

**From:** [Cole-Tindall, Patti](#)  
**To:** [dustin](#)  
**Cc:** [Constantine, Dow](#); [Abrams, Whitney](#); [Pedersen, Megan](#); [Alessi, Sasha](#)  
**Subject:** RE: RECONSIDERATION of FIU reorganization  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 1, 2024 3:29:30 PM

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Dustin,

I am in receipt of your email. I will view this information and determine the appropriate next steps for the King County Sheriff's Office. You can expect something back from me within the next 7 days.

Patti

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**From:** Dustin Frederick <dustin@local519.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, September 30, 2024 1:42 PM  
**To:** Cole-Tindall, Patti <Patti.Cole-Tindall@kingcounty.gov>  
**Cc:** Constantine, Dow <Dow.Constantine@kingcounty.gov>; Abrams, Whitney <Whitney.Abrams@kingcounty.gov>; Pedersen, Megan <Megan.Pedersen@kingcounty.gov>; Alessi, Sasha <Sasha.Alessi@kingcounty.gov>  
**Subject:** RECONSIDERATION of FIU reorganization

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Dear Sheriff Cole-Tindall---I am respectfully asking you to reconsider your decision to --- disarm the FIU investigators, modify their special commission, and remove their investigation/arrest authority.

**BACKGROUND----**After approximately five months of experience under this alleged "improved process" the following facts have become evident.

- On October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2007, then Council member Dow Constantine sponsored the Ordinance that transferred the Fire Investigation Unit from the Department of Development and Environmental Services to the Sheriff's Office. The Ordinance passed 8 to 0 with one member excused.
- In a well-reasoned explanation of the benefits of the proposed transfer, the Ordinance outlined the duties and responsibilities of the FIU.
- For 17 years from October 2007 to September 30<sup>th</sup> the Fire Investigators assigned to the Fire Investigation Unit (FIU) have conducted successful fire investigation activities pursuant to the Ordinance.
- Weapons have only been drawn twice in those 17 years. There have been no incidents alleging use of force violations.

Fire Investigators have been fully trained on the use of firearms ---identical to the training received by fully commissioned Deputies.

- Engrossed Second Substitute Bill 5051 passed by the legislature changed the ability to receive firearms training from the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Center (CJTC) for newly hired Fire Investigators.
- However, under that legislation the Sheriff retained the authority to provide the training “in house” and to continue the provisions of their existing “special commission” consistent with the original 2007 Ordinance sponsored by Dow Constantine.
- In March 2022, an “in house” training program was created for the KCSO that would satisfy all state requirements.

**SAFETY ISSUES----**Removing firearms from the Fire Investigators has created significant safety issues for both Investigators and Deputies with no viable solutions.

- The proposed plan to utilize Deputies to keep Investigators safe while processing a fire scene is not viable because there is a shortage of Deputies.
- There have been numerous fire scenes over the last five months where Deputies who have been assigned to a fire scene to protect Fire Investigators---who are no longer armed--- have either not responded or left before the scene was secure.
- Deputies assigned to protect Fire Investigators are now exposed to extremely hazardous materials for which they are not properly protected.
- Deputy uniforms that are taken home for cleaning can expose family members to the hazardous material.

**LEGAL ISSUES----**changing the working conditions for the FIU has created several legal issues.

- PSEU will file an Unfair Labor Practice charge against the County for “skimming” bargaining unit duties.
- Obligations for FIU services that are promised to contract cities may be unfulfilled which will create issues for the County and the KCSO

**SOLUTION----**please reconsider your decision to remove firearms from FIU Investigators and restore their duties as described in the 2007 Ordinance sponsored by then Council member Dow Constantine. Implement the "in house" training syllabus created in 2022 that will meet any/all obligations under E2SSB 5051.

Implementing the above solution will resolve all current safety, legal and operational issues that have evolved due to the change in working conditions within the FIU.

Respectfully,

Dustin Frederick