

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
BUDGET AND LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

1390 Market Street, Suite 1150, San Francisco, CA 94102 (415) 552-9292
FAX (415) 252-0461

September 21, 2012

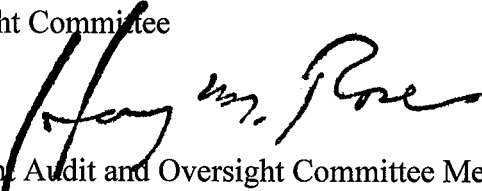
TO: Government Audit and Oversight Committee
FROM: Budget and Legislative Analyst 
SUBJECT: September 27, 2012 Government Audit and Oversight Committee Meeting

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Item	File	Page
5	12-0884 Accept and Expend Grant – Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus Inventory - \$1,514,584	5 - 1

Item 5
File 12-0884

Department:
San Francisco Fire Department

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Legislative Objectives

- The proposed resolution would authorize the Fire Department to retroactively accept and expend a grant in the amount of \$1,514,184 from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to upgrade and replace its self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) inventory. The grant from FEMA requires the City to provide matching funds of 20 percent of the total project cost of \$1,892,729, or \$378,545. The allocation of \$378,545 for these purposes from the City's General Fund was previously appropriated by the Board of Supervisors in the Fire Department's FY 2012-13 budget. Therefore, if the proposed resolution is approved, the total amount of money available for purchase of SCBA equipment would be \$1,892,729 (\$1,514,184 plus \$378,545).

Key Points

- On September 23, 2011, the Fire Department applied for a grant from the FEMA totaling \$1,514,184 to purchase 275 SCBA units and related equipment. The FEMA grant was awarded on February 12, 2012.
- The Fire Department has not yet expended the grant or matching funds. The Fire Department included the retroactive language to account for any unforeseen issues that may come up in the approval process and does not anticipate having any expenditures until after Board of Supervisors approval. Therefore, the proposed resolution should be amended and the word "retroactively" removed from the proposed resolution's title.
- The proposed resolution's title incorrectly states that the FEMA grant amount is \$1,514,584 rather than the actual grant amount of \$1,514,184. Therefore, the proposed resolution's title should be amended to reflect the \$1,514,184 FEMA grant amount.

Fiscal Impacts

- The \$1,892,729 available under the FEMA grant for SCBA equipment, including the \$378,545 in matching City funds, would be used to purchase 275 SCBA kits, including the related accessories.
- Previously received grants from the Federal Urban Areas Securities Initiative program of Homeland Security allow for the purchase of 100 additional SCBA packs, and would result in a complete replacement of the Fire Department's SCBA inventory.

Recommendations

- Amend the proposed resolution by deleting the word "retroactively" from the title.
- Amend the proposed resolution to reflect the correct grant amount of \$1,514,184 in the title.
- Approve the proposed resolution as amended.

MANDATE STATEMENT / BACKGROUND

Mandate Statement

In accordance with Administrative Code Section 10.170-1, the acceptance and expenditure of Federal, State, or other grant funds in the amount of \$100,000 or more is subject to approval by the Board of supervisors.

Background

In order to provide breathable air in contaminated environments, firefighters use a self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). SCBA is a backpack-like frame typically composed of: (a) a high pressure tank, (b) an air pressure regulator, and (c) an air connector from the air cylinder, and (d) a respirator, which are commonly referred to as a SCBA pack. Each SCBA pack also requires a face piece which the firefighter wears to breathe. These face pieces are specially fitted to each firefighter and cannot be swapped between members.

As of July 1, 2002, the Fire Department's General Order 02 A-45 requires that firefighters respond to all reported incidents of fire in full Personal Protective Equipment¹ (PPE). The Fire Department defines PPE to include (a) turnout² boots, (b) turnout pants, (c) turnout coat, (d) Fire Department-issued gloves, (e) Nomex hood³, (f) helmet, and when in a hazardous environment, SCBA packs. It is existing Fire Department policy to have appropriate SCBA packs on hand. Also integrated into SCBA packs are Personal Alert Safety Systems⁴ and, on some SCBA packs, voice amplifiers⁵.

According to Mr. Mark Corso, Chief Financial Officer for the Fire Department, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has two standards for SCBA-related equipment, NFPA Standard 1981 and 1982. NFPA Section 1981 sets forth the minimum design, performance, testing, and certification standards of SCBA-related equipment. These are generally revised every five years (or more frequently if needed) and have been modified over the years to address safety issues with regard to the use of SCBA packs in response to specific incidents or generic issues that have arisen in fire service. NFPA Section 1982 sets forth the minimum design, performance, testing, and certification standards of all Personal Alert Safety Systems. These requirements have changed in recent revisions of NFPA standards as the technology of these systems has improved. The NFPA standards were most recently updated in 2002 and 2007.

¹ PPE is equipment worn to minimize exposure to a variety of hazards.

² Turnout clothing is clothing designed to help protect a firefighter's skin and internal organs from dangerous heat, fire, and smoke that could cause potential harm or death.

³ A Nomex hood is a flame-retardant hood which protects the portion of the head not covered by the helmet and SCBA face mask from the intense heat of the fire.

⁴ A Personal Alert Safety System can automatically send an alarm if a firefighter is unconscious or unable to move and in need of rescue and also allows the firefighter to be able to summon help. There is an audible alarm that sounds and locator devices also receive a signal alerting Fire Department Chiefs that are outside of the incident that there is a member that is in need of help in the fire. Locator devices can be used to locate where an incapacitated firefighter is. These devices do not attach to the SCBA but rather are located outside of the incident, where a Fire Chief is directing fire crews to attack the fire.

⁵ Voice amplifiers provide voice amplification to enable communication between firefighters and fire officers during an incident.

Major safety improvements to SCBA-related equipment resulting from the 2002 and 2007 updates to NFPA standards include:

- An added display to the regulator to allow the member to monitor his/her air consumption easily. (2002 revision)
- An added connector to allow other firefighters to connect an air source to a compromised firefighter. (2002 revision)
- Enhancements to the Personal Alert Safety System to improve durability and functionality in extreme heat, fire, and moisture conditions and reduce the chance of failure of a firefighter's distress signal. (2007 revision)
- Face piece upgrades to reduce the amount of CO₂ allowed to build up in the mask. (2007 revision)

Mr. Corso advises that the Fire Department's current inventory of SCBA equipment is in need of replacement. 382 SCBA packs, or approximately 99 percent, of the Fire Department's current inventory of 386 SCBA packs were purchased between FY 1982-83 and FY 2002-03 and are not in compliance with current NFPA standards for that equipment. In addition, due to the age of the SCBA equipment, the Fire Department incurred maintenance costs of approximately \$39,000 in FY 2011-12 and will continue to incur similar costs unless the equipment is replaced.

The Fire Department applied for and received grants of \$517,388 for SCBA replacement in FY 2009-10 and of \$565,000 in FY 2010-11, for a total of \$1,082,388, from the Federal Urban Areas Securities Initiative⁶ program of Homeland Security with no matching City funds required. These grants have yet to be expended. The \$1,082,388 in previously received grants from the Urban Areas Securities Initiative program of Homeland Security are planned to be expended in FY 2012-12 to purchase 100 SCBA units and related equipment.

On September 23, 2011, the Fire Department applied for a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) totaling \$1,514,184 to purchase an additional 275 SCBA units and related equipment to enable the full replacement of the current SCBA equipment inventory for a total project cost of \$1,892,729. The FEMA grant was awarded on February 12, 2012 and requires General Fund matching dollars of 20 percent of the total project cost, or \$378,545.

DETAILS OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION

The proposed resolution would authorize the Fire Department to retroactively accept and expend a grant in the amount of \$1,514,184 from FEMA to upgrade and replace its SCBA inventory. The grant from FEMA requires the City to provide matching funds worth 20 percent of the total project cost of \$1,892,729, or \$378,545. The allocation of \$378,545 for these purposes from the City's General Fund was previously appropriated by the Board of Supervisors in the Fire Department's FY 2012-13 budget. Therefore, if the proposed resolution is approved, the total

⁶ The Federal Urban Areas Securities Initiative program of Homeland Security addresses and funds the planning, organization, equipment, training, and exercise needs of high-threat, high-density urban areas to prevent, mitigate, respond to, and recover from acts of terrorism.

amount of money available for purchase of SCBA equipment would be \$1,892,729 (\$1,514,184 plus \$378,545).

On July 12, 2012, the Fire Commission recommended approval of the retroactive acceptance and expending of the \$1,514,184 grant from FEMA (Resolution No. 2012-03).

Although the proposed resolution provides for retroactive expenditure approval, the Fire Department has not yet expended the grant or matching funds. According to Mr. Corso, the Fire Department included the retroactive language to account for any unforeseen issues that may come up in the approval process and does not anticipate having any expenditures until after Board of Supervisors approval. Therefore, the proposed resolution should be amended and the word “retroactively” removed from the proposed resolution’s title.

In addition, the proposed resolution’s title incorrectly states that the FEMA grant amount is \$1,514,584 rather than the actual grant amount of \$1,514,184. Therefore, the proposed resolution’s title should be amended to reflect the \$1,514,184 FEMA grant amount.

Also included in the proposed resolution is a waiver of indirect costs, which are required under Administrative Code Section 10.170-1. According to Mr. Corso, the indirect costs associated with this grant are estimated to be approximately \$300 so the Fire Department did not include such costs in their proposal in order to maximize the use of funding on the actual acquisition of equipment.

Mr. Corso advises that the purchase of the SCBA equipment funded under the FEMA grant needs to go through a formal competitive bidding process. To date, the bidding process has not occurred and no vendor has been selected. The competitive bidding process is scheduled to begin once the Board of Supervisors has approved the proposed resolution.

FISCAL IMPACTS

Mr. Corso advises that \$1,892,729 available under the FEMA grant for SCBA equipment, including the \$378,545 in matching City funds would be used to purchase 275 SCBA kits, including the related accessories. The Table below summarizes the equipment budget, as approved by FEMA.

Table: Equipment Budget for SCBA Funded Under the FEMA Grant

Quantity	Description	Unit Price	Extended Price
275	SCBA Packs with 1 Face Piece and 2 air bottles	\$5,250	\$1,443,750
1025	Face Pieces	200	205,000
275	Voice Amplifiers	300	82,500
11	Locator devices	\$1,200	13,201
	Subtotal		\$1,744,451
	Tax (8.5%)		148,278
	Total:		\$1,892,729

The expenditures detailed in the Table above, together with the additional expenditures associated with the \$1,082,388 in previously received grants from the Federal Urban Areas Securities Initiative program of Homeland Security which allow for the purchase of 100 additional SCBA packs, would allow for a complete replacement of the Fire Department's SCBA inventory, including 1,400 total face pieces. Mr. Corso advises that, while only 1,275 face pieces are currently needed, the Fire Department will be hiring additional firefighters in the coming years per the Mayor's hiring plan and will need to utilize those additional 125 face pieces (1,400 less 1,275) for that additional staff once they are hired.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Amend the proposed resolution by deleting the word "retroactively" from the title.
2. Amend the proposed resolution to reflect the correct grant amount of \$1,514,184 in the title.
3. Approve the proposed resolution as amended.