

Running head: THE EFFECTS OF RECRUITING AND HIRING PROCESSES

Executive Development

The Effects of Recruiting and Hiring Processes on the  
Ethnic Diversity of Line Personnel at Parker Fire District

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**CERTIFICATION STATEMENT**

I hereby certify that this paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
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## Abstract

Parker Fire District (PFD) has identified the lack of diversity of line firefighters as a concern. The problem is nearly 100 percent of the line firefighter applicants who make it through the PFD hiring process are White males. The purpose of this research paper is to evaluate PFD's hiring processes to determine their impact on the diversity of firefighter applicants who successfully complete the hiring process. This Applied Research Paper utilized the Descriptive Research Method. Data were obtained through ethnic and gender surveys and the collection of recruiting and testing process results. Data were analyzed to answer the following questions: (a) How does the ethnic composition of PFD's line members compare to the communities they serve, (b) What are the recruiting and testing processes utilized by PFD when hiring line members, (c) How has the recruiting process impacted the ethnic diversity of the firefighter applicant pool, (d) How has the testing process impacted the ethnic diversity of the firefighter applicant pool, and (e) Should PFD consider modifying the recruiting or testing processes to increase diversity of line members? Firefighter ethnic composition was compared to U.S. Census Bureau ethnic information. Recruiting processes were compared to the IAFF Diversity Initiative and testing results were analyzed to determine if an adverse impact was created as defined by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Results indicated that each aspect of the hiring process-- employer mindset, recruiting and testing--contributed to the lack of diversity of line firefighters at Parker Fire District. It was recommended that Parker Fire District should demonstrate that diversity was more than just a goal. Recruiting efforts should be adjusted to specifically target the ethnic communities within the District. Finally, the firefighter testing processes should be adjusted to eliminate all adverse impacts.

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## Introduction

In 2005, Parker Fire Chief Daniel Qualman challenged his department heads to make Parker Fire District a “Best in Class” organization. Each department head was tasked with investigating industry leaders in both the public and private sector for new and innovative operating philosophies. These new concepts were to be brought back and implemented within their respective departments in an effort to improve the services they provided (Chief Dan Qualman, personal communications, April 25, 2008).

As a result of this mandate, the Operations Division determined that, to achieve Best in Class status, they first must work to broaden the diversity of line employees. To fully achieve this goal, the Operations Division desired to have a line workforce (firefighters) which accurately reflected the ethnic make-up of the communities they protect (Parker, 2005, p.1).

Cultural diversity and how it influences the safety and services provided by public sector employees was the topic of the FIRE 20/20 (2007) research project. The research project states, Many activities, perspectives, communications and behaviors vary from one cultural group to the next. In addition, the degree of firefighters’ cultural competence- or their ability to relate with sensitivity and understanding to those of other cultural backgrounds- greatly influences how high-quality services are delivered. (p. 27)

The FIRE 20/20 (2007) research project verifies Parker Fire District’s belief in the importance of having a line workforce which accurately reflects the diversity of the communities they serve. Increased diversity within the firefighter ranks will permit Parker Fire District to provide higher quality services to the citizens living within the district.

Although Parker Fire District (PFD) has identified the lack of diversity of line members as a concern, little has changed since the 2005 “Best in Class” challenge. The problem is nearly 100 percent of the line firefighter applicants who make it through the PFD hiring process are White males. The purpose of this research paper is to evaluate PFD’s recruiting and hiring processes to determine their impact on the diversity of firefighter applicants who successfully complete the hiring process.

Data were collected through the use of an ethnic and gender survey given to current line firefighters. PFD recently completed a hiring process to establish an applicant pool for the position of line firefighter. All applicants for this position were given an ethnic and gender survey as part of their application packet. Data were collected to determine the effects of each testing process on the various ethnic and gender groups. The data collected were analyzed to answer the following questions: (a) How does the ethnic composition of PFD’s line members compare to the communities they serve, (b) What are the recruiting and testing processes utilized by PFD when hiring line members, (c) How has the recruiting process impacted the ethnic diversity of the firefighter applicant pool, (d) How has the testing process impacted the ethnic diversity of the firefighter applicant pool, and (e) Should PFD consider modifying the recruiting or testing processes to increase diversity of line members?

FIRE 20/20 (2007) states, “In order to improve cultural competency, the fire service must make strides to achieve cultural diversity within its organization (internally) and among the community members (externally)” (p. 28). Cultural competency involves changing what we know, what we think and how we perform to serve and support the people in our communities from all cultural backgrounds (p. 27). Utilizing the descriptive research method, this Applied Research Paper will assist PFD to better understand how the recruiting and testing processes

affect the diversity of line firefighters in an attempt to better serve and support the people in our communities.

### Background and Significance

Parker Fire District is located south of Denver, Colorado in portions of Arapahoe and Douglas Counties; two of the fastest growing counties in Colorado. Parker Fire District covers 105 square miles and provides fire and emergency medical services to a population base, in 2007, of approximately 101,000 people. This figure represents a doubling of the population over the last five years (Parker, 2008, p. 1).

In an effort to provide the best service possible to the citizens of the rapidly growing district, Fire Chief Dan Qualman challenged each of his Division and Bureau Chief's to make their departments a "Best in Class" (BIC) organization. According to Chief Qualman, BIC was a concept designed to constantly elevate the performance standards of every employee. To get new ideas and concepts, each department head was encouraged to investigate respected corporations within the business communities to determine what separated them from their competition. The Division and Bureau Chiefs were then challenged to bring those concepts and ideas back and implement them at Parker Fire. Several Chief's accepted the challenge and visited corporations such as United Parcel Services (UPS) and Mercy Hospital (Chief Dan Qualman, personal communications, April, 25, 2008).

The Operations Division, headed by Chief Bob Baker, determined that Parker Fire District needed more diversity within the line firefighters to provide BIC service to the communities they serve. To fulfill this BIC goal, it was determined that the diversity of the workforce should be reflective of the agency's demographics. The Operations Division, working with the Human Resources Department, determined the best way to broaden the diversity of line



employees was to develop and implement a recruitment program aimed at attracting a diverse workforce (Parker, 2005, p.1)

According to the United States Census Bureau update conducted in 2006, the rapid growth in both Arapahoe and Douglas Counties has led to noticeable changes in the ethnic composition in both counties from 2000 to 2006. The percentage of White residents has declined; American Indian and Pacific Islander have remained virtually unchanged; meanwhile, the percentages of Black, Hispanic, Asian and Other residents have all increased (United States, 2006, p.1).

Table 1

*Ethnic Composition changes between 2000 and 2006*

	ARAPAHOE COUNTY		DOUGLAS COUNTY	
	2000	2006	2000	2006
WHITE	79.9%	76.8%	92.8%	90.5%
HISPANIC	11.8%	16.7%	5.1%	6.7%
BLACK	7.7%	9.5%	1.0%	1.3%
ASIAN	3.9%	5.0%	2.5%	3.8%
AMERICAN INDIAN	0.7%	0.6%	0.4%	0.5%
PACIFIC ISLANDER	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%
OTHER	4.5%	5.1%	1.4%	2.0%

NOTE: Ethnic classifications and percentages taken from U.S. Census Bureau website: <http://factfinder.census.gov>

Since 2005, when the “Best in Class” challenge was issued, growth within PFD has continued at a moderate pace. Utilizing the trends found in the U.S. Census information, it is safe to surmise that the percentage of White residents have continued to decline and the percentages of the other ethnic groups, particularly Hispanic and Asian have continued to increase. In contrast, the ethnic composition of the line firefighters at PFD has remained relatively unchanged during that same time frame.

In January of 2008, Parker Fire District began a hiring process for Paramedics, Apprentice Firefighters and Line Firefighters. The ethnic and gender compositions of these

applicants have been analyzed throughout the hiring process to determine the effects of the recruiting and testing processes on each ethnic group. The results of this research will be presented later in this Applied Research Paper (ARP); however, it has become apparent that the current recruiting and testing processes will provide the same results as past hiring processes.

If Parker Fire District is to achieve their stated goal for ethnic diversity, future recruiting and testing processes must be adjusted from current practices. Minneapolis Fire Department (MFD) is an example of a fire department that achieved its desire to have a department reflective of the population they serve. From 1970 until 2000, the MFD operated under a court ordered oversight of their recruiting, testing and hiring processes. The court oversight was lifted because MFD and Fire Chief Rocco Forte actively evaluated every aspect of their recruiting and hiring processes to determine how they impacted the applicants.

The first step taken by MFD was to actively recruit from the ethnic communities within their fire district. Next, MFD analyzed which ethnic groups applied, how they performed in the testing processes and how they performed in the interview process. Armed with this information, MFD was able to modify their processes to reduce or eliminate barriers to employment (Norris, 2003, p. 9). As a result of their evaluation and adjustments, MFD was able to recruit and hire line firefighters that accurately reflected the ethnic composition of the communities they served.

The Revised Statement of Purpose, dated January 1, 2001, states that the Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP) will provide “an understanding of transforming fire and emergency services organizations to reflect the diversity of America’s communities” (Department, 2008). The benefit of diversity is recognized by the National Fire Academy (NFA) in the Executive Development portion of the EFOP. The NFA (Department, 2005) states, diversity of race, gender and perspective “allows for rich dialogue and exploration of ideas different from the main

stream” (p. SM 2-18). The NFA further states that creativity in the organization can be encouraged through diversity (p. SM 6-7.) More specific to this ARP, the NFA states that increasing diversity of the workforce will lead to a reduction of communication barriers and result in an increased acceptance of the fire department in the community (p. SM 7-7).

This ARP will address issues that relate to all five United States Fire Administration (USFA) operational objectives as listed in the EFOP Applied Research Self-Study Guide. FIRE 20/20 (2007) states, “Studies suggest that the degree to which service members reflect the populations they serve (i.e., representation) is directly associated with safer working environments and improved outcomes in the delivery of community services” (p. 20).

Achieving a diverse work force that accurately reflects the communities will result in safer and more efficient fire and emergency medical operations as well as more effective public education programs. The result will be a reduction in loss of life of firefighters, people in the age group of 65 and above, as well as, those 14 years old or under as outlined in the first three USFA directives. Increased diversity of PFD will also foster better communications and relationships with ethnic and civic leaders in the communities. As a result of these new relationships, USFA directives 4 and 5 which address promoting comprehensive all-hazard risk-reduction planning and responding to emerging issues within PFD will be facilitated (Executive, 2005, p. 3).

#### Literature Review

In an effort to become a “Best in Class” organization, Parker Fire District has established a goal of developing and implementing a recruitment program aimed at attracting a diverse workforce. The outcome of this recruit program was intended to broaden employee diversity of line demographics to accurately reflect the agencies demographics (Parker, 2005, p. 1).

Parker Fire District's belief that the quality of services provided to the citizens would improve if the line firefighter demographics were reflective of the communities' demographics was confirmed in the recently completed FIRE 20/20 (2007) research project.

Many activities, perspectives, communications and behaviors vary from one cultural group to the next. In addition, the degree of firefighters' cultural competence- or their ability to relate with sensitivity and understanding to those of other cultural backgrounds- greatly influences how high-quality services are delivered (p. 27).

Accurate firefighter representation of the ethnic composition of the communities served is not just a Parker Fire District issue. Fire departments throughout the nation have the same concerns. The FIRE 20/20 (2007) research project examined three fire departments: Seattle, Austin and Milwaukee to better understand how the ethnic composition of those departments affected the safety and effectiveness of the services they provided. All three departments identified new and unique challenges as a result of multiple languages, cultural and religious traditions and generational differences (p. 233).

FIRE 20/20 (2007) concluded the best way to overcome those new challenges was through multicultural capacity.

For the purpose of this discussion, multicultural capacity refers to the degree of proficiency and ease with which Fire/EMS personnel respectfully deliver emergency and non-emergency services to multicultural community members, as well as their willingness to learn about different community cultures. This includes knowledge of cultural practices, values, rituals, differences in expressing emotion, community priorities, etc. (p. 233)

### *Recruiting*

The hiring process for line firefighters at Parker Fire District consists of two parts; the recruiting process and the testing process. Kent (2004) states that recruitment, to achieve a diverse workforce, requires a change in mindset by the organization. The best policies and procedures will be ineffective unless the employees have bought into and value the concept on diversity (p. 1).

Ruiz echoes Kent's beliefs that companies must view diversity, not as just another policy, but as a way of life. She goes on to say that attending job fairs is not always the best approach to recruiting minorities. "The only foolproof method of success is having a strong corporate image, one that fires up candidates into seeking an employer out by name before actually setting foot in a job fair" (2006, p. 2). The one common goal or need among minority applicants, according to Fyock (1993) is to search out employers that recognize the importance of growth and advancement within the organization. They are also looking for a work environment not just free of discrimination, but one that values diversity (p. 34).

To determine if a company values diversity, the candidate will often evaluate the ethnic and gender make-up of the current employees. In his 2001 article, Leonard presents strong evidence that a company's actions speak louder than their policies. Thirty-three percent of applicants stated they would not work at a company if they lacked gender or ethnic diversity. The number jumped to forty-four percent when black applicants were asked if they would eliminate a company from consideration because of the lack of gender or ethnic diversity (p. 1).

The International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) produced a Diversity Initiative titled, *Achieving and Retaining a Diverse Fire Service Workforce* (Fox, K., Hornick, C., Hardin,

E., 2006). The Initiative presented 10 recommendations for fire departments to follow in their quest to diversify their workforce. The first seven steps pertain directly with recruiting practices:

1. Specifically target the group you want to reach and recruit. Generic messages and blanket advertising do not work to reach minorities and women effectively.
2. When targeting particular groups and when doing recruiting in general, use language to promote a message of inclusiveness.
3. Use some “formal” methods of recruiting such as advertising combined with establishing associations with minority and women based organizations.
4. Give specific and detailed information about the job, necessary skills, requirements, salary and benefits.
5. In developing recruiting information and in advertising, remember to target the candidate’s family as well.
6. Use minority and women recruiters. Make sure the candidates know they will not be the only minority or women in the department.
7. Communicate the value of diversity in all of your messages. Show diversity in your advertisements, recruiting information, website and other materials (pp. 5-8).

### *Testing*

The final three IAFF Diversity Initiative recommendations address the issue of testing and retention of minority candidates.

8. Use a fair and valid selection process that measures what is really required for the job. Be as inclusive as possible in the first stages of the process in order to learn more about your candidates.
9. Only require the education needed to perform the job.

10. For retention and job satisfaction, provide a mentoring program for newly hired firefighters (Fox et al., 2006, pp. 8-9)

The IAFF recommendations do not necessarily require fire departments to change their methods or strategies regarding recruitment of applicants. Nor does it require fire departments to lower their testing standards. “Best in Class” fire departments need only to adjust the focus and emphasis of their recruiting and testing processes to achieve their diversity goals (p. 9).

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is charged with enforcement of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act protects applicants from employment discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, and religion. Title VII not only protects against intentional discrimination but also against recruiting and testing processes that adversely impact persons of a certain race or color (Equal, 1978, p. 212). Adverse impact was defined by the EEOC as, “a substantially different rate of selection in hiring, promotion, or other employment decisions which works to the disadvantage of members of a race, sex, or ethnic group” (p. 231). According to the EEOC, adverse impact occurs when a selection rate for any race, sex, or ethnic group is less than four-fifths, or 80 percent, of the rate for the group with the highest rate of selection (p. 214).

In summary, the literature review demonstrated that Parker Fire District was correct in their beliefs that, to achieve “Best in Class” status, the ethnic composition of the line firefighters must accurately reflect the ethnic composition of the communities they serve. Ethnic diversity directly relates to safer, more efficient operations, improved communications and better decision making processes.

According to the literature, there are three steps that PFD must take to achieve the goal of increased ethnic diversity of line firefighters. First, and foremost, PFD must demonstrate to all

perspective employees that diversity is not only desired but actually valued at PFD. This step will be very difficult to achieve given the current ethnic composition of line firefighters and PFD as a whole. Secondly, PFD must actively recruit minority candidates within the ethnic communities of the district and surrounding areas. Minorities must feel that PFD values their talents and contributions to the department and the citizens they serve. They must also know that their contributions will be recognized with growth and promotional opportunities in the future. Finally, PFD must ensure that the firefighter testing processes do not create an adverse impact on the minority applicant.

## PROCEDURES

### *Ethnic Composition*

For this Applied Research Paper, the Descriptive Research Method was utilized to evaluate data obtained through research, surveys and testing results. Currently there are 104 line members from the rank of Firefighter to Battalion Chief at PFD. In May and June of 2008, each line member was given a simple survey (Appendix A) asking for Ethnic Background and Gender. The ethnic classifications were taken from the U.S. Census Bureau survey. All 104 line members completed and returned the survey.

The results were compared to the mean ethnic composition of PFD presented in the 2006 revised U.S. Census reports for Arapahoe and Douglas Counties. The Census Bureau data were limited in the fact that Parker Fire District only covers portions of each county. However, Parker Fire District does encompass a large portion of the growth areas for each county. As a result, trends identified in the counties as a whole do accurately reflect the trends within the Parker Fire District boundaries.



### *Recruiting Process*

The current recruiting processes for Parker Fire District were investigated and compared to the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) Diversity Initiative titled, *Achieving and Retaining a Diverse Fire Service Workforce*. The Diversity Initiative was chosen for comparison purposes because it accurately reflected the combined recommendations of the other authors cited on this subject. To establish the effectiveness of the current recruiting practices of PFD, an Ethnic Survey (Appendix B) was included in the application packet for the Line Firefighter hiring process that started in February of 2008. PFD received a total of 721 applications for this testing process. Applicants completed and returned 693 of the ethnic survey's resulting in a return rate of 96 percent.

The data obtained from the ethnic survey were compared to the 2006 revised U.S. Census Bureau reports for Arapahoe and Douglas Counties to determine if Parker Fire District's recruiting processes were attracting applicants reflective of the District's ethnic composition. The Census Bureau data were limited in the fact that Parker Fire District only covers portions of each county. However, Parker Fire District does encompass a large portion of the growth areas for each county. As a result, trends identified in the counties as a whole do accurately reflect the trends within Parker Fire District boundaries.

### *Testing Process*

Ethnic and gender information was obtained from each applicants answer sheet for the FireTEAM test given at the beginning of the testing process. Permission to obtain the information was granted by PFD Human Resources Department. The total number of applicants taking the FireTEAM test was 609. Of the applicants taking the test, 36 chose not to fill out the ethnic information resulting in a 94 percent completion rate. The Ethnic Background of each

applicant was entered in a spreadsheet and tracked throughout the testing process. Data were compiled to determine the impact each testing process had on the ethnic composition of the applicant pool.

During the collection of data, it became apparent that the testing process was impacting the gender composition of the applicant pool as well. Believing this information would be important to PFD; the scope of the ARP was expanded to include the effects of the testing process on the gender composition of the applicant pool.

Data collected were evaluated to determine if the testing processes individually, or as a whole, created an adverse impact on minority applicants. The Uniform Guidelines on Employment Selection Procedures was used to determine ethnic and gender adverse impact. According to the Guidelines, adverse impact occurs when a selection rate for any race, sex, or ethnic group is less than four-fifths, or 80 percent, of the rate for the group with the highest rate of selection (Equal, 1978, p. 214). For the purposes of this ARP, Whites and males were the two control groups that all adverse impact comparisons were made. The “Other” ethnic classification was included as a minority classification for the total minority comparisons. The “No Response” classification was not included in the total minority section.

The ethnic composition data obtained from The FireTEAM test does not directly correlate to the ethnic composition data obtained from the application process. This limitation was the result of differences in the ethnic classifications used by this researcher in the application survey and those used by ERGOMETRICS for the FireTEAM test. The limitation was enhanced by the number of applicants who did not take the fireTEAM test for reasons known only to them.

Determining the Adverse Impact of the testing process was further limited as the applicants progressed through the testing process. This limitation was a result of the reduction in

numbers of specific ethnic groups as the testing process progressed. The lower numbers resulted in greater percentage reductions when applicants failed a portion of the testing process.

### *Definitions*

**Apprentice Firefighter:** Firefighters utilized to supplement the Line Firefighting staff. Apprentices must make a commitment to work four 24 hour shifts a month for a minimum of two years. In return, PFD would provide an hourly wage and benefit package, free participation in PFD's Fire Academy and free Emergency Medical Technician Basic (EMT-B) certification training.

**Line Firefighter:** Traditional definition of a Line Firefighter who works 24 hour shifts, 10 days a month, on a rotating schedule.

**Paramedic Firefighter:** Traditional Line Firefighter who, in addition, possesses a valid Emergency Medical Technician Paramedic (EMT-P) certification.

## RESULTS

### *Parker Fire District's Ethnic Composition*

To achieve "Best in Class" status, a goal was established by Parker Fire District to have the ethnic composition of the line firefighters reflective of the ethnic composition of the citizens they serve. In May and June of 2008, an ethnic and gender survey was administered to the line firefighters of Parker Fire District. All 104 line personnel from the rank of Firefighter to Battalion Chief responded to the survey. The results of the ethnic and gender survey show that PFD line members were composed of 96 percent White, two percent Hispanic, one percent Asian and one percent Other. The gender results were 94 percent male and six percent female line members.

Comparing the data resulting from the PFD line ethnic survey with the mean ethnic composition of Arapahoe and Douglas Counties, it becomes very evident that PFD has made little or no progress to achieve their “Best in Class” goal for ethnic diversity.

Table 2

*Ethnic Comparison of Citizens to Line Firefighters*

	<b>ARAPAHOE</b>	<b>DOUGLAS</b>	<b>MEAN</b>	<b>PARKER</b>	<b>% OF GOAL</b>
WHITE	76.80%	90.50%	83.60%	96.00%	114.80%
HISPANIC	16.70%	6.70%	11.70%	2.00%	17.00%
BLACK	9.50%	1.30%	5.40%	0.00%	0.00%
ASIAN	5.00%	3.80%	4.40%	1.00%	22.70%
AMERICAN INDIAN	0.60%	0.50%	0.50%	0.00%	0.00%
PACIFIC ISLANDER	0.20%	0.00%	0.10%	0.00%	0.00%
OTHER	5.10%	2.00%	3.50%	1.00%	28.50%

*NOTE:* Ethnic classifications and percentages taken from U.S. Census Bureau 2006 update website: <http://factfinder.census.gov>. Mean is the average of Arapahoe County and Douglas County.

*Recruiting Processes and Results*

Parker Fire District’s recruiting process for the 2008 Line Firefighter hiring process was composed of four parts; Internet, postcards, job fair and focused Paramedic recruiting. The Internet information was found on Parker Fire District’s website: [www.parkerfire.org](http://www.parkerfire.org). Included in the website information were job qualifications, minimum requirements, testing processes and pay scales. Also found on the website was the applications to be filled out by the perspective applicant.

Postcards (Appendix C) were sent out to a total of 1223 people. The postcards were generic in nature; simply stating that PFD was accepting applications for Line Firefighter, Paramedic Firefighter and Apprentice Firefighter. Interested individuals were then directed to the PFD website for more information. To receive a postcard, a person must (a) have participated in a Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) or Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) class offered at PFD during 2007 or 2008 or, (b) have taken the Denver Regional Council of Government (DRCOG) fire test and scored 75 percent or better, or (c) have expressed an interest

in PFD at the Diversity Job Fair (HR Assistant Becky Sheldon, personal communication, March 24, 2008).

The Diversity Job Fair was hosted in Denver, Colorado on December 4, 2007. Parker Fire District was represented at the job fair by the Human Resource Director, one Apprentice Firefighter Captain and one Line Firefighter. A total of 38 postcards were sent to individuals contacted at the Diversity Job Fair (HR Assistant Becky Sheldon, personal communication, March 24, 2008).

In past hiring processes, PFD has had difficulty attracting qualified and competent Paramedic applicants. For the 2008 hiring process, PFD instituted a focused recruitment program for Paramedic applicants. The focused recruitment process involved current Paramedic Firefighters traveling to various locations throughout Colorado to deliver presentations emphasizing the benefits of working at Parker Fire District. Data specific to this process was not collected as part of this ARP.

The IAFF (2006) Diversity Initiative was utilized as the standard for which to compare PFD's recruiting processes. When the recruiting processes were compared against the seven recommendations of the Diversity Initiative, several inconsistencies become readily apparent.

IAFF (Fox et al., 2006) recommendation one states, "Specifically target the group you want to reach and recruit. Generic messages and blanket advertising do not work to reach minorities and women effectively" (p. 5). This recommendation was closely followed for the recruitment of Paramedic Firefighters. However, as it pertains to the recruitment of specific ethnic and gender groups, this recommendation was not followed. PFD utilized their website, postcards and attendance at one job fair to attract perspective applicants for the Firefighter positions. The website was limited to those individuals who have access to the Internet. The use

of postcard notifications was random and leaves to chance any contact with specific ethnic or gender groups. Attendance at the Diversity Job Fair was the only process followed by PFD that specifically targeted minority applicants.

Recommendation two states, “When targeting particular groups and when doing recruiting in general, use language to promote a message of inclusiveness” (p. 5). The PFD application contains the traditional “Parker Fire is an Equal Opportunity Employer” message on the front page. Beyond that, messages stating PFD values diversity or inclusiveness can not be found on the application, postcard or website.

The third recommendation states, “Use some “formal” methods of recruiting such as advertising combined with establishing associations with minority and women based organizations’ (p. 6). The intent of this recommendation was for employers not to rely on their website alone to inform perspective employees of employment opportunities. PFD attempted to expand their recruiting efforts beyond the confines of their website. However; other than the job fair, these efforts failed to target specific ethnic or gender groups. Further analysis of the effectiveness of the job fair will be presented later in this ARP.

Recommendation four states, “Give specific and detailed information about the job, necessary skills, requirements, salary and benefits’ (p. 6). PFD did an excellent job giving specific and detailed information outlining the minimum requirements, application process, testing processes and salary ranges on the PFD website.

IAFF recommendation five states, “In developing recruiting information and in advertising, remember to target the candidate’s family as well’ (p. 7). PFD recruiting processes did not address the potential issues or concerns family members of minority applicants may have regarding the position of Firefighter.

Recommendation six states, “Use minority and women recruiters. Make sure the candidates know they will not be the only minority or women in the department” (Fox et al., 2006, p. 7). This recommendation would be difficult to follow for a fire department, such as PFD, that is composed of 96 percent White and 94 percent male firefighters. When the applicant enters the Parker Fire District website to download an application or visits the PFD Head Quarters building, the majority of the pictures he or she will view show White male firefighters in action, White male Chief Level Officers and White participants in Public Education activities.

Furthermore, PFD participated in the Diversity Job Fair in Denver as part of the 2008 hiring process. PFD was represented by the Human Resource Director, who was a White female; Apprentice Fire Captain, who was a White male; and a Line Firefighter, who was a White female. PFD did a good job with the gender representation of the group; however, they lacked the ethnic diversity necessary to demonstrate PFD’s commitment to diversity and inclusiveness.

Finally, recommendation seven states, “Communicate the value of diversity in all of your messages. Show diversity in your advertisements, recruiting information, website and other materials” (p. 8). Analysis of the information presented in the preceding six recommendations verifies that PFD has not effectively communicated the value of diversity to perspective applicants.

To analyze the effectiveness of PFD’s recruiting processes to attract ethnically diverse applicants, an ethnic survey was included in the firefighter job application. Comparing the ethnic make-up of the applicants to the ethnic make-up of the fire district will illustrate how effectively PFD has targeted the ethnic communities living within Parker Fire District

Table 3

*Ethnic Comparison of Citizens to Firefighter Applicants*

	<b>ARAPAHOE</b>	<b>DOUGLAS</b>	<b>MEAN</b>	<b>APPLICANT</b>	<b>% OF GOAL</b>
WHITE	76.80%	90.50%	83.60%	86.10%	102.90%
HISPANIC	16.70%	6.70%	11.70%	9.10%	77.70%
BLACK	9.50%	1.30%	5.40%	2.00%	37.00%
ASIAN	5.00%	3.80%	4.40%	1.30%	29.50%
AMERICAN INDIAN	0.60%	0.50%	0.50%	1.20%	240.00%
PACIFIC ISLANDER	0.20%	0.00%	0.10%	0.30%	300.00%
OTHER	5.10%	2.00%	3.50%	0.00%	0.00%

*NOTE:* Ethnic classifications and percentages taken from U.S. Census Bureau website: <http://factfinder.census.gov>. Mean is the average of Arapahoe County and Douglas County.

The data illustrates how the recruiting efforts of PFD have failed to attract the ethnic diversity reflective of the communities located within Parker Fire District. This fact is especially evident with the Black and Asian applicants. Black applicants represented only 37.0 percent of the Black population living within PFD and the Asian application rate represented only 29.5 percent of the Asian population living within PFD.

*Testing Processes and Results*

The testing process for the firefighter positions at PFD consisted of six sections; Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT), FireTEAM Written Test, Paramedic Test, Application Review, Oral Board and Background Check.

The CPAT was developed as part of the Fire Service Joint Labor Management Wellness and Fitness Initiative by the IAFF and the International Association of Chiefs (IAFC) working in conjunction with ten leading fire departments and unions throughout the United States (IAFC, 2008, P. 1). The CPAT consists of eight stations with a forty-five foot walk between each station. The stations were comprised of a stair climb, hose drag, equipment carry, ladder raise and extension, forcible entry, search, rescue drag and ceiling pull. The CPAT had a time limit of 10 minutes and twenty seconds.



The CPAT testing has been offered at several authorized locations throughout Colorado. Applicants who have successfully completed the test receive a certificate valid for one year. Applicants for the PFD 2008 hiring process had the option to present a valid certificate or pass the CPAT offered at PFD on February 22 through February 25, 2008.

Data analysis for the CPAT shows that no ethnic or gender groups experienced an adverse impact from this test. Data obtained regarding the adverse impact of the CPAT was limited because applicants had the opportunity to pass the CPAT anytime within the previous year. Data was not differentiated between applicants that took the CPAT at PFD and those that possessed a valid certificate from a previous testing process.

The FireTEAM test was a written test developed by ERGOMETRICS & Applied Personnel Research, Inc. located in Lynnwood, Washington. The FireTEAM test was designed by professionals from six fire departments and is used to identify candidates' strengths and weaknesses before they are hired. The FireTEAM test consists of four sections; Human Relations (HR), Mechanical (ME), Mathematics (MA) and Reading (RE) (FireTEAM, 2003, pg .1).

The applicant must pass each section with the following minimum scores; HR 75%, ME 65%, RE 70%. Math currently does not have an established minimum passing score. In addition, the candidate must pass the overall test with a combined minimum score of 70% (HR Assistant Becky Sheldon, personal communication, March 24, 2008).

For Table 4, and all tables to follow in this section, adverse impact is defined by this researcher as a selection rate for any ethnic group which is less than four-fifths, or 80%, of the selection rate for Whites. Similarly, adverse impact for women is defined by this researcher as a selection rate for women which are less than four-fifths, or 80%, of male applicants. Some

testing processes could have been proven to adversely impact the White and male groups, however, that was not the focus of this ARP.

Table 4

*Effects of FireTEAM Test at 70% Passing Rate*

	<b>TOOK</b>	<b>PASSED</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>	<b>PERCENT OF</b>	<b>ADVERSE</b>
	<b>FIRE TEAM</b>	<b>FIRE TEAM</b>	<b>PASSED</b>	<b>WHITE</b>	<b>IMPACT</b>
				<b>/MALE</b>	
WHITE	453	340	75.0%	X	X
HISPANIC	49	35	71.4%	95.2%	NO
BLACK	9	5	55.5%	74.0%	YES
ASIAN	9	2	22.2%	29.6%	YES
AMERICAN INDIAN	8	6	75.0%	100.0%	NO
OTHER	11	7	63.6%	84.8%	NO
NO RESPONSE	33	24	72.7%	96.9%	NO
<b>TOTAL MINORITY</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>63.9%</b>	<b>85.2%</b>	<b>NO</b>
MALE	542	406	74.9%	X	X
FEMALE	30	13	43.3%	57.8%	YES

The data illustrates that the fireTEAM test had an adverse impact on Blacks, Asians and females. The selection rate for Blacks was 74% of the selection rate for Whites; falling just below the 80% standard. The selection rate for Asians and women fell well below the 80% standard with less than 30% and 60% selection rates respectively.

Breaking the data down further, it was determined that 100% of the Blacks who failed the FireTEAM test did so by failing the Mechanical section. 75% of the Blacks also failed the Reading section of the test. Asians who failed the FireTEAM test were equally divided at 43% between the four sections. The data further confirms that females generally failed one of two sections. Mechanical was failed by 65% of the female applicants and Reading was failed by 53% of the female applicants. The percentages do not total 100% because individual applicants may have failed more than one section.

PFD utilized the results of the FireTEAM test to further reduce the applicant pool for the hiring process. To continue in the hiring process, PFD increased the passing score to 82.5% on the FireTEAM test. The passing score was adjusted to 80% if the applicant had a letter of recommendation from a current PFD employee (HR Assistant Becky Sheldon, personal communication, March 24, 2008).

Table 5

*Effects of FireTEAM Test at 82.5% Passing Rate*

	TOOK FIRE TEAM	PASSED FIRE TEAM	PERCENT PASSED	PERCENT OF WHITE/MALE	ADVERSE IMPACT
WHITE	453	139	30.6%	X	X
HISPANIC	49	15	30.6%	100.0%	NO
BLACK	9	1	11.1%	36.2%	YES
ASIAN	9	2	22.2%	72.5%	YES
AMERICAN INDIAN	8	5	62.5%	204.0%	NO
OTHER	11	0	0.0%	0.0%	YES
NO RESPONSE	33	14	42.4%	138.5%	NO
TOTAL MINORITY	86	23	26.7%	87.2%	NO
MALE	542	174	32.1%	X	X
FEMALE	30	2	6.6%	20.5%	YES

The adjustment made by PFD eliminated an additional two hundred and forty-three applicants from the testing process. The resulting data shows that an adverse impact was still experienced by Blacks, Asians and women. In addition, the PFD adjustment created a new adverse impact on the “Other” ethnic classification. Data shows that almost 64% of the applicants in the “Other” ethnic classification passed the FireTEAM test under the standards established by ERGOMETRICS. With the PFD adjustment to the passing score, 100% of the “Other” ethnic classification failed the test and were removed from the testing process.

The Paramedic test was the next test in the hiring process. Only those applicants with a valid Paramedic Certificate were involved in this testing process. The Paramedic test consisted of

two parts, a written test and a practical test. The written test was fifty-three questions in length and had an established minimum passing score of 80%. The questions for the written test were taken from the National Registry Emergency Medical Technician- Paramedic test question bank. The practical test consisted of seven medical and trauma scenarios that were proctored by current PFD Paramedics. The scenarios were scored on a pass/fail basis (Captain John Glenn, personal communication, July 7, 2008).

Table 6

*Effects of Paramedic Test*

	<b>TOOK TEST</b>	<b>PASSED TEST</b>	<b>PERCENT PASSED</b>	<b>PERCENT OF WHITE/MALE</b>	<b>ADVERSE IMPACT</b>
WHITE	22	8	36.3%	X	X
HISPANIC	2	0	0.0%	0.0%	YES
BLACK	---	---	---	---	---
ASIAN	1	1	100.0%	275.4%	NO
AMERICAN INDIAN	1	0	0.0%	0.0%	YES
OTHER	---	---	---	---	---
NO RESPONSE	4	2	50.0%	137.7%	NO
<b>TOTAL MINORITY</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>25.0%</b>	<b>68.8%</b>	<b>YES</b>
MALE	29	11	37.9%	X	X
FEMALE	1	0	0.0%	0.0%	YES

*NOTE:* Cells containing (---) indicate no one from that ethnic classification participated in Paramedic test

Given the special nature of the Paramedic test and the limited number of participants, it is very difficult to analyze the data for this testing process. Even if it were possible to definitively establish that an adverse impact was created on a particular ethnic or gender classification, PFD could readily defend that impact as a business necessity.

The remaining applicants were subject to an application review. Each application was reviewed for completeness, driving record and employment history. An application was determined to be complete if it contained the necessary documentation to prove the applicant possessed the minimum requirements for the given position. Each position, Firefighter Apprentice, Line Firefighter and Paramedic had slightly different minimum qualifications.

The applicants driving record was reviewed for traffic tickets including accidents, Driving While Impaired (DWI) and Driving Under the Influence (DUI). The applicants driving record was compared to the standards for insurability established by PFD's insurance carrier. Finally, the applicants' employment history is evaluated. Items such as questionable reasons for leaving, extended periods of time between employment and short stays at each employer were evaluated (HR Assistant Becky Sheldon, personal communications, March 24, 2008).

Data obtained from the Application Review portion of the PFD testing process illustrate an adverse impact on the Black ethnic classification. This data is limited in the fact that only one Black applicant remained in the hiring process at the time of this test. His application was rejected due to past employment history. Looking at the data as a whole, forty-seven applicants were removed from the hiring process by the application review. Of those forty-seven, 65% were removed because of incomplete applications, 26% due to employment history and 9% because of driving record.

At this point in the hiring process, Parker Fire District Board of Directors voted to create a Fire Authority between Parker Fire District and South Metro Fire Rescue (SMFR). As a result, PFD no longer needed to hire for the position of Line Firefighter. However, it was decided by PFD to continue the hiring process for Paramedic Firefighter and Apprentice Firefighter. All applicants testing for the position of Line Firefighter were given the opportunity to continue the hiring process as an Apprentice Firefighter.

In addition, PFD determined that all Paramedic Firefighter applicants and the top 40 ranked Apprentice Firefighter applicants would proceed to the Oral Boards. This decision left fifty-one applicants remaining in the testing process. Data collected from this step of the testing process showed that each ethnic group remaining in the testing process dropped equally at

approximately 50%. Likewise, the number of applicants dropped because they wanted the Firefighter only position was equal to the number of applicants dropped because of their ranking in the testing process. Statistically, the data confirms that this portion of the testing process did not create an adverse impact on the minority or women applicants.

The applicants that remained in the hiring process proceeded to the Oral Board section of the testing process. The oral board consisted of seven PFD and SMFR members representing Firefighters, Paramedics, Officers, Human Resources and the Firefighter Association.

Table 7

*Effects of Oral Board Assessment*

	<b>TOOK ORAL BOARD</b>	<b>PASSED ORAL BOARD</b>	<b>PERCENT PASSED</b>	<b>PERCENT OF WHITE/MALE</b>	<b>ADVERSE IMPACT</b>
WHITE	38	18	47.3%	X	X
HISPANIC	4	1	25.0%	52.8%	YES
BLACK	---	---	---	---	---
ASIAN	1	1	100.0%	211.4%	NO
AMERICAN INDIAN	1	0	0.0%	0.0%	YES
OTHER	---	---	---	---	---
NO RESPONSE	4	3	75.0%	158.5%	NO
<b>TOTAL MINORITY</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>33.3%</b>	<b>70.4%</b>	<b>YES</b>
MALE	47	22	46.8%	X	X
FEMALE	1	1	100.0%	213.6%	NO

*NOTE:* Cells containing (---) indicate that ethnic classification no longer in testing process

The data shows that the Oral Board portion of the testing process created an adverse impact on the Hispanic and American Indian ethnic classifications. Although the data is questionable at this point due to the low numbers of people involved, one important fact is evident. Other than the specialized Paramedic test, this is the first time that an adverse impact has been demonstrated for the Hispanic or American Indian ethnic groups.

The final process for PFD's 2008 hiring process was Applicant Background Checks. All applicants that successfully passed the background check were extended a job offer for the position in which they applied. The background checks were carried out by Summit Discovery

Group. The background check consisted of reference checks, application and certification verification and criminal history checks (HR Assistant Becky Sheldon, personal communication, July 7, 2008).

Table 8

*Effects of Background Checks*

	<b>TOOK CHECK</b>	<b>PASSED CHECK</b>	<b>PERCENT PASSED</b>	<b>PERCENT OF WHITE/MALE</b>	<b>ADVERSE IMPACT</b>
WHITE	17	15	88.2%	X	X
HISPANIC	1	0	0.0%	0.0%	YES
BLACK	---	---	---	---	---
ASIAN	1	1	100.0%	113.3%	NO
AMERICAN INDIAN	---	---	---	---	---
OTHER	---	---	---	---	---
NO RESPONSE	3	2	66.6%	75.5%	YES
TOTAL MINORITY	2	1	50.0%	56.6%	YES
MALE	21	17	80.9%	X	X
FEMALE	1	1	100.0%	123.6%	NO

*NOTE:* Cells containing (---) indicate that ethnic classification no longer in testing process

The Background Check adversely impacted the Hispanic and No Response classifications. The Hispanic group joins the Black, American Indian and “Others” groups as being eliminated from the 2008 PFD hiring process.

The adverse impact of the testing processes carried out after the FireTEAM test are limited due to the low number of applicants in the minority classifications. To get a more accurate assessment of the adverse impact of PFD’s testing process on the ethnic and gender groups; a table was created reflecting the impact of the overall hiring process on the ethnic classifications.

Table 9

*Overall Effect of Testing Process*

	<b>TOOK TESTING</b>	<b>PASSED TESTING</b>	<b>PERCENT PASSED</b>	<b>PERCENT OF WHITE/MALE</b>	<b>ADVERSE IMPACT</b>
WHITE	476	15	3.1%	X	X
HISPANIC	50	0	0.0%	0.0%	YES
BLACK	9	0	0.0%	0.0%	YES
ASIAN	9	1	11.1%	358.0%	NO
AMERICAN INDIAN	8	0	0.0%	0.0%	YES
OTHER	11	0	0.0%	0.0%	YES
NO RESPONSE	34	2	5.8%	187.0%	NO
<b>TOTAL MINORITY</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>35.4%</b>	<b>YES</b>
MALE	559	17	3.0%	X	X
FEMALE	38	1	2.6%	86.6%	NO

The data obtained from this table dramatically illustrates that the testing processes utilized by Parker Fire District did create an adverse impact on minority applicants. As a whole, minorities passed the testing process at a rate of only 35.4% of the passing rate of White applicants. This percentage is well below the 80% required to prove an adverse impact had not occurred. Breaking down the data further, the testing process removed the entire applicant pool of Hispanics, Blacks, American Indians and “Others”. Only one Asian and two “No Response” remain with the fifteen White applicants.

In addition, the research data confirms that an adverse impact was not created for female applicants when compared to the male applicant success rate. Females passed the testing process at a rate of 86.6% of the male passing rate. This figure is above the 80% required to substantiate an adverse impact claim.



## Discussion

Parker Fire District, in an attempt to achieve “Best in Class” status desired to have ethnically diverse Line Firefighters that accurately reflected the ethnic diversity of the communities served by PFD. The FIRE 20/20 (2007) Research Project confirmed that ethnically diverse firefighters operate safer and more efficiently at emergency and non-emergency incidents (p. 233).

To achieve PFD’s established goal of ethnic diversity, Kent (2004) believes the first step must be taken by Parker Fire District Administration. Kent states that an organization must have a change in mindset where all employees believe in the value of diversity (p. 1). Ruiz (2006) believes that diversity must be a way of life, not just a stated goal, at PFD (p. 2). Diversity will remain only a goal until the ethnic communities can look at PFD and see that diversity is celebrated (Leonard, 2001, p. 1) and the potential exists for growth and advancement for the minority applicant (Fyock, 1993, p. 34).

### *Recruiting*

The IAFF (Fox et al., 2006) Diversity Initiative titled, *Achieving and Retaining a Diverse Fire Service Workforce* outlines ten important recommendations that PFD should follow in their pursuit for ethnic diversity. Currently, the data shows that PFD only follows recommendation 4 which states, “Give specific and detailed information about the job, necessary skills, requirements, salary and benefits’ (p. 6). Following this one recommendation is not enough to show the ethnic communities that PFD values diversity. As a result, PFD’s recruiting practices for the 2008 hiring process, according to the data, fall short in attracting Hispanic, Black and Asian applicants.

The data clearly illustrates that PFD is no closer today to achieving their goal of ethnic diversity than in 2005 when Chief Daniel Qualman challenged his department heads to make Parker Fire District a “Best in Class” organization.

### *Testing*

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is charged with enforcement of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act protects applicants from employment discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, and religion. Title VII not only protects against intentional discrimination but also against recruiting and testing processes that adversely impact persons of a certain race or color (Equal, 1978, p 212). Adverse impact is defined by the EEOC as, “a substantially different rate of selection in hiring, promotion, or other employment decisions which works to the disadvantage of members of a race, sex, or ethnic group” (p. 231). According to the EEOC, adverse impact occurs when a selection rate for any race, sex, or ethnic group is less than four-fifths, or 80 percent, of the rate for the group with the highest rate of selection (p. 214).

The data obtained from the testing processes was evaluated against the adverse impact standard utilized by the EEOC. The data clearly indicates that adverse impacts did occur throughout the testing process. The data also demonstrated that PFD created an adverse impact when they adjusted the parameters of the FireTEAM test. Taken as a whole, the testing process was determined to have had an adverse impact on the minority applicants for the Line Firefighter position. Conversely, the data confirmed that the testing process did not create an adverse impact on the female applicants.

The 2008 Parker Fire Academy will consist on fourteen White males, one Asian male, two “No Response” males and one White female. Adding these new Firefighters to the current

Line Firefighters reduces the percentage of the White ethnic classification minimally. Very little or no change is found in the remaining ethnic classifications. Clearly this academy will not benefit Parker Fire District in their quest for Line Firefighter ethnic diversity to achieve “Best in Class” status.

### Recommendations

The problem addressed by this ARP was that nearly 100 percent of the line firefighter applicants who make it through the Parker Fire District (PFD) hiring process are White males. The purpose of this research paper was to evaluate PFD’s recruiting and hiring processes to determine their impact on the diversity of firefighter applicants who successfully complete the hiring process.

The applicant pool for the 2008 Line Firefighter hiring process were followed through the recruiting and testing processes to determine the impact of the processes on the individual ethnic and gender classifications. The data obtained for this ARP indicate that PFD must make several changes to the (a) mindset of the organization, (b) recruiting processes and (c) testing processes.

### *Organization*

Kent (2004) states that recruitment, to achieve a diverse workforce, requires a change in mindset by the organization. The best policies and procedures will be ineffective unless the employees have bought into and value the concept on diversity (p. 1). PFD Administration must demonstrate that diversity is more than just a goal or a policy; it must be a way of life at Parker Fire District.

PFD has a Mission Statement, Value Statement and a Vision Statement. PFD needs to create and post a Diversity Statement that can be accessed by all PFD employees, residents and visitors. Changes must be made to the PFD website and employment applications detailing

PFD's desire and commitment to achieving a diverse and inclusive workplace. In addition, pictures displayed on the PFD website and in the PFD facilities need to celebrate diversity. Pictures of ethnic and gender diversity must be added to, or replace, the predominately White male pictures. This change will be easier to facilitate with the merger between PFD and SMFR.

Finally, PFD must improve communications and interaction with civic and community leaders locally, regionally and nationally. Increased communications and interactions not only lead to improved services provided by firefighters, it also allows for better decision making and policy implementation by the Administration.

### *Recruiting*

According to Pritchard (2007), PFD should stop talking about their desire to achieve ethnic diversity and start taking simple, practical steps to achieve diversity. PFD needs to interact and communicate with the people they hope to attract by visiting schools, organizations, community events and churches. During these interactions, PFD must ask three simple questions: (a) What must we do to be most effective in our efforts to recruit professional applicants from your community, (b) What issue must we be sensitive toward to create a welcoming and inclusive workplace, (c) How do we help you to feel welcomed and accepted at PFD (p. 102).

During the 2008 hiring process, PFD performed focused recruiting efforts to attract qualified Paramedic applicants. A similar focused recruiting program needs to be developed and implemented to attract qualified minority applicants. The new recruiting program must address all ten of the recommendations outlined in the IAFF Diversity Initiative. PFD must search out and investigate how other corporations, police and fire departments, such as Milwaukee Fire Department, have achieved ethnic diversity.

PFD does an excellent job with public education and attending community events. However, the majority of these events occur in predominately White neighborhoods. PFD must make a concentrated effort to perform these activities in ethnically diverse neighborhoods. These interactions will give community leaders, family members and the youth of the community the opportunity to learn more about PFD and the firefighting profession. In addition, PFD line members will learn about the activities, perspectives and beliefs of the various cultures residing in PFD.

### *Testing*

Data obtained from the testing process illustrate that adverse impacts occurred in almost every portion of the testing process followed by PFD. The data were verified statistically with the finding that minorities passed the testing process at a rate of only 35.4% of the passing rate of White applicants. The data shows that the FireTEAM test had the greatest impact on the Asian and female applicants. In addition, certain sections of the FireTEAM test such as Mechanical and Reading impacted minorities at a much greater rate than White and male applicants. It is the recommendation of this researcher that PFD investigate available alternatives for written tests.

PFD adjusted the FireTEAM test standards to reduce the total number of applicants in the hiring process. This adjustment created an additional adverse impact to the "Other" ethnic classification by eliminating 100% of the applicants in that group. In future testing processes, PFD should refrain from adjusting the testing standards for two important reasons. First, PFD must never create an adverse impact on any ethnic or gender group. Secondly, IAFF Diversity Initiative number eight advises that PFD should be as inclusive as possible in the first stages of the testing process in order to learn more about the candidates (Fox et al., 2006, p. 8). The

adjustment to the FireTEAM standard eliminated two hundred and forty-three applicants very early in the hiring process.

In summary, Parker Fire District established a goal to have a line workforce that accurately reflected the ethnic composition of the communities they served. By establishing this goal in 2005, the PFD Operations Division believed that they could provide a better service to the citizens and, as a result, move closer to becoming a “Best in Class” organization. However, since 2005, little or no progress has been made toward achieving this goal. PFD remains a department composed of 96% White and 94% male line members. The recently completed hiring process will provide only minimal adjustments to the percentages of Whites and males.

To achieve their goal, PFD must first look internally at the current employees. PFD must ensure that diversity and inclusiveness are more than just a policy or a statement in a book. Diversity must be a mindset valued by all employees of Parker Fire District.

Next, to recruit applicants from the ethnic communities, the perspective applicant must see that PFD values diversity. This can be accomplished through messages and pictures on the PFD website and facilities; visits by Line Firefighters to community events and public education demonstrations; and Administration personnel visits to Homeowner Association meetings and civic events.

Finally, PFD must review and make adjustments to the Line Firefighter testing process. All adverse impacts to minority groups must be eliminated from the testing process unless it can be shown to be a business necessity. Adverse impacts can be reduced or eliminated by evaluating other testing options or processes and refraining from making adjustments to testing standards. PFD should also investigate other corporations and public safety organizations who have achieved the same goal of ethnic diversity.

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## Appendix A

## Ethnic and Gender Survey for Current Line Firefighters

**Ethnic and Gender Survey:**

This survey seeks very basic ethnic and gender information from each line employee. This information will be used by Lt Randy Whipple for his Executive Fire Officer Program applied research paper. This survey and its answers will be treated in a confidential manner and will be used solely for this research project. **The survey results will be compiled in a research paper that will be used by Parker Fire District to improve future hiring practices.** Completing this survey is entirely voluntary.

**ETHNIC BACKGROUND:** Please review all categories listed below. Determine the category which you believe best represents your ethnic background. Check one category only.

- White (Not Hispanic) - Person of European, Middle Eastern or similar descent
- Black (Not Hispanic) - Person of Black African descent
- Hispanic – Person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or Spanish descent
- Asian – Person of Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Thai or similar descent
- Pacific Islander – Person of Hawaiian, Samoan, Polynesian or similar descent
- Native American – Person of American Indian, Eskimo or similar descent
- Filipino – Person of Filipino descent
- Other – Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**GENDER:**

- Male
- Female

## Appendix B

## Ethnic Survey for Line Firefighter Applicants

**Ethnic Survey:**

The attached survey seeks very basic ethnic information from each applicant. This information will be used by one of our employees for his Executive Fire Officer Program applied research paper. This survey and its answers will be treated in a confidential manner and will be used solely for this research project. **The survey will be detached from the application during the initial processing of your application and will not be used in any way in the employment process.** While completing this survey is entirely voluntary, your response will assist Parker Fire District with improving their future hiring practices.

**ETHNIC BACKGROUND:** Please review all categories listed below. Determine the category which you believe best represents your ethnic background. Check one category only.

- White (Not Hispanic) - Person of European, Middle Eastern or similar descent
- Black (Not Hispanic) - Person of Black African descent
- Hispanic – Person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or Spanish descent
- Asian – Person of Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Thai or similar descent
- Pacific Islander – Person of Hawaiian, Samoan, Polynesian or similar descent
- Native American – Person of American Indian, Eskimo or similar descent
- Filipino – Person of Filipino descent
- Other – Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix C  
Sample Recruiting Postcard

**FIREFIGHTERS & PARAMEDICS WANTED!!!!**

January 7, 2008

Dear Potential Candidate:

Parker Fire District is beginning a hiring process for our Fall 2008 Academy. We are looking for full-time Firefighters and Paramedic/Firefighters in addition to part-time Apprentice Firefighters. We offer a very competitive wage and benefit package. If you are Interested in applying with Parker Fire, please visit our website at [www.parkerfire.org](http://www.parkerfire.org) to review the detailed job posting and to download an application. The deadline to apply is Thursday, February 7, 2008.

Sincerely,

Parker Fire Human Resources