



BEARHFTI Advisory Council Meeting Minutes Tuesday, March 16, 2010

Advisory Council Participants:

Sharon Bradley, Council Vice Chair, Industry Member
Fay Wood (via phone), Council Vice Chair, Industry Member
James Albers, Public Member
John Andrew, Public Member
Burt Grimes, Industry Member
Tim Hawkins, Industry Member
John McCormack, Public Member
Bert Miles, Industry Member
Kathleen Newman, Industry Member
James Rushton, Industry Member
Mona Terry, Public Member
Gene Valcke, Industry Member
James Webb, Industry Member

BEARHFTI Staff Members:

Dale Chessey, Licensing Programs
Rick Diamond, Field Operations Manager
Rick Fong, Bureau Chief
Victoria Hernandez, Assistant to the Chief
Joanne Mikami, Compliance Unit Manager
Said Nurbakhsh, Test Engineer

DCA Staff:

Brian Stiger, Director

Agenda Items:

I. Opening Remarks and Introduction

- Chief, Rick Fong, opened the meeting at 10:15 a.m. and welcomed all attendees
- The Chief also welcomed and thanked the Department's Director, Brian Stiger, for attending the meeting
- The advisory council members introduced themselves

II. Department Updates

- Director, Brian Stiger, informed that the Department has taken a great transformation in Enforcement, citing Senate Bill 1111, The Consumer Protection Enforcement Initiative, as the most important legislation the Department has supported in over 30 years
- As part of the Governor's Job Creation Initiative, Director Stiger informed the council that the Licensing units will be working on Furlough Fridays to get rid of the backlog in licensing and that the Furloughs will end in June
- Rick Fong spoke about The Consumer Protection Enforcement Initiative and expressed his excitement that the Bureau will be involved in the project

III. Bureau Updates

- **Licensing Update**
 - Dale Chessey provided an overview of both BEAR and BHFTI trends and explained that service contract applications and program filings for BEAR have almost doubled due to the fact some locations have double/triple registered because of product brands (AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile) wanting their own specific registrations
 - Dale added that service contracts for BHFTI have decreased because of store closures or businesses repositioning for the challenging economy
 - Dale announced that there will be big improvements with the Bureau's Licensing unit. In the near future it will be Web based and licensees will be able to pay their license fee online sometime in the next year or so
 - Mona Terry, James Rushton, Tim Hawkins and Dale Chessey discussed the criteria for criminal applicants and agreed that although the Bureau does a thorough records check, background checks should be mandatory on all applications received
- **Enforcement Update**
 - Rick Diamond informed the council of two new inspectors in the Sacramento region, Dan Koller and Zenaida Mercado
 - Rick Diamond updated the council on recent field activities and responded to questions regarding complaints, for example: "what is compensation to consumers?" He explained that the Bureau receives complaints and staff help mediate the compliant and, in turn, the businesses will repay the consumer.
- **Lab Update**
 - Dr. Said Nurbakhsh gave an overview of how each sample that is received is tested relative to its specific test requirement
 - Said also added that the Bureau is accredited by NAVLAP annually
- **Compliance Update**
 - Joanne reported that the unit is fully staffed and making great progress with case closures
 - Joanne also provided information on the unit's recent activities, such as telephone disconnects and citation review conferences

IV. Legislation/Regulation Updates

- Rick Fong updated the council on Senate Bill 772, Senate Bill 1291 and Assembly Bill 2111
- Gene Valke, Said Nurbakhsh, and Kathleen Newman discussed Technical Bulletins 117 and 133, specifically consumer complaints and concerns

V. Industry Trends and Issues

- John Andrew and Rick Fong discussed general industry knowledge and agreed that there is a lack of public awareness on some of the industries' challenges that directly impact services to consumers.
- The Council discussed what training the industry provides on repairing electronics, what's available and areas that need to be further developed.
- Burt Grimes commented that more exposure on what BEAR regulates would help keep the public aware

VI. Council Member Updates

- Tim Hawkins and Bert Miles reported that there is not enough training or follow through in the industry on new products coming out.
- Kathleen Newman suggested video education on the websites and more publications on education sources
- James Webb along with all council members agreed that outreach to licensed technicians for BEAR and BHFTI should be available to the public in all languages

VII. Public Comment

- No public comment

Meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.