

STATE FIRE MARSHAL

ITEMS 186 and 187 of the Budget Bill

Budget page 474

FOR SUPPORT OF STATE FIRE MARSHAL FROM THE
GENERAL AND DRY CLEANERS' FUNDS

Amount requested	\$731,190
Estimated to be expended in 1962-63 fiscal year	718,046
Increase (1.8 percent)	\$13,144
TOTAL RECOMMENDED REDUCTION	\$6,744*

Summary of Recommended Reductions

	Amount	Budget Page	Line
1 Fire prevention engineer *	\$9,948	475	6
1 Deputy state fire marshal I	6,744	475	7

* 1 Fire prevention engineer is indicated in budget to be reimbursed by the State College Board of Trustees.

GENERAL SUMMARY

The office of the State Fire Marshal is provided for by Sections 13100 to 13146 of the Health and Safety Code. The functions of the office, as described in Section 13100.1, are to foster, promote and develop ways and means of protecting life and property against fire and panic. The State Fire Marshal attempts to fulfill his obligation by participation in numerous areas, some of which are self-supporting as the result of license or reimburseable provisions. The State Fire Marshal inspects private mental facilities, public assembly areas and schools; reviews plans for and inspects all state institutions; inspects public welfare facilities and private and public hospitals; reviews public school drawings for the Division of Architecture; controls the use of fireworks, the transportation of explosives and the use of flame retardents and flammable wearing apparel; prepares and distributes to subscribers a list of materials and equipment complete with installation instructions that comply with fire and safety regulations; inspects fairs and expositions; performs plan review and inspection service for dry cleaning plants and press shops; regulates the transportation of flammable liquids; regulates the sale and servicing of fire extinguishers, and performs other miscellaneous duties.

Estimates of reimbursements from the subscription to building material listings, flammable liquid truck licenses, and fire extinguisher licenses indicate a reduction from the estimates in last year's budget. The reduction in revenue from fire extinguisher licenses is the direct result of the change in the fee structure from \$35 to \$1 for retail sales as amended by Chapter 8, Statutes of 1962. The office of the State Fire Marshal is seeking legislation to establish a fee arrangement that will require the manufacturer of the material listed to support the building materials listing program as opposed to the present practice of charging the parties subscribing to the listings. This appears to be a reasonable approach and it is hoped that this change will increase revenue so that the program will become self-supporting.

ANALYSIS

Support of the State Fire Marshal for 1963-64 will require \$615,921 from the General Fund, a decrease of \$2,995 or 0.4 percent from the

State Fire Marshal—Continued

1962-63 estimated expenditure. The Dry Cleaners Fund will contribute \$115,269, an increase of \$16,139, or 16.3 percent above the 1962-63 contribution. The 1962-63 estimated expenditure of \$618,916 includes \$44,413 from the Emergency Fund. The \$574,503 remaining after reduction of emergency funds approximates more accurately the amount appropriated in 1962-63. The proposed \$615,921 represents a \$41,418 (7.2 percent) increase above that level. This increase is caused by the proposed \$42,644 (6.1 percent) increase in cost of personal services and \$8,895 (5.9 percent) operating expense increase and is partially offset by a \$13,879 (67.5 percent) decrease in the equipment proposal. Dependence upon the Emergency Fund in the current year is the result of underestimated revenues in the building material listings, flammable liquid truck licenses and fire extinguisher licenses.

The assignment of a fire prevention engineer to the state college construction program will provide for an increase in service that we oppose as a matter of policy. The private architect that designs a structure for the Board of Trustees should theoretically be as responsible for his design's compliance with the governing code as is the architect employed by the Division of Architecture. The Fire Marshal performs a spot review of Division of Architecture designs and can continue this spot review of projects diverted from the Division of Architecture to the private architect without an increase in staff. Approval of the concept of a complete review of state college building designs could be extended in the future to complete review of all state building designs, including those of the University of California should they desire such service. This would require an extensive addition to the Fire Marshal's staff. *We recommend deletion of this position.*

The Dry Cleaners Fund will contribute an additional \$16,139 in the budget year in order to support an additional deputy state fire marshal position necessary to eliminate the plan checking backlog in that area. *We recommend approval of this position.*

The second deputy position proposed is not needed to maintain the present level of service but would enable the fire marshal to extend his coverage into areas that he feels need additional attention. There are public assembly areas, for example, that are not even cataloged. It is impossible to adequately staff the Fire Marshal's office to police every conceivable hazard, thus a reasonable level of protection must be sought. It is our opinion that the present staff represents that necessary to preserve a reasonable level of protection. *We recommend deletion of the second deputy position (\$6,744).*

The tank truck program requires a higher ratio of clerical to professional personnel than does the staff in general, but at inception of the program this fact was not foreseen. As a result an additional clerical position is required in the Los Angeles office. *We recommend approval of this position.*