

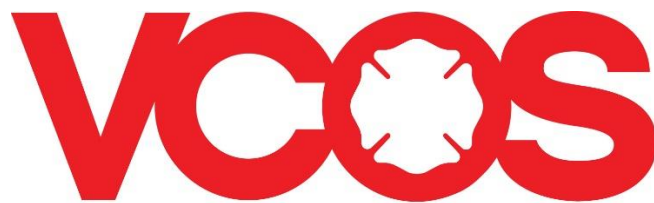
~ INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS ~

**VOLUNTEER & COMBINATION OFFICERS SECTION  
BYLAWS**

**Adopted June 2024**



*Officers Section*



Leaders in Critical Thinking

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## **ARTICLE I - NAME AND MISSION**

### **Section 1. Name**

This organization shall be known as the Volunteer & Combination Officers Section of the International Association of Fire Chiefs.

### **Section 2. Mission**

To develop and enhance effective, professional leaders of the volunteer and combination fire service by providing tools, resources, and representation to lead their organizations effectively.

## **ARTICLE II - MEMBERSHIP AND DUES**

### **Section 1. Section Membership Categories**

There are two categories of membership available within the Volunteer & Combination Officers Section, "Regular" section membership and "Affiliate" section membership.

A. **Regular section membership** is available to those individuals who are Regular, Associate or Departmental members of the IAFC as long as they maintain their Association dues. Failure to maintain Association membership will result in loss of section membership. These members of the section are eligible to vote on all section ballots. Eligibility to run for office is determined in Article V, Section 4.

B. **Regular section membership** is also available to IAFC Life members. IAFC Life members do not pay section dues. These members of the section are eligible to vote on all section ballots but may not hold office. To receive free section membership upon attainment of IAFC Life member status, the member must have been a dues-paying section member for at least five years prior to taking Life membership.

C. **Affiliate section membership** is available to all Affiliate members of the IAFC who wish to join the section as long as they maintain their Association dues. Failure to maintain Association membership will result in loss of section membership. Affiliate members pay the same section dues as IAFC members. Affiliate members are not eligible to vote or hold elective office but may be involved in the work of the section.

### **Section 2. Dues**

The annual section dues shall be set by the Board of Directors in an amount no greater than \$45.00 for Regular, Associate, Departmental or Affiliate members. Dues shall be payable in conjunction with the payment of the member's Association dues. Any member wishing to join the Section prior to the date of Association dues renewal shall pay the section dues upon joining, thereafter when the Association membership dues is paid.

## **ARTICLE III - SECTION OFFICERS**

### **Section 1. Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee of the Section shall consist of the Section Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary/Treasurer and the VCOS IAFC Director. Each officer shall have a term of office for one (1) year or until their successors are elected (See Article V, Section 7). Only at-large members of the Board of Directors are eligible to be on the Executive Committee in addition to the VCOS IAFC Director.

## **Section 2. VCOS IAFC Director**

The VCOS IAFC Director to the IAFC Board of Directors shall be selected by the current VCOS Board of Directors within two weeks of the annual meeting of every even numbered year. The term of office will be for two years. In the event of a vacancy in this position, the current VCOS Board of Directors will select the replacement to fulfill the remainder of the existing term of the position vacated. The VCOS IAFC Director to the IAFC Board of Directors is not subject to the Division election limitations. This individual must be an active regular member of the IAFC and VCOS and had served on the VCOS Board of Directors within the previous ten years.

## **Section 3. Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors shall consist of nine (9) members at-large, and the VCOS IAFC Director. At-large members shall have a term of three (3) years with three (3) to be elected each year. Not more than two (2) members at-large shall be elected from any single division of the IAFC. The immediate past chair will be appointed for a one-year term as a non-voting member to terminate at the following year's annual meeting. No member of the board can serve in more than one position on the VCOS Board at the same time. The VCOS Board of Directors by a simple majority vote may suspend this to allow an existing VCOS Board member to compete in another elected office within the IAFC. A VCOS Board member will not serve on two or more IAFC Section Boards of Directors and has the option to vacate the VCOS Board position or the additional position of serving on more than one IAFC Section's Board of Directors.

## **Section 4. Vacancies**

In the event of a vacancy occurring in the office of the Chair, the office shall devolve upon the Vice-Chair. In the event of a vacancy occurring in the office of the Vice Chair or Secretary/Treasurer, or in the event of a vacancy in the office of Chair when there is also a vacancy in the office of Vice Chair, the majority vote of the Section Board of Directors shall determine the selection of an individual who shall serve for the unexpired term. If the vacancy(s) in the office of member at large occurs within the time period of January 1 and April 15 of the current year, the VCOS Board will not appoint a replacement and will operate without the specific position(s) until the next election cycle.

## **Section 5. Unexpired Terms**

In the event that a member retires, resigns as chief officer or leaves the fire service while holding an elected office, the member may continue to hold said office until the expiration of the term of office.

## **Section 6. Removal from Office**

In the event that an officer is convicted of a felony while holding office, that officer shall be deemed to have forfeited his/her office and shall be removed from that office.

## **ARTICLE IV - DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS**

### **Section 1. Duties of the Chair**

The Chair shall:

- A. be the official representative and spokesperson of the Section,
- B. serve as the Chair of the Board of Directors,
- C. preside at the meetings of the Section and at the meetings of the Board of Directors,
- D. appoint committees as deemed necessary to conduct the business of the Section, and
- E. call special meetings of the Board of Directors as deemed necessary to accomplish the business of the section.

### **Section 2. Duties of the Vice Chair**

- A. assume the duties of the Chair in the absence or inability of the Chair to perform his/her duties,
- B. assist the Chair in conducting the business and policies of the Section, and
- C. perform such other duties as prescribed by the Board of Directors of the Section.

### **Section 3. Duties of the Secretary/Treasurer**

The Secretary/Treasurer shall:

- A. ensure the minutes of the Section meetings are produced,
- B. distribute the minutes in a timely fashion to the members of the Section and to the IAFC headquarters,
- C. maintain records of the monies of the Section that are collected, deposited and disbursed, and
- D. prepare an annual budget, consistent with the format of the IAFC budget, for submission to the Board of Directors.

### **Section 4. Duties of the VCOS IAFC Director**

The VCOS IAFC Director to the IAFC shall:

- A. represent the Section at the meetings of the IAFC Board of Directors,
- B. report the actions of the IAFC Board to the Section Board of Directors,
- C. present the Section's report at each of the IAFC Board of Directors meetings,
- D. take direction from the Section Board of Directors,
- E. be responsible to the Section Board of Directors,
- F. perform such other duties as prescribed by the Section Board of Directors; and
- G. Understand this position is representing the fire service as a whole versus total focus on VCOS issues and activities.

### **Section 5. Duties of the Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors shall:

- A. have general charge of the affairs of the Section,
- B. review the work of the Section and develop board policy for the Section, and
- C. amend or approve the budget prepared by the Secretary/Treasurer for submission to the IAFC Board of Directors.

## **Section 6. Duties of the Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee will serve as the primary leadership of the Section, and shall:

- A. coordinate all current projects,
- B. coordinate future projects,
- C. assign various directors to specific projects,
- D. review the annual budget and make recommendations to the board of directors for its approval, disapproval or change,
- E. study and evaluate the finances of the Association with the purpose of formulating plans for increasing revenues, and budgeting control of present and future finances, and
- F. carry out other duties assigned by the Board of Directors.

## **ARTICLE V - MEETINGS AND ELECTIONS**

### **Section 1. Meetings**

The Section shall meet annually at the annual conference of the International Association of Fire Chiefs or at an appropriate time within the month of the conference and/or allow for a virtual meeting with a 10 calendar days' notice to VCOS members. Other meetings may be held at the call of the Board of Directors of the Section or at the call of the Board of Directors of the IAFC.

### **Section 2. Quorum**

A simple majority of those present at the Annual Section Meeting and voting shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at all meetings of the Section.

### **Section 3. Elections Committee**

No later than February 15 of each year, the Chair shall appoint an Elections Committee of three (3) members, all of whom shall be current Regular members of the Section. The Chair or Vice-Chair may not be appointed.

### **Section 4. Eligibility for Office**

Any member of the Section seeking election to any office shall be a regular member of the Association and an active chief officer of a volunteer or combination Fire-Rescue or fire-based EMS agency. A combination agency consists of an active fire department with active emergency response volunteer firefighters.

### **Section 5. Elections**

An electronic ballot shall elect all members of the Board of Directors except for the VCOS IAFC Director.

### **Section 6. Election Process**

The VCOS election process will fit within the overall IAFC election process. Each year the VCOS Election Committee will notify VCOS members of the VCOS election timeline and specify the dates of the nomination period for members to submit their nominations to the VCOS board. The exact VCOS nomination period dates may differ from the IAFC's nomination period dates. Members wishing to be placed in nomination for office shall submit their name to the Elections Committee by the established deadline. Nominations received after the deadline will not be considered. A candidate may only run for one (1) position at a time.

The Elections Committee shall submit the list of nominations to the Secretary/Treasurer within seven days after the nomination period closes. If no more than one eligible member is nominated for any of the offices to be filled, the Secretary/Treasurer shall cast a ballot for those nominated and notify the members of the Section of the election of new officers. If more than one eligible member is nominated for any of the offices to be filled, then the Elections Committee shall arrange the sending of electronic ballots to all VCOS members

eligible to vote. The results of this election will be made official at the annual meeting of the Section.

### **Section 7. Divisional Representation**

If more than two (2) candidates for member-at-large are members of a single division of the IAFC, only the two (2) with the highest vote totals will be eligible to take office.

### **Section 8. Election of Board Officers**

Within fourteen (14) calendar days of the unofficial results of the election, the Chair will appoint an existing board member to assemble a slate of officers for the positions of Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary/Treasurer. This board member will poll the incoming board of directors within fourteen (14) calendar days of being appointed seeking their respective interests in seeking one of the three positions. Within twenty-one (21) calendar days prior to the annual meeting, the nominations board member will contact the incoming board with the slate of officers interested individuals for the respective positions that will be presented at the annual meeting. These three positions shall be selected by the members of the board of directors no later than thirty (30) calendar days from the date of the annual Section meeting.

## **ARTICLE VI - COMPATIBILITY WITH IAFC**

### **Section 1. Inconsistencies of Bylaws**

In any inconsistency between these Bylaws and the Constitution and Bylaws or policies of the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the latter shall apply. If such inconsistency is in question, the matter shall be referred to the Constitution, Bylaws, Resolutions Committee of the IAFC and if necessary, to the Board of Directors of the Association for a final resolution.

### **Section 2. Position Statements**

Any position statements prepared by the Board of Directors must be submitted to and receive approval from the IAFC Board of Directors before the position can be released outside the Association as per current IAFC policy.

### **Section 3. Setting Policy**

The IAFC Board of Directors has the responsibility and authority to set policy for the Association. The Section may adopt procedures for conduction of its business. All such procedures must be consistent with, and without conflict to, policies established by the IAFC Board of Directors or the Board of Directors.

## **ARTICLE VII - AMENDMENTS**

### **Section 1. Amendments to Bylaws**

The Section shall have the power to alter, amend, or revise these Bylaws provided:

- A. the amendment has been reduced to writing by the Section Board of Directors or a member of the Section and filed with the Secretary/Treasurer no later than January 1 of the year the amendment is to take effect,
- B. the amendment has been sent to the Chair of the IAFC Constitution, Bylaws, and Resolutions Committee no later than February 1 of the year the amendment is to take effect,
- C. the IAFC Elections Committee shall arrange to prepare and send an electronic ballot to all members eligible to vote, fitting within the overall IAFC election process, of the year the amendment is to take effect,
- D. the results of the vote have been presented at the annual meeting,
- E. a two thirds (2/3) majority of the members entitled to vote and voting, shall be necessary for the adoption of any such alteration, amendment, or revision, and
- F. all changes will become effective upon adoption unless otherwise provided.

## **Section 2. Amendments at Conference/Annual Meeting**

Nothing contained in the preceding section shall prevent the Section at the annual meeting, from amending any section of the Bylaws upon a four fifths (4/5) majority vote of the members entitled to vote and who are present and voting, provided that notice of such action shall be given in writing and printed copies made available to all Section members present at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the time when such amendment is considered. All amendments ratified at the conference must conform to IAFC rules and undergo review by the IAFC constitution and bylaws committee prior to adoption.

## **ARTICLE VIII - SECTION OPERATIONS**

### **Section 1. Order of Business**

The following order of business shall govern all meetings of the Section unless the order is suspended by majority vote of those members present and voting:

- A. call to order,
- B to modify the agenda if necessary,
- C. officers report,
- D. committee reports,
- E. old business,
- F. elections (if necessary),
- G. new business,
- H. good and welfare of the Section, and
- I. adjournment.

### **Section 2. Rules of Order**

The rules contained in the current Robert's Rules of Order, shall govern the Section in all cases to which they are not inconsistent with the Bylaws of the Section or the Constitution and Bylaws of the International Association of Fire Chiefs.

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Chief Timothy S. Wall – VCOS Chair Mark Light – IAFC CEO/Executive Director

Amended August 2001

Amended August 2002

Amended September 2006

Amended August 2007

Amended August 2008

Amended August 2012

Amended April 2016

Amended April 2018

Chief Chuck Flynn, VCOS Chair – Rob Brown, IAFC CEO/Executive Director

Amended August 2022

Amended March 2023 – Technical Changes Only

Amended June 2024