Guest Director Letter

MAKE FIRE PREVENTION EDUCATION BETTER THAN EVER

Fire prevention education spurs our fire protection community into a frenzy of action! We visit schools, sponsor poster contests, speak at service club luncheons, hold open houses, display our finest equipment and rolling stock, and diminish our supply of home fire safety brochures and junior fire marshal badges. There is no limit to the creative ways we present fire and life safety concepts to the residents of the communities we serve. Many thanks to every fire and life safety educator!

As you prepare for educational activities, keep in mind three tips to help ensure your fire and life safety messages, materials, and programs are better than ever.

TEACH BY EXAMPLE
Children and adults WATCH and learn by what WE do. Our attitudes and actions may be more important than our words. Children learn by watching adults and modeling the adult behavior. It may be tempting to have clowns run as if their clothes are on fire, and it would seem like a joke to us because it is so illogical and ridiculous. Young children, however, do not know the difference between real and pretend. Showing the wrong behavior is very risky for all children. They may remember the wrong behavior and never remember or use the RIGHT behavior. Children are mimics, and they learn through watching YOU and everything you do. Since children and adults WATCH what we do, it is important to model the right behaviors:

- Use the crosswalk and look both ways before you cross the street.
- Make sure displays and equipment do not block exits.
- Ensure electrical cords are not a trip hazard.
- Follow the school or building policy concerning visitor registration.
- Wear a helmet when you ride your bike.
- Use your seat belt.
- Be prepared to tell about your home smoke alarm.
- Tell the story of practicing your home escape plan.

ADULTS CANNOT BE SCARED INTO PREVENTING OR PREPARING
It is important not to try to frighten adults into action as part of our fire and injury prevention programs. A fire, weather disaster, or medical emergency are all FRIGHTENING. When adults are scared they immediately regress into denial, which means NO ACTION to prepare or prevent. We must simply tell adults WHAT TO DO. Images and descriptions of fire and disasters are NOT motivating. Many times fire service personnel believe that frightening illustrations will grab people’s attention and motivate adults to be safer. This is NOT true.

People are much more likely to prepare for an emergency, such as stocking a home disaster kit or testing their smoke alarms, if they are given the facts without being exposed to the reality of the emergency. Adults just want to know what to do without being scared. Our very nature causes all of us to think that “it won’t happen to me.” This natural tendency, called denial, intensifies when people are frightened, and, as a result, they take no action to prepare for or prevent an emergency.

A SCARED CHILD CANNOT LEARN
A scared child cannot listen or learn. This concept is important for all fire and life safety educators to understand. DO NOT scare children! DO NOT frighten children with explicit stories about home fires or show images of burned clothing, toys, or household items. DO NOT talk about burned pets.

Loud noises are very frightening to children. Scary noises include the sound of a smoke alarm, the bell ringing on an SCBA when the bottle is turned on, and sirens. If you are going

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to test a smoke alarm or make any other loud noise, prepare the children. Let them know to expect a loud noise, and encourage them to cover their ears or stand close to the teacher to get ready for the loud sound.

There is one other very common fear for children—a firefighter wearing protective clothing and breathing apparatus. Firefighters must never enter a classroom or approach children dressed in bunker gear. A firefighter should always don personal protective equipment while the children watch, step by step, each piece at a time, including the air pack, face piece, and regulator. The key concept is for children to understand that the firefighter looks and sounds different in all the gear, but is still the same firefighter who is a helper and friend.

There are important language components in this presentation as well. The firefighters should tell the children they are there to “Help you” not to “Get you.” It is important NOT to use phrases such as: “Don’t be afraid,” “The firefighter is not scary,” “There is nothing to be frightened about,” or “Don’t hide from the firefighter.” Once a firefighter is fully dressed in the PPE and SCBA, the firefighter should lower to a crawl position and remain very still. The firefighter should let the children step forward and never crawl toward the children. Encourage the children to touch the firefighter, and constantly assure the children that this is the same firefighter as before, but with a different look. Some children will not want to touch the firefighter or move any closer. They can be encouraged to wave to the firefighter, and the firefighter can wave back. Do not force a child to take part. Children will approach the firefighter at their own pace and when they feel comfortable. Remember, young children should not try on a firefighter’s helmet. The helmet is only for the firefighter to wear. The weight of the helmet could cause a neck injury, and the experience is not worth the risk.

Feel proud of the work you do teaching and promoting fire and life safety. It is important to every child and adult you meet. Best wishes for a fun and effective fire and life safety program!

Nancy Trench
Assistant Director
Fire Protection Publications

Abstract

Intermediate Treatment of Oily Wastewater from Fire Fighter Training Exercises

Maple Ridge Fire and Safety Training Centre
Justice Institute of BC

By Harlan G. Kelly, P.Eng., V.P., Technology, Dayton & Knight Ltd., North Vancouver, BC, Canada; and Kirby Mohr, President, Mohr Separations Research, Inc., Jenks, OK

The Justice Institute of British Columbia (JIBC) operates a Fire and Safety Training Centre located in Maple Ridge, British Columbia. The training centre utilizes two water treatment systems designated as “Class A” and “Class B.” The Class A system treats wastewater generated from training exercises involving wood-burning fires and appears to be performing adequately. The Class B system treats wastewater associated with fuel-related fire training exercises. Waste streams in the Class B system typically include the carryover of aqueous film-forming foams (AFFF), Purple K dry chemical powder, soot, and aviation-grade fire training fuel. Wastewater from both systems is reclaimed and reused in training exercises.

The JIBC has completed the intermediate upgrade of the Class B wastewater treatment system. The objectives of the upgrade were to improve the quality of the reclaimed water and eliminate potential health concerns related to its use in training exercises.

Dayton & Knight studied options for improving the treatment of the oily wastewater and designed the new facilities. The completed design included enlarging existing influent tanks to increase hydraulic retention time; installing a coalescing plate-type oily water separator provided by Mohr Separations Research, Inc. to enhance hydrocarbon separation; and other improvements.

The Class B system originally was constructed in 1983 and upgraded in 2001. The former treatment system included gravity separation and mechanical removal of unburned hydrocarbon fuel; settling; and filtration with granular activated carbon (GAC) filters to remove suspended solids. The majority of the unburned fuel was removed and processed to a quality acceptable for reuse in training exercises.

The older system did not remove all of the contaminants from the water satisfactorily, and some were carrying over into the recycled water used for training exercises. Students complained of recycled water odors and skin irritations. These concerns are believed to be linked to the carryover and presence of the wastewater constituents listed previously. Other fire-fighting training facilities with similar treatment works have indicated comparable issues arising from the use of recycled wastewater.

This design brief includes a review of current technologies used to treat wastewater generated from similar training facilities. Previous investigations undertaken by others have determined that AFFF causes fuel to emulsify in the wastewater, making separation of the fuel from the wastewater considerably more difficult. A standard oil/water separator typically is not effective for separating emulsifications without extensive detention time. The Maple Ridge Training Centre recently switched from the use of AFFF to Simufoam.

Dayton & Knight investigated other fire-fighting training facilities to identify the different approaches currently used to treat associatated wastewater and to help select equipment for an improved process.
It is widely recognized throughout the fire service that leadership greatly influences attitudes toward safe behaviors—particularly at the company or station level. The Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives (FLSI) program was founded on the belief that a safer fire service will come from cultural change brought about by wide dissemination of training on safe workplace practices.

The wildland community is a long-standing proponent of safety through effective leadership training. The National Wildfire Coordinating Group developed the L-380 course and the entire L-sequence on fire service leadership. The program is a model for fire service organizations interested in cultural change at the company officer level. The Virginia Fire Chiefs Association (VFCA) recently applied and expanded this model at the first-ever Safety Through Leadership (STL) Academy.

A coalition of state and national fire service organizations combined efforts to conduct the academy at the University of Richmond (VA), June 16-20, 2007. Via a Fire Act Grant, the FLSI program underwrote the academy to improve the leadership skills of company officers, with a focus on encouraging a culture of safety in their respective departments.

“The Safety Through Leadership Academy has been identified by the Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives program as a way to fulfill the need for providing company officers with the skills and knowledge to perform their critical role as first-line supervisor safely and effectively,” said Chief Richard Anderson, FLSI director. The Safety Through Leadership Academy embodies the 16 firefighter life safety initiatives, and focuses on safety and making “Everyone Goes Home” part of the primary mission. Anderson commented, “It is our vision (that) training organizations across the country will take the program and use it in their leadership program.”

More than 120 fire officers from across the state applied for the 34 seats available exclusively for Virginia students. Six others were selected from around the country in hopes that they would become program ambassadors. Virginia participants represented all geographic areas of the state, including metropolitan areas, rural districts, and suburban communities. The students came from career, volunteer, and combination fire departments.

Chief Cecil “Buddy” Martinette, former Lynchburg, VA, FD fire chief, kicked off the academy with an intensive day of leadership training. Martinette, currently Hanover County, VA, assistant county administrator, gave an excellent overview of leadership dynamics and a tutorial on how fire departments function in the real world of local politics. All leadership examples were tailored to fire department situations at the company level. Training Chief Tim Sendelbach assisted throughout the program.

Over the next three days, students heard from some of the most progressive leaders and safety proponents in the US fire service. These included District Chief John Sullivan, Worcester, MA, who gave a seminar on the Worcester Cold Storage Fire; Battalion Chief John Salka, FDNY, who spoke on large-scale applications of safety management systems; and Assistant Chief Paul LeSage, who introduced the concept of crew resource management. Evening presentations reinforced the day’s learning. Cathy Hedrick of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation gave a poignant presentation on the personal experience of line-of-duty death. Her son, Kenny, died fighting a house fire in 1992.

The implementation of the 16 initiatives was an ever-present theme throughout the academy. The Charleston tragedy of June 19 occurred while the program was in session. The unspeakable event reinforced participants’ commitment to eliminating preventable firefighter injuries and deaths. Many of the Virginia students still were grieving the loss of Firefighter Kyle Wilson, Prince William County Department of Fire and Rescue, who died in May 2007 while searching for victims at a house fire. During the entire academy, at every event, a chair was reserved for Kyle—the missing man from Virginia.

Chief Chris Eudailey, VFCA president, said, “Our goal is to give front-line managers the leadership tools they need in order to make a real difference.” He added, “We want them to go back to their communities and spread what they have learned. We want them to save (firefighter) lives through leadership.”

At the academy’s conclusion, a formal graduation ceremony included leaders from across the state of Virginia, major fire service organizations, and recently appointed US Fire Administrator Greg Cade. During the ceremony, students were required to describe their personal commitment to safety and how the commitment will affect the men and women whose safety they will influence greatly.

The Everyone Goes Home Program is seeking fire service leaders interested in developing the STL train-the-trainer program. In addition, company officers who are certified instructors and want to attend train-the-trainer sessions should e-mail info@everyonegoeshome.com with STL TTT in the subject line.

Dr. JoEllen Kelly is program development manager for the Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives program and project manager for the Safety Through Leadership Program.
By Chief Dennis Compton

Pre-Hospital Emergency Medical Care . . .
A Fire Service Tradition

The fire service has a long-standing tradition of providing pre-hospital emergency medical care throughout the nation. As far back as the 1920s, some fire departments carried resuscitation equipment on their fire trucks. The Miami, FL, Fire Rescue Department put its first rescue truck in service in 1939 to offer basic first aid for citizens. Then there were Rescue 51 Paramedics John Gage and Roy DeSoto, the stars of the popular television series in the early 1970s that brought fire-service-based EMS into the homes of millions of people in America.

A snapshot of current times indicates that more than 90 percent of the career, combination, and volunteer fire departments in the US provide some level of EMS response. EMS has evolved into a critical service delivery responsibility of a fire department...and arguably the most popular service with our customers. We should celebrate fire service leaders who had the foresight and vision to see how our fire-protection-based deployment model and exceptional personnel could form the template for pre-hospital 9-1-1 emergency care deployment, response, and service delivery.

No single model describes the “best” fire-service-based EMS configuration. In fact, fire-service-based EMS systems are structured in several ways. Three models are most common:

• Cross-trained multi-role firefighters who provide patient care and transport
• Fire department employees who are not cross-trained fire suppression personnel, but who accompany the firefighters to provide patient care and transport
• Cross-trained multi-role firefighters who provide patient care, but with patient transport provided by private ambulance through contractual agreement. This option is most effective when the fire department administers and monitors the performance requirements within the transport agreement

No matter what the configuration, the foundation is the use of fire service facilities, apparatus, equipment, and highly capable personnel to provide emergency medical services to the public in time of need. There is no EMS system better deployed for rapid, multi-faceted response than a fire-service-based system. No system is more capable of simultaneously securing a scene; mitigating the hazard; and triaging, extricating, treating, decontaminating (if necessary), and transporting the patients to an appropriate medical facility than the fire-service-based EMS model. The model also provides a significant return on public dollars already invested in the nation’s fire departments.

As with everything we do, the fire service cannot be satisfied with the current level of EMS effectiveness. We must continue to embrace and improve this aspect of our work, as well as better communicate the role of the fire service as the most common and effective EMS provider. Therefore, it is critical that the fire service further enhance policy-maker and public understanding concerning fire-service-based EMS systems. Some of the ways this can be achieved include:

• Increase the understanding within the federal and state governments that fire department grant funds given to improve deployment, staffing, equipment, and response to fires also directly and positively affect EMS response and service delivery in almost every community in America.
• Ensure that the fire service is represented whenever and wherever policy decisions are made that relate to EMS issues, including government, the medical community, the public health community, and others.
• Collect and use data that will continue to define the effectiveness of the fire-service-based EMS system, and continually identify areas where improvement and change are needed.
• Implement and staff progressive all-risk public education programs in our fire departments that integrate fire safety and other unintentional injury prevention messages. This effort is the basis of an EMS injury prevention program and a critical component of our safety mission.
• Integrate EMS definitively and effectively into the mission statements of fire departments and the United States Fire Administration, as well as achieving further integration into the curriculum at the National Fire Academy.
• Encourage all fire service professional and membership organizations to communicate clearly to their constituents and members the critical role of fire-service-based EMS within fire department service delivery systems.

We should take the time to step back and celebrate the long-standing tradition that the fire service has established through the integration of pre-hospital 9-1-1 emergency medical response into our service delivery systems...then we should continually take advantage of opportunities to improve fire-service-based EMS.

The late Jim Page and several others (before and after him) dedicated their lives to making fire-service-based EMS the model of choice in our nation. They saw the value of this model as a quality-of-life issue in our society...and that is exactly what fire-service-based EMS has become. Many lives are saved, and many others positively impacted everyday, through emergency medical services delivered throughout our nation by dedicated and capable members of fire departments. We should all be proud of that tradition, and tell the incredible story of fire-service-based EMS every chance we get.

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The Face of Validation:
Lt. Beverley Walker

IFSTA would like to recognize Lt. Beverley Walker, a fire safety educator with the Hall County Fire Department in Gainesville, GA, and member of the IFSTA Fire and Life Safety Educator validation committee. Beverley recently received the Georgia State Firefighters Association 2007 Fire Educator of the Year award during the Georgia State Firefighters Association annual conference. Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue will acknowledge Beverley and her achievements during the Firefighters Recognition Day ceremonies at the Georgia State Capitol in February 2008.

Hall County FD’s Captain Scott Cagle nominated Beverley. He said, “There are no other educators in Georgia—and maybe the nation—like Lt. Beverley Walker. We are honored and privileged to have her in our ranks here. I am sure she could obtain a job anywhere she chose but has made the decision to be a part of our team and help accomplish our mission. Beverley is known all over this region for her work in fire and life safety, and her dedication shows it. You can tell this is not a ‘job’ for Lt. Walker but a lifestyle.”

Cagle continued, “Beverley has dedicated her life to saving others, not by running into burning houses, but by educating them not to have fires in the first place. I sit back and wonder sometimes, over her years in educating citizens, how many lives has she saved?” Cagle is pleased that she continues to be recognized for her commitment. Beverley also was named Staff Officer of the Year for the Hall County Fire Services for 2007.

“I can honestly say that Beverley does not do this for the awards,” Cagle said. “She truly does not want to see anyone suffer the power of fire. Georgia is safer by having Lt. Beverley Walker working to reduce fires and fire-related injuries.” Beverley’s other honors include the Safe Kids Award for her volunteer work in raising safety awareness as a passenger safety technician and assisting with proper bicycle helmet fittings, among other activities.

Safe Kids Georgia advocates safety awareness through community partnerships and recognized Beverley’s dedication to safety though her work with parents and children. She has taken an active role in community events concerning injury prevention for more than 17 years and has helped the state training academy with fire and life safety curriculum for many years. Beverley, who originally wanted to be a schoolteacher, reported she feels she has the best of both worlds as a fire and life safety educator. Her job allows her to teach, but on a greater scale, covering issues that immediately impact children and families.

Beverley measures her success in feedback from grateful school officials and parents. One mother approached her after attending a passenger safety class. The woman had experienced a serious car accident that could have ended in disaster had she not learned how to install her baby’s car seat properly two weeks before at one of Beverley’s classes. “We both hugged each other and cried in the middle of Wal-Mart,” Beverley said, adding that such stories motivate her to continue her quest for safety awareness by using sound educational techniques.

Ed Kirtley, IFSTA curriculum projects coordinator, commented, “When people ask us what sets IFSTA apart from the competition, Beverley is a fine example of the difference.” He added, “There are those, like Beverley, who lead our profession by making contributions to IFSTA that fulfill our mission to be an international leader in the fire and emergency services. Customers who purchase our manuals can be confident that they are receiving the best information and practices in the business.”

A group of state fire training directors formed IFSTA in 1934 with the mission to develop and validate high-quality, comprehensive training materials for the fire service. Since its inception, IFSTA has worked with FPP at OSU to produce and distribute materials following their approval by the assigned IFSTA committee. FPP is an auxiliary enterprise of the College of Engineering, Architecture, and Technology at OSU in Stillwater, OK.
IFSTA and FPP News Briefs

Home Safety Council Features Fire Safety Solutions for People with Disabilities

This summer, the Home Safety Council Network website highlighted the research of Nancy J. Trench, assistant director for OSU FPP and FPP director of research. The more than 5,000 members of the site’s Expert Network were shown the results of the FPP and Oklahoma ABLE Tech fire safety grant project, Fire Safety Solutions for Oklahomans With Disabilities. Nancy’s research demonstrated that the disabled population is at greater risk for fire and burn injury and death. “These populations are more vulnerable because they may not receive early warning or have egress capability to take lifesaving action quick enough to protect themselves from fire,” Nancy said. For more information about the project and for recommendations on effective fire and life safety programs for people with disabilities, visit www.homesafetycouncil.org/expert_network/en_bljul07_w001.aspx.

New Board Officers for Home Safety Council include

IFSTA Board Member

Newly Elected Officials Will Strengthen the Nonprofit’s National Leadership

WASHINGTON, DC – The national nonprofit Home Safety Council (HSC) has announced new leadership for its board of directors. Newly appointed are Chief Dennis Compton, chair; Marshall A. Croom, vice chair; and Walter W. Beckly II, secretary-treasurer. The officers will serve two-year terms.

“This diverse team brings valuable experience, injury-prevention knowledge, business acumen, and leadership skills to HSC’s board,” Home Safety Council President Meri-K Appy said. “We welcome the opportunity to advance our mission with the benefit of their wise counsel and oversight.”

Chief Dennis Compton, of IFSTA and FPP at OSU, has more than 35 years of fire service, training, and leadership experience. The former Mesa, AZ, fire chief is an author and respected advisor in the fire service and emergency management fields. Dennis is vice chair of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Board of Directors and a member of the George Washington University Homeland Security Policy Institute’s Steering Committee.

The HSC is the only national nonprofit organization solely dedicated to preventing home-related injuries that result in nearly 20,000 deaths and 21 million medical visits on average each year. Through national programs, partnerships, and the support of volunteers, HSC educates people of all ages to be safer in and around their homes. The HSC is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization located in Washington, DC.

Tonya Hoover Named Assistant State Fire Marshal in California

IFSTA Committee Member Achieves High Rank

California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger announced recently that the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL Fire) in California has appointed Tonya Hoover, member of the IFSTA Building Construction Committee, as assistant state fire marshal. Tonya is an OSU graduate with an AS degree in Fire Protection and Safety Engineering Technology, and a BS in Technical Education specializing in Fire Protection and Safety Engineering Technology. She holds an MBA from the University of Phoenix.

Tonya began her career at age 14 as a “junior” volunteer firefighter in Pennsylvania. Since 1998, she has served as fire marshal within the 63-square-mile Moraga-Orinda Fire District, with responsibility for all fire prevention activities. Previous assignments include serving as deputy fire marshal at the University of California at Berkeley from 1990 to 1998, and fire inspector for the Riverview Fire Protection District and the Dublin San Ramon Services District. Tonya was sworn into her new statewide position on September 4, 2007, and is now responsible for state fire training, state regulations, pipeline safety, and code implementation.

UK Journal Reviews IFSTA Aircraft Manual

Favorable Review Strengthens IFSTA’s UK Presence

On behalf of the UK Civil Aviation Authority’s Safety Regulation Group, Owen Healy and Simon Webb reviewed IFSTA’s Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (4th ed.) manual in the June issue of Fire Prevention Fire Engineers Journal. Healy and Webb said the book was extremely well written and illustrated, and that it was of particular use to fire fighting/rescue personnel who are content that it is based upon NFPA guidance and practice. They commended the continuous validation process of IFSTA manuals and encouraged their translation for the benefit of the International Civil Aviation Organisation.

Where in the World is IFSTA?

Mexican Charity Supplies Spanish Essentials of Fire Fighting Manual for Training School

El Mundo para Puerto Morelos, a Mexican-based charity that helps schools, clinics, and emergency services in Puerto Morelos, recently supplied local firefighters with the Spanish version of Essentials of Fire Fighting manuals for training purposes. Catriona Brown, administrator of El Mundo, worked with the Cancun Fire Service to coordinate fire training in August. Local firefighters attended classes in rescue, CPR, first aid, and hazardous materials.

“The bomberos were delighted and relieved to receive the manuals that were so graciously donated,” Brown said. “The fire service here is in dire straits because of severe training and equipment shortages.” The training comes on the heels of a tragedy earlier this year when two firefighters died in a shopping center fire. The men, who were not wearing proper breathing apparatus, were overcome with fumes when they entered a building where the roof collapsed. Brown observed that the deaths could have been avoided with the proper training.

“Everything we can do to prepare them in any way is lifesaving to these firefighters and, of course, to the community,” Brown commented. “They are keen to learn, and we are doing all we can to help. We all thank the IFSTA/FPP organization — you are making a big difference here!”

Tonya Hoover

Favorable Review Strengthens IFSTA’s UK Presence
Abstract

Chosen Process Includes Change in Fire Fighting Chemicals and Treatment System

Dayton & Knight Ltd. recommended switching from the Chemguard Simufoam to a non-emulsifying, self-degrading product such as MicroBlaze-Out™. The firm recommended testing the change in fire-suppression material on a pilot-scale basis to determine whether the change would improve treatment. A larger influent tank was suggested to allow an increase in the initial detention time for oil separation.

A special coalescing plate module system from Mohr Separations Research, Inc. of Oklahoma was recommended to enhance separation. This portion of the design also included merging two of the upstream tanks to create a larger tank for solids settling and provide a sump for solids accumulation. A flocculation and settling system was recommended for removing suspended solids downstream from the oil separation tank.

The photo shows the coalescing system before it was installed in the separator pit. The system consists of an aluminum frame with UV-protected black coalescing plate modules. A solids collection trough is located under the coalescing plate modules and has doors that may be opened from outside the pit for safety and ease of cleaning.

The paper provides a review of the program objectives, discusses the approaches used in the selection of treatment solutions, and offers a general overview of the current project status and future additions. Site and equipment drawings and photo images are included.

Kirby Mohr has a BS, Chemical Engineering, from Iowa State University, and an MS in Environmental Engineering from Oklahoma State University. He is a registered professional engineer in Texas. Mohr has been involved in design of systems for separation of hydrocarbons and water for more than 20 years and has experience in engineering, process safety studies, startups, and operations in refineries, gas processing facilities, and specialty chemical plants, in addition to design of equipment for production facilities, refineries, and chemical plants. Mohr has provided consulting engineering for OSU Fire Service Training in Stillwater, OK, and for other fire training schools.

To view this article in its entirety, please go to www.ifsta.org and click on “Articles” under the Speaking of Fire link on the left side of the page.

IFSTA Elects New Executive Board Members

IFSTA held its 2007 Executive Board election at the 74th Annual IFSTA Validation Conference in Tulsa, OK, on July 10, 2007. Three incumbent members were reelected: Dennis Compton, fire chief (ret.) Mesa, AZ, FD; Frank Cotton, battalion chief, Memphis, TN, FD; and Wes Kitchel, captain, Santa Rosa, CA, FD. Also reappointed for an additional three-year term was Chief David Daniels of the Renton, WA, FD. Chief Daniels represents the IAFSC Safety, Health, and Survival Section on the IFSTA board.

Fire Chief Stephen Ashbrock of the Madeira & Indian Hills Joint FD in Cincinnati, OH, rejoined the board after serving two terms from 1998 to 2004. He began his fire service career as a firefighter-paramedic with the Reading, OH, FD in 1978. He became chief of that department before moving to Madeira & Indian Hills in 1999. Steve holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Cincinnati and also is a graduate of the NFA Executive Fire Officer program. He has served on numerous regional and state fire service committees in Ohio. Steve has participated as a member of numerous IFSTA manual validation committees, including committees for the 4th and 5th editions of Essentials of Fire Fighting.

The IFSTA Executive Board also voted unanimously to reappoint Connecticut State Fire Administrator Jeff Morrissette to a second three-year term as executive board chair. Jeff is a long-time IFSTA participant and has served multiple elected terms on the IFSTA Executive Board.

Guest Editorial

Chief Dennis Compton is a well known speaker and the author of several books, including the When In Doubt, Lead! series, Mental Aspects of Performance for Firefighters and Fire Officers, as well as many other articles and publications. He also is co-editor of the current edition of the ICMA textbook Managing Fire and Rescue Services. He is an advocate and executive advisor for the fire service and other homeland security organizations.

Dennis was fire chief in Mesa, AZ, for five years and assistant fire chief in the Phoenix, AZ, FD, for 27 years. He is past chair of the IFSTA Executive Board and the Congressional Fire Services Institute’s National Advisory Committee. Dennis currently is chair of the Home Safety Council Board of Directors and vice chair of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Board of Directors.

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From Our Readers

Thanks to IFSTA

I would like to extend a huge “thank you” to the International Fire Service Training Association (IFSTA), United States Fire Administration (USFA), International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). I recently returned from Harvard University’s program for Senior Executives in State and Local Government and would like to thank each of those four organizations for helping make this dream a reality! Each organization sponsors two fellowships for chief fire officers to attend this outstanding program, held in both June and July each year. Without their financial assistance and the support of my supervisor, Chief Scott Anderson of the Maple Grove FD, the opportunity to attend a program like this would never have been possible.

The three weeks were jam-packed with thought-provoking discussions, an array of innovative ideas, and a renewed appreciation for public service. The program also provided a forum where I was able to develop new friendships and expand my professional network across the globe with the other class members who attended. This program is not just for fire personnel. In our July session, out of the 80 who attended, only six were chief fire officers. The rest included many elected or appointed officials and public servants from all over the United States, as well as the world—three from Ireland and one each from New Zealand, Mexico, and Taiwan.

The experience was amazing and one that will stay with me throughout my fire service career. I am honored to have met such a wonderful mix of people and grateful to have had the opportunity to work with five other outstanding chief fire officers.

To the NFPA, USFA, IFSTA, and IAFC — your encouragement through this fellowship program will no doubt have a positive influence on the nation’s fire service! Your support is sincerely appreciated.

Sincerely,
Judy A. Smith Thill, Deputy Chief
Maple Grove, MN FD

The following letter was sent to Dennis Compton, who has been associated with IFSTA and FPP for many years. His works include the When in Doubt, Lead series and Mental Aspects of Performance.

FPP Author Dennis Compton Inspires UK FD

Dennis,

Having recently purchased the three-volume set of When in Doubt, Lead, I am writing to share with you a little feedback on your work. I recently took my management team (one chief executive and seven directors) to a “blue sky” awayday and asked them each to complete the “key organisational elements” questionnaire contained in volume one. The results were quite remarkable, as the simple but challenging nature of the questions and the introspection required to answer them gave the team a really good sense of self-awareness as we went into quite heated debate about the future direction of our service over the next five years.

Some of the outcomes that were decided upon include a new consultation and negotiation strategy, an announcement of our revised strategic corporate aims, and objectives that will allow our business managers to plan effectively. This will result in a more efficient link between our business planning and budgetary processes.

With best regards,
Mark Jones
Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Deputy Chief Executive
Essex County Fire and Rescue Service/UK

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