealt with or at least heard before moving the process forward (Kraus, 2014, p. 48). When surveyed about the importance of the cooperation and input of the labor groups to the consolidation success all four survey groups rated the labor groups input as extremely important or important. These results make it clear that moving forward with the merger will need to be a collaborative effort between all stakeholders. If the cooperation and input are not gained the effort is likely to run into obstacles that may have been easily removed through the collaborative process.

Once we got started on this, we spent a lot of time with our people throughout the organization both safety and non-safety to try and explain where we were going what the benefits would be as we saw them for the organization as a whole (M. Kraus, personal communication, May 2, 2016).

When surveyed regarding cultural issues and organizational norms all groups were asked the same questions with interesting results. When asked if their District would lose their identity with their community the employees and board of LFD were more concerned with their relationship and identity within the community while the majority of SPFD responses were not concerned with losing identity with the community. “We soon discovered that when people have an emergency, most of them are much more concerned with how quickly a fire engine shows up at their home or business than which city’s name is on the side of it” (Hubert et al., 2009, p. 2). It is clear by employee write-in responses that LFD has significant community ties and is active with local events such as parades, football support, pancake breakfasts, and festival support. SPFD does not routinely seek out these types of opportunities and would benefit from increased

community involvement and interaction. These types of community involvement would only strengthen the consolidation effort and the overall mission. Jenaway (2014) states organizations should “Develop an informational program for the public that provides basic facts and stress that the department is not going anywhere, simply improving itself” (p. 9).

When asked about the District characteristics and how important they are to the respondent the results were mixed. Characteristics surveyed included the name of the district, type, and color of apparatus, policies and procedures, and uniforms, patches, and turnouts. By analyzing the agencies differences, a consolidation can be made stronger by taking the best from each agency and blending those into the new organizational culture (Johnson, 2015, p. 556). The results showed that both the governing boards were more concerned about what the consolidated District would be named than the employee groups were overall. It was clear that the ties to the community name were important from the write in comments but not as significant for the employees. While a significant issue there may be an opportunity per the results to rename the District to better identify with all citizens served.

Policies and procedures were rated as slightly less than highly important by all survey groups except the LFD employees who rated them less than important. This could be a result of many policies already being changed to match SPFD’s to effectively manage the current contract for administrative services. “I think in the long term you’ll see more consistency between the agencies handling SOP’s and SOG’s and overall operational efficiencies” (D. Fuller, personal communication, May 4, 2016). Identified through this research moving forward all policies and operating procedures will need to be standardized before a consolidation of the Districts.

“Such issues as the name of the new organization, the color of emergency apparatus and the selection of an individual to head the organization, among many others, can derail

consolidation discussions” (Jenaway, 2014, p. 7). In regards to the four survey results that involve the specific individual District characteristics including uniforms, patches, turnouts, and apparatus type, color, and inventory LFD employees and Board according to their responses are not overly concerned with the change that may come about in the consolidation effort. While SPFD employees and Board members place a significantly higher degree of importance on these characteristics of their District. The results indicate that these issues that can in some cases disrupt consolidation efforts may have less of an impact on this particular initiative due to LFD’s indifference and motivation for consolidation.

By completing this research on successful consolidations and the concerns of the employees and governing bodies of those organizations many factors and concerns have been identified that can be applied to SPFD and LFD’s proposed consolidation effort. Some concerns have been identified that are specific to SPFD and LFD’s proposed consolidation effort during this research. These specific concerns identified include the financial feasibility of consolidation, organizational culture differences, lack of communication from the administration and the labor group’s involvement in the consolidation process. The overall results of this research will have organization implications on SPFD and LFD leading up to and including the possible future consolidation of the two organizations into one new Fire District.

Recommendations

SPFD and LFD have a tremendous opportunity ahead of them to continue on the path to increasing their organization's efficiencies, reducing duplication and increasing the overall level of service to the community they serve. There has been a great deal of cooperation, teamwork, and compromise on behalf of both districts to successfully operate under the current contract for administrative services. Identified concerns of all employees and governing boards will need to

be addressed while pursuing and investigating the feasibility of consolidating the districts. The consolidation will need to build on and rely on the relationships that have been formed in the current contract for service. The information obtained from other agencies that have been successful with their consolidation efforts as identified in this research should be integrated into the recommendations.

The first recommendation would be to have the administration conduct a thorough and comprehensive consolidation feasibility study. This study will focus on many areas the first and most critical to the effort would be the financial position of both LFD and SPFD. LFD must prove that the organization can finance the needed increases in employee compensation and benefits to ensure that one agency is not subsidizing the other. The study should include operational differences, response time standards, minimum staffing requirements, job descriptions, equipment needs, apparatus replacement, and facility needs. The research has identified that there are concerns within the employees and boards in regards to the financial feasibility and the savings or increased efficiencies that could be realized through consolidation. By completing a comprehensive consolidation feasibility study, the concerns of the boards and employees could be decreased or eliminated.

The second recommendation would be to form a consolidation guidance committee. This committee would be made up of key administrative personnel, members from all labor groups' leadership, and members from both governing boards of the districts. The research was clear that there are cultural, and operational differences that need to be addressed before moving the consolidation forward. By bringing the key personnel from both agencies together, these concerns can be discussed and worked through before they gain momentum and negatively affect the consolidation effort.

The third recommendation would be to establish an internal consolidation communication plan. This communication plan will be composed of regularly scheduled in-person communications from the Chief of the Districts to all personnel for the duration of the consolidation effort. The information would come from the feasibility study and the consolidation guidance committee and then disseminated to all members of the districts. The research and corresponding data show that employees have concerns about the lack of information coming from the leadership of the Districts even though the information is being made available through their labor groups. To further encourage cooperation and input the information and ideas from the employees can be rerouted back to the consolidation guidance committee for further action or discussion.

The fourth recommendation would be to establish an external consolidation communication plan. This communication plan will be composed of community meetings and press releases timed to key events and information needing to be publicized as established by the consolidation guidance committee. Included in the external consolidation communication plan will be key local government leaders and politicians that can be of assistance throughout the consolidation. The data showed that employees of LFD have concerns about losing their identity with their community, and SPFD could garner new public interest and support moving forward from the local community by instituting this recommendation.

All future readers of this applied research project should understand that this research is exclusive to SPFD and LFD and the purpose of identifying why consolidating the two Districts creates concerns with members of both Districts. The research identified how comparable Districts have successfully performed consolidations and discovered many of the concerns of the employees and the governing boards of both SPFD and LFD. To any organization attempting to

consolidate fire service agencies this research approach and corresponding results could be beneficial.

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Appendix A

Deputy Chief Geoff Miller, SMFD

1. Please describe your position in your agency at the time of the consolidation effort?

They were all different. The earlier consolidations were in the 80's. I was the training officer for some of them I was a Battalion Chief and then an Assistant Chief. The training officer position was the interesting position I was in during a merger that was for sure.

2. Which agencies were being consolidated?

Citrus Heights a nine station District and then North Highlands a two station District were the first to consolidate in February of 1984. That was a pretty easy one because it was small merger. Meanwhile American River Fire Protection District is doing consolidations on their side of the future Sacramento Metro Fire District with Arden, Arcade and Sloughhouse Fire Protection Districts. The next merger was Citrus Heights Fire District and Rancho Cordova Fire District in July of 1984. That consolidation was a tough one because we did not share contiguous borders Fair Oaks Fire District was in between. The Fair Oaks Chief at the time didn't want anything to do with losing his kingdom. With the merging of Rancho Cordova we became Sacramento County Fire District a new 29 station District. In November of 1993 Fair Oaks Fire District finally merged into the Sacramento County Fire District. In December of 2000 the Sacramento County Fire Protection District and the American River Fire Protection Districts merged to form the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire Protection District.

3. Can you describe the main reason your organization decided that consolidation/regionalization/ merger was a viable option to consider?

The economy of scale we had already proven through the smaller mergers that when you consolidate you don't need 4 Chiefs, 4 Deputy Chiefs, 4 Training Officers, and 15 Battalion Chiefs. The savings from those positions could be put into improving your level of service to the community through purchasing new equipment and updating facilities pretty much putting the money where it should be going. We also soon realized that our bargaining position got better when you need four engines you obviously get a better deal than if you were to purchase one engine. Also, when we merged American River into Sacramento Metro we received our ERAF money back due to being a multiple county agency. We had proven that the consolidation process worked through the years, and it made sense and increased the level of service to the communities of all agencies served.

4. Was there support within the line personnel for the initiative?

When it comes to the big consolidation between Sacramento County and American River Fire Protection Districts the line personnel we're all for merging it was usually administration that was dragging. Line guys got to see the positives from all the other mergers they knew that it would benefit them in the long run. I think both sides realized that there were more opportunities in a larger agency. In a larger agency, there were advancement opportunities that did not present themselves in a smaller District.

5. Were there major cultural differences between the agencies?

The way that American River Fire District ran EMS calls was probably the biggest we just had to give it time until they were comfortable with advance life support. It was a conscious decision to keep AMR in American Rivers District, so we didn't blow things up all at once and make too many changes. The plan was slowly over time to take over the transport piece of the operation. It

took some time to work through all the operational issues sometimes you think you are closer than you are to making it work. We had to deal with what size attack lines and nozzles were going to be the new operational norm let alone adding ALS transport services.

6. What were some of the major concerns of the employees and were they answered before moving forward?

There were some concerns initially about leaving nice areas of the new District and going to not so much thought after areas. But as is known in the Fire Service it all about your crew and soon all were able to bid to the station and areas that they wanted to be working at. All the initial concerns went away pretty quickly after the mergers.

7. Was there community support for the consolidation effort?

There was support in some areas but even late in my career and you would go someplace and they would say hey Citrus Heights Fire District is here and you would have to correct them and tell them Citrus Heights Fire District went away in 1980 were Sac Metro now. The public knew they called 911 and a fire engine showed up to take care of the problem no one looks at the side of the truck in an emergency. When you start closing stations then the community really gets involved but if you lay out the facts and the response times and usually even that goes away pretty quick.

8. Was there a plan on how to restructure the governing boards if so how was that accomplished?

That took a lot of negotiations some of the Board members were long standing members of their Boards it took some negotiations to get that initial Board to seven members.

9. Was there cost savings predicted and were they realized when the merger was accomplished?

There was lots of work with the positions and the organizational charts the reorganization of positions were the major savings realized during the mergers.

10. How long did the whole consolidation process take to complete?

They all took different amounts of time but the large merger between Sacramento County and American River Fire District took several years. There was some bad blood early on in the process we had an interim chief a position holder. There were a lot of rumors floating around from both sides we had to take a couple of stabs at it to make it work. We went through about four interim chiefs and a long process before we got close to making it happen. The merger got held up for the longest time in regards to the name of the new District what are we going to call it? We were even getting held up on the type of badges that we were going to wear Sacramento County had just bought new badges for the entire department. But in the long run it made more sense to rename the District Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District and give everyone the new identity. You know we created a 42 station department there was a lot of movement a lot of money so it took some time.

11. How quickly were each agencies employees integrated with each other?

There were no forced movements on the last merger we rebid the whole new District and off we went. With the size of the District and the amount of people that were retiring, there was a lot of integration that happened people just started having to work together.

12. Was there an agency that gained more than the other?

The big merge was pretty even there were no obvious winners or losers. Obviously the smaller Districts gained a lot when Sacramento County and American River were consolidating. But that last merge between the two was pretty even.

13. Was the merge cost neutral and if it wasn't how did that get portrayed to the public and the agency members?

In every sense the public gained from the consolidations freeing up the monies in administration by getting rid of the supplication of effort allowed us to increase the level of service to the community. We have a dozer program, a helicopter and an airport crash rescue response that we couldn't have afforded before the consolidations.

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14. What have been the major realizations of the merger for the new organization and would you do it again if you had the choice?

The thing that is a surprise for a lot of us is that there is still a small contingent of us and them even after 16 years. It also took some time to get the operational stuff smoothed out and working well it was a lot different than just running mutual aid and working fires together. We ended up making a new set of SOG's, and SOP's a while after the merger to get everyone on the same page. I totally think our mergers were the right thing to do and would do it all over again if we hadn't done it back in the day. The learning opportunities that employees receive from now being a part of a larger agency are priceless. I would have never been exposed to airports, tank farms, high rises, and college campuses if we had stayed Citrus Heights Fire District.

Appendix B

Chief Michael Kraus, MRFA

1. Please describe your position in your agency at the time of the consolidation effort?

The project had been talked about for almost twenty years when we started the ball rolling on this effort the previous Fire Chief had just left for another agency, so I was the Interim Chief. From the beginning of the regionalization, I was promoted to Fire Chief of the Modesto Regional Fire Authority. I had been with the agency for 28 years and retired with 31 years of service.

2. Which agencies were being consolidated?

This was the interesting part and also the tricky part the agencies were The City of Modesto, Salida Fire Protection District, and the County Fire Warden's Office.

3. Can you describe the main reason your organization decided that consolidation/regionalization/ merger was a viable option to consider?

I think really from the start when we started getting serious with the effort I had the same message anytime I talked about the effort. The message and the goals were to reduce duplication, and increase efficiencies we truly believed that was why we were in the regionalization effort, and we stuck with that message. Modesto was 11 stations and Salida was a three station District. The County Fire Wardens office was not involved in suppression but was a provider of fire prevention and administration.

4. Was there support within the line personnel for the initiative?

Naturally there was a lot of questions although had it had been talked about for years it had mainly been talked about at the Chiefs level and not at the line level. Once we got started on this, we spent a lot of time with our people throughout the organization both safety and non-safety to try and explain where we were going what the benefits would be as we saw them for the organization as a whole. It got down to a point that WE were not going to go any further until our labor union had an advisory vote on the initiative, so we had some sort of a tool to use to show that the line supported the effort. It was an overwhelming advisory vote saying to move forward with the process. It did not happen overnight that educational process probably took a good six months before we got the vote together to move forward.

5. Were there major cultural differences between the agencies?

Right off the bat there were safety personnel of Modesto Fire had issues with Salida being a combination District. Salida Fire District utilized volunteers, and the City of Modesto had no volunteers and an aggressive IAFF Union that didn't want anything to do with volunteers. That cultural element right there was difficult to deal with throughout the whole process. The union needed assurances that the new organization wouldn't be replacing paid personnel with volunteers. The civilian element was another one bringing all the civilians together from the city, county, and district lent itself to being a huge task in itself. Even above the volunteer issue the civilians not getting along are willing to take a look at other processes or procedures was the biggest issue. The operational platform worked well because everybody had been working together and operated pretty much the same. We did run into a problem when we were trying to figure out what the organization was going to be called. The County and District Chiefs wanted the name to be neutral without the name of Modesto in the new name. The union employees from the City of Modesto were hard fast in wanting Modesto in the name since they were bringing 85% of the personnel and resources into the new agency. The effort struggled with that for a while until everyone settled on Modesto Regional Fire Authority.

6. What were some of the major concerns of the employees and were they answered before moving forward?

The District personnel were not IAFF or CPF affiliated so in the end once we decided they were going to be City of Modesto employees we folded them right into the union. Another issue was the different retirement systems and inequities in pay but once the agencies became City of Modesto employees that was taken care of as well. Some Salida Fire District members that were close to retirement chose to stay employees of Salida through the merger process. Also, we had to assure all stakeholders that nobody would lose their jobs, but the administrative positions would be eliminated through attrition. We didn't need three Chiefs, three fire marshals, and three training officers. One hard thing about saving so much money is convincing the governing authorities that the savings were meant to increase efficiencies not be put back into the general fund. That took some time but in the end were successful.

7. Was there community support for the consolidation effort?

Early on when we decided to move forward, we invited the media in and had some answer and question press conferences trying to get the word out to the citizens that worked well. There were also a couple of city events that weren't specifically for our effort but we were asked to come out and talk to the community those went well and were good opportunities for us moving forward. We had some pretty good exposure early on, and everyone was pretty happy we were looking for ways to reduce duplication and increase efficiencies. You have to keep in mind this was at the start of the recession in 2009 things were starting to look really bad. The public wanted us to try and be efficient as possible.

8. Was there a plan on how to restructure the governing boards if so how was that accomplished?

At first, the three Chiefs got together, and we just thought we would do contracts for service between the Districts. The city council of Modesto though wanted to go to the Joint Powers Authority (JPA) concept right away partly because we had a successful JPA in the County with a regional dispatch center. The simple thing for our JPA Governing Board it seemed was to have a representative from each member agency sit on the Board. If the JPA members increased then, the new members would have rotating terms. The goal was to keep the JPA Governing Board at five members with the originating agencies having permanent seats on the Board.

9. Was there cost savings predicted and were they realized when the merger was accomplished?

No one lost their job immediately so the dollars didn't materialize right away. About a year after I retired thought the unofficial realization was over two million dollars that were saved in over 3 years.

10. How long did the whole consolidation process take to complete?

No one lost their job immediately, so the dollars didn't materialize right away. About a year after I retired thought the unofficial realization was over two million dollars that were saved in over three years.

11. How quickly were each agencies employees integrated with each other?

We integrated employees right away all employees became employees of the City of Modesto and worked for the Fire Authority. They were kept in their original positions and then as openings became available they then were able to bid into the City and into Salida. At first, there was not a lot of movement, but as employees became more comfortable with the merger, we saw a lot more movement. Seniority was based on paid career time not volunteer time with Salida.

Were there any unexpected consequences of the integration?

I didn't see the clash between the civilian employees and there was some power struggles at the Chief Officer level that were very unexpected.

12. Was there an agency that gained more than the other?

The clear winner in all of this was Salida they received significant pay raises to bring them up to Modesto. Also, two of their three stations were staffed with two people and immediately were increased to three personnel on the fire engines. The depth of the platform for Salida increased tremendously they received an increase in response to three engines, two trucks, and a battalion chief.

13. Was the merge cost neutral and if it wasn't how did that get portrayed to the public and the agency members?

Salida benefited the most, but they were a very solvent District with very efficient budgeting practices. They had paid for all of the employee increases before their employees moved over to Modesto employment.

14. What have been the major realizations of the merger for the new organization and would you do it again if you had the choice?

Going back to the original intent of reducing duplication and increasing efficiencies we did that they were realized. Absolutely, I would do it again if I could I would have slowed it down and put it into phases but the politicians wanted it to move fast, so we made it happen.

Appendix C

Chief Dave Roberts El Dorado Hills California

1. Please describe your position in your agency at the time of the consolidation effort?

I was the Fire Chief of the El Dorado Hill Fire Protection District.

2. Which agencies were being consolidated?

We were doing an annex or merge with Latrobe Fire District and then we did a contract for service with Rescue Fire District.

3. Can you describe the main reason your organization decided that consolidation/regionalization/ merger was a viable option to consider?

We tried to annex Latrobe, Rescue, and Cameron Park Fire Districts many times over the years and all the attempts failed miserably. It has always been something we are interested in because we have always felt that thirteen Fire Districts within El Dorado County were just too many agencies causing a lot of redundancy and duplication of effort. Latrobe was going out of business and burning through their reserves. My point was we were going to be going out there anyway so if we could get some money for it we might as well merge because we would be the closest resource anyway.

Rescue Fire is the other agency we went in with but with a shared services agreement with my deputy chief retiring it made perfect sense to bring their chief over as my deputy chief. We pay Rescue Fire District \$30,000 a year, and they staff our Deputy Chief Position, and we provide them Battalion Chief coverage 24/7 365 days a year. The whole agreement has worked well for both agencies.

4. Was there support within the line personnel for the initiative?

Some yes some no it fractured the union some were very concerned with well that's just more people I will have to test against. Others were concerned with seniority issues where they fit in the seniority hierarchy. Those are the things that are important to them but not the big picture what's best for the organization moving forward. Some of the guys that are longer term thinkers "big picture people" see it as an opportunity and protecting El Dorado Hills Fire if El Dorado Hills ever goes to being a city. We can remain separate now from the City because of the annexation and the threat of the new City taking all of our reserves to fund the City programs. It was a tough 50/50 split.

5. Were there major cultural differences between the agencies?

The training and experience levels were the big things that we had to deal with bringing the personnel over into our department took some time. We lined out training programs for all and developed task books to help facilitate the process some took advantage of the opportunity and some didn't. There was a whole lot of their not as good as we are type of thing going on from both sides, and I kept bringing our guys back to the fact that you are lucky that you landed with El Dorado Hills and it's our responsibility to help get the Latrobe personnel to our level of competencies. It was the right thing to do for the citizens of both Districts. Latrobe was used to working with old equipment and just making it work, and the El Dorado Hills employees were used to brand new apparatus and equipment that just worked all time. There are good and bad things that can come from both ways of working and that's what we had to work through.

6. What were some of the major concerns of the employees and were they answered before moving forward?

There were many concerns dealing with the level of training that the Latrobe personnel were at during the time of the merger. Additionally, the level of service being provided was not what the crews from El Dorado Hills were accustomed to providing their community. Also the fact that Latrobe was not an organized labor union was a concern to the employees of El Dorado Hills Fire District. We tried to get ahead of the rumor mill and get the information out as soon as possible to our employees to ease their concerns.

7. Was there community support for the consolidation effort?

It was difficult in Latrobe we scheduled six community meetings at different times of the day to try to meet the needs of the local community. It was a total win for the citizens of the community as we went to an ALS deployment model and are very close to staffing their station 24 hours a day. In the El Dorado Hills community, we just had to lay out the facts. The first fact was if we didn't merge with Latrobe they would fail and close shop. If that were the case, our resources would be the closest, and we would be running those calls anyway.

8. Was there a plan on how to restructure the governing boards if so how was that accomplished?

The governing board of Latrobe was good with not being on the Board of the new agency they knew they were in good hands with El Dorado Hills and just really stepped down. They were glad to be an advisory panel to the Board of their new District.

9. Was there cost savings predicted and were they realized when the merger was accomplished?

There were no real cost savings involved with this merger it was done out of necessity. Latrobe was failing we were going to serve the area if the District went away and get nothing for doing the work. We were able to negotiate the tax rate with the County and still we are subsidizing the Latrobe area we now serve. The annex of the Latrobe District did enable the El Dorado Hills Fire District to avoid being a part of the City of El Dorado Hills movement that would have blended the District with all its reserves into the new City. This in the Districts point of view would not have been good for emergency service delivery to the residents of the District.

10. How long did the whole consolidation process take to complete?

The whole process took about 18 months from start to finish.

11. How quickly were each agencies employees integrated with each other?

Really they were integrated right away once the annex was signed personnel started working and training together.

12. Was there an agency that gained more than the other?

It was definitely Latrobe that gained more as far as services to the citizens. The employees that came over from Latrobe also gained in wages and benefits as well as the level of training and equipment.

13. Was the merge cost neutral and if it wasn't how did that get portrayed to the public and the agency members?

The annex was not cost neutral it is costing El Dorado Hills approximately \$500,000 to staff Latrobe with an Engineer and a Captain right now twelve hours a day ALS. Soon we will be going to around the clock coverage in Latrobe and that will bring on additional expense.

14. What have been the major realizations of the merger for the new organization and would you do it again if you had the choice?

The major realization is that there was a lot of work put into the effort by all to make the annexation work for the Districts. It was definitely worth doing and would do it again without a

doubt. The process is keeping El Dorado Hills Fire District out of the local community politics of being part of a new City of El Dorado Hills that would in all likely hood be after our reserves to help fund the new City.

Appendix D

Captain Darren Zimmerman, SPFD Labor Group

1. Do you think the administrative contract for services is a sustainable method of operation for Loomis and South Placer Fire District? I do but there needs to be changes Loomis needs to pay a lot more money for the services that they're getting right now. I think it's smart for any District if they can consolidate services and reduce duplication of effort. If you can share those costs you can transfer those funds to general services which can pay for anything including salaries, apparatus, and major equipment.

2. What do you think the major benefits of consolidating South Placer and Loomis Fire Districts will be initially?

It's hard to say that there is a benefit unless you come from the aspect of everyone will benefit from the consolidation. Loomis has to be self-reliant have to be able to pay their personnel the same thing as South Placer is getting paid if you don't you'll end up with one group feeling inferior. If this isn't done before the consolidation with Loomis money then South Placer will be subsidizing Loomis and that will create animosity between the labor groups and the community. So the first thing that has to be proven is that Loomis is sustainable at our pay. They need to be able to pay for their own salaries and benefits and the cost of the current Administration to make sure that it's all revenue neutral. The number one major benefit is to get rid of redundancy and you have purchasing power together.

3. Do you believe there are any benefits of consolidation that will become apparent in the future?

I think that number one you're giving Loomis citizens a huge benefit as far as increased services. One of the future benefits is possible ALS services in downtown Loomis with a 15-minute response time for AMR you could realistically cut that time by six minutes if a South Placer Ambulance was in the Town of Loomis. Benefits for South Placer include a different source of revenue, room to grow the District and more positions for labor to fill in another station. L3809 members can have more opportunities to receive overtime at the Loomis station and vice versa. It also gives South Placer employees a chance to work in areas that they never have before with the freeway railway and high pressure underground pipelines.

4. What do you think will be the greatest obstacle that needs to be addressed before the consolidation moves forward?

I think the biggest obstacle is communication, you can send all the information out to the Unions and if there's not a dollar sign attached to it they won't read it. So you really need to get out in front of the truth and give them information in like a state of the union. If you don't the rumor mill will take over and the information takes on a life of its own. When the consolidation starts to get a head of steam on it there's going to be difficulties with seniority, station bidding and the check off process.

5. Do you know of any disadvantage to consolidating the two Districts?

No it's just that no information is worse than bad information so long as it's an open process and we know what the goal is and that's to consolidate the two districts then I think we'll be ok. I can't really see any huge disadvantages. The devil will be in the details some people will be happy and some people won't but overall I think it'll be good for the agency. I also think that we need to do a good job of educating the public in both areas that are going to be consolidated to

get out in front of the bad news or perceived bad news. The community will portray it as bad if they don't have the real information that will definitely happen if we don't campaign.

6. What do you think will be the major concerns of the employees in the consolidation process?

Number one since our budget is higher than Loomis is I think that 3809 is worried that we will be supplementing Loomis. I think once you're able to show that no we're not subsidizing and yes Loomis is paying for the increase in salaries and benefits I think it'll be better for the consolidation attempt. I think that labor needs to know that pretty soon there's going to be a Cal Fire wall from the Loomis border up to Tahoe so we need to do a good job Shoring up our borders and getting the room to grow that we need now.

7. Do believe that there are benefits to the community in consolidating the two Districts?

Decreasing redundancy we don't need to Chief Officers that are less than four miles apart are two training officers it's going to streamline training we're going to increase efficiencies from ordering equipment, apparatus, and staffing in general.

8. How big a role will each Districts organizational culture play in the consolidation process in your opinion?

I think we're already seeing it happen we've been changing policies and procedures at Loomis and they are getting a feel of how our department is run. So you are already seeing the cultures blend and change just what the contract for services was intended to do I believe. When we merge and integrate employees you'll see it even more. I think it's a good thing that the job descriptions have already been changed because you're holding their personnel to our level and standard even before the consolidation takes place.

9. Do you believe that the differences in organizational culture are great enough to derail the consolidation effort?

No I don't because we have worked hand-in-hand with Loomis for years and we've always had a good relationship with them. I think that we just need to work through those organizational culture differences and it will be fine.

Appendix E

Battalion Chief Jason Brooks. SPFD Administrative Labor

1. Do you think the administrative contract for services is a sustainable method of operation for Loomis and South Placer Fire District?

Sustainable is the key word will it last forever no, at some point things are going to change either in equality of growth or budgets. I think for the short to medium term yes it is sustainable.

2. What do you think the major benefits of consolidating South Placer and Loomis Fire Districts will be initially?

Initially it will be just like the administrative contract I think not much will change. Within a short period of time I think there will be a lot of benefits. Once we establish maybe one work group and all have the same policies, reduce the duplication of effort, and start seeing the money savings from that as a single larger agency. It will take six months to a year to start realizing any benefits outside of the administrative contract.

3. Do you believe there are any benefits of consolidation that will become apparent in the future?

Operationally we will be more on the same page from the way we do things around the station to the operational guidelines. We will have a larger pool of employees that are the same type and can be used across the new larger District to reduce mandatories and staffing issues. We will bring in additional people that have different expertise that we may not currently have in our District or vice versa. There will be a financial savings down the line in the future in the long run we will be a more financially stable District do to the different funding mechanism that will add diversity to the new Districts portfolio. Not to mention just the savings of not duplicating positions in the Districts.

4. What do you think will be the greatest obstacle that needs to be addressed before the consolidation moves forward?

My opinion it will be external and political maybe a little from the public side mostly in my opinion it will be at the political county level. I don't think we are going to have a problem internally. I know there are still discussions on employee concerns. My gut feeling being around their employees even with some of the pains of the contract with more rules they still seem excited to consolidate.

5. Do you know of any disadvantage to consolidating the two Districts?

The only disadvantage that I could possibly see is there may be an increased workload issue for administration.

6. What do you think will be the major concerns of the employees in the consolidation process?

My opinion is that the SPFD employees are going to be more of an issue centered around the money that it will take to bring up LFD to SPFD wages and benefits. That it would delay raises and increases to the employees of SPFD because the perception is that LFD would need to be subsidized by SPFD.

7. Do believe that there are benefits to the community in consolidating the two Districts?

Providing the same service with less overhead, better buying power, and reduced duplication of effort.

8. How big a role will each Districts organizational culture play in the consolidation process in your opinion?

Loomis is small they have their own identity and they are proud of it but they can see the future and they understand to survive that the consolidation is the right thing to do. SPFD's organizational culture is going thru changes we are on our third Chief in five years and there will be a little bit into the process of merging.

9. Do you believe that the differences in organizational culture are great enough to derail the consolidation effort?

Absolutely not!

Appendix F

Captain Devin Fuller, LFD Labor Group

1. Do you think the administrative contract for services is a sustainable method of operation for Loomis and South Placer Fire District?

I think the administrative contract for services is not as sustainable as a full merger would be. I just think the contract is more work for South Placer we should consolidate and move forward as one agency.

2. What do you think the major benefits of consolidating South Placer and Loomis Fire Districts will be initially?

I guess for Loomis it would be manpower the ability to move around a little bit more and cover our calls a little bit better. Also the ability to work at different stations is beneficial for our employees. I believe we already do a lot of those things that a consolidation will provide in greater detail we have training, maintenance on apparatus and day-to-day operations running pretty smooth with the contract for administrative services.

3. Do you believe there are any benefits of consolidation that will become apparent in the future?

I think in the long term you'll see more consistency between the agencies handling SOP's and SOG's and overall operational efficiencies. I think both agencies would be more financially stable you would have one budget instead of two and would be able to budget more efficiently.

4. What do you think will be the greatest obstacle that needs to be addressed before the consolidation moves forward?

I think the labor groups are going to be the biggest obstacle as far as being able to bring pay up and benefits up so they are equal all around. I don't think the community is going to be an obstacle when they went for the measure it was to keep Loomis Fire. This consolidation is different because it's increasing the level of service to the community and making us more effective, efficient, and sustainable.

5. Do you know of any disadvantage to consolidating the two Districts?

No I don't see any disadvantages to consolidating you're only improving services to the community by bringing the two agencies together and we're already doing it.

6. What do you think will be the major concerns of the employees in the consolidation process?

I think as far as Loomis goes the biggest concern is the benefits. We have full paid medical but we don't have medical at retirement so that's going to be a wash. I think for the Loomis employees the biggest benefit will be going to the 3% at 55 retirements if that can happen it would be great.

7. Do believe that there are benefits to the community in consolidating the two Districts?

I think the community will see a tighter nit better trained Fire District with more consistency and a better level of service.

8. How big a role will each Districts organizational culture play in the consolidation process in your opinion?

I think there's things that Loomis does that the employees would like to see continue, that we do in the community. For example our yearly pancake breakfast and the participation we have with

Del Oro football and all the parades that we take place in I guess its a little pride in Loomis. But those things can definitely still take place if you're part of South Placer.

9. Do you believe that the differences in organizational culture are great enough to derail the consolidation effort?

No I don't think there's anything within the organizational culture of Loomis that could derail the consolidation process. I think that we can work out the differences between the labor groups and the District can work on the financial end of the project and we will be good to move forward.

Appendix G

Michael DeLaurentis, SPFD Board

1. Do you think the administrative contract for services is a sustainable method of operation for Loomis and South Placer Fire District?

Not sure if its sustainable because I see it as a growing workload on you, yourself the chief as well as others that are providing services under that contract. I think that it is more work that we can provide long term, while still keeping our District properly managed. I see growing work in the contract that will continue to grow over time. Providing duplicate services for two Districts.

2. What do you think the major benefits of consolidating South Placer and Loomis Fire Districts will be initially?

The initial benefits will be in operations more resources to everyone's disposal. Less duplication of effort in operations one EMS project manager, one training project manager for example.

3. Do you believe there are any benefits of consolidation that will become apparent in the future?

Sure the investments for post-retirement benefits for the Loomis personnel, obviously there will be some economy of scale benefits we won't need two chiefs, two assistants nothing to dramatic as far as cost savings are concerned. Increased services to the public through the realization of more personnel to do more tasks without duplicating efforts.

4. What do you think will be the greatest obstacle that needs to be addressed before the consolidation moves forward?

Hard to say what the greatest obstacles are going to be but I guess it would be bringing all labor groups into synchronization. That will be what takes the longest to accomplish.

5. Do you know of any disadvantage to consolidating the two Districts?

I really do not see any disadvantages I think it is good for both agencies. It will also be good for the citizens of both Districts reducing government and increasing services.

6. What do you think will be the major concerns of the employees in the consolidation process?

I wonder if they think that this is going to be more work for them individually. Maybe the Loomis employees do not want to join the union.

7. Do believe that there are benefits to the community in consolidating the two Districts?

As long as the property taxes stay the same and we continue to provide the same great service I do not expect our citizens to be against the proposal. We would work toward bringing the level of service up within the new District to what is expected here at South Placer.

8. How big a role will each Districts organizational culture play in the consolidation process in your opinion?

From what it sounds from your reports and the information from the last chief is we are already working well together. Unless there are some cultural difference that exist that we are not aware of all should be good. I do not know much about their Board but I have set in a few Board meetings at Loomis. I do not see why there would be a cultural problem between either of our Boards. Some of us Board members will have to step down I do not know if that will be a huge problem we cannot have a ten person board. We will have to figure that out as we get closer.

9. Do you believe that the differences in organizational culture are great enough to derail the consolidation effort?

I do not think so it just seems to be a no brainer it feels like the right thing to do from all standpoints.

Appendix H

Russ Kelley, LFD Board

1. Do you think the administrative contract for services is a sustainable method of operation for Loomis and South Placer Fire District?

I don't know I think its working well I have no problems with it whatsoever. It would depend on how the community feels about the increasing cost, well every cost is going to increase and as long as we can keep that on an even basis then I think that might work. But I think long term I think we need to get it together in one place if we can.

2. What do you think the major benefits of consolidating South Placer and Loomis Fire Districts will be initially?

I do not know, based on where we are right now and how we have worked together to bring everything together I do not see any changes. I don't see a lot of change happening the community won't be able to identify the difference. I do not even think half of them know that there is a difference in the fire logo on the side of the truck. They just want to see that fire truck show up when they need it.

3. Do you believe there are any benefits of consolidation that will become apparent in the future?

I think that our main thing is that we are able to purchase effectively together. You know to leverage a smaller department versus a larger department has more purchasing power in everything. Ultimately that is the whole benefit on consolidation the only concern I have like everyone financially is everyone going to be getting the same value for their contribution as they were before the consolidation.

4. What do you think will be the greatest obstacle that needs to be addressed before the consolidation moves forward?

The County! The County doesn't recognize the abilities that we have to keep a solvent fire department and to be able to plan. Even though they helped Loomis Fire get to where we are they do not recognize are abilities. I know Jim Holmes and Jeanie Windenhausen helped us get to where we needed to be that's been a great benefit. Know the challenge is to manage that money effectively and efficiently and to be able to do what we said we were going to do and that is to ask for no new taxes.

5. Do you know of any disadvantage to consolidating the two Districts?

I don't see a lot of disadvantage I see nothing but advantages. The biggest disadvantage is the politics and the stuff that goes with it these are business decisions they are not political decisions. They shouldn't be political we do need to keep the people happy and sometimes that is political.

6. What do you think will be the major concerns of the employees in the consolidation process?

The employees are worried about their retirement and how much money they are going to make and how much money they are putting in their pocket. They want to know that they are getting their fair share for doing the same job that will mean a step up for some.

7. Do believe that there are benefits to the community in consolidating the two Districts?

I think we are getting a better fire department, better communication, better responses basically a good value for our money. This a business decision not a political decision and if the County

thinks this is anything but a business decision then they need to rethink that because it is a business decision.

8. How big a role will each Districts organizational culture play in the consolidation process in your opinion?

I think the culture is good everybody wants to see that their part of the community is recognized. We may change a name or do something's to recognize we didn't lose everything but we gained a more efficient Fire District.

9. Do you believe that the differences in organizational culture are great enough to derail the consolidation effort?

I don't think so it's a good effort it's a business decision and it's a business decision based on taking care of the community. So based on that we are good.

Appendix I

All survey comments unedited:

South Placer Employee Concern Survey

Survey question one:

Were you initially in support of the current contract for services between LFD and SPFD?

- ~ Loomis needed a fire chief in order to operate at a high level.
- ~ I could have gone either way, I see the benefits of sharing costs (staff) and not duplicating services.
- ~ I felt this was an opportunity to show the Loomis Fire Board how well their Fire Department could run with a full Administrative Staff. Thus, warming them up to the idea of a potential merger. However, I was hesitant with the potential cost and workload to our current department.
- ~ Although it created additional revenue for our district, it increased the work load for our command staff in a time that was already difficult due to a transition in leadership. It was a sound decision to assist our closes neighboring special district as the county has fail to do so.
- ~ Really didn't know how it would work out, thought doing a trial period was the correct way to approach an Administrative Contract.
- ~ I have always been a proponent of a full merger between the two Districts. The contract in my opinion was a good start to move in the proper direction of a full consolidation.
- ~ in support, for long term solutions but have fairly large concerns about how it will affect

Survey question two:

Do you believe that the administrative contract for services is an effective way to operate long term?

- ~ Our job is about progression
- ~ No, while the differences between the agencies have been able to be worked out through the current Admin. contract, to operate long term with such differences (policies, procedures, etc.) would almost be counterproductive by making it harder to manage the group.
- ~ Our current contract doesn't have many issues as far as I can tell with my limited experience however consolidation seems like a more efficient long term plan.
- ~ A complete merger of personnel would be more efficient but only if Loomis can be revenue neutral with South Placer.
- ~ The administrative contract should be a transition tool to a complete merger. Currently I think it is working well but there are gaps and overlaps that would best be solved by a complete merger.
- ~ In my opinion, in order for the Loomis Fire District to increase their level of service they must merge with an advanced Fire Department with such services (i.e. ALS services, Prevention, 24/7 Battalion, etc.). In order for SPFD to continue Long Term providing Contracted Services, the fees would have to become more financially beneficial. Currently Loomis Fire is getting a smoking deal.
- ~ I do not believe either party has moved forward with the assumption that this current agreement would be long term. I believe both parties are intending for either Loomis to eventually provide their own Chief and administrative services, or there would be a full merger.

- ~ With policies and MOU's being different, it is hard to go to drill and seeing the other agency allowed to conduct themselves in a manner we are not allowed to. Example: tobacco, tattoo's, station shirts, Sundays being rest day for Loomis, etc.
- ~ In my opinion this is the future of the fire service, instead of redundancy in many areas money can be saved by contracting for services with fire departments to free up funds for equipment and salaries/benefits. We should look to our neighbors as well, in regards to training/EMS.
- ~ Inefficient way of doing business. Consolidate and things will be much more cost effective and will save a lot of wasted time due to duplication of effort.
- ~ Not the way we do it. It is one thing to offer a fire chief to run more than one agency provided both agencies have support personnel to carry out the mission. It's difficult to have one agency's personnel managing many of the functions of another agency yet still try to stay separate. At the current position we are in now, we might as well merge, change our current agreement or separate. I don't believe continuing the way we do it now is effective long term.
- ~ No, I have seen that our BC's seem to spend more time dealing with the "one horse town" attitude of LFD. I think we wasted our time on the administrative contract. Our BC's spent more time in the beginning dealing with issues that kept them away from our crews. I don't doubt that we had to start with an admin contract to get to here but it would have been better to have some communication on the particulars earlier.

Survey question three:

In each of the following areas rate how you feel each is functioning within the current contract between LFD and SPFD?

- ~ I feel the training has gotten much better between the organizations. There has been some conflict between the different personnel from both agencies. However you're going to get that anywhere
- ~ Training has worked out the best, but it's also the easiest to plan. Operations has been going well, but the subtle differences in policies and culture has created a few challenges. Personnel have seemed to blend well because everyone has worked together and known each other for years, and the Admin portion seems to be functioning. I have no knowledge of issues with Prevention or Maintenance, so I find them adequate.
- ~ My reasons for marking adequate on administration, prevention and maintenance were because I'm not involved enough in those areas to give an accurate opinion.
- ~ I feel that our administration having to provide services for two separate entities consumes a lot of time and could possibly prevent them from concentrating on our districts needs.
- ~ Overall Loomis's crews interact well with South Placer crews. Loomis is very positive at trainings. I do not have enough information to answer accurately in the other areas. My adequate ranking means I'm neutral.
- ~ As a volunteer I am unable to get the participation of the interns or other volunteers because of conflicting schooling and working shifts. With my job and career I am unable to participate in the daily training with the paid stations.
- ~ Not really sure, so I'm guessing
- ~ I'm not involved in operations personnel or prevention enough to have a credible opinion
- ~ Training has by far increased between the two Departments increasing our effectiveness on incidents.

- ~ Training, operations, personnel hasn't changed in my opinion. In my position I don't deal with prevention, admin, or maintenance between the two.
- ~ Station 19 area has a diminished level of service on department training days as they cover Loomis.
- ~ I do not know much about our contract for prevention and maintenance.
- ~ "Training: South Place gives the majority of the drills, I think Loomis should share some of the responsibility. Operations: I think we should be used more in Loomis especially the Truck."
- ~ The areas you are asking for a grade a much to broad to give an answer. For example when it comes to training, are you talking about the training that we are providing/doing (with Loomis at a company level) yes. All neighboring agencies should be working together. On the other hand, they Loomis aren't providing anything for SPFD personnel. Operations, are you asking emergency, policy/procedures, day to day operations, equipment purchases, etc? Again these are much to broad as categories, they need to be refined to specific areas.
- ~ "The two Districts have different prevention standards. Wasteful and inefficient.
- ~ Managing two Districts with the current administrative staff is a stop gap measure and should not be continued long term. I'm sure the Placer County Fire Study and the LAFCO MSR will reflect this. Small one station departments are a thing of the past in the current economic climate."
- ~ I would rank some areas higher but I don't know how they're doing over at Loomis as far as administration and personnel goes. All the other areas we are doing it and they participate and reap the reward while we do the work. If we were one department they would have to put in an equal amount of work especially when it comes to training.
- ~ most of these things do not affect me personally so its hard to have much opinion on them. the interaction between the shop and Loomis' personnel has been somewhat clunky I think due to the difference between the schedules of the shop and safety
- ~ personnel. I believe it would be much easier of records and parts ordering were a little more integrated.
- ~ I rated Personnel, Administration, Prevention and Apparatus Maintenance as 'Adequate'. As a line employee, I am not exposed on a consistent basis to those categories therefore I am neutral.
- ~ South Placer Fire and Loomis Fire are not fully consolidated so therefore; it makes it very difficult to operate as a whole (1) District. I believe South Placer Fire has but in the effort to make the current situation as best as it can with the support given by Loomis Board.
- ~ I think its important that we have included LFD companies for training. For operations, they do things somewhat different and if the master plan was to merge the two agencies, then they should fall under our ops. For personnel, they need to have the same requirements to test for specific jobs. For example, our guys need Command 1A, LFD guys don't need it to take the test. Now they have no one available to promote and we have possibly one to fill the current vacancy here. I am pretty sure admin underestimated the struggles they would deal with as this contract progressed. I have no idea what preventions impact is on this subject. For apparatus maintenance, I know I have seen their rigs in our shop a lot in the beginning and they didn't take care of their trucks as well as we do. So our shop, I think, keeps them pretty accountable to our standards.

- ~ I think the management of administration and prevention of two separate districts is not effective or efficient due to different policies, procedures, and level of service.

Survey question four:

Has your opinion on the administrative contract changed in the last year and a half of working with a contract for services?

- ~ It really hasn't affected our organization in a negative way. I feel our admin still performs all the tasks for us line guys.
- ~ While Administrative Contracts sound great and like a good idea I've noticed that at times it would be much easier to just function as one department and make it a full merge.
- ~ It has changed for the worse. I have been told South Placer has exceeded the original contract cost of providing service to Loomis. If we are over budget on the contract, Loomis should pay the cost, and ensure the money isn't coming from South Placers budget.
- ~ I feel this has not changed on SPFD end. In my position I've not gained anything by a administrative contract between the two agencies.
- ~ I have the same opinion. Its good for Loomis, fair for SPFD.
- ~ I think it is going well.
- ~ To much work to manage two districts with the existing administrative staff. Wasted effort. Far better to consolidate and be more efficient. Operationally we can share more resources. The contract has worked but I think the end goal should be that the contract is a transitional process to facilitate a full consolidation.
- ~ And (shocker) it has nothing to do with the chief getting 5%. It mainly has to do with the perception that we will do most of the leg work when it comes to training, facilities, personnel, operations, etc. Loomis seems to not want to even participate in coming to operations meetings anymore. So for me it seems like they're giving up and ready to let us run everything. Which we are doing but I would like to think they'd want to at least participate.
- ~ I still support the merger/service contract and believe it's a good way forward for both departments.
- ~ It has made me look at them more critically. I was cautiously optimistic in the beginning and now after seeing how they required a lot of effort of our admin to "clean house"... what's next. As this moves towards a merger, how is this going to affect my pocket book?

Survey question five:

Do you think that LFD and SPFD can both benefit from consolidation?

- ~ Yes I do. But it's an uneducated assumption because I don't know what all the numbers look like.
- ~ Shared costs, thus creating saving. We worked closely with each other prior to the Admin Contract, and since the contract we've begun to mirror each other even more. A merge seems like the next logical step.
- ~ It seems like personnel having more options for stations to work at and more personnel to be able to work with staffing wise would be nothing but a benefit.
- ~ "I am hopeful that a merger would be helpful but I have many questions....There are many fiscal concerns;-what does it do to budget to bring their salaries up?-what retirement rate do they come in with?-what kind of financial impact will it have on us?-will merging help us continue with growth and continued development?-is there a chance that Loomis could loose their special taxes that could end up hurting us?..Just listing a few...."

- ~ I believe all small agencies with similar budgets should consolidate. This removes waste of redundancy involving admin. services. This also can create better operations between crews on incidents. But it is only beneficial if one department isn't subsidizing the other.
- ~ If both departments operate under one set of policies and operational guidelines both departments and communities will benefit from increased efficiency and communication within the department.
- ~ As long as funds coming from one district's tax base doesn't go to support another. This would not be fair for the SPFD tax payers, nor it's employees.
- ~ I've yet to be educated on how this will benefit SPFD and the people with in the public on SPFD.
- ~ I have long believed that SPFD should investigate consolidations with surrounding agencies provided it is beneficial to our public, District and employees. If consolidation were detrimental to any of those groups, I would be against it. Long term, it is the most efficient service for this area. I believe one larger agency would be a more viable model than several small agencies and I do not believe it would have to be limited to the special district. I believe SPFD should investigate consolidations with ALL of the surrounding agencies to find out what would truly be best for us.
- ~ Labor groups and administration haven't discussed anything, I don't know.
- ~ "Absolutely. Greater depth of services. Expanded ALS delivery. Future untapped revenue streams such as development revenue, special tax and benefit assessment revenue. Smaller government (Consolidate the Boards).
- ~ Potential for expanding transport delivery service. Consistent levels of service for both agencies, etc, etc."The benefits far out weigh the risks
- ~ In the long run I believe Loomis has a great potential for tax base and in the short term adding one more station to the roster adds minimal work to south placer administration and as things become more integrated processes and procedures will become smoother.
- ~ I believe Loomis would benefit more from a consolidation with South Placer than South Placer would benefit administratively. We are already running calls and training together so there would be no difference in that respect. Everything is dependent upon the "contract" if we consolidated. Would the budgets be consolidated and would the salary scale be the same?
- ~ I am sure we both can benefit from consolidation in many aspects but at the same time I have gone through consolidation before and that was not a pleasant experience.
- ~ I really don't know. Yes I would rather work for a larger agency but I'd feel more comfortable with our admin standing up before the crews here at SP and telling us all why it's a better move.

Survey question six:

Do you feel there are cost savings that can be realized by consolidating the two Districts?

- ~ Once again I don't know all the numbers
- ~ I would have to see the numbers to know. A presentation would be informative and clear up misinformation.
- ~ Speaking from the maintenance division, a merge will allow a reduction in fleet size for both departments. Maintenance and repair costs are higher than most people realize.
- ~ Not sure about cost savings, but I do see the potential for increase in overall revenue with transporting fees and room for development within Loomis.

- ~ More unsure than maybe.
- ~ An obvious cost savings for Loomis. We would loose 100K right off the top for loss of the administrative service. Would it create additional revenue above the cost necessary to run station 28? Is there a benefit for the SPFD public, district and employees?
- ~ Without Labor Groups discussing any consolidation with Administration, I can't make an educated answer.
- ~ Currently there are many ways to save money. Less duplication of effort. Standardized purchasing. Group purchasing. Less cost when recruiting personnel. The list goes on and on on ways to save money. Also it increases our ability to obtain grants and other funding by consolidation.
- ~ If we were to 100% consolidate meaning increasing the response boundaries for the services South Placer currently provides, we would have to put on more personnel to staff additional ambulances if AMR were willing to give up their current response area within the Loomis Fire District.
- ~ Possibly by apparatus replacement costs?
- ~ Eliminate repetition of work. This will free up manpower to accomplish other things

Survey question seven:

Do you believe that SPFD may lose its identity with the community if the two Districts are merged?

- ~ Absolutely not. We're not "Granite bay fire" I think that the public will have no clue and could give a sh**, as long as a fire truck pulls up and solves their problems.
- ~ We're not called Granite Bay Fire...our identity is South Placer Fire, most people don't even know that we cover Granite Bay area.
- ~ I think loomis has a much bigger identity with their community...
- ~ I don't believe South Placer has an identity. South Placer has always been in transition since I have worked here. It could be seen as a "training department". It can also be seen as a small department that tries to be bigger than it can actually be. Too many stations and not enough calls is the common factor holding us down. The district is all but built out. So, future growth is limited. Ideally, the department should only have 3 stations. I also think it would be beneficial to rename the department Granite Bay FD. The community would identify better knowing South Placer isn't just another government agency in the area and knowing it is their FD.
- ~ I don't believe the district has much of an identity with the community currently. A merger may possibly help.
- ~ I believe out of the two departments, Loomis has a stronger identity with its community. SPFD still has some work to do to even create an identity with our community. But in all fairness, both communities are different in themselves. "All small town in like a big family"
- ~ Unfortunately SPFD doesn't have a true identity. Which isn't a bad or a good thing in my opinion.
- ~ I feel that Loomis Fire would lose it's identity with their community.
- ~ Both parties have pride in their agencies and identities. That does not have to be lost because of a consolidation.
- ~ With the exception of a few community members, the public doesn't care what the side of a fire truck says. They think we are all the "same" department, as long as we show up to their emergencies that's all they care about. As far as identity, that's established through strong

effective leadership, training, tradition, adapting to the public needs to provide superb customer service, strong relationship between Labor and administration, strong sense of direction (where we are going as department currently and in the future).

- ~ South Placer has strong community identity. So does Loomis Fire. I do not believe that will change regardless of what it says on the door of the fire truck or on the patch we wear. When people dial 911 they want service. Period
- ~ Neither agency would lose their identity. We could put on the apparatus "Serving (your town here)". Stay and become more involved in the community, etc,etc.
- ~ I think Loomis fire has more to be concerned with as far as losing "Identity". Loomis as a township has a small town feel or identity that should be dealt with delicately. Personally I like the way Loomis fire seems to court community support and spirit.
- ~ The Loomis Fire District has about the same relationship with their community as we do at South Placer. Considering South Placer already covers a good portion of the 95650 zip code, I do not believe if presented right that our community would be against a complete merger. That being said, every detail has to be addressed prior to presentation. Everyone would want to know how the budgets, taxes, fees and salaries would be dealt with.
- ~ Why would it. We already serve multiple zip codes. Our identity is not just granite bay, or Loomis, or Newcastle... We are south placer.

Survey question eight:

Please rate the following District characteristics by how important they are to you personally?

- ~ It would be nice to keep the same policies because we are all familiar with them.
- ~ Our current FD name is out dated and should be changed. We need continuing policy updates. Each company should know exactly what their role will be 1st due, 2nd, 3rd., ect... for every type of call. There is too much freelancing or lack of action on incidents. Walking with a purpose doesn't help on scene.
- ~ I feel the name Granite Bay Fire would be a better fit for our department, many people I come into contact with that live within our district don't know where or who South Placer Fire is.
- ~ "I want to merge policies and keep the better ones and get rid of the bull**** ones.
- ~ I would love to change our badges. Get the ones Loomis use to wear.
- ~ I think new apparatus specs should be a collaboration from both agencies with heavy input from the shop."
- ~ The people make the "District", I could care less about the name on my sleeve. What I do care about, is getting the best possible equipment, apparatus, and turnouts showing the District's number one priority is firefighter safety. Policy/Procedures should constantly be reviewed for firefighter safety, as well as keeping the department progressive and adapting to changes that we face in all facets of our job.
- ~ Policies and procedures need to be the same. Again to reduce duplication of effort and to make things even across the board.
- ~ As a shop employee the type of apparatus and general spec is highly important to me. On the positive side it seems like both districts are currently fairly close in this regard. Color and inventory aren't very important to me.
- ~ I think we are much more proactive in apparatus (Pierce) and turnouts. I do like their choice of nozzles.

Survey question nine:**How important do you feel is the cooperation and input of the labor groups is to the success of the two Districts consolidating?**

- ~ At the end of the day..... It's up to the board of directors and fire chief to iron out the ops and logistics. Line guys will always fight change... And in a few years all that goes away.
- ~ While I feel this is extremely important it's just as important to not let the labor groups think they can stifle progression. Voices and concerns should be heard, but not to the point that progression is stopped because someone's feeling get bent out of shape. EVERYONE needs to understand that we need to make this happen if it's going to be beneficial for the communities as a whole, that's why we are here!
- ~ If they can't agree and or do not want to merge then it will result in a very unhappy work force. I do think crews could be happy with a merger but all the information should be put out their to reduce speculation. Speculation is generally negative around here.
- ~ Input from labor groups is important but too much bickering slows the process of the goal. Discussions should mostly involve dialog on how the departments can improve service, not paychecks.
- ~ The more involved both labor groups are, the less the rumor mill could hinder the process. Everyone has questions and concerns which should be address through education and the flow of information.
- ~ Important, but more important would be the communication coming from the chiefs of SPFD.
- ~ I don't think a merger will work without input from all parties.
- ~ Those who don't study history are condemned to repeat it! Case in point, merger with Consolidated Fire District that failed because Labor didn't support it. I don't know of a successful merger that wasn't supported by Labor.
- ~ Historically the labor groups have had major impacts on the success or failure of consolidations. It is imperative that both labor groups work together for the common goal of consolidation in order to be successful.
- ~ You will get the best success in everything you do if you collaborate with labor. The chief will always run the department but keeping labor well informed on the plan and challenges ahead, getting opinions, asking for solutions, and making compromises are the best ways to get buy in and have a great department. Good luck
- ~ Our union, right now, with the current make up of the board, isn't going to help us. Unless they include more people from SP who are always looking at the future and staying on the cutting edge, we will just spin our wheels. I would rather just represent myself than have our union decide what's best...

Survey question ten:**Do you believe that duplication of effort can be reduced if the two Districts consolidate?**

- ~ With admin yes.
- ~ This has always been one of the number one reasons agencies consolidate...reduction in duplicated efforts.
- ~ At the administrative level it can and that has already been proven.
- ~ In addition, Loomis has personnel that could provide skills to further help out both departments.
- ~ More unsure than maybe.

- ~ Turnout purchasing, radio's, testing, telestaff.
- ~ Without Administration discussing with Labor how they intend to staff Loomis (ALS/BLS, Engine/Grass, Ambulance, staffing levels etc.) What will Loomis bring to SPFD, training, resource specialization, additional resources that could lead to a potential reduction in monies associated with apparatus replacement, equipment, grant funding, etc.? I can't make an educated answer, without any information.
- ~ Absolutely duplication of effort can be reduced. Its such an issue to me that I do not support a long term contract for administrative services. Merge and be done with it. The Town of Loomis would also benefit greatly by reducing the number of service providers to the town from three to two. Currently the Town of Loomis has three different fire protection districts serving the township.

Survey question eleven:

How quickly do you think personnel should be integrated after a merger has been approved?

- ~ Rip the bandaid off quickly
- ~ This is extremely tough to answer. I would say immediately to get things rolling, however it may take a bit of time if one agencies minimum qualifications (spfd) are tougher that the others (Loomis)
- ~ If we are going to merge might as well get it all over with. There is already a close relationship there. Should be an easy consolidation.
- ~ Slowly over time, similar to a check-off process, so they may train and further familiarize themselves with our equipment and SOPs. This also goes both ways, as Loomis has different target hazards than SPFD (i.e. I-80 and railway).
- ~ SPFD has multiple stations and we bid for assignments every other year by seniority; if a merger takes place, Personnel would eventually mix through the bid process according to seniority and operational needs.
 - ~ I believe there should be a transitional period so neither party suffers from an operation stand point. Maybe a year or less.
- ~ Since neither department has ever been through a merger, consulting other departments in our area whom have completed successful mergers would be a good place to start. Additionally, this will be a case by case scenario based on training, requirements, and area familiarization.
- ~ Allow the bid process to work for both agencies so that over time you have full integration without hurting peoples feelings vis a vis seniority bidding rights.
- ~ During the regular rotation shift bids
- ~ It depends on the qualifications needed to work at particular stations. As long as they are qualified and "checked off" at a station they should be able to pull shifts there. I wouldn't do a bid integration until the 2019 bid. Allowing for an easier transition.
- ~ This should be a progression. Many agencies around us have merged. What went good.. what went bad. Let's learn from them. How do the seniority lists play into this?? Station bidding? Job qualifications are probably the most important to me. I think we need to raise the bar higher on our end. Most places require some level 2 classes for BC. Captain, I think should be higher as well. When Loomis guys come over with less quals.. how are they going to be looked at?
- ~ As soon as they are qualified.

Survey question twelve:**Do you have any concerns about a potential consolidation between LFD and SPFD that have not been addressed in the previous questions?**

- ~ Long term viability. The Town of Loomis has, in the past, felt that in order to maintain a "small town feeling" that growth of their town should be kept to a minimum. During the same time, some neighboring city's have exploded with development. Development and growth are essential to a public agencies current and future funding. Unless the Town of Loomis changes their position on future growth, the fire services there will always be monetarily behind. Costs of running a fire department are rising every year. Apparatus purchases, equipment and labor are just a few expenses that will always increase. In order for the Consolidation between Loomis and South Placer to be successful and REVENUE NEUTRAL, the town's current way of thinking must change to a develop friendly atmosphere. This mind set has proven to be successful in the City of Roseville and now, the City of Rocklin.
- ~ Decrease in salaries and benefits for SPFD personnel. Increase for administration staff pay.
- ~ Much like marriages with step-children I would hope that equal respect and courtesies would be given to all members. If could be very detrimental if SPFD employees felt that Loomis employees were being "favored". Much like a step parent trying to "buy" a step child's love and friendship. This is probably most importantly handled at the Battalion Chief level
- ~ I would be concerned that SPFD may not realize the revenue benefit we thought we would receive. That after the dust settled we would be supplementing their community.
- ~ I just don't want the merger to be a gateway for future mergers with Penryn or Newcastle. They need to be more secure first.
- ~ How much time will you give Loomis to mirror our job requirements? How will you staff station 28? They are a small town that has been traditionally opposed to growth, especially commercial, where do you see any future growth for their budget? I understand the Board of Directors may be changing how they view potential growth, but the public they serve isn't. How do you plan on changing public resentment to growth and why it's good for Loomis Fire? Can Loomis equal SPFD in salaries/benefits without touching their 1.5 million dollar reserve. They currently are on a different PERS formula and have no retiree healthcare, have you determined those costs? What will be the budgeting principles for the consolidated departments? How many Board of Directors will represent Loomis and SPFD, what will the determining factors be and why? Currently both departments use map books that are an outdated form of response(with an MDC that shows an address) , Phoenix Fire (and our neighboring departments) went to an electronic based form of response using GPS many years ago to provide better response times and a better level of service. When do you see both departments making this move? Currently all of SPFD is toned out for a call, instead of individual stations. We know medically that this is horrible on the heart of firefighters, when would you change this for both departments? How important is it for both departments to have a Plymovent system and wellness program?
- ~ Move forward and get it done. It's long overdue. Several Placer County Studies have also agreed. Better service and more efficient along with future revenue potential. It's a no brainer.
- ~ Keep the crews from SP informed more often than not.

All survey comments unedited:

Loomis Employee Concern Survey

Survey question one:

Were you initially in support of the current contract for services between LFD and SPFD?

- ~ For Loomis Fire this meant better service provided for the community; for the staff this meant better training such as multi company drills, more resources in fire ground operations and in management support.

Survey question two:

Do you believe that the administrative contract for services is an effective way to operate long term?

- ~ It would be most effective to consolidate
- ~ To many different methods of SOP's and Policies; make it equal across the board so management can make one decision and not worry about either side getting it one way and the other side getting it different. For instances grooming policies, if we are practicing as one we should all look the same?
- ~ A merger is more cost effective.

Survey question three:

In each of the following areas rate how you feel each is functioning within the current contract between LFD and SPFD?

- ~ I can not comment based on direct knowledge of areas such as training. Other comments are based on observations. Prevention still requires more support.
- ~ "I really enjoy being able to go out of service and be able to commit 100% to drill.
- ~ Its great knowing that we will always have a B/C on duty on initial response!
- ~ I enjoy working with SPFD personnel, I feel that we have a great relationship.
- ~ Apparatus maintenance is amazing, the guys in the shop are extremely helpful and knowledgeable!"
- ~ Operations appear to be functioning well. Loomis personnel have had to adjust to the different culture and management style of South Placer -- big department vs small department differences. I think this has been the biggest difficulty.
- ~ I believe things are going well to much work on the administrative staff to keep up with two separate boards. Merge the Districts and things would get better under personnel and administration.
- ~ "Training: benefits both districts in turn benefits the public. Operations: for Loomis it's nice to have a command structure for every aspect of the fire service. Personnel: for Loomis we have a better idea of SP fire personnel, it makes for better fire ground operations and cohesiveness between both Districts. Administrative: Loomis Fire has better representation with each shift having it's own BC and so on up the ladder. Prevention: Having two Prevention officers trying to support two different Districts visions is difficult; the visions should be the same. In fact they should be the same County wide. Maintenance: sometimes Loomis has a rash of fixtures and I'm afraid it affects the SP equipment that needs repair/outfitting. "

Survey question four:

Has your opinion on the Administrative Contract changed in the last year in a half of working with a contract for services?

- ~ The longer we continue to observe this contract the better we all get at it.

Survey question five:**Do you think that Loomis Fire District and South Placer Fire District can both benefit from consolidation?**

- ~ "I see Loomis as being somewhat in limbo -- not fully independent, but not fully part of South Placer either. Since for Loomis there is no going back, the greatest benefit is to move forward with consolidation. Consolidation will definitely benefit the Loomis public with increased level of service.
- ~ I'm not sure what the benefits are to South Placer, other than expanding their area of influence. "
- ~ Less duplication of effort more employees to get the same amount of task done will reduce the workload on all. Apparatus replacement cost will go down as sharing of apparatus will reduce the need for future purchases. A stronger more diversified revenue stream. Will increase opportunities for grants.
- ~ If it continues like it is everyone benefits, it is becoming easier and easier not to mention better for all.

Survey question six:**Do you feel that there are cost savings that can be realized by consolidating the two Districts?**

- ~ Survey question seven: There should be savings when you eliminate unnecessary layers in mgmt. Improvements in efficiency and effectiveness may also be manifested as cost savings.
- ~ I feel that combining our funds we would essentially have a bigger pot in the game. Both districts have similar goals and mission and together we could accomplish it.
- ~ There should be cost savings on an administrative level, i.e. "economies of scale." But there may be extra costs in bringing Loomis up to the same level of service and the same level of employee compensation (including benefits) as South Placer. I'm not sure how it will balance out.
- ~ See above those can be multiplied with combined purchasing, integrated training and labor costs.
- ~ Overhead reduction.

Survey question seven:**Do you believe that Loomis Fire District may lose its identity with the community if the two Districts are merged?**

- ~ I believe that if all apparatus within the Loomis Town has written on it Proudly Serving Loomis that the residents that it serves will be very pleased.
- ~ Only some of the long time residents may care. A lot of the current residents don't even think about it. Some residents within the SPFPD may think the LFPD protects them because of their post office. Most people just want to know that someone will show up when they call and that their tax dollars are being spent wisely. The new dept. stills has to reach out to the residents..
- ~ Depending on if the door on the side of 28 would be changed from "Loomis Fire" to "South Placer Fire" it might have the Loomis Fire name disappear
- ~ I think the vast majority of the community don't distinguish between the districts anyway. They see a fire truck and guys in uniform, not the name on the truck. As long as the firefighters continue to be visible in the community and provide public education services (including station tours), people will identify them as "our" firefighters.

- ~ This would have to be managed getting a strong community support for the merger and keeping serving Loomis on the door of the apparatus.
- ~ Loomis Fire is well involved with the whole community; we do more with the community than SP Fire does, not saying SP Fire is not involved with their community.

Survey question eight:

Please rate the following District characteristics by how important they are to you personally?

- ~ I believe that if all apparatus within the Loomis Town has written on it Proudly Serving Loomis that the residents that it serves will be very pleased.
- ~ These are not applicable to me.
- ~ I would like to keep current Loomis Class A uniform spec.
- ~ With change will have to come compromise.
- ~ "District name: I think it is important to the folks of Loomis. Inventory/Apparatus: we already basically have the same. Its important to be as close to the same as possible. Uniforms/Patches: the uniforms already look the same, maybe like the name the community would like to see Loomis. Policies/Procedures: The majority of these are the same to be productive and proper they need to be the same."

Survey question nine:

How important do you feel is the cooperation and input of the labor groups to the success of the two Districts consolidating?

- ~ Labor groups want more money, the question is how will each District's organization cooperate with each other.

Survey question ten:

Do you believe that duplication of effort can be reduced if the two Districts consolidated?

- ~ This has been answered in the comments above.

Survey question eleven:

How quickly do you think personnel should be integrated after a merger has been approved?

- ~ As established with input from the labor groups
- ~ My answer is less than "immediately," but more quickly than "slowly over time." Integration should occur, but not so quickly that problems are created.
- ~ Slowly, but not more than two years.

Survey question twelve:

Do you have any concerns about a potential Consolidation between Loomis Fire District and South Placer Fire District that have not been addressed in the previous questions?

- ~ There should be a broader consolidation to improve efficiency and effectiveness within the area.

~

All survey comments unedited:

Loomis Fire Board Concern Survey

Survey question one:

Were you initially in support of the current Administrative Contract for services between LFD and SPFD?

- ~ I was not a board member during that period.

- ~ Considering the options and the commitment to providing the best services possible with the funds available this was the best choice.

Survey question two:

Do you believe that the Administrative Contract for Services is an effective way to operate Long Term?

- ~ It may be effective, but not the most effective way to operate. I think the study on consolidation should answer or at least point us in the right direction to make an informed decision on whether to consolidate.
- ~ It works only for short term. Allows us time to find a sustainable solution to providing services.

Survey question three:

In each of the following areas rate how you feel each is functioning within the current contract between LFD and SPFD?

- ~ I think that training , operations and maintenance are functioning well due to the innovative ways the leadership has approached these areas since the contract was finalized. Personnel and administration have suffered somewhat due to the unavoidable overlap and duplication of effort.
- ~ "While I feel everyone is doing a great job, we are still sorting things out to allow us to work better together. Melding the policies and procedures into one helps to avoid confusion and misunderstandings. The crews working to provide the best coordination and training will make us more productive and sustainable.

Survey question four:

Has your opinion on the Administrative Contract changed in the last year in a half of working with a contract for services?

- ~ I have been on the board for six months so I can't compare accurately.
- ~ It seems to be working fine. Working by the same guidelines and procedures is the challenge. Working with different labor groups has not become a problem but keeps management on their toes to be sure they are doing the right things.

Survey question five:

Do you think that Loomis Fire District and South Placer Fire District can both benefit from consolidation?

- ~ Connecting the things that benefit both agencies is the easy part. Resolving differences of benefits and or services is more complex but can be solved. This is not only an agency problem but a community concern. Both agencies have support in taxes that were increased to support our needs, we need to honor our commitment to keep things in line with income and expense.

Survey question six:

Do you feel that there are cost savings that can be realized by consolidating the two Districts?

- ~ You have done a great job helping us save money on Ins and testing processes and other thing also. It has been a benefit to us so far.
- ~ "Being a larger agency will help increase the buying power for equipment and services. In house agency apparatus maintenance and repairs will also be a benefit to both. having staff on duty that have a vested interest in our equipment, is very beneficial and productive. As we are a small agency we cannot afford a crew that resolves all equipment issues.
- ~ I would expect lower insurance cost, lower training cost"

Survey question seven:

Do you believe that Loomis Fire District may lose it's identity with the community if the two Districts are merged?

- ~ This could be a downside to consolidation, but it may only be temporary if approached and managed correctly.
- ~ I think it might by a little but not much. Most of the public wont notice the difference who shows up as long as they have service.
- ~ "This is a public relations issue that needs careful and thoughtful coordination. Identifying what we heard and how it can be resolved (feedback) with the community. All staff should understand the questions and answers to concerns then be able to educate the community. When responding to emergencies no one will look at a uniform or a patch and say ""I will wait for help from my preferred agency"". All folks will be happy with the first response. "

Survey question eight:

Please rate the following District characteristics by how important they are to you personally?

- ~ All long as we can have Black roof tops like South placer Engines and Trucks.
- ~ "Whats really important is public safety at an affordable cost with reasonable identification that ""these people work for us and we pay their wages"". We also would like to know we are getting what we paid for and sometimes more than we expected. Community is an important to the public as well as a proud factor for the firefighters when they are out or town on a strike team. We should all be proud of where we are and who we are, its human nature."

Survey question nine:

How important do you feel is the cooperation and input of the labor groups to the success of the two Districts consolidating?

- ~ "This involves respect and value of each others abilities and skills as recognized by experience and training. We will need to resolve the differences in benefits (6 different retirements), wages, and other things yet to be identified. We will need help from all labor groups we cannot fail to respond to all concerns, we may also not be able to satisfy every concern but all need to be addressed."

Survey question ten:

Do you believe that duplication of effort can be reduced if the two Districts consolidated?

- ~ This is another area where a study of the consolidation would be very helpful.
- ~ "We already know just by the admin agreement that we can do better financially. Sometimes a small staff can mean not enough coverage of vacations, medical concerns, etc. These things can be better handled short term with other staff members to cover."

Survey question eleven:

How quickly do you think personnel should be integrated after a merger has been approved?

- ~ This is a tough one and should be considered very thoroughly by the leadership and board of directors after getting input from the leadership and rank and file of both districts.
- ~ "While working with an admin contract we have done a lot of the groundwork to make this work faster. we have been 1 1/2 years getting this far and it has worked well. If it were a cold start it would take much more time to be efficient and seamless. I do not think this should be done on an immediate basis ever. To many hard feelings."

Survey question twelve:

Do you have any concerns about a potential Consolidation between Loomis Fire District and South Placer Fire District that have not been addressed in the previous questions?

- ~ What will be the composition of the board of directors? This item needs some input and discussion from both boards and the leadership.
- ~ Don't know at the present time
- ~ The only one thing that keeps coming up is the 2 different tax rates between the 2 district. The rest of the question were fine and I am good with it all happening.
- ~ "As the employees and the public get involved they will bring new ideas and interests. This will cause us to address them and modify the game plan if necessary. One should never think they have all the answers unless they have properly evaluated and found consensus with all involved."

All survey comments unedited:

South Placer Fire Board Concern Survey

Survey question one:

Were you initially in support of the current Administrative Contract for services between LFD and SPFD?

- ~ No comments

Survey question two:

Do you believe that the Administrative Contract for Services is an effective way to operate Long Term?

- ~ The efficiencies, or economies of scale, make sense. Especially in two such similar communities.
- ~ The Administrative only ? maybe, not sure at this time. It may be fine for awhile without a full consolidation.

Survey question three:

In each of the following areas rate how you feel each is functioning within the current contract between LFD and SPFD?

- ~ My biggest concern is the additional workload on admin and BCs.
- ~ As far as I know everything is running smooth. Don't know their personal. I'm sure their fine, especially under our leadership.
- ~ I am unable to give an educated opinion given that I am not that informed of the Loomis operations.
- ~ Some of the above items in the survey, I don't have a through knowledge of the details

Survey question four:

Has your opinion on the Administrative Contract changed in the last year in a half of working with a contract for services?

- ~ No Comments

Survey question five:

Do you think that Loomis Fire District and South Placer Fire District can both benefit from consolidation?

- ~ No Comments

Survey question six:

Do you feel that there are cost savings that can be realized by consolidating the two Districts?

- ~ There should be, but with the thin admin and the heavy workload, I'm not sure.
- ~ Yes for Loomis, not sure about long term for SPFD
- ~ One administration instead of two

Survey question seven:

Do you believe that South Placer Fire District may lose it's identity with the community if the two Districts are merged?

- ~ I don't think it would help, maybe in the future.

Survey question eight:

Please rate the following District characteristics by how important they are to you personally?

No Responses

Survey question nine:

How important do you feel is the cooperation and input of the labor groups to the success of the two Districts consolidating?

- ~ Also, I think the community should be 100% involved , maybe put it out some way to the voters.

Survey question ten:

Do you believe that duplication of effort can be reduced if the two Districts consolidated?

- ~ only those efforts that are still duplicative
- ~ I'm all about saving money , just not on the backs of us or our funds. It would have to be a win/win.

Survey question eleven:

How quickly do you think personnel should be integrated after a merger has been approved?



- ~ Obviously something of this magnitude would take some time if it were to happen.
- ~ Over time but within a defined period. Probably a year.
- ~ We are already integrated

Survey question twelve:

Do you have any concerns about a potential consolidation between LFD and SPFD that have not been addressed in the previous question?

- ~ Not at the moment.
- ~ Financial impact on each district.
- ~ "How do we combine the budgets of both districts?"
- ~ How will the citizens react to combining our budgets?
- ~ How will the Boards be combined?"

Appendix J



Employee/Board Concerns Survey- South Placer Fire District Employees
Executive Fire Officers Program - National Fire Academy - Fire Chief Eric Walder
Note: These questions are subjective in nature as they are designed to find out how you feel.

*** 1. Were you initially in support of the current Administrative Contract for services between LFD and SPFD?**

1- Not in Support	2	3	4	5	6 - Neutral	7	8	9	10 - High Support
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

*** 2. Do you believe that the Administrative Contract for Services is an effective way to operate Long Term?**

☐ Yes

☐ No

Other (please specify)

3. In each of the following areas rate how you feel each is functioning within the current contract between LFD and SPFD?

	1 Poor	2	3	4	5 Adequate	6	7	8	9	10 Excellent
Training	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Operations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personnel	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Administration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prevention	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Apparatus Maintenance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please elaborate.

4. Has your opinion on the Administrative Contract changed in the last year in a half of working with a contract for services?

- ☐ Yes for the better
- ☐ Yes for the worse
- ☐ No
- ☐ Write in response

5. Do you think that Loomis Fire District and South Placer Fire District can both benefit from consolidation?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe/Unsure

Comments welcome.

6. Do you feel that there are cost savings that can be realized by consolidating the two Districts?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe/Unsure

Please add comments or ideas on potential cost savings.

7. Do you believe that South Placer Fire District may lose its identity with the community if the two Districts are merged?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe/Unsure

Please Explain

8. Please rate the following District characteristics by how important they are to you personally.

	Not Important to Me				Important But I Could Be Flexible					Highly Important I Do Not Want to Change
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Name of the District	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Type, color, inventory, of Apparatus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uniforms, Patches, and Turnouts	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Policies and Procedures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments

9. How important do you feel is the cooperation and input of the labor groups to the success of the two Districts consolidating?

- ☐ Extremely Important
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Not Important

Comments

10. Do you believe that duplication of effort can be reduced if the two Districts consolidated?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe/Unsure

Comments

11. How quickly do you think personnel should be integrated after a merger has been approved?

- ☐ Immediately
- ☐ Slowly over Time
- ☐ Never
- ☐ Other (please specify)

12. Do you have any concerns about a potential Consolidation between Loomis Fire District and South Placer Fire District that have not been addressed in the previous questions?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Other (please specify)