OFFICE OF SENATOR
Eulogio Shawn Gumataotao

38th Guam Legislature | *I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan*

November 5, 2026

Daren D. Burrier
Fire Chief
Guam Fire Department
P.O. Box 2950
Hagåtña, Guam 96932

Dear Chief Burrier:

Hafa Adai! The Bureau of Budget and Management Research transmitted the Consolidated Revenue/Expenditure Report (CRER) for the period ending September 30, 2026 to the Speaker of the Guam Legislature on October 22, 2026. It closes Fiscal Year 2026, and the Guam Fire Department's year-end position requires explanation to this Committee.

The report shows your operations account appropriated at $38,514,050, expended at $39,079,341, and encumbered at a further $360,242 — a negative balance of $925,534. Your Firefighter Recruitment Cycle shows $1,392,942 appropriated against $712,822 expended, leaving $680,120 — 48.8% of that appropriation — unspent at the close of the fiscal year.

Two details sharpen the question. First, September was not an expensive month for your Department. You spent $2,649,341 in September against a running monthly average of $3,311,818 through August — roughly twenty percent below your own pace — and still finished negative. That tells me the shortfall was structural and present well before the final month. Second, the Department entered deficiency on operations while leaving nearly half of its recruitment appropriation unobligated.

The reading available to this Committee on the face of the report is that the Department paid overtime it could not afford rather than hire the firefighters this Legislature funded it to hire. If that reading is wrong, I respectfully want your explanation of the correction in writing.

I respectfully request a written response to the following by Nov 20, 2026:

1. Total FY 2026 overtime expenditures for the Department, by month, and the portion attributable to minimum-staffing requirements.

2. Authorized, funded, and filled firefighter positions as of October 1, 2025 and September 30, 2026, with the vacancy rate at each date and as of the date of your response. Please state separately the figures for firefighters and other positions in the Department.

3. For the Firefighter Recruitment Cycle: the number of recruits funded, the number who entered the academy, the number who graduated, and the number on shift today. Please explain why $680,120 went unobligated.

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4. The total FY 2026 deficiency on operations and the FY 2027 appropriation line against which it is being used.

5. Whether the Department requested a transfer, reprogramming, or supplemental authorization during FY 2026 from the Office of the Governor of Guam; if so, to whom, on what date, and with what result.

6. For the Fire, Life and Medical Emergency Fund: FY 2026 collections closed at $1,014,456 against $719,303 in FY 2025, with ambulance service revenue rising from $534,562 to $826,690. Please state whether that increase reflects transport volume, a billing or rate change, or a collections catch-up, and whether the Department expects it to recur in FY 2027. The report shows no ambulance revenue collected in September 2026 against $47,804 in September 2025 — please account for that month.

7. Current apparatus status: units in service, units out of service, and the oldest ambulance and engine in the active fleet.

The report is submitted in draft form and subject to internal audit. If any figure above is incorrect, state so plainly and provide the corrected number.

GFD and this Committee are both aware that the Department did not spend $4,873,590 of its $37,981,307 FY 2025 General Fund Appropriation as of the final day of the fiscal year, according to the CRER for the period ending September 30, 2025. Although I proposed through Bill 211-38 to authorize GFD and other public safety agencies to access unexpended prior year appropriations, you cautioned in January 2026 against moving forward with the measure recognizing that your budgeting approach is grounded in discipline, transparency, and accuracy. If the CRER for the period ending September 30, 2026 is accurate, perhaps GFD could have used a small portion of its unexpended FY 2025 General Fund appropriation to cover the $245k shortfall in FY 2026.

Chief, I write to you what I will say publicly. Across all Fire Department lines this Legislature appropriated $39,906,992 and the Department consumed $40,152,406 — a net miss of $245,414, roughly six-tenths of one percent. That is close to right, and I do not intend to let anyone characterize FY 2026 as a year in which the Legislature shortchanged this Department. But a Department that runs an operating deficiency while half its recruitment money sits idle has an allocation problem this Committee needs to understand, and I would rather understand it from you than read about it.

Thanks for your cooperation and responses in advance.

Sincerely,

SHAWN GUMATAOTAO
Chairman, Committee on Public Safety, Emergency Management, and Guam National Guard

cc: The Honorable Frank F. Blas, Jr., Speaker, Guam Legislature
Lester L. Carlson, Jr.-Director, Bureau of Budget and Management Research
Edward M. Birn-Director, Department of Administration