**DoD Military Firefighter of the Year**

**Award Description:**
This annual award recognizes an individual military firefighter for superior job performance and outstanding contributions to the fire service, with specific focus for *on-duty* related contributions to Fire and Emergency Services programs.

**Eligibility:**
Military Firefighter serving in one of the following duty positions: Firefighter, Driver Operator, Dispatcher, Fire Inspector, and Lead Firefighter. Military Firefighters with different duty position titles, but equivalent duty responsibilities (including shipboard and aircraft rescue firefighters), are also eligible. Calendar year 2006 Military Firefighter of the Year award winners from the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard (Note: DLA does not have any military firefighters). The component annual award winners are the only individuals eligible to compete for this DoD level award.

**Criteria:**
- Component (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard) selection as “Military Firefighter of the Year” for 2007.
- Component prepared nomination document describing significant achievements and contributions using the following headings:
  - Accomplishments
  - Job Performance
  - Technical competence
  - Leadership ability
  - Initiative
  - Resourcefulness

### 2007 DoD Military Firefighter of the Year Nominees

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Army
US Army Military Firefighter of the Year for 2007
SPC Scott Radke
Fort Carson Fire & Emergency Services and 60th Ordinance Battalion, Colorado

Accomplishments: Epitomizes the highest standards!—Army’s unparalleled military firefighter!
- Deployed for 15 mos. to Camp Anaconda, Balad AB, Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom
- Paved the way for his peers! Sought training & certification in terrorism and WMD emergency response...
- Played an intricate role developing/deploying the Army Fire Marshalls Program. Touched Thousands!!
  --Worked side by side with the AF Fire Prevention establishing an in depth fire safety initiative—Gifted!
- Key player in the SSgt Ray Rangel Memorial. Spent countless hours honoring a fellow firefighter KIA!
- Responded to 300+ incidents! From fires to major a/c crashes. Took the wise course of action everytime

Job Performance: Puts forth unrelenting effort!
- Member of rescue air mobilization squad. Primary mission; extricating trapped soldiers in hostile areas
  --Responded to a Turkish AN-26 crash; played a critical role in the search and recovery of 33 victims
  --Placing personal fatigue aside; SPC Radke volunteered to spend extra hours in search of the black box.
- Instituted procedures simplifying & streamlining building inspections—Tackled over 450 in 15 months
- Credited on numerous occasions by Air Force Group and Wing Commanders for exceptional performance!
- “Cut Above” Performance! Assigned as handlineman on an intense fire at a transient housing facility.
- As a newcomer w/ little local knowledge of the base/facilities, used his stateside training and initiated an aggressive interior attack, extinguishing the fire. Credited for saving 40+ from this fast moving inferno.

Technical Competence: Trusted with full confidence to take the right action...EVERYTIME!
- Impressive knowledge of fire apparatus operations & the fire to arrive safely—we can’t help if we don’t get there!
  -- Assigned as “Hot Truck” Driver & Ensured all personnel were well trained on the TI-3000 crash truck.
  -- Graduated to primary driver for Balad’s 1st out engine; protecting over 30K troops. A true trailblazer
- Superior knowledge&skill of rope rescue-taught peers the basics of Awareness & Operation level rescue!
  --Insatiable appetite for high angle training ensured all guard towers were preplanned for rapid rescue...
- Mimicked stateside training—acquired 2 hardwood bldg's to conduct live burns at, 50 FF's mission ready!
  - Took his stateside specialty to the theatre...established a hose testing program responsible for 5000'

Leadership Ability: Consistently works well above his pay grade without hesitation
- Volunteered to establish stability in a defunct SCBA program. Ensured deployed FF's had the same
  protection as their counterparts state-side. Ensured 50 SCBAs met stringent OSHA & NFPA requirements!
- Exhibits characteristics of a born leader! Ensured continuity w/5 rotations of AF firefighters. Team/sit fight
  - Selected to ensure 250+ firefighters were familiar w/department ops & familiarization of 20 aircraft...
  - Led the off duty charge - Motivated himself & many others to aid in the construction of a new station!
  - Assigned tasks for FD & Unit always come first! If a books not cracked or his hands aren’t dirty, He’s sick!

Initiative: Not a selfish bone in this soldier’s body!
- Rendered outstanding support to the mission; volunteering to be the commanders driver several times...
- Spent off duty hours volunteering @ Camp Field Hospital transferring wounded warriors for MEDEVAC.
- Major player organizing base mass casualty exercise; fused multiple organizations into one flawless team
- Technological whiz kid! Hours dedicated to improving &adding department’s commo equipment...

Resourcefulness: Aggressive in seeking answers to complex problem...An all around firefighter!
- Designed and constructed a storage mezzanine protecting 100K of equipment from harsh desert elements
- Demonstrates ingenuity on all incidents—consistent utilizing proper equipment in a timely manner—
  possesses common sense, skills & abilities to affect encountered situations.
- Positive attitude and motivation only enhances his ability to work and interact so well with every contact
  made. Customer service at all levels superlative and always striving to do the best job possible, while
  making a positive impact on the people he meets.
Navy
DoD Military Fire Fighter of the Year 2007
ABH2(AW) Jason R. Jackow, Firefighter
Naval Support Facility, Thurmont Maryland (Camp David)

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: Highly dedicated and professional United States Navy firefighter!
- Hand selected “best of the best” for Presidential Support Duty as a firefighter at Naval Support Facility, Thurmont, Maryland (Camp David). Committed to excellence! Proud to serve! Loyal, honest, and sincere
- Recognized for his vast knowledge and competence…hand selected as the Fire Department’s Training Officer, a position usually held by a First Class Petty Officer or above
- Implemented a robust training program, created and maintained 13 training records for U.S. Navy Firefighters…ensured certifications and training were updated with impeccable attention to detail
- Created and developed an intense in-rate training curriculum increased structural and aircraft firefighting knowledge and skills for the Command’s team, resulting in the advancement of four junior personnel
- Spearheaded the revitalization of Firehouse Software program instrumental in the tracking and logging of all emergency responses, daily fire department activities, and training evolutions

JOB PERFORMANCE: Committed to excellence and exudes quality in all actions!
- Critical player, ensured the safety and protection of the President of the United States, the First Family, Heads-of-State dignitaries and other high ranking officials…fire department ever-ready
- Sets high standards…aggressively led the training and day-to-day operations of the Command fire brigade, consisting of Navy professional firefighters and non-fire fighting rate Sailors ensured the Command safety and emergency response operations were 100% mission capable
- Landing Signal Enlisted…directly supervised and led 15 Presidential helicopter arrivals and departures which included 75 helicopter training touch and go’s for HMX-1 Helicopter Squadron, H-1’s, H-3’s, SH-60’s, H-46’s, and H-53’s with zero mishaps…fire companies always ready and standing-by
- Evaluated responses during training exercises and implemented upgrades to training and techniques

TECHNICAL COMPETENCE: Recognized Expert! Sought out for technical knowledge!
- Incredible year of training and personal development. Completed certifications for Emergency Vehicle Operators Course, pump operator, hazmat tech, hazmat incident command, and fire inspector 1 & 2
- Liaison for Naval District Washington’s, District Fire Chief, ensuring that maintenance contracts for apparatus, ladders, and SCBA air machine maintenance are scheduled and accomplished on time
- Revised and created 32 Standard Operating Procedures for Naval Support Facility Fire Department
- Established government drivers licensing program for 50 active duty personnel

LEADERSHIP ABILITY: Performed leadership duties with exceptional results!
- Led the Command’s duty fire brigade in structural firefighting operations, aircraft crash and salvage procedures, hazardous material operations and CBRN operations
- Command leader. One of four fully qualified Duty Fire Marshals. Responsible for the overall fire and emergency operations and safety incidents in the absence of the District Fire Chief
- Directly responsible for the leadership, guidance and training of eight firefighters

INITIATIVE: Committed to excellence and exudes quality in all actions!
- Utilized Maryland Fire Rescue Institute to certify 20 personnel…Firefighter I, EVOC, Pump Operator
- Spearheaded fire prevention programs…hosted 42 Command families for National Fire Prevention Week
- Outstanding community volunteer, assistant coach for the Gettysburg, PA Warriors Junior Football

RESOURCEFULNESS: ABH2 Jackow can be counted on to accomplish any mission!
- Established the development and implementation of 42 maintenance shops, and guest facility pre fire emergency action plans reducing fire department response times by 50 percent
- Coordinates closely with Andrews Air Force Base personnel on the maintenance and operation of the Tactical Air Navigation System (TACAN) used by HMX-1 and 1st Helo Squadron for flight operations
- Established standard operating procedure with mutual aid partners…resources maintaining maximum security posture for the President of the United States, First Family and NSF personnel

Protecting Those Who Defend America
Marine Corps
From: Chief Warrant Officer Three Todd M Tarker, Officer in Charge, Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting, MCAS Camp Pendleton
To: Chief Warrant Officer Four Edward Collier

Subj: NOMINATION FOR MILITARY AND DOD FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR SERGEANT NATHAN A. SORIA XXX XX 2542/7051

Ref: (a) Department of Defense Fire and Emergency Services Awards Program DTG 111140ZJAN

Encl: (1) Nomination Sheet
(2) JPEG Photo, DATA Sheet

1. It is with respect and vested interest that I nominate Sergeant Nathan A. Soria for Military and DoD Firefighter of the Year.

2. During my observation of Sgt Soria, his primary billet has been as the departments Training Chief, a billet normally held by a SNCO. Due to manpower shortages and deployment cycles Sgt Soria has supported operations as an ARFF Assistant Section Leader and Senior Rescue man in addition to maintaining his primary billet. Sgt Soria constantly displays superior leadership, expertise, and organizational skills in accomplishing all tasks assigned. Sgt Soria has initiated, developed, coordinated, implemented and instructed several programs and courses that have enhanced the proficiency, readiness, and professional development of this department and many other Marine Corps and Federal Fire departments. His dedication, resourcefulness, and “can do” attitude has given him the ability to produce multiple new programs, as well as maintain military and Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting annual training. Sgt Soria personally inspected all classes and training materials used in order to ensure consistent quality training for the operational section; of the new programs developed most notable is the in house EMT-Basic program taught and accredited by Palomar Community College while the Marines are on duty allowing the Marines more opportunities to attend this class then if they attended at the Community College. In addition, Sgt Soria researched, and coordinated a comprehensive crane course that ensured that Marines were trained in the safety, operation, and instruction of all aspects of the crane, creating a self sustaining program within ARFF to teach all Marines on the operational sections. While simultaneously meeting the requirements of his primary billet Sgt Soria taught two advanced level courses to Marines and Federal Firefighters from up and down the West Coast enhancing the mission capability of fire departments from San Diego, CA to Seattle, WA. Sgt Soria has conducted briefs for several tour groups throughout the course of the year taking the opportunity to let the civilian communities get a closer look at Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting daily operations. With his technical knowledge and professional demeanor these tours have become an essential tool for community outreach within the department and go along way in showing how diverse and comprehensive the Marine Corps and DoD Fire Service is.

3. Sgt Soria’s many accomplishments are a testament to his dedication, hard work, and maturity. Sgt Soria demonstrates proven and reliable leadership, with the vision and communication skills necessary to implement ideas into action. He is a “mission oriented” Marine in every sense of the phrase, and is currently one of the lead instructors for emergency services personnel in coordination with the Texas A&M Annex.

4. Sgt Soria has earned and enjoys the complete trust and confidence of his superiors, and the loyal respect of his peers, and subordinates. This respect is not gained solely by what he wears on his collar; but was earned with a superior work ethic, dedication to technical proficiency, and a genuine concern for this division and all its Marines. This respect coupled with his knowledge, have made him the “go to guy” in this department, and a source of reference for numerous other Marine Corps Commands and DoD departments within the Western region. Sgt Soria has done everything possible within his billet and experience to positively impact the DoD Fire and Emergency Service, and will continue to be an innovative and dedicated Fire and Emergency Services professional for many years to come.

5. I can be contacted at: Commercial (760) 725-4707, DSN 365-4707 or by E-mail at: todd.tarker@usmc.mil

T.M. Tarker
Accomplishments:
- Coordinated and implemented a 1st Responder Program to meet roadmap requirements, certifying 8 instructors and 42 students.
- Obtained a NATEC account to update NAVAIR and ensure that Camp Pendleton ARFF was placed on the Automatic distribution list guaranteeing that the most up to date publications are available at all times.
- Initiated an EMT-B program with Palomar College, giving all personnel the opportunity to become EMT-B.
- Researched and Coordinated a Crane Train-the-Trainer, Crane Operations, and Crane Safety courses for four Marines Crane Train-the Trainers.
- Organized EVOC Instructor Course.
- Set up a CSTI Hazmat IC course for Base Fire Department and MCAS ARFF, certifying 21.
- Set up a Wild Land Fire Fighting Training course for all ARFF personnel, providing fully trained crews for mutual aid during the next wild land fire season.
- Gained certifications in 10 Advance Courses: Rescue Technician I, Fire Inspector I, II, III; Fire Instructor II, III; Fire Officer I, II; ARFF Driver Operator, and Hazmat IC.

Job Performance:
- Coordinated and directed 12 advanced Fire and Emergency Services Certification courses, personally instructing 2 of them in which over 150 various pro board certifications were obtained by both Marines and civilian emergency service personnel.
- Revamped ARFF Licensing Program and all ARFF Training Jacket.
- Licensed 9 reservists from 473 on the P-19a making them mission capable while deployed to Iraq, while still licensing 15 Marines and permitting 5 from MCAS ARFF Camp Pendleton.
- Manages and oversees all ARFF personnel training jackets, advance courses, fire fighter physicals, and MOS training.
- Safety Representative for MCAS ARFF teaching 16 OSHA classes and performing 4 building inspections.
- Instructed 2 EVOC classes, 4 BLS classes, and 3 AVOC classes which certified over 60 students.
- Assembled 23 packages that were sent to AFCESA to reciprocity over 85 certifications to DoD certifications.

Technical Competence:
- Sgt Soria’s certifications are: Fire Fighter I/II, HazMat Operations, HazMat Awareness, HazMat IC, Airport Fire Fighter, Fire Instructor I-III, Fire Inspector I-III Fire Officer I-IV, Telecommunicator I, ARFF Driver Operator, Rescue Technician I, FEMA IS 100/200/700, EVOC Instructor, BLS Instructor, Emergency Responder Instructor.
- Sgt Soria’s knowledge and expertise allows him to oversee and manage all ARFF training.
- Sgt Soria’s ability to communicate makes him an outstanding liaison for outside agencies that have an impact in the ARFF community which ensures the required cross training is scheduled and conducted.
- Sgt Soria is an exceptionally qualified ARFF technician. He is motivated, and has the initiative and intelligence to succeed in any environment with any task. His potential is unlimited, and is an asset to the operations division.

Leadership Ability:
- Supervises All ARFF Marines’ training progression.
- Advisor to all personnel for enrolling and reaching their required advance training.
- Continually provides sound counseling and guidance to subordinates in both line and staff positions.

Initiative:
- Sgt Soria is a self starter who possesses a far reaching vision with a profound affect on all those around him. His systematic approach to problem solving, organizational skills, and staffing ability, has yielded many self sufficient programs.
- Sgt Soria’s efforts have enabled this organization to produce certified ARFF war fighters and DOD civilian firefighters.
- Sgt Soria’s initiative and efforts in implementing new programs will have a continuous impact at MCAS Camp Pendleton ARFF.

Resourcefulness:
- Sgt Soria researched and negotiated with various companies to provide programs that would be cost sufficient to this department.
- Sgt Soria’s coordination with other fire departments for cross training has enhanced his Marines abilities and expertise, while giving the other departments a respect for the ARFF community.
Air Force
Air Force Nominee for the DoD Military Firefighter of the Year Award
Airman First Class Andrew B. Gard, Ramstein Air Base, Germany

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:
- Best of the best! Awarded 435 CES, 435 CEG and 435 ABW Airmen of the Quarter for Apr-Jun 07; #1 of 12K
- #1 Smoke Eater! 2007 USAFE and Kaiserslautern Military Community (KMC) Military Firefighter of the Year!
- A1C w/Natl Registry EMT Instructor cert; 1of3 qualified to teach--incredible pass rate increase from 65% to 90%
- Certified swift water rescue technician--completed grueling 50-hour course with ease; graduated with 98% average
- 1 of 235! Conquered Advance Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support course--mastered tasks; certified w/96% average
- Teamwork help flight earn 2007 USAFE CMSgt Ralph E. Sandborn Award for Outstanding Fire Protection Flight

JOB PERFORMANCE:
- Provided life-saving care on a child that fell 3 floors--provided emergency care/prepped for transport--saved a life!
- Guardian Angel! Assisted w/successful child birth in car backseat at main base gate--featured in KMC newspaper
- Battled a large MFH fire for 2 hrs--technical hose evolutions limited property damage to $116K--saved $3M bldg
- Lead medic w/CPR in-progress--provided mouth-to-mouth for overdose patient w/respiratory failure--saved a life!
- Mitigated glycol spill on F-16; diverted/contained spill--reopened USAFE’s busiest airlift hub in just 7 minutes
- Provided medical care for sexual assault victim; controlled bleeding & calmed patient; gained her confidence/trust
- Responded to POV accident; extricated trapped victims using Jaws of Life--quick airlift trans ensure all 3 survived
- First to smoke-filled house; immediately ventilated; prevented back draft--saved $17M bldg & $65K pers property
- Dispatched to C-17 fuel spill; assisted evacuation of 6 crew; quickly isolated ignition source--saved $237M aircraft
- Responded to accidental foam discharge; stopped flow & diverts spill into drains--actions saved $70K equipment
- Controlled & contained HazMat acid spill aboard C-130; saved $48.5M aircraft & prevented environmental impact
- Deployed 8 firefighters, 1 P-19 & equip valued at $1.5M to Romania in 5 days--assisted in new joint base build-up
- Dispatched to complex German/US chlorine incident--worked w/100 responders, stopped vapor! Saved 327 lives!

TECHNICAL COMPETENCE:
- Aced external ESOCAMP--translated 76 MSDSs; 0 crit/0 maj findings; 1 strength--earned “Excellence” award!
- Reported ARFF veh w/scratches in frame to HQ USAFE; 2 flts discovered same cracks--averted possible catastrophe
- Tested and repaired 6 fully-encapsulated Level-A HazMat suits; his efforts saved AF $15K in replacement costs
- Tackled first dual HQ/German safety inspection--247 items/8 stations/226 firefighters--validated w/0 discrepancies
- Increased medical capabilities for KMC--certified in AED/Oxygen Therapy--first line of emergency medical care
- Certified as Space Shuttle orbiter rescuer technician; ready for short-notice taskings to European alt landing sites
- Managed flt’s $1.2M Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus prgm--conducted 110 fit tests; validated 0 discrepancies
- Created 25 aircraft pre-fire plans; identified hazards & vehicle set-ups--assisted SFO decision-making w/quick data
- Translator between US/LN medics--eliminated language barriers for 60+ Americans/LN during emergency calls
- Set the pace for flight’s driver training--certified on 3 vehicles in 1 quarter; enhanced overall drivers pool by 10%
- Achieved advanced Rescue Technician I cert--normally reserved for SrA/SSgt firefighters--graduated w/94% avg
- Earned DoD ARFF Driver/Structural Pumper certifications w/92%--finished CDCs in 5 months; awaiting upgrade

LEADERSHIP ABILITY:
- Leader among peers--elected President of Ramstein Firefighters’ Association--coord’d events to enrich community
- Instructed 120+ hr EMT-Basic course--proctored & certified 15 new EMTs--boosted unit medical capabilities 15%
- Built Armed Forces Against Drunk Driving schedule; donated weekend for 48-hr shift--13 rides; saved 40 careers
- A1C stepped fwd as flt’s AF Assistance Fund & CFC project officer--100% contact for 225 folks; raised $14K+
- Energized Fire Station 2 self-help project; painted interior & installed new toilets--saved AF $8K in contract costs

INITIATIVE:
- Despite 2 deployments, logged 50 credits towards his CCAF Degree in Fire Science--6 credits hrs shy; 4.0 GPA!
- Completed HazMat Ops and Telecommunicator I/II CDC--enrolled in Fire Instructor I course normally for >SrA
- Graduated Texas A&M Train-the-Trainer course--logged 8 firefighter I/II certificates in 2 mths--most in command
- Bulldog on safety--authored flight’s Personal Accountability operating guide; filled NFPA 1500 safety requirement
- Tested, inspected & tracked $450K of HazMat equip; organized for rapid deployment--flight ready for any incident
- Emerged as shift’s informal leader--spearheaded ladder testing prgm; inspected and tested 89 ladders; saved $24K
- Volunteered scarce off-duty time at base Post Offices during peak holiday rush despite 72-hour shift work schedule

RESOURCEFULNESS:
- Huge heart! Took on setup/teardown ’07 Special Olympics; 746 participants; event lauded by local press/attendees
- Conducted 38 tours for dignitaries; impressed DVs w/professionalism & pride--received 3 Letters of Appreciation
- Educated 500 residents on fire safety hazards; utilized humorous skits; kept public’s attention--home fires fell 35%
- Volunteered 250+ hrs as National Ski Patrol member; provided on call medical support for 350K USAFE members
- Helped sq booster club booth setup/teardown at 4th of July Fest & Welfare Bazaar; raised $6.5K for morale pgrms
- Orchestrated flt clothing drive for family that lost all belongings in house fire--collected/delivered 112 lbs of goods