

June 3, 2019

Hiring Freeze leaves Cal/OSHA with growing vacancies

As you may have heard, DIR is denying that there is a “hard freeze” on hiring at Cal/OSHA and the other worker-protection agencies under the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR). Instead, they say hiring is occurring “slowly” – which may be a polite way of saying “glacial” or “at a snail’s pace” or your favorite euphemism for “not so as you would notice.” It hardly matters whether there is an official freeze, or just a pace of hiring that is indiscernible and cannot keep up with retirements and turn-over.

Attached is the latest information about Cal/OSHA’s field inspector vacancies – 29 CSHO positions open for a vacancy rate of 12%.

Other important facts revealed in the May 8th DOSH Organization Charts are:

- There are 220 nominally filled CSHO positions, with 214 of these actually available for field inspections;
- Region I (Bay Area) and Region IV (LA basin) are particularly hard hit with 12 and 8 CSHO vacancies, respectively
- There are 3 vacant District Manager positions in Enforcement, and 4 vacant District Senior Safety Engineer positions
- The Mining & Tunneling unit also has critical leadership vacancies – Principal Safety Engineer and 2 of 3 Districts with vacant SSE/manager positions
- No change in the number of field inspectors who speak languages other than English (26 total)
- And the usual bad ratios of Cal/OSHA inspectors compared to 1980 Fed OSHA and current California Fish & Game

Money-wise, since the Legislature fully funded new CSHO positions at DOSH in 2015 – starting with the PSM unit and then other units – DIR leadership has left more than \$18 million in enforcement resources unused since July 2015. The Division had authorized money – it just was not used – and now we have the slow walk down the hiring lane...

The fate of the eight Elevator TAU inspectors who must be permanently hired by next Monday – or be separated from state service through no fault of their – remains unclear.

Best,
Garrett Brown