

**FINAL**

**FIREFIGHTER AND FIRE SAFETY INSPECTOR TRAINING COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
July 14, 2009**

Chaired by: Phil McLean

Meeting Date and Location: July 14, 2009, Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), 1980 West Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43223

Committee Members Present: Bob Babb, Terry Gill, Mark Mankins, Richard Sacco, Jim Steele, Dudley Wright

Committee Members Absent: Mark Lundy

Staff Present: Aleta Dodson, John Kennington, Tom Macklin, Doug Orahood, Richard Rucker

Guests: Jeff Cotner, Ohio Society of Fire Service Instructors; Charlie Dixon, Columbus Division of Fire; Martin Fuller, Whitehouse Fire Department; Jim Holcomb, EMS Board/Violet Township Fire; Daryl McNutt, EMS Board/Whitehouse Fire Department; Bill Mallory, EMS Board; Michael Vedra, Columbus Fire Department; Steven Wallis, Ohio Society of Fire Service Instructors/Ohio Fire Rural Council

The meeting was called to order at 10:07 AM

**REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE MAY 12, 2009 FIREFIGHTER AND FIRE SAFETY INSPECTOR (FFSI) TRAINING COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**ACTION: Motion to approve the May 12, 2009, committee minutes.** Steele first. Sacco second. None opposed. Motion approved.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT, Richard Rucker**

Mr. Rucker said the Division of EMS was approached by Fred Piechota, Committee on Accreditation Manager of the Pro Board Fire Service Professional Qualifications System to become the Ohio accrediting body for this program after an Ohio fire charter requesting accreditation with them. Per Pro Board policy, they must first contact the state certifying body. The Division will meet with them to obtain more information.

The state budget (House Bill 2) passed and the Division of EMS will receive 65¢ for each certified abstract driver's license obtained. The Division has sought a permanent funding source for many years and pleased to finally obtain it. However, in the first three months, those funds are currently only fifty percent of what it has been in prior years.

Mr. Steele asked with the new budget, will the FFSI committee return to monthly meetings. Mr. Rucker said no because after the bill was signed, the Governor came out with a mandatory 30% budget cut. He expects the Board and this committee will meet every other month for at least two years.

The “one-card” bill recently legislated will enable an individual to have all their EMT, fire, inspector, and instructor certifications on one card with the same expiration date. Division staff is working on an implementation plan and will notify EMTs to explain the change in their next scheduled renewal reminder notification. Committee members and staff had hoped to utilize a picture ID, but that will not occur because it would require increased fees to cover the costs which is not in keeping with the Governor’s Executive Order, nor is the BMV able to produce it without additional legislation changes. Mr. Steele said having both EMS and Fire certifications on one card will make Ohio the only state doing that.

FIRE COORDINATOR REPORT, Doug Orahood

Mr. Orahood reported he will participate in a panel discussion on fire training along with Mr. Steele and Mr. McLean at the Ohio Fire Chiefs conference and give an update on the fire safety inspector continuing education. Mr. Orahood said call volume regarding firefighter certification have decreased down to only one or two calls a week, online testing technical issues have decreased as schools now have the ability to unlock the student’s exam and restart where they left off, the Board of Regents stackable certificates for fire safety inspector and instructor college credits are on hold due to recent budget cuts, the Division has received the fire safety inspector item bank for updating, and the fire inspector test will be revised in the next thirty days based on changes to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1031 standard.

Copies of the certification, fire, and investigation reports were distributed. Mr. McLean had a question about the investigation report that showed two permanent revocations/denials. Mr. Orahood believes they were initial applicants.

Mr. Kennington received one request for a continuing education exemption due to active military status and staff recommends for approval. The individual was deployed for most of 2008.

**ACTION: Motion to approve the request(s) for exemption(s) regarding continuing education for one individual(s) serving on active military duty during the certification period.** Steele first. Mankins second. None opposed. Motion approved.

Mr. Orahood said there has been an increase in exam requests and the Division processed 180 requests in June alone. He said most are for only one or two people who in a majority of cases, do not show up. Staff will require seven day notice and a minimum enrollment of five people. In the first half of 2009, the Division received 774 exam requests and are on pace to test 8,500 people this year. In 2008, there were a total of 3,600 exam requests.

Mr. Orahood and Mr. McLean attended the State Fire Marshal’s Ohio Education Collaborative meeting. Mr. Orahood is unsure what direction the education regional training proposal is headed as a number of educators have not been attending.

Mr. Orahood brought forward a request for exemption for an individual who did not complete their fire instructor exam within the two-year time period requirement. The individual took the knowledge exam in December 2007 but did not take the fire instructor exam until March 31, 2009. Mr. Orahood read from a letter submitted from the program director who said it was his fault there was not a class formed in the time period as he did not have enough students for a class and the school had a fire. Mr. Orahood said according to rule, the individual will have to

complete the course again. Mr. Gill said he is sure that was not the only school providing that training and test in Ohio. Mr. Steele asked why would the school give the individual a knowledge exam without a class. Mr. Orahood said that is not uncommon as schools will test ten people, but say only three pass; then there are not enough students to hold a class. Mr. Steele asked if this is looked at when the school is audited and Mr. Orahood said only completed courses are audited. Mr. Steele said now that the test is online, would Mr. Orahood know when people have taken the knowledge exam. Mr. Orahood said the Division goes by what the schools submit.

**ACTION: Motion to deny exemption from the two year period rule to take test after passing course per the ORC rules; the individual will need to retake the course.** Baab first. Gill second. None opposed. Motion approved.

CHAIR'S REPORT, Phil McLean

Mr. McLean said at the last National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1403 workgroup meeting, the group decided this would be a separate class offered to instructors above the current instructor course requirement. Members agreed to put together short teaching chapters and Mr. McLean still needs these slides turned in. He has requested Mr. Steele to assist him on this project. The original project plan was to get the teaching slides together, develop the course, present to the Ohio Fire Alliance, and once developed, introduce to the 2,700 instructors around the state for their input. He said some instructors have no interest in doing live burns, but all instructors need to be aware that the committee is going to provide an educational component to them if they are going to do live burns in an acquired structure. The original goal of the group was to have education available for fire instructors who have not been to an acquired structure burn. Mr. McLean wanted to make sure this is still the committee's plan and members concurred.

Mr. McLean said there was a meeting with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at the Ohio Fire Academy in relation to the EPA inserting language requiring NFPA 1403 needs followed when a permit is issued to a fire department for an acquired structure burn. Mr. Orahood asked what if a permit is not requested and Mr. Steele said they would be in violation of the EPA rules. Mr. Orahood said the reason he asks is he receives calls about acquired structure burns that occur without EPA permits. He recently received a call about a training exercise that took place in an already fire damaged home without an EPA permit, where fire explorers wearing turnout gear were allowed to go inside. He said he does not know of any authority EMS has on such a situation and did not know where to send the complaint. Mr. McLean said if EPA puts this in their language with the granting of the permit, it would be them. Mr. Steele said EPA is going to deal with open burns, legal or otherwise. Mr. Babb said OAC 4765.23.02(A)(b)(2) and 4765.23.02(B)(7) refers to administrative action that allows for certification revocation for not following 1403 standards. Mr. Orahood will look into these rules further. Mr. Steele said four-year institutions are eager for the 1403 class and said the Ohio Fire Chief's Association (OFCA) is willing to back the course. He said members of this committee need to ensure their respective organizations are on the same page prior to an Alliance meeting in order to speak with one voice.

Mr. McLean reported that the Fire Hazard Recognition Course June 4<sup>th</sup> meeting was cancelled. He spoke with Mr. Dutton and is working to get this course back on track. At the last meeting

they reviewed the NFPA 1031 standard which was used to teach the 80 hour fire inspector's class. The NFPA defined Fire Inspector I (FI I) qualifications mirror topics being put in the hazard recognition course. The Firefighter Inspector II (FI II) class goes beyond the NFPA 1031 standards. The group was to look at the Fire Inspector I level topics in 1031 and match those as close as possible to the proposed 24 hour hazard inspector course and call it Inspector I. The question will be if this committee allows someone who completed FI I to go on to be a FI II by taking an additional transition course or do they need to retake again. The initial thought was when developing the 24 hour course, they would go through the non-critical hours for hazard recognition that include inspection procedures, principles of combustion, fire hazard recognition, site access and means of egress, water based fire protection system, portable extinguishers, plans review, hazmat identification and hazmat storage and handling. Categories for FI I out of NFPA 1031 standard that would include report, records and procedures, system maintenance and testing, evacuation drills for schools and evaluation of conduct, preparation for emergencies, hazard recognition, fire behavior, flame spread, decorations and furnishings, portable extinguishers, egress doors, lights, door hardware, and construction types.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding overlap among the two courses, whether inspectors who already completed the course need to either re-take the course, a transition course, complete continuing education, or be grandfathered, concern over time lapse, and this is an opportunity to increase the training standard. Mr. Steele said the 80 hours has value because 40 hours are spent on codes. He believes an FI I should not be writing citations as it is a company inspector course to recognize hazards that are commonly seen. He thinks to alleviate the current inspectors' fears would be to grandfather them as FI IIs because they already are card carrying inspectors. Mr. McLean said the committee will continue to work on the 24 hour course and revamping the 80 hour course.

#### NEW BUSINESS

The Fire Academy re-kicked off the "Everyone Goes Home" 16 firefighter life safety initiatives that utilize advocates to deliver the message throughout Ohio. He attended the meeting where Bob Calametta from Massachusetts discussed how states are incorporating the 16 life saving initiatives into their current training. Mr. McLean said there are several advocates in Ohio: Richard Best, Columbus; Christopher Hafley, Tiffin; and Ron Terriaco, Concord. Mr. McLean said he was disturbed that this was kicked off over a year ago in Ohio and he never realized that the Ohio Fire Academy had tailored it into their training for the 136 and the 256 courses without this committee knowing about it. Mr. Dixon said Mr. Cotner and Mr. Belcher started this initiative when it came out a year ago. A number of instructors were put through the training, but things fell through the cracks, which is why this has recently reemerged. He said some components have been used in various Academy training such as PPE. Since then, the initiative training is being done outside of the 315 hours and is covered in each 240 class. He emailed Mr. Calametta in Massachusetts and received permission to put their online program on their Learning Management System (LMS). A lengthy discussion ensued and topics discussed included these initiatives need entrenched in firefighter classes, converting the program to the EMS Division's Lectora program and post to the EMS website along with advocates visiting fire departments throughout Ohio, need to incorporate an evaluation system to keep in continuity with other programs, and advertise throughout Ohio and specifically the 62 charter institutions, using the Division listserv and other resources. Mr. Dixon will forward the online program to Mr. Orahood. Mr. McLean needs a volunteer to head the project and will schedule an advocate

to speak at September's meeting. Mr. Dixon said there is a lot of good information coming from these initiatives. He said the state of Indiana looked at the death rate for volunteers and saw 65% deaths were heart related. Indiana University developed a three level exercise program.

### OLD BUSINESS

Members of the volunteer course committee gave an update. Mr. McLean thanked the volunteer committee members for their hard work and time. Mr. Orahod wanted to officially thank the Columbus Division of Fire for allowing Charlie Dixon to assist in reviewing the test. Mr. Cotner reported that the first class is completed and 13 out of 15 students passed. Mr. Orahod needs the final course information submitted to him via e-mail. Committee members reviewed the skill sheets and liked the notes on the side on what the instructor is expected to do and believe it will be easy for someone to follow. A discussion ensued and topics included having all information distributed to instructors from one contact point (suggestion was to use the Division of EMS), instructors can be notified of revised course forms through the EMS listservs, members want the student evaluations from the pilot course to review and Mr. Orahod will obtain, how security of mid-term and final exams will be maintained if posted on the EMS website, instructor and program director should develop their own mid-terms from information provided since the state provides the certification exam as their regulatory function, and the sheet needs converted from the International Fire Service Training Association (IFSTA) numbers or simply leave blank for instructors to fill in themselves depending on publisher textbook they are teaching from. The OSFSI group will present a one-day symposium around the state and can add an hour or two about the new 36-hour course for instructors interested and include a train the trainer session

The FFSI committee agreed to a second pilot course and Mr. Orahod will contact program directors to find the second pilot location. Mr. Dixon said Bowling Green wants to hold a course and Mr. Cotner would instruct. Mr. Orahod does not want to send the course out as a "pilot" because he is concerned if it is called that, people will want to make changes to it. Mr. McLean said the Firefighter I training enrollment has doubled and he wants to promote this class as an awareness course. Mr. Steele said the chiefs know this is an awareness course and those students need to move on to the next level. He received a lot more positive feedback than he expected as he was initially skeptical about the course, but it is a very good course.

### ADJOURNMENT

**ACTION: Motion to adjourn.** Babb first. Steele second. None opposed. Motion approved.  
**Meeting adjourned at 12:00 PM.**