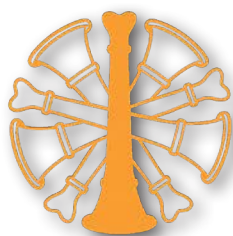


Winter 2023-24



CHIEFS

The Official Magazine of the International Association of Fire Chiefs

150

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Leadership in Action



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CHIEFS



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Achieving Goals Together

I AM SO proud to serve as your President and Chairman of the Board of Directors for the next year! I look forward to strengthening the relationship between all fire and emergency services organizations. Leveraging our common interests is vital to recruiting and sustaining an exceptional workforce to serve the public.

One of our priorities is wellness. Our focus will continue to be on early detection programs for cancer and cardiovascular disease, as we know this save lives. We must also raise awareness about sleep hygiene, work/life management, and physical and mental health to ensure our career and volunteer firefighters and EMS providers feel supported.

We cannot lose sight of the need to be vigilant about building and sustaining healthy organizational cultures, strengthened by behavioral best practices, in which everyone can thrive.

We must also be an active partner in the campaign on environmental impact for addressing the horrific wildfire threat across North America and other world regions.

As chief officers, we will no doubt have various challenges ahead of us. We need to continue the work of the Labor-Management Alliance (LMA) to enhance the working relationship between fire service leadership and the labor organizations that represent the workforces of fire departments of all sizes.

In our strategic initiative plan, the association frames its relationship with the membership and related organizations based on four goals: Lead, Educate, Serve, and Include. I look forward to embracing and enhancing our progress in these areas.

LEAD

The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) is the preeminent advocate for fire and emergency services on leadership, policy, management, and service delivery. We need to ensure our organizational brand is fortified by the highest level of integrity and uncompromising loyalty to our core values. Where we fail, we learn. Where we learn, we grow. Where we grow, we encourage accountability, and that allows us to lead effectively.

EDUCATE

Education is the cornerstone of everything we do. Academies and ongoing technical training are essential to preparing and sustaining a workforce to fulfill our mission. We also need to invest more in the professional development of our leadership and the public.

On an individual level, be curious. Challenge assumptions about the old ways, open your mind to new ideas, and encourage critical thinking that produces decisions that are beneficial to all.

On a community level, get involved! Engage with your local community, schools, and businesses.

SERVE

Each day firefighters, company officers, and chief officers work hard to give service above self. We must continue to encourage aligning our assets to community needs, incorporating data analytics, creating community risk reduction models, as well as embracing partnerships and coalitions with health care, social service,

and educational institutions to enhance our service to our communities.

INCLUDE

Inclusion is a special word for me because I am an immigrant. I was born in Liberia, Africa. When I was a preteen, the country fell into a political coup with widespread executions and arrests. My family escaped to the United States and settled in Maryland. One day, we stopped at a fire station for directions. Years later, that fire station is where I would serve as a recruit firefighter, a paramedic, fire officer, and my last field assignment as a battalion chief.

Whether as an immigrant, or during my Marine Corps infantry experience, or my fire and emergency services tenure, my path to this moment has been graced with countless people who have opened their doors to me, both personally and professionally. They provided opportunity, challenged me, encouraged me, and corrected me. The power of these interactions has propelled me to where I am today.

We all have this power to build inclusive teams and inclusive organizations. This power means building teams that may not look like a fire department of yesterday, but a fire and emergency services department that is made up of individuals who are willing to give their best no matter their race, sexual orientation, gender, or religion.

Please join me as we embrace these goals and work together during this 150th anniversary year of our IAFC.

Fire Chief John S. Butler
President and Board Chair

'Nothing Is There Forever':

Tech Advancements in the Fire Service

By Kaitlin Vitt, iCHIEFS Staff Writer

While there seems to be a new technological advancement every day — from a new way to track your workout to a new way to regulate your home's temperature from afar — these breakthroughs haven't always been applied specifically to the fire service.

"For many years, the fire service was kind of the second tier — we didn't get things developed for us; rather, we had to adapt on how to use what already existed," says Jeff Dulin, Strategic Advisor for the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) and Staff Liaison with IAFC's Technology Council.

But this has changed in the past decade.

"Now, technologists are looking to us and saying, 'Hey, before we build this, let's talk to the fire service. Let's work with the IAFC to get opinions of chiefs about what they truly need and how it should work for them,'" Dulin says.

These advancements are changing the way the fire service approaches fire suppression and prevention. Both



As Staff Liaison with IAFC's Technology Council, Chief Jeff Dulin looks into new and emerging technologies applicable to the fire service.

firefighters and leaders must better understand how elements of fire-scene operations have evolved so the service can best serve communities.

"Technology takes big leaps about every six months right now," says Dulin. "That timeframe is going to get shorter and shorter for certain types of technologies."

This fast pace highlights the necessity for leaders in the fire service to voice their needs to vendors, and to be clear that those needs may change.

"We try and stay very closely connected to our technology vendors so that we can be lockstep with them as they're developing something, so they don't go build something that's designed for a round hole and we have a square peg," Dulin says. "Those technology companies can say, 'OK, there's the blueprint to where we want to go. Now let's reverse-engineer it to get to where we need it to be.'"

THE LARGEST LEAPS

Dulin categorizes the advances in three main areas. The first are developments to existing products, such as better turnout gear — for example, the development of new nanofiber technology has

created lighter turnout gear with better protection. Another example is the use of geographic information systems (GIS) that place things at an X, Y, and now Z coordinate. Anything and everything that happens is in the three axis points. Fire departments have learned how to harness this data for spatial relationship and data comparison.

The second are technologies that are starting to come on the market and are being developed to work specifically for the fire service. An example is technology that provides capability for better communications, whether that's online, using satellite, or otherwise.

The final area of technologies are those that are emerging and haven't quite hit the market but will be here soon, and by working closely with the tech industry, the fire service can shape what it's going to look like. For example, augmented reality, which puts computer-generated images onto a real-world view, can provide visualization inside burning buildings that firefighters can't normally see. With augmented reality, you might now be able to see walls, the floor, furniture, hallways, and so on to provide valuable building information for fighting fires.

ADAPTING TO THE TIMES

With so many changes, it can be overwhelming to stay up to date with it all. Dulin says about seven to 10 years ago, there was more pushback against tech advancements from those in the fire service.

"They wanted to keep things the way they were. They were reluctant about technology. They weren't sure if they could trust it."

One of the biggest tech hurdles for the fire service was cloud computing, Dulin says, an advancement that has been a big benefit to the industry.

"I no longer have to rely on having my servers in a back room that I pay an IT person to manage every day," he says. "All that much more fire department operations are being put into the cloud because it's dynamic, it's elastic, it can grow and stretch

"Chiefs and leaders have learned they have to adapt to the new culture of workers that they're hiring."

— Chief Jeff Dulin

and adjust as needed. Even more importantly are the instantaneous changes in the systems."

As an example, Dulin gives a scenario where a fire inspector goes into a building, marks down on their tablet what chemicals were in the location, and identifies exits, among other key observations.

"They hit send, they leave, and five minutes later, there's a fire in the building. The company responding to the fire pulls up their computers and can see all the notes the fire inspector made five minutes ago," Dulin says. "Before they arrive, they're seeing the latest information that was just entered five minutes ago by somebody on a different platform, but the platforms are interconnected."

Compared to a decade ago, there isn't as much resistance to tech advances, Dulin says.

"The people we have coming on as firefighters today are much more technologically in tune," he says. "Chiefs and leaders have learned they have to adapt to the new culture of workers that they're hiring."

One way the fire service has adapted to these changes is through its training process. While new hires used to be trained by a simple slideshow presentation, now it's much more interactive.

"That's the generation we're in today. They don't learn by you talking to them. They learn by them interacting with something and reading and taking online tests and seeing graphics."

HOW TO KEEP UP WITH TECHNOLOGY

As IAFC's Strategic Advisor, Dulin looks at the horizon to find paths for the IAFC to better position the association as a global leader in fire

and emergency services, including by keeping up with tech advances.

The IAFC's Technology Council, which Dulin is a part of, is made up of about 75 chiefs who represent fire departments of all sorts, including volunteer, combination, large, small, and so on. The council's role is to look at new and emerging technologies and make recommendations on how the fire service can best adapt emerging technologies.

The council is a valuable resource for departments and is always available to chiefs and leaders for guidance on tech and to put them in touch with others who have gone through similar developments.

In addition to looking to the IAFC and its Technology Council, attending webinars, reading articles, and working alongside vendors, the IAFC's Technology Summit International is another place leaders and fire chiefs can learn about the latest in tech.

"If you're interested in technology, if you're a fire chief that oversees technology, if you're someone in a department who wants to get involved with the latest technology developments for the fire service, you need to be there to see what's happening now," Dulin says. "More importantly, we will talk about what's going to be coming out in the next two to five years."

The summit is open to anyone and takes place December 5 to 7, 2023, in Irving, Texas. To learn more about the event and to register, visit <https://tsi23.eventscribe.net>.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR TECH

Dulin thinks one of the biggest upcoming tech developments for the fire service is artificial intelligence (AI).

"AI will change everything from a 911 call, to a unit responding to a call, to an incident commander on

"It's going to be different in the next year, so plan for the change to come about quickly."

— Chief Jeff Dulin



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the scene making decisions, and then also after actually reporting for lessons learned about that incident," he says.

"If you're an incident commander on the scene, you're trying to listen to multiple radios. You're trying to look at visualizations of data that are coming across tablets. But you can't see and comprehend and do analysis on all that simultaneously."

With AI and machine learning, which is an application of AI that teaches computers to learn from experience and make decisions on their own, all the data that comes in can be filtered, so only the necessary information is displayed to the user. Plus, the data displayed will adjust as the situation changes.

"Fire chiefs today really need to stay abreast of the latest technology changes, look at where they want to go, develop a plan, and also understand that technology changes and that nothing is there forever," Dulin says. "It's going to be different in the next year, so plan for the change to come about quickly." 💧

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Beyond the Flames: The Role of Fire Departments



By Chief Mike McEvoy, Past Chair of the IAFC EMS Section

Of the 43 million emergency medical services (EMS) calls answered annually in the United States, the fire service is the largest responder, answering well over half of these calls. Other providers comprise much smaller shares, including private services (13%), government/municipal services (10%), and hospital-based services (5%).^{1,2} Since there were only 1.35 million fires in the U.S. during 2021, which was the last year data were available, it should come as no surprise that EMS is the key focus for almost all U.S. fire departments.³ It is no wonder the fire service has actively participated in every aspect of EMS, including education,

insurance reimbursement, and regulations governing EMS.

Fire departments offer a wide variety of emergency medical services in their communities. About two-thirds of fire department responses are for EMS or rescue.⁴ These consist of ambulance transport, Basic Life Support First Response (BLSFR), Advanced Life Support First Response (ALSFR), and specialized technical rescue such as hazardous material and tactical medical services. Even fire departments that do not regularly provide EMS response typically have EMS-trained firefighters readily available and equipped to manage injuries that occur to members on

duty. This is because of the many dangers encountered routinely at the scene, during training, and across the spectrum of all-hazard responses.

EMS EDUCATION

As the largest provider of EMS, the fire service naturally plays a significant role in EMS education. Many of the over 700 accredited paramedic programs are run by the fire service, plus the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) and the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) hold multiple board seats on the Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the EMS Professions (CoAEMSP), the standard setting organization for paramedic programs.⁵ The IAFC has also long maintained an active role on the board

of directors of the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians, the nation's EMS certification organization.⁶ Combined, these assure fire service input and oversight by the primary provider of EMS care nationwide.

The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) long ago began offering EMS programs at their academy virtually and through outreach classes.⁷ In fact, it is often said that the USFA's free and low-cost training programs are among the best-kept secrets in the fire and EMS worlds. The USFA has significantly increased its focus on EMS under the direction of Fire Administrator Dr. Lori Moore-Merrell by participating more actively in EMS at the federal level, increasing the number of EMS courses available, and preparing to connect national fire reporting to the National EMS Information System (NEMSIS), the largest and most comprehensive prehospital medical record system in the world.⁸ The fire service leadership had the foresight to see that today's fire service has evolved well beyond simply putting out fires.

The fire service is in a unique position to innovate and take the lead in future advances in the provision of EMS in our communities, the training of EMS personnel, and EMS leadership at all levels of government. While EMS was not a priority for the fire service many years ago, it is now their main focus. Leaders in the fire service who neglect to prioritize, invent, and support EMS are missing their best chance at long-term viability. A practical knowledge of EMS at the local, regional, state, and federal levels is also very necessary for aspiring company officers and future fire service executives. This includes being aware of EMS billing and compensation, a topic on which the IAFC EMS Section frequently sponsors courses.

LEADING THE WAY

Fires have steadily declined because of well-planned, deliberate, and expertly carried out fire prevention efforts. Fire departments across the nation are using their expertise in fire prevention, code development, inspections, and safety education to improve health and well-being of the residents in their communities. EMS data collected by the fire service has helped inform

departments on overdose prevention efforts, first aid and CPR educational needs, fall prevention, bicycle safety, and a wide range of other community risk reduction initiatives. Given the very successful outcomes of fire prevention efforts, it seems quite logical that the fire service will be able to translate this work into community risk reduction programs that ultimately improve the health and welfare of their communities, thereby reducing emergency EMS responses.

The fire service has led some of the most progressive EMS initiatives including making Seattle a community where cardiac arrest survivors are most likely to receive bystander CPR, San Antonio a community where critical trauma patients get prehospital blood, and places such as Columbus and Salt Lake City communities where refractory cardiac arrests are treated with extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO). The fire service has spearheaded community paramedic programs nationwide, diverting patients to more appropriate care destinations and preemptively checking on underserved members of the community who

previously used 911 for a variety of non-emergent conditions. Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD), the standard for handling emergency calls, originated in fire service call centers and then extended to 911 centers around the world.

As the population ages, EMS needs will increase and the fire service will continue to be the leading responder. The need to innovate in healthcare has never been greater due to personnel shortages, including EMS. The fire service also holds the greatest ability to address the healthcare needs of our communities in novel and creative ways since it is the largest provider. EMS is the primary function we do in our communities, despite the fact that we go by the name of firefighters. 🔥

Mike McEvoy is the EMS Coordinator for Saratoga County, New York, and immediate past chair of the IAFC EMS Section as well as the chair elect of the National Registry of EMTs. He is the chief medical officer and firefighter/paramedic for West Crescent Fire Department and actively involved in fire and EMS advocacy.

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Training the Next Generation

You've overcome one hurdle — recruiting new workers — but now comes another obstacle: training them. How can leaders in the fire service best train the upcoming generation of firefighters? We talked with Chief Al Yancey from the Minooka Fire Protection District and Chief Rich Cowger from the Columbus Fire Rescue for their insight.

iCHIEFS: HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A FIRE CHIEF?

YANCEY: I joined the fire service in 1988, and I've been a fire chief for 25 years. I've been the chief at the Minooka Fire Protection District for 20 years.

"The days of 'because I said so' do not work." — Chief Al Yancey

COWGER: I've been in the fire service since 1993, and I have been the fire chief at my department for 23 years. I have been with the department for a total of 30 years.

iCHIEFS: WHEN YOU JOINED THE FIRE SERVICE, WHAT WORKED AND DIDN'T WORK WITH HOW YOU WERE TRAINED?

YANCEY: When I started receiving training in the volunteer department, I believe the hands-on training was

the most impactful. It was even more impactful when we had the opportunity to do live fire training in an acquired structure or do extrication and rescue on an acquired vehicle. We also ran a local firefighter certification academy.

What didn't work as a volunteer recruit and was disappointing to me was when we had a training officer who would not put the time into preparing training programs, arranging instructors, and sometimes

Continued on page 12

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“Don’t rely on someone else to ‘make’ you learn – take some personal accountability to be as informed as you can about the job and the tasks and the understanding of why.”
– Chief Rich Cowger

would not even show up to the training. For the longest time, the fire chief would not do anything about the training coordinator because they were friends, and for that reason, the training and overall morale of the organization suffered. As a volunteer, I was giving of my time, only to show up and find no program.

COWGER: The first department I joined trained twice a month. It was a very small rural organization. Then the next one I joined did hands-on training one night a week. For me, hands-on training was and still is better than other types of training, but we never really spent a lot of time on the why and the reasons behind why we did it that way. Often, more time was spent on visiting rather than training because we weren’t often prepared. Lectures tended to bore me unless they were delivered in a way that kept my attention and interest. There wasn’t much for virtual training in those days.

ICHIEFS: HOW IS TRAINING CURRENTLY DONE, AND WHAT IS AND ISN’T EFFECTIVE?

YANCEY: It is important to have a plan for firefighter training. Our experience is that outlining a year’s worth of training gives a clear picture to the firefighter on what the topics will be for the year. Obviously, changes may need to be made; however, this helps personnel chart their training course. Also, for new

personnel, we provide them with a training book that outlines all of the training topics and skills they must complete within a one-year probation.

What doesn’t work, especially for volunteers, is to show up to training and nothing be planned or the instructor is not prepared. It is a waste of time for the volunteer firefighter to show up to receive training and get nothing out of the program; they have other things they can be doing in their personal life, so don’t waste their time.

Also, senior firefighters need refreshed training. The same old thing every time gets old. While we need to continue to practice the basics, we also need a training program that provides new and innovative ways to learn, new opportunities for new skills and knowledge, and different ways to accomplish a task.

COWGER: Unfortunately, in my department, in some cases, the training is the same as when I started, though as we have changed from an all-volunteer department to combination, we have had to morph our training program to try to include more training throughout the week, at various times of the day, and tailor the training to take place with a smaller number of folks. We have tried the virtual and online training, and while this helps some, it didn’t seem to get the buy-in we were hoping for.

We have tried to incorporate sections of online learning to get some of the fundamentals established and then use the actual training time as hands-on.

We use task books so that once the new recruits are shown or taught a skill, they then have the task book that helps them hone in on that skill and use it in combination with others. That can be done somewhat on one’s own timeframe, though the idea is to give the new person the ability to have something tangible in front of them that helps track their progress.

ICHIEFS: HOW CAN LEADERS IN THE FIRE SERVICE BEST TRAIN THE UPCOMING GENERATION OF FIREFIGHTERS?

YANCEY: Listen to the firefighters, and value their opinion on how they will best learn. Outline the programs for the firefighters, and explain why the things they are learning are important. The days of “because I said so” do not work. Hands-on training and making it as real-world as possible through acquired structures is effective. It is especially important to reinvent the process to make things challenging and allow firefighters to learn new ways and techniques. Leadership should be open to consideration of ideas that firefighters bring for new ways to do things and new technology to help them in their job function.

COWGER: I think that training today has to take on more of a hybrid approach. In the past, one style of training seemed to work, but in today’s world, where using time as efficiently as possible is very important, there needs to be a mix. And the training needs to be as realistic as possible, or at least show the context of why it’s important. The new generation is more used to instant information, so you have to give them concise information in a timely manner at times that they may be available. The traditional one-night-a-week training may still have its place for some, but the training program has to be adaptable.

ICHIEFS: HOW CAN NEW RECRUITS MAKE THE MOST OF THEIR TRAINING?

COWGER: Be involved and invested. One thing I remember as a new firefighter was taking the initiative on my own to learn things. I would spend a considerable amount of time by myself looking over the various apparatus, learning where things were located on the apparatus, learning the process of how tools operated, what tool was used for what, and so forth. I would go over putting my gear on correctly, including the self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) and reviewing its operations. While I relied on the instructors to give me knowledge, I did stop learning just because they weren't there at the moment. Don't rely on someone else to "make" you learn — take some personal accountability to be as informed as you can about the job and the tasks and the understanding of why.

ICHIEFS: IS THE CURRENT ENVIRONMENT ENCOURAGING FOR NEW RECRUITS? WHY OR WHY NOT?

YANCEY: I think this is dependent on the organization. If the recruit training program is clearly providing the recruit with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be successful firefighters, then it is an encouraging environment. If the training program is not structured and lacks guidance, coaching, and mentoring by a training coordinator and company officers, then it is likely not an environment where recruits would feel encouraged and rather would likely feel unprepared and lost. If a recruit firefighter feels unprepared and lost in their recruit journey, they will likely look for new opportunities in other fire departments.

Within a volunteer fire department, if the training program is not structured and providing the volunteer recruit with the knowledge, skills, and abilities, I can almost assure you that your retention rate is low; they are not wasting their time with your department and will be heading

down the road to a department that will invest time and energy into preparing their firefighters to be safe and successful in their role. Also, it bears mentioning that volunteer recruits need to clearly understand what is expected of them to be a successful member of the organization (certification, JPR accomplishment, etc.) because the volunteer's time is valuable, and a successful volunteer recruit will want to know what is required of them in training and skills development.

COWGER: It certainly can be if you have some modern out-of-the-box thinking to make the training environment interesting and fun to learn in. No doubt there are times for some old-school processes and flat and simple hard work — it's what we have to do. But we should be able to put some spin into it to keep people interested and provide scenario-based training so that folks understand why they are going through the motions and that there is a desired end result. 💧


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Legislative Update:



Ken LaSala, IAFC Director of Government Relations and Policy

The Time to Act Is Now

Even though we are just approaching the end of 2023, the time for accomplishment in the 118th Congress already is starting to close. Once the presidential election starts in earnest next year, most of the votes in the House and Senate will involve political gamesmanship. So, from a practical perspective, we will have to work hard to pass legislation important to the fire and EMS legislation in the last quarter of 2023 and the first quarter of 2024.

Highlighted below are the important bills we must act on.

PRESERVE FUNDING FOR AFG, SAFER, AND THE USFA

The House and Senate are considering legislation to fund the

federal government for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024. The House Appropriations Committee passed its FY 2024 U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Appropriations bill (H.R. 4367) on June 21, while the Senate Appropriations Committee passed its companion bill (S. 2625) on July 27.

As shown in Figure 1, the Senate proposes cuts to the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) and Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant programs. Furthermore, it would not fully fund new initiatives at the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), including the new National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS). It is important to prevent these cuts to the AFG and SAFER grant programs

and the USFA. The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) is working with the other national fire service organizations to protect these programs. In addition, we ask IAFC members to contact their Senators (through our legislative action center at www.iafc.org/gr) to protect the funding for these programs.

PROTECT AFG AND SAFER FROM ELIMINATION

In addition to funding cuts, the AFG and SAFER grant programs face the prospect of being terminated on September 30, 2024. That is the sunset date in federal statute.

The Senate passed the Fire Grants and Safety Act (S. 870) on April 20 by a vote of 95-2. The bill would:

Figure 1: Proposed Funding for Federal Fire Service Programs (In Millions (\$))

Program	FY 2022 (Enacted)	FY 2023 (Enacted)	FY 2024 (Enacted)	FY 2024 (President's Request)	FY 2024 (House)	FY 2024 (Senate)
AFG	360	360	370	370	360	338.4
SAFER	360	360	370	370	360	338.4
USFA	53.212	60	72.8	60	72.8	59.556
UASI	740	615	711.184	711.184	615	578.1
SHSGP	645	520	601.186	616.186	530	488.8
US&R	37.832	37.832	37.8	37.832	40.832	37.832

- Authorize \$95 million for the USFA from FY 2024 through FY 2030;
- Authorize funding for the AFG and SAFER grant programs through FY 2030; and
- Delay the termination of the AFG and SAFER grant programs to September 30, 2032.

The House Science, Space, and Technology Committee held a hearing on the AFG, SAFER, and USFA programs on May 11, at which then-IAFC President and Board Chair Chief Donna Black testified. The committee then passed its version of the Fire Grants and Safety Act (H.R. 4090) on June 21 by a vote of 29-0. Because of the more restrictive House rules, the House bill is different from the Senate bill.

H.R. 4090 would:

- Authorize \$95 million for USFA for FY 2024 through FY 2028;
- Authorize \$750 million each for AFG and SAFER program for FY 2024 through FY 2028; and
- Delay the sunset for AFG and SAFER through September 30, 2030.

The Senate bill (S. 870) is the better piece of legislation for the fire service. Nevertheless, it will be challenging to pass any bill to reauthorize the AFG, SAFER, and USFA programs in the House because House rules require any increases in authorization levels to be matched with corresponding program cuts. The IAFC is asking its members to contact their representatives and

ask them to pass the Fire Grants and Safety Act (S.870/H.R. 4090.)

ENSURE THE FUTURE OF FIRSTNET

The First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) was established in 2012 to be a nationwide broadband network for public safety. Much like the AFG and SAFER grant programs, FirstNet also faces a sunset date. In this case, the sunset date would be in 2027.

Representative Lizzie Fletcher (D-TX) introduced legislation to preserve FirstNet by removing the sunset date. The bill only has three cosponsors, so a lot of work needs to be done. The IAFC asks all FirstNet subscribers to contact their representatives and ask them to maintain FirstNet by sponsoring H.R. 3366.

EXPAND ELIGIBILITY TO THE PSOB PROGRAM

Representative Bill Pascrell, Jr. (D-NJ) and Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) introduced legislation (the Honoring Our Fallen Heroes Act, H.R. 1719/S. 930) to allow the families of firefighters and other public safety officers who die or become disabled from cancer to be eligible for the federal Public Safety Officer's Benefits (PSOB) program. The bills are picking up support in Congress: H.R. 1719 has 53 cosponsors, and S. 930 has five cosponsors. Please ask your senators and representatives to support this important legislation.

REAUTHORIZE THE NATIONAL FIREFIGHTER CANCER REGISTRY

Congress created the National Firefighter Cancer Registry to better understand the cause of cancer in firefighters, who have a 9% increase in cancer diagnoses and a 14% increase in cancer-related deaths compared to the public. The authorization for the program expired at the end of FY 2022. Senator Bob Menendez (D-NJ) offered an amendment to the FY 2024 National Defense Authorization Act (S. 2226) to reauthorize the program from FY 2024 through FY 2028 and increase funding for the program to \$5.5 million for each year.



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REAUTHORIZE THE SIREN GRANT PROGRAM FOR RURAL EMS

Finally, the IAFC is working to reauthorize the Supporting and Improving Rural EMS Needs (SIREN) grant program. The program is located at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). It is designed to provide funding for procuring EMS supplies, recruiting personnel, and running EMS licensure classes. Only public and non-profit fire and EMS agencies are eligible to receive funding.

Senators Richard Durbin (D-IL) and Susan Collins (R-ME) introduced

the SIREN Reauthorization Act (S. 265) to extend the authorization of the SIREN grant program through FY 2028. Representative David Joyce (R-OH) introduced a bipartisan House companion bill (H.R. 4646). The bills also would remove the 10% matching grant requirement and clarify that the grant funds could be used to purchase naloxone and other drugs and devices for the emergency treatment of drug overdoses. The Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee passed S. 265 on June 15. The bill is ready for consideration by

the full Senate. Its House companion, H.R. 4646, has 10 cosponsors.

As you can see, we have a busy winter in Washington. I urge you to contact your representative and senators about these bills. As Congress becomes distracted by the presidential election, it will take a team effort to pass legislation to help America's fire and emergency services. You can keep up to date on federal legislative issues at www.iafc.org/gr. 📌

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

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Carrying the Legacy Forward



We wish to extend our heartfelt gratitude to each one of you. Your unwavering support and commitment to the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) have been instrumental in making our organization the paramount authority representing leaders in fire and emergency response worldwide.

At the IAFC, our mission is clear: we empower all-risk response leaders to create a safer world. Our membership embodies the spirit of expertise meeting excellence, and together, we are the driving force shaping the future of emergency response. As the premier organization dedicated to enhancing global preparedness, safeguarding communities, and fostering innovation, the IAFC serves as a beacon of unwavering dedication and support to our noble cause.

That is why we want to take this moment to recognize your unwavering

commitment to the IAFC. You are the heart and soul of our organization, and your dedication to the principles of all-risk response leadership is inspiring and invaluable. Your membership is not just a transaction; it's a testament to your belief in the mission and values of the IAFC. It signifies your commitment to continuous learning, collaboration, and staying ahead of the curve in the dynamic field of fire and emergency response.

As an IAFC member, you are part of an exclusive community that offers unparalleled benefits. But beyond the tangible advantages, your membership represents a shared vision of a safer world. It's a platform where expertise is celebrated, knowledge is shared, and excellence is fostered. Your active participation in IAFC events, conferences, and programs has been instrumental in creating an environment where ideas flourish, innovation thrives, and leaders are born. Your engagement with our community enriches not only your professional journey but also the collective progress of all-risk response leadership.

Our 150th anniversary is an opportunity to reflect on our rich history and honor the traditions that have shaped our identity. It's a moment to pay homage to the remarkable individuals who have devoted their lives to safeguarding

their communities. In celebrating our 150th anniversary, we remember that you, our members, are the heart and soul of our association. You are the torchbearers of our legacy and the architects of our future. Be inspired by the accomplishments of those who came before you, and let the limitless potential of innovation propel you forward.

We find ourselves at a pivotal moment, implementing the new Strategic Initiatives Plan adopted by your IAFC Board of Directors. This plan, rooted in your feedback and aspirations, is guiding our efforts now and in the coming years. It outlines critical objectives designed to empower you, the fire and emergency service professional, with the tools and knowledge necessary to address the evolving challenges of our field.

As we embrace the promise of a new year, we are filled with excitement for the incredible opportunities that lie ahead. Our dedication to empowering all-risk response leaders remains unwavering. Thank you for being a part of the IAFC community and for your continued support. Together, we will make a difference in the lives of those we are sworn to protect, and together, we will create a safer world for all.

Rob Brown

IAFC Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director



TEMPERATURE MONITORING SYSTEM

MEASURE – RECORD – REPLAY

Monitor conditions inside any training building or acquired structure and see real-time temperature changes on building floor plan heat maps. The system can also be used to enhance scale-model prop training by illustrating the temperatures inside closed compartments.

Thermocouples are placed inside the training environment and are plugged into the system. Quickly create floor plans or cross section views with the mapping feature. During the evolution, temperatures and a heat map display the real time conditions. The data can be viewed on any nearby tablet, laptop or smartphone (not included with system). After the evolution, scenarios can be replayed for debriefs and critiques.



Uses / Applications



- ▶ The Flashpoint Temperature Monitoring System can be used in any training scenario including live-fire evolutions in training buildings, acquired structures, even scale-model (doll house) props. These training events cost time and money to set up, why not have a means of capturing the lessons learned during the training for immediate and future learning enhancement?
- ▶ Display real-time interior conditions and enhance situational awareness for instructors and safety officers.
- ▶ Live fire conditions can change rapidly and may not be immediately evident to interior crews. Detect rapid changes in conditions or elevated temperatures and alert instructors and safety officers.
- ▶ Test new tools or tactics. Because time and temperature are recorded, you can compare evolutions and measure performance.
- ▶ Replay during debriefs and observe changes to conditions throughout the evolution. Flag key events such as crew entry, water application, ventilation and fire control.

Key Points

- **Portable**
The system packs up into a rugged hand-held carrying case.
- **Battery Powered**
Up to 8 hours of continuous operation per charge. Data Recording - Record and export time vs. temperature data for up to 10 thermocouples.
- **Heat Map Display**
Visualize temperature data in real time with heat map floor plan overlay.
- **BYOD Capable**
Create a WiFi network, independent of an internet connection, which trainees and observers can use to view heat map and temperature data.
(BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE)



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PLACE PORTABLE THERMOCOUPLES IN ANY BUILDING OR TRAINING PROP



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