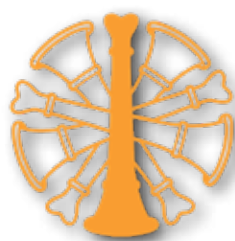


Winter 2022-23



# CHIEFS

The Official Magazine of the International Association of Fire Chiefs



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*And much more!*



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# IAFC: The Next 150 Years



**IT WAS GREAT** to be immersed with fire and emergency service colleagues and friends in San Antonio for Fire-Rescue International (FRI) 2022. It also marked a special professional moment for me as our U.S. Fire Administrator Dr. Lori Moore-Merrell challenged me, Chief Butler, Chief Waldo, and Chief Locke upon our swearing in. I accept the responsibility to provide leadership, foresight, and loyalty of purpose to progress our organization to a new and higher level of skill and ability. I will take this opportunity to share highlights of my speech to our entire membership, as I hope to set an expectation for the coming year.

Established in 1873, the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) has provided a forum for fire and emergency leaders to exchange ideas, develop professionally, and advocate for our industry through representation. Reflecting on our collective challenges over the past several years has given us an opportunity to re-evaluate priorities, assess our resources, and recognize our desire for not only organizational but also emergency service sustainability as we exist in the 21st century.

We initiated a strategic planning process with the assistance of our colleagues at Tenzinga. Through initial outreach to focus groups, we heard our membership express concerns about the ongoing challenges of recruitment and retention, succession planning for the future, and the need for enhanced

leadership development and support to include the executive level.

We heard your desire to depict the fire service in more realistic and practical ways as we operate today. We recognize the continued need to fund projects that provide best practices and enhance our experiences so we may strive to improve service delivery and ensure public trust through our continuous efforts to nurture a diverse, inclusive, and well-trained workforce. Building and supporting our IAFC membership is at the forefront of the years that lie ahead, and the health and wellness of our members is paramount!

We gathered representatives from the divisions, sections, committees, and councils along with the Board of Directors to draw upon their experiences and ideas to identify and implement strategies to move us forward. I am excited that we have developed a realistic and actionable strategic plan that will serve as our guiding light for a unified effort as we consider future opportunities. This will have an impact on every fire and emergency service leader from the smallest rural department to the largest metro area. Over the next few months, the strategic plan will be made available and incorporated into the 2023 budget process.

This association embodies representation. Our divisions, sections, committees, and councils as well as the Board of Directors are where all our work comes together. I encourage our members to engage and take an active role in our work, as the strength of our organization lies with you. Through our initiatives to lead, educate, serve, and belong, we will position ourselves for success for the next 150 years.

We have witnessed tragic civilian fire loss, unspeakable violent incidents, and the changing urban fire

problem caused by the increasing impacts of wildland fires. As a board, we will do our part to collaborate with our partner agencies. We will tell our story and insist we be considered part of the national critical infrastructure. When the critical needs of fire and emergency services are communicated and understood, allocation of resources is a reasonable expectation. Our communities are counting on us.

"Honor tradition" and "embrace innovation" have been my messaging over the last few years. It is essential that we honor the traditions of our service, and that we never forget. We must go into the future with respect for the history and legacy of the fire service and impart that in all we do. However, we must recognize when the reality of our circumstances requires change.

Embracing innovation, let's work together to identify better ways of doing our work. Apply technologies that will keep our communities safer and improve our ability to respond. Expand and improve our global footprint so we can share and learn from others. And it is imperative we look outside our industry for best practices to support and equip our current leaders and prepare our future leaders as well.

As I stated in my speech, I am going to focus my attention on communicating with you, representing you, and working with you to ensure we remain the leading agency of fire and emergency leaders. I ask you to walk alongside me, and let's work together to find solutions that will bring our organization to a new and higher level of skill and ability. With a unified mission and defined messaging, we will affirm and confirm the value of the IAFC.

**Fire Chief Donna Black**  
IAFC President and Board Chair

# Honoring Leaders in the Industry



(From left): Chief Ken Stuebing, IAFC past President, presented volunteer Fire Chief Marshall Turbeville and career Fire Chief Gary Ludwig with the 2022 Fire Chief of the Year award, alongside Jim Johnson, President of Pierce Manufacturing.



(From left): Lieutenant Kris Prosser, Captain Michael Kaake, and firefighter paramedic Tyler Abbatiello received the 2022 Ben Franklin Award for Valor.

**T**housands of people from across North America and around the world involved in fire and emergency services gathered in San Antonio for Fire-Rescue International (FRI) from August 24 to 26.

This annual event is a chance for leaders in the industry to learn from each other and about the latest in fire technology as well as an opportunity to network and collaborate.

FRI is also a place for the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) to recognize and celebrate a number of award winners, including the Fire Chief of the Year and Ben Franklin Award for Valor.

Congratulations to this year's winners! The nomination period for the 2023 awards will be announced in the new year.

## FIRE CHIEF OF THE YEAR

Since 1996, the Fire Chief of the Year award has recognized one volunteer and one career fire chief for their leadership, innovation, professional development, integrity, public service, and contributions to the fire service. The IAFC presents the Fire Chief of the Year award in proud

partnership with Pierce Manufacturing Inc., a global leader in custom fire apparatus innovations and manufacturing.

Active chiefs who have shown admirable contributions in leadership, innovation, professional development, integrity, public service, and contributions to the fire service are eligible for this award. The IAFC appoints a selection committee to review nominees for this award.

This year's Fire Chief of the Year recipients are volunteer Fire Chief Marshall Turbeville of the Northern Sonoma County Fire District in Sonoma County, California, and career Fire Chief Gary Ludwig of the Champaign Fire Department in Champaign, Illinois.

Chief Turbeville led his community's response to the devastating wildfires in California over the last several years, including the Tubbs, Pocket, Kincade, and Walbridge fires. These fires caused widespread damage and destruction to the area and triggered significant emotional and psychological trauma within the community and the fire department.

After frontline experience fighting these fires, Chief Turbeville determined the status quo response to the

firestorms was inadequate and worked with his community to develop new strategies focused on prevention, preparedness, and appropriate mitigation methods to save future life, property, and the environment.

Chief Ludwig is the past President and Chairman of the Board for the IAFC. During his term as IAFC President, Chief Ludwig was faced with the crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the early days of March 2020, several weeks prior to the shutdown in the United States, Chief Ludwig implemented a Coronavirus Task Force consisting of fire chiefs, International Association of Fire Fighters leaders, physicians, and private industry. The Task Force met weekly and conveyed vital information to members across the country. Chief Ludwig's actions led the fire service through the pandemic during the most difficult time.

## BEN FRANKLIN AWARD FOR VALOR

The IAFC Ben Franklin Award for Valor is the IAFC's most prestigious award. Since 1970, the award has recognized the spirit of service, courage, and heroism that is a proud tradition among the world's fire and emergency service.

This award is sponsored by Motorola Solutions, a global leader in public safety and enterprise security, and is named after Benjamin Franklin, one of the first fire chiefs in the United States. An inventor, statesman and humanitarian, Franklin was a prime contributor to the wealth of tradition that symbolizes the fire and emergency service worldwide.

"The award recognizes firefighters worldwide for their expert training, leadership, heroic actions, and safe practices," said Chief Ken Stuebing,

IAFC past President and Board Chair. "We thank this year's very deserving recipients for their courage."

The 2022 Ben Franklin Award for Valor recipients are Captain Michael Kaake, Lieutenant Kris Prosser, and firefighter paramedic Tyler Abbatiello. Nominated for their heroic and swift water rescue in the Whitewater River, the members of the Colerain Township Department of Fire and EMS in Ohio exhibited incredible bravery, perseverance, and commitment to public safety.

The Whitewater River is one of three major tributaries that empty into the Ohio River within the greater Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio area. It is used extensively for a variety of recreational activities. On July 24, 2021, previous flooding, newly fallen trees, and powerful, swirling currents made for dangerous conditions. That day, the Hamilton County Communications Center (HCCC) received a 911 call from a kayaker informing dispatch that a person they were with had overturned his kayak.

The HCCC dispatched Whitewater Township Fire Department and additional water rescue elements, among them the Colerain Township Department of Fire and EMS's Rescue 26 and Boat 26, as well as the Cincinnati Fire Department's Rescue 14 and Boat 14. Colerain's Boat 26 launched first, with the crew of Kaake, Prosser, and Abbatiello. They found the overturned kayaker near the confluence with the Ohio River, where he was struggling to stay afloat and continuously being swept under by currents and undertow.

Prosser was able to move the boat within several yards of the kayaker. Kaake and Abbatiello swam to him and were able to secure a personal flotation device and anchor it to an overhanging tree. For several minutes, they held onto the kayaker and kept him from being pinned against a growing pile of debris while they awaited additional support from Cincinnati's Boat 14. The boat was able to get into a position that allowed rescuers to pull the victim onboard and take him safely to shore.

"It is an honor to present this award to the heroes from Colerain Township Department of Fire and EMS," said Chris Lonnett, Vice President of Motorola Solutions. "Your commitment to training and conditioning prepared you to act quickly and make steadfast decisions in the face of extreme danger and pressure. On behalf of Motorola Solutions, the IAFC, and the communities you serve, thank you for your bravery. Because of you, a life was saved, and a man was able to return home to his loved ones."

Kaake, Prosser, and Abbatiello received Medals of Honor at FRI for their outstanding contributions. 💧



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# This Time: My Cancer



Chief Billy Goldfeder is a prostate cancer survivor and stresses the need for male firefighters to get tested.

By Chief Billy Goldfeder, Loveland-Symmes Fire Department

**T**his is my attempt at writing a very basic, but very honest, “firehouse talk” article about cancer.

Some people are afraid of even the word cancer – I get it. With that said, this column has some words to intentionally draw your attention, with the hope of saving your life.

I came very, very close to having a different outcome to this story. How close? Google “Gleason Score 9” when you have a second.

## A BRIEF BACKGROUND

I’ve been a firefighter since 1973, and I still love it. In 2022, I continue as an active deputy chief who regularly responds to fires and participates in training.

I am telling you my cancer experience so you can learn. For example, someone asked me, “Did you find out you have prostate cancer from a colonoscopy?” I answered no. Colonoscopies check your butt neighborhood. My butt is currently fine. This

is about the boy region and its relatives in a nearby neighborhood.

The prostate is part of the male reproductive system. It is a walnut-sized gland located between the bladder and the penis. The urethra runs from the bladder to the penis, through the center of the prostate.

Men, you have your prostate to thank for being part of your personal pipeline of pleasure, reproduction, and relief. I profusely thanked mine before its recent departure. Do I miss Mr. Prostate? Read on.

## PROSTATE CANCER?!

How did I know? Did it hurt? Any symptoms?

No symptoms. None. No issues with the “gloved hand” test. Nothing unusual was found. My issues started with an elevated prostate-specific antigen (PSA).

The PSA test is a simple blood test that screens for prostate cancer by measuring the amount of PSA in your blood. PSA is a protein produced by

both cancerous and noncancerous tissue in the prostate.

Prior to what I describe below, my PSA level rose only slightly over three years, but with the added risk of firefighter-related cancers, exposures, and an unknown family history (I was adopted), I realized I was at risk.

In July 2021, the PSA was rising again (but still under 10). I went to the Urology Group of Cincinnati and underwent numerous tests, including a prostate biopsy, a CT scan, an MRI, and a bone scan, none of which caused pain.

A few days later, my urologist told me I had prostate cancer. Although my cancer was considered stage 1, my cancer cells were very aggressive, resulting in a Gleason score of 9. Anything less than 6 isn’t overly concerning, and the worst is 10.

Even though we caught the cancer early, the urologist was concerned about the cancer cells escaping my prostate – and the Gleason score indicated those cancer cells wanted to escape very badly.



*Chief Billy Goldfeder's grandchildren supported him on his cancer journey.*

To be honest, I wasn't scared or worried about myself. I was (and remain) concerned about my family. We have five kids and six grandkids, and my disabled sister counts on me each day.

Otherwise, I saw this cancer issue as a fire: we're on scene, we sized it up, we determined what we are going to do, and we do it hard, fast, and with the best-trained and well-staffed folks anywhere.

### A CRITICAL NOTE

In my opinion, you should wait until you decide on a course of action before sharing with others you have cancer. This prevents you from getting advice from all of the so-called "fire-house physicians."

With that said, don't decide on a treatment until you reach out to the Firefighter Cancer Support Network (FCSN). The people there will connect you with other firefighters who survived, and you will hear their experiences firsthand.

After you weigh out all the options, you will likely reach the conclusion of what's best for you quite naturally.

I kept this cancer issue close to my

wife and me. I spoke with my chief, Otto Huber, and a few close friends, but no one else. I spoke with our kids two weeks prior to the surgery.

My family is my life, but I wanted to make this as least disruptive to their lives as possible. This way, I told them what was going on, what we had researched, who we spoke with, what we were doing about it, and when we were doing it. They did appreciate it.

### HOW MY CANCER WAS TREATED

My urologist explained two options existed for my specific cancer treatment: radiation or surgery. Both have pros and cons. I initially wanted radiation because of the experiences of friends, even though I had little knowledge of the two options. But surgery? That sounded like, well, surgery, and I didn't like the sounds of that.

Teri and I weighed the options and spoke with friends at the FCSN. I also spoke with some longtime fire service friends who survived prostate cancer.

I have remained close to many of my brother and sister firefighters over the years. One of those firefighters

is now a highly respected physician. He and his peers (who are experts in urology) were my second opinion. You must get a second opinion.

Teri and I agreed surgery (robotic) would achieve the best results. My surgery was a robotic prostatectomy, which is a laparoscopic surgery done via a robotic system. My surgeon sat at a control panel in the operating room and moved robotic arms to operate through five small incisions in my abdomen. The robotic system provides the surgeon more maneuverability and more precision when moving the instruments than what is possible non-robotically.

### SURGERY TIME, AND A TUBE

My surgery (three-and-a-half hours and another four hours to wake up) was on October 8, 2021. I was in the hospital for one night. What was really cool is they "traded" my cancer-filled prostate for a catheter.

Go ahead now and squint your eyes. Say, "Nope. No way. No one is sticking a tube up into my 'pal' down there!"

Again, there was no pain. Was it awkward for the seven days I had to use it? Of course. I normally don't have anything attached to my "pal," but, overall, no big deal. Think back to what you and your little buddy have been through in your life together. A little catheter? Piece of cake.

When the tube is in, you don't know when you are peeing, because the urine automatically flows into a small bag taped to the leg, and you (or the best wife ever) dump it a few times a day.

### WAITING FOR RESULTS

After surgery, I was home for a total of 30 days. No lifting, light schedule, and so on, which meant no bunker gear, so no work or runs.

A week after surgery, they removed my catheter. It stung for about a second as it was removed it, but I was fine after that.

When my prostate was removed via radical prostatectomy, some tissue around it, including the seminal vesicles and lymph nodes, was also

removed and tested for cancer to see whether any “micro stuff” escaped from the artist formerly known as my prostate.

At my 30-day appointment, the surgeon took blood and tested it to see what my PSA was. I crossed my fingers. I prayed. I hoped.

He called me two days later, stating enthusiastically, “Your PSA is perfect at 0.01, and I will see you in three months.”

## OUT OF THE WOODS?

So, am I in the clear? Sort of. I am far better off than if I didn’t have my PSA checked in the past several years and didn’t have the surgery.

However, because my cancer was confirmed by the post-surgery pathology report to be highly aggressive, despite being considered cancer-free at the time of this writing, a high risk of metastasis (cancer spreading to other organs) exists. I will get blood tests every three months to ensure the cancer does not rekindle.

## WHAT’S CHANGED IN MY LIFE

I wrote this column seven weeks after surgery, so keep that timeline in mind. Changes for everyone post-surgery are different based on the individual.

One of the changes I’ve encountered has to do with urination, which the prostate used to control. Some of that bodily function is relearned. I have had a few incontinence issues, but if you tell me a joke and I laugh really hard, I might dribble a little. Same if I cough. (Talk to any woman who has had kids. It happens.) I am wearing a pad and will be for a few months.

Another difference is in the past when I had to pee, I had 15 to 20 minutes to ignore it, wait, hold it in, then go. Nope. No more. When the pee tones go off, I can’t be delayed.

My energy levels have also changed. Some say that’s not a result of the surgery but of my age (66). To those people, I say, “Shut up.”

Before surgery, when 11 p.m. came around, I was ready for bed. Now, some days, 6 p.m. is my new 11 p.m.

But I had major surgery, and it takes time for the body to recover from that and the anesthesia.

And now for the good part: sexual function. The real answers that you want to know. Pee, shmee. What about sex and erectile abilities?

Well, it takes time. It does seem to be getting better, so I am hoping that will continue. I am not yet where I was (aka sexual dynamo), but I am seeing some improvement.

## GET CHECKED

This was the closest call I have ever had. I was in several crashes responding. I was in two fire collapses. I was lost and disoriented once. I was assaulted at a fire and got my bell rung. I faced whatever else a typical suburban firefighter would over 49 years.

But cancer was the biggie – and that’s why I wrote this column to you.

Male firefighters have the greatest chance of losing their lives due to cancer. I am begging you, if you are 40 or older and you go to fires (or know someone who does), a PSA test is a must. No excuses. Ask for it. Make sure it happens.

If you ignore getting a simple PSA test and have cancer, it won’t go away. It will get worse and can kill you. Too many firefighters have ignored the

slight rising of a PSA, or didn’t get a PSA test, or got one and were told to see a urologist and ignored it or put it off. After all, if you have no symptoms, how bad can it be?

Remember, I had no symptoms!

Look at the photos of your family on your phone, in your wallet, in your helmet, and in your locker. Get your PSA test now. The odds are you are fine, but if not, you will be way ahead of it and can knock down your “room and contents fire” versus a fully involved, out-of-control personal conflagration. 🔥

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*Chief Billy Goldfeder, EFO, a firefighter since 1973, serves as a Deputy Fire Chief of the Loveland-Symmes Fire Department in Ohio. This piece originally appeared in Firehouse Magazine.*

## PROSTATE CANCER RESOURCE

Chief Goldfeder created 40PlusFIRE ([www.40plusfire.com](http://www.40plusfire.com)), a website male firefighters and their loved ones can use to easily understand everything about prostate cancer. It features a downloadable document from Dr. Michael Hamrock, Boston Fire Department’s physician. Show this document to your physician or urologist so they can learn about the cancer risks associated with being a firefighter.



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# Is There Finally Something New and Better in Fire/EMS Hiring?

By **Charles Johnson**, Westfield Fire Department

**O**ur fire department, like many others, has a huge need for firefighters and EMS providers, and we are hiring. At the same time, we are in competition with every fire department in our region. Sound familiar?

Like everyone else in this situation, we strive to hire the best, and we want to hire a workforce that looks like our community.

We implemented a new way. How do I know this? Because the applicants themselves are applying and testing in our region and have told me that our process was entirely different than every other one. In fact, they told me that our process seemed more relevant and “that the questions were different than those used by everyone else.”

## WRITTEN TEST

We decided to use a new written test. The test is offered online. This means that we can reach applicants that are not local. We also found that about 65–70 percent who sign up for the test actually take it. The test takers signed up online and were monitored online; our staff had limited interaction with candidates at this point except to provide names and email addresses to our vendor.

In the past, we would have had to schedule those applicants, and that can take weeks, sometimes months. Further, the changes to schedules require constant back and forth with the applicants. This part of the process went away when we shifted to online.

In addition, we would have had to obtain locations for the candidates taking the tests and then provide staff to verify and monitor the individual test takers. This too went away.



In speaking with others who use online testing, they too feel as if they are saving thousands of dollars in staffing and scheduling.

The online format provides two more benefits. First, the written test we use measures competencies that are validated for our profession but are administered in both audio and video formats. As a result, we visualized a much more diverse candidate pool than our traditional process. Second, the vendor allows us to review competency scores so that when scores are close, we can look at individual competency scores such as “teamwork.” This helps us to further distinguish between applicants.

## THE INTERVIEW

Next, we administered a much different interview process. Our process did not consist of standard questions like “What do you consider your best quality?” Instead, our questions allowed us to evaluate the applicant’s judgment, fit, integrity,

conscientiousness, verbal skills, interpersonal skills, and other highly relevant competencies. Our questions were valid, and our interview panels were trained to be reliable. Our applicants reported to me that the interviews they had with other departments didn’t have questions like ours, and they said ours felt like they were applying for a fire-fighting/EMS job. In other words, it had face validity.

## THE PROCESS WORKS

Our new testing and interview process showed us much more about our applicants’ qualifications than we have ever seen or measured before. We feel like we were able to obtain highly qualified and diverse hires, exactly as we wanted.

If you have any questions about our hiring process, please feel free to contact me at [cjohnson@westfield.in.gov](mailto:cjohnson@westfield.in.gov). 🔥

*Charles Johnson is the Training Chief for the Westfield Fire Department in Indiana.*

# Increasing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Fire-Rescue Service

**T**he International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) has conducted a study on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the workplace. Released in May 2022, the results provide a way for the IAFC to help volunteer and combination departments in the United States improve their recruitment and retention efforts, particularly as they relate to groups that traditionally have been underrepresented in the fire-rescue service.

"This association (IAFC) embodies representation," says Chief Donna Black, IAFC President and Board Chair. "We will continue to lead the way in providing best practices in the fire service so that we may strive to improve service delivery and ensure public trust through our continued efforts to nurture a diverse, inclusive, and well-trained workforce."

The survey results offer insight into how the 1,311 respondents view DEI in their departments, what their agencies are doing or not doing to foster inclusion and fairness, and some of the challenges that face their organizations.

While some respondents reported that their department leaders act fairly and they feel included, others reported a less positive experience. For example, many said they do not believe DEI initiatives in their departments have been effective, and over half of the respondents report they have had personal experience with discrimination, bullying, and/or hazing.

This report aims to change this by encouraging the creation and maintenance of inclusive, equitable, and diverse work environments. Titled "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the U.S. Volunteer and Combination Fire-rescue Service," the report is available for download through IAFC's website.<sup>1</sup>

## WHAT IS DEI?

In short, DEI ensures everyone feels welcome and has equal opportunity, and no one is discriminated against.

As described in the report, diversity revolves around appreciating the many ways in which people differ; equity ensures people are treated fairly and have equal opportunities to be who they are; and inclusion enables people to feel welcome, respected, trusted, and valued so they feel they belong.

Making sure everyone at the department knows these definitions is just the start of implementing DEI in the workplace, which can increase recruitment and retention, as the report outlines.

## HOW TO INCREASE DEI

The report offers recommendations for departments on how they can increase DEI in the workplace.

"If the U.S. volunteer fire service is to survive, and even thrive, going forward, it must address the realities with which it is faced, namely the critical shortage of volunteers and the increased (and increasing) diversity of the population," the report states.

Recommendations include:

- **Education:** Define DEI and its implications and continually encourage learning on this topic.
- **Setting a foundation for success:** Make DEI initiatives the norm by holding people accountable for any negative behaviors, engaging with communities that are underrepresented at the department, and being open to new ways of thinking.
- **Recruitment:** Look at your pre-recruitment and recruitment process to ensure they attract qualified applicants of all backgrounds and don't deter anyone. Make it known to the community that you are seeking qualified volunteers.
- **Selection:** Use a consistent process for hiring, and maintain performance standards. Evaluate the effectiveness of your hiring practices, and make changes if you're not seeing success in assigned roles.

## • Work environment and retention:

Create a safe environment with a culture that values and accepts people for who they are for both existing and future members. Define the department's core values and communicate them so everyone understands which behaviors are acceptable and which are not.

## • Leadership and management practices:

Review the department's policies, procedures, programs, practices, and systems to ensure they are fair, and make changes as needed. Communicate consequences for poor behavior in advance, and implement them as needed.

The report outlines the full list of recommendations and goes into more detail on each. Survey respondents also rated the ideas they thought would most likely improve DEI. The suggestions include marketing materials that appeal to a wide variety of people, recruitment efforts targeting underrepresented groups, and social activities that allow members to get to know each other.

"Our work is meaningful, and I believe we should use our values and commitment to this profession to make improvements so that we accomplish our mission," says Chief Ken Stuebing, IAFC past President and Board Chair. "This will help us to attract and retain diverse and skilled firefighters, paramedics, and emergency service personnel as well as to improve our workplace cultures so that everyone can feel included and thrive in their roles." 🔥

## REFERENCE:

1. International Association of Fire Chiefs. "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the U.S. Volunteer and Combination Fire-rescue Service." <https://www.iafc.org/topics-and-tools/resources/resource/diversity-equity-and-inclusion-in-the-u.s.-volunteer-and-combination-fire-rescue-service-study-final-report>.



# Zero Roadway Fatalities

By **Norris W. Croom III**, Castle Rock Fire and Rescue Department

**A**s an emergency responder, you have first-hand experience with the dangers that exist on our roadways. No doubt, you have seen your share of fatal crashes. Hopefully, you are also aware of the increasing dangers roadways pose to responders. No matter the roadway – interstate, urban street, or rural road – far too many responders have been struck and killed while operating at roadway incidents.

The United States Department of Transportation (DOT) reported 42,915 roadway fatalities in 2021, which was a 10.5% increase from 2020. As a result of these continued increases, the DOT released a National Roadway Safety Strategy this past January with “an ambitious long-term goal of reaching zero roadway fatalities.”

Utilizing a “Safe System Approach,” there are five key objectives in this strategy: safer people, safer roads, safer vehicles, safer speeds, and post-crash care.

While each of these impacts fire and EMS responses, we have a prime opportunity to assist in this strategy through post-crash care.

The goal of post-crash care is to “enhance the survivability of crashes through expedient access to emergency medical care, while creating a safe working environment for vital first responders and preventing secondary crashes through robust traffic incident management practices.”

The post-crash care objective describes the long-standing efforts of the fire service and EMS. Ensuring appropriate care is delivered on scene, efficient transportation to an appropriate facility, and on-scene safety are actions recognized by the DOT as key factors and included in the overall strategy.



*The United States Department of Transportation reported 42,915 roadway fatalities in 2021.*

The DOT went on to identify four key focuses, which are listed on the department’s website:

1. Develop and implement an outreach plan for EMS personnel for on-scene safety and traffic incident training.
2. Advance traffic incident management training and technologies targeted at improved responder and motorist safety.
3. Expand the use of and support for the National Emergency Medical Services Information System (NEMSIS) – the national database that is used to store EMS data from U.S. states and territories – by funding applied research and data quality improvements.
4. Improve the delivery of EMS throughout the nation in collaboration with the Federal Interagency Committee on Emergency Medical Services (FICEMS) and the National Emergency Medical Services Advisory Council (NEMSAC) by focusing on shortening ambulance on-scene response times.

Fire and EMS agencies, along with the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), have been formally working since 2012 to implement traffic incident management on crash scenes to improve responder safety. Since then, new technologies and processes have also been deployed to assist in better notifications to the motoring public, enhance PPE and apparatus designs, and allow for a quicker cleanup of crash scenes.

The IAFC EMS Section continues to work with the FICEMS, NEMSAC,

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and Federal Highway Administration, along with our partners at the International Association of Fire Fighters and National Volunteer Fire Council, among others, to strengthen the processes and procedures to improve patient care and responder safety at crash scenes.

However, there is still much to do.

We need to continue to work with our local, regional, and state partners to ensure that the appropriate fire and EMS response to motor vehicle crashes is available regardless of location in a metro or rural environment. We must work with our hospital systems to ensure there are resources available to care for crash victims and that the continuum of care can be provided to the most seriously injured patients.

Lastly, we need to continue our work with law enforcement, public works/the DOT and towing and recovery partners to further our efforts in scene safety and promote quick clearance of roadway scenes.

Many may say that zero roadway fatalities are an unachievable goal, and there is no doubt that it is very ambitious. Yet the fire service also has the long-term goal of Everyone Goes Home, and we continue to make progress toward achieving it. The post-crash care objective deserves the same level of attention as Everyone Goes Home; it will impact not only the motoring public but also all of our responders. We have the ability to help effect this outcome, and we need to capitalize on what has already been done.

The entire National Roadway Safety Strategy can be found at [www.transportation.gov/NRSS](http://www.transportation.gov/NRSS). 🔥

---

*Norris W. Croom III, EFO, CEMSO, CFO, is the Fire Chief for the Castle Rock (Colorado) Fire and Rescue Department. He’s been a member of the IAFC and EMS Section since 1998 and currently serves as the EMS Section International Director.*

# Legislative Update:

## Endgame for the 117th Congress



**Ken LaSala**, IAFC Director of Government Relations and Policy

It is hard to believe, but the 117th U.S. Congress will come to an end soon. The new Congress goes into session in January with the potential for new leadership and new committee chairs. Even as this Congress gets ready to depart for good, it still has some key legislation to complete. Most importantly, it must pass funding for the federal government and extend the Medicare ambulance add-on payments. Here is a list of issues that we hope to see addressed before the end of the year.

### PASS THE FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2023 APPROPRIATIONS BILLS

Currently, the federal government is running under a continuing

resolution. It is open and operating, but it cannot start any new projects. This is a continuing problem; the FY 2022 appropriations were not signed into law until March 15, 2022, which is almost halfway through the fiscal year. These continuing resolutions previously have delayed applications for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) and Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) programs and caused other complications for federal fire service programs.

The House Appropriations Committee marked up all twelve of the FY 2023 federal appropriations bills in June. In addition, the House was able to pass the FY 2023 *Consolidated Appropriations Act* (H.R. 8294) on

July 20, which included funding for transportation, public housing, and wildland fire programs. There was considerably less progress in the Senate, where the Republicans and Democrats could not reach an agreement on basic defense and non-defense spending. So, the Democratic Appropriations Committee members released their draft bills on July 28.

Figure 1 shows how funding for federal fire service programs looks.

Both the House and Senate bills would allow the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to waive the maintenance of expenditure and matching requirements for the AFG and SAFER grant programs. The House

**FIGURE 1. FUNDING FOR FEDERAL FIRE SERVICE PROGRAMS (IN MILLIONS (\$))**

Program	FY 2020 (Enacted)	FY 2021 (Enacted)	FY 2022 (Final)	FY 2023 (President's Request)	FY 2023 (House Approps.)	FY 2023 (Senate Dem. Approps.)
AFG	455 <sup>1</sup>	460 <sup>2</sup>	360	370	370	370
SAFER	355	560 <sup>3</sup>	360	370	370	370
USFA	46.844	49.269	53.212	60 <sup>4</sup>	58.287 <sup>5</sup>	58.287
UASI	665	705	740	711.184	615	605
SHSGP	560	610	645	616.186	520	510
US&R	37.832	37.832	37.382	37.832	37.832	37.832

1. Includes \$100 million in AFG funding from the CARES Act (P.L. 116-136).

2. Includes \$100 million in AFG funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (P.L. 117-2).

3. Includes \$200 million in SAFER funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (P.L. 117-2).

4. Includes over \$2 million from FEMA Procurement, Construction, and Improvements (PCI) account.

5. It is unclear from the House report if the FEMA PCI account includes the upgrades to NFA.

and Senate bills also contain \$65 million for competitive grants to public housing agencies to evaluate and reduce residential health hazards in public housing, including lead-based paint, carbon monoxide, mold, radon, and fire safety. The House also is proposing \$5.5 million for the National Firefighter Cancer Registry, while the Senate is proposing \$4.5 million. The House is proposing at least \$10 million for the SIREN grants for rural EMS, while the Senate is proposing \$15 million. The House also is proposing \$21 million for the Volunteer Fire Assistance program at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, while the Senate is proposing only \$20 million. The IAFC is advocating for increased funding for these important fire service programs.

#### EXTEND THE MEDICARE AMBULANCE ADD-ON PAYMENTS

The authorization for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) ambulance add-on payments for urban, rural, and super-rural zip

codes (two percent, three percent, and 22.6 percent, respectively) expires on December 31, 2022. Because fire and EMS departments are reimbursed by CMS only for transport costs, these add-on payments help to pay only slightly for the cost of the services provided to Medicare patients. Nevertheless, it is important that these payments continue.

Representative Terri Sewell (D-AL) and Senator Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV) introduced the *Protecting Access to Ground Ambulance Medical Services Act* (H.R. 2454/S. 2037) to extend these important payments until January 1, 2028. Additionally, the legislation makes important changes to how CMS classifies a zip code as urban, rural, or super-rural. Both bills have bipartisan support, and we will be working to include them in the FY 2023 appropriations bills.

#### PROTECT THE AFG AND SAFER PROGRAMS AND REAUTHORIZE U.S. FIRE ADMINISTRATION (USFA)

The IAFC and the other national fire service organizations have been

working to reauthorize the AFG and SAFER grant programs and the USFA. Congress authorized funding for all three programs through FY 2023. However, the AFG and SAFER programs face a sunset date of September 30, 2024, which will eliminate them. We are proposing legislation to extend the authorization of AFG, SAFER, and USFA through FY 2030 and remove the sunset dates. In addition, we also are asking Congress to reauthorize the USFA at \$95 million. This increase of almost \$20 million would be used to replace the National Fire Incident Reporting System with a real-time, cloud-based system and allow USFA to examine the cause of major fires.

#### PROTECT FIRSTNET

In addition, we are asking Congress to protect the federal First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet). FirstNet, a nationwide broadband network dedicated to public safety use, faces a sunset date in 2027. The IAFC supports legislation (H.R. 6768) to remove this sunset date. We are asking Congress to pass this simple legislation this year to ensure the existence of this important public safety resource.

The IAFC continues to work on other legislation during this lame-duck period. We continue to ask Congress to create a \$10 billion–\$15 billion program to transition the nation to Next Generation 911. We also continue to ask the Senate to pass the *HERO Act* (H.R. 1480), the House-passed legislation that would create better mental health resources for fire and EMS personnel.

I encourage you to contact your members of Congress about these bills through the IAFC's Legislative Action Center and download our Hot Sheet when meeting with your Senators and Representatives. This information can be accessed at [www.iafc.org/gr](http://www.iafc.org/gr).

*Ken LaSala is the IAFC's Director of Government Relations and Policy.*



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Darley - You Serve Others. We Serve You. Founded in 1908, W. S. Darley & Co. is a family owned and operated business which manufactures and distributes firefighting and defense equipment. Our mission is to passionately serve the world's first responder and tactical communities by providing high quality, safe and innovative products with unmatched commitment and service. Darley is headquartered in Itasca, IL and has manufacturing, engineering and operations in Chippewa Falls, WI and Janesville, IA.



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# You Belong *Here*



**"M**embership has its privileges" was an advertising slogan made famous by American Express in the late 1980s. The American Express commercials displayed people on great vacations, living lavishly, and enjoying financial freedom. Each commercial would always end with the slogan. The implication, of course, was that many of the finer things were available to only those who carried the American Express credit card. So, if you wanted to get in on the good life and the rewards, you had to be a member.

At this moment, you may be assuming that I am about to borrow from American Express and say "IAFC membership has its privileges." But not exactly. While, as an International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) member myself since 1987, I feel that IAFC membership affords certain privileges, the true value of an IAFC membership is "belonging." Yes, the IAFC provides best-in-class education, resources, representation, and advocacy. But IAFC membership is so much more!

By belonging to the IAFC, you are connected with an engaged membership that is strong, out-front, respected, and leading the future of fire and emergency services worldwide. The IAFC Board of Directors, working with our division and section stakeholders, has updated our strategic initiatives to assure the IAFC is focused on member

"By belonging to the IAFC, you are connected with an engaged membership that is strong, out-front, respected, and leading the future of fire and emergency services worldwide."

needs. To support these new initiatives, we are reengineering our organization and staff to deliver the valued products and services our members have come to rely on from the IAFC while expanding our reach and increasing our ability to connect directly with our members.

As an IAFC member, you have access to the right training, education, and personal development opportunities to grow your knowledge and meet the challenges facing chief fire and EMS officers today. However, IAFC membership is not just for chief officers. IAFC membership is open to company-level officers and others who are emerging as our next emergency services leaders in both volunteer and career departments.

Through our various on-site programs and conferences, IAFC members have opportunities for networking and vital person-to-person dialogue regarding current complex issues while receiving resources, education, and solutions to address emerging issues. What's more, as an IAFC member, you are not just a spectator – your participation will help shape the future of fire and emergency services.

As an IAFC member, you will be kept up to date on the latest issues facing fire and emergency services. As I am writing this, our IAFC members are on the front-line responding to epic wildfire incidents across North America and around the globe. Our IAFC members and partners are collaborating on the effort to combat firefighter-related illness and ensure the safety of first responders on our highways remains a priority.

New challenges appear seemingly every day. Our IAFC Academy currently provides online training and resources

for personal and professional growth, and many more programs and higher education learning opportunities are planned to come online in the near future. Our IAFC government relations and policy experts continually monitor legislative opportunities and impacts to keep you in the know and to advocate for programs such as Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER), Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG), Next Generation 911, and FirstNet.

If you are a current IAFC member, I thank you for your investment and trust in the IAFC. If you are not currently an IAFC member, I invite you to learn more about the value of IAFC membership and the opportunities that the IAFC has to offer by visiting our IAFC membership benefits page.<sup>1</sup>

IAFC membership certainly has its privileges! After nearly 150 years since our founding in 1873, the IAFC remains the go-to organization for emergency service leaders and those partners who work with us. But as an IAFC member, we're not just your go-to organization – you belong!

## Rob Brown

IAFC Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director

## REFERENCE:

1. International Association of Fire Chiefs. "Membership Justification Kit." [https://www.iafc.org/docs/default-source/1mbrship/mbrship\\_justificationkit\\_newmbrs.pdf?sfvrsn=fd916d0c\\_2](https://www.iafc.org/docs/default-source/1mbrship/mbrship_justificationkit_newmbrs.pdf?sfvrsn=fd916d0c_2).



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