



Department of Employee Relations

**Tom Barrett**  
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**Maria Monteagudo**  
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Labor Negotiator

March 18, 2013

To the Honorable  
Fire and Police Commission  
City of Milwaukee  
Milwaukee Wisconsin

Dear Commissioners;

This report recommends changes to the pay range structure for the classifications of Battalion Chief and Deputy Fire Chief in the Milwaukee Fire Department as shown below.

	Minimum			Maximum	
<u>Battalion Chief</u>					
Current Pay Range	\$82,683.38				\$90,728.04
Proposed Pay Range	\$85,962.76	\$87,682.01	\$90,728.04	\$92,065.22	\$94,366.85
<u>Deputy Fire Chief</u>					
Current Pay Range	\$92,915.94				\$103,076.74
Proposed Pay Range	\$94,774.32	\$97,641.96	\$99,085.19	\$103,076.74	\$105,138.27

The realignment of pay ranges and the establishment of higher pay range maximums will assist in addressing some of the pay compression problems that impact the Chief's ability to attract applicants for these critical leadership positions within the Fire Department. This report also recommends adding a recruitment footnote to the classification of Assistant Fire Chief consistent with the one available for Assistant Chiefs in the Police Department.

**Background**

In 2012 Chief Mark Rohlfing requested a classification and compensation study of the Battalion Chief and Deputy Fire Chief classifications in the Fire Department. The purpose of the study was to determine if the pay structure for the classifications was adequate in attracting and retaining qualified candidates given the impact of a wage freeze for members of the sworn management ranks since 2009 in relation to wage increases negotiated for members of Local 215 in 2009, 2011, and 2012. The study was also needed to determine if the pay differential between the rank of Captain and Battalion Chief was adequate given the significant increase in responsibility associated with the Battalion Chief rank.

**Organizational and Compensation Structure**

The Milwaukee Fire Department has a total of three positions of Assistant Fire Chief responsible for overseeing all staff and operations of each bureau as summarized in the following table.

Milwaukee Fire Department		
Support Bureau	Operations Bureau	EMS/Training/Education Bureau
<i>Budget and Management Technical Services Administration Construction &amp; Maint</i>	<i>Firefighting Division Special Operations: Marine/HURT/HAZMAT Fire Investigation Unit</i>	<i>EMS Division Health and Safety Training Community Relations</i>
Staffing	Staffing	Staffing
<i>1 Assistant Chief 2 Battalion Chiefs</i>	<i>1 Assistant Chief 3 Deputy Chiefs 16 Battalion Chiefs</i>	<i>1 Assistant Chief 2 Battalion Chiefs</i>

Although assigned to specific responsibilities within each Bureau, Assistant Chiefs are on a rotation schedule every third day and are responsible for responding to second or greater alarm fires and significant emergency scenes. They act as Incident Commanders with full and direct authority over all personnel responding to the emergency. Deputy Fire Chiefs are part of the Operations Bureau and staff each shift within the Firefighting Division. Their primary duty is to oversee the day-to-day operations, including overtime hiring, of the Firefighting Division. This Division includes all sworn field-assigned personnel in five battalions. This position serves in a high level leadership capacity and is responsible for identifying operational efficiencies, developing and implementing operational policies for the suppression forces, and developing and adhering to sound fiscal management practices.

Battalion Chiefs command and assume responsibility of all responding Fire Department forces operating at the scene of emergencies until relieved by a superior ranking officer. Their duties also include management of battalion staffing, maintenance of discipline, establishment and monitoring of battalion and department policies, coordination of training sessions, and the maintenance of high standards of performance for personnel, equipment, and quarters.

The classification and pay ranges associated with the command staff within the Fire Department are presented below:

	Range Minimum	Range Maximum
Fire Chief	\$107,973.32	\$151,159.06
Assistant Fire Chief	\$95,030.26	\$133,049.02
Deputy Fire Chief	\$92,915.94	\$103,076.74
Battalion Chief	\$82,683.38	\$90,728.04
Fire Captain ( <i>Local 215</i> )	\$79,538.68	\$85,901.92

The Fire Chief, Assistant Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chief, and Battalion Chief classifications are sworn management positions within the Milwaukee Fire Department. Since they are not members of the Milwaukee Professional Firefighters Association, Local 215, they are not subject to the same terms and employment conditions as the employees they supervise. Through collective bargaining Local 215 members received wage increases in 2009 (\$359 added to base pay + 3%), in 2011 (\$325 added to base pay), and in 2012 (2.95% in Pay Period 1 and 1.35% in Pay Period 14).

Up until 2009, the City strived to maintain wage parity between Local 215 and the sworn management personnel. Appropriate pay differentials based on nature of work and level of responsibility associated

with each rank was important since most protective service organizations strive to develop internal talent and promote from within, instead of bringing high ranking individuals from the outside with limited knowledge and experience in the organization.

Since 2009 sworn management positions in the Fire Department have been subject to wage freezes along with most general city employees. This has created a pay compression problem that limits the pool of qualified candidates to be considered for promotion. Fire Captains have little to no incentive to consider a promotion to Battalion Chief. At the maximum of the pay range, Fire Captains earn an annual salary (excluding overtime) of \$85,197. Approximately 70% of the Fire Captains are currently at the top of their pay range. Under current provisions of the Salary Ordinance, a promotion to Battalion Chief results in a 5% salary increase to \$90,197. The current maximum of the Battalion Chief pay range is \$90,728, leaving no room for pay progression for a newly appointed Battalion Chief. Given this compression, it should be no surprise to learn that only eight Captains applied in 2011 and five in 2012.

In addition to the internal pay comparisons and the review of the pay compression problem, salary market data was gathered from other local jurisdictions within the state. The survey results are summarized below.

<b>Battalion Chief</b>	
<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Max Rate of Pay</b>
Oak Creek	\$84,539
Racine	\$85,000
Milwaukee County	\$85,767
Waukesha	\$87,800
Appleton	\$88,150
North Shore	\$89,322
West Allis	\$89,332
<b>Milwaukee</b>	<b>\$90,728</b>
Greenfield	\$90,908
Madison	\$99,008
Average	\$88,869

Given the size of Milwaukee’s Fire Department, the population of a large urban area, and the characteristics of the city’s infrastructure, Milwaukee’s maximum rate should be the highest of the jurisdictions surveyed. Milwaukee’s salary is higher than all of the jurisdictions by an insignificant amount. Furthermore, Milwaukee’s salary falls short when compared to Greenfield and Madison.

**Pay Range Restructuring**

In order to address the pay compression problems within the Fire Department and to bring the compensation level to an appropriate level, a restructuring of the pay range for Battalion Chiefs is recommended.

<u>Battalion Chief</u>	Minimum				Maximum
Current Pay Range	\$82,683.38				\$90,728.04
Proposed Pay Range	\$85,962.76	\$87,682.01	\$90,728.04	\$92,065.22	\$94,366.85

The recommended pay range represents a 4% increase at the minimum and maximum and re-establishes a step structure. A newly promoted Battalion Chief would be paid the step that is at least 5% higher than his/her salary prior to the promotion.

The new pay range maximum for Battalion Chiefs provides a more reasonable pay differential between the ranks of Fire Captain and Battalion Chief as demonstrated below.

Fire Captain	\$79,538.68 - \$85,901.92
New Battalion Chief	\$85,962.76 - \$94,366.85

In order to preserve appropriate pay differentials between the recommended pay range for Battalion Chiefs and the Deputy Chief levels, this report also recommends a new pay range for Deputy Fire Chief as presented below.

<u>Deputy Fire Chief</u>	Minimum				Maximum
Current Pay Range	\$92,915.94				\$103,076.74
Proposed Pay Range	\$94,774.32	\$ 97,641.96	\$99,085.19	\$103,076.74	\$105,138.27

The recommended pay range represents a 2% increase at the minimum and maximum and re-establishes a step structure. A newly promoted Deputy Fire Chief will be paid the step that is at least 5% higher than his/her salary prior to the promotion.

While no change is recommended for the pay range for Assistant Fire Chief, a footnote similar to that available for Assistant Chief of Police is recommended. This footnote allows recruitment to be at any rate within the pay range with the approval of the Employee Relations Director and the Chair of the Finance and Personnel Committee.

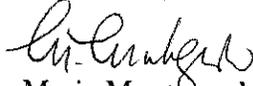
#### **Implementation and Fiscal Considerations**

The implementation of the recommended pay ranges will create a more equitable structure within the Fire Department. It is anticipated that internal equity adjustments will be processed after approval of this new structure. These adjustments will be needed to address current inequities created by having individuals who were promoted to the rank of Battalion Chief in 2009 -2011 make less than individuals promoted in 2012. These inequities stem from pay progression and salary adjustment practices available to the recently promoted individuals when they were members of Local 215.

The fiscal impact of the new pay structure and the anticipated internal equity adjustments is estimated to cost about \$68,000. The elimination of the recall allowance benefit (\$850) per member and the elimination of the CPR allowance (\$250) per member, will reduce this cost to approximately \$41,750. It is important to recognize that the recommended pay ranges shall not be adjusted by any cost of living increases implemented for general city employees in 2013.

The necessary changes to the Salary Ordinance will be presented and submitted under a separate communication. DER staff will be available at the upcoming meeting of the Fire and Police Commission to address your questions or concerns.

Respectfully Submitted,



Maria Monteaquedo  
Employee Relations Director

C: Mark Rohlfing