



Florida Division of State Fire Marshal Quarterly Newsletter

THE DESIRE TO SERVE – THE COURAGE TO ACT – THE ABILITY TO PERFORM

**FLORIDA DIVISION OF STATE FIRE MARSHAL
REPRESENTING CFO ALEX SINK**

From The Desk of Director Julius Halas

30 September 2010

Volume 3, Issue 2

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Director Julius Halas

Florida State Fire Marshal Employees Receive Special Recognition - Congratulations!

It is always a pleasure to see my staff recognized for their hard work. Over the past two quarters, the State Fire Marshal's Office had two members who were acknowledged during the Department Employee Recognition Program Ceremony held in August. Please join me in congratulating Captain Janet Hartman, Bureau of Fire & Arson Investigations and Records Technician Walter Gee, Bureau of Fire Prevention.



Pictured L to R: Captain Hartman and Chief Corbett.

Captain Janet Hartman was the recipient of the Exceptional Contribution Award for leading the Bureau to receive Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation in an unprecedented six months.

Mr. Gee has consistently provided an excellent work product. His level of professionalism and courtesy is evident in his interaction with co-workers and external customers. In the past year, he has handled licenses for 566 current Fire Equipment Dealers and produced photo identification cards for 2,172 fire equipment permittees. He also processed 495 new applications for licenses and permits. He continues to constantly demonstrate a readiness to learn and a positive attitude.



Pictured L to R: AD Merritt, Casia Sinco, Walter Gee, and Director Halas.

Links

State Fire Marshal

<http://www.myfloridacfo.com/sfm/>

Bureau of Fire and Arson

http://www.myfloridacfo.com/sfm/bfai/bfai_index.htm

Bureau of Forensic Fire and Explosive Analysis

http://www.myfloridacfo.com/sfm/ab/BFEA_index.htm

Bureau of Fire Prevention

http://www.myfloridacfo.com/SFM/bfpr/bfpr_index.htm

Bureau of Fire Standards and Training

http://www.myfloridacfo.com/SFM/bfst/bfst_index.htm

Leadership Messages and Notes

From the Office of Assistant Director Jeff Merritt



Lieutenant Colonel Jeff Merritt

This message is sent with mixed emotions as I announce my retirement from the State Fire Marshal's Office. It has been my honor to serve the citizens of the State of Florida for 30 years in law enforcement and public service, spending the last 19 years with the State Fire Marshal's Office. It has been a blessing to serve these last few years as the Assistant Division Director of this great agency. I stood proudly beside three of our bureau chiefs, watching the hard work of their teams rewarded with various accreditations. I have served side-by-side with county, state, and federal agencies, working toward the positive development of this Division that I am very proud of where we are today.

I will forever hold close to me the incredible memories of working fire scenes in the early morning hours along with my fellow detectives in the Bureau of Fire and Arson Investigations. My career has been filled with partnerships and relationships that I will cherish always. As I begin a new chapter in my life I can't help but say "thank you" for being a part of the fond memories in my book of life. Thank you for your support, guidance and encouragement throughout the years. I had opportunities that have afforded me both professional and personal growth that will remain with me every day of my life. I wish each and every one of you all the best life has to offer you both personally and professionally. It has been a great ride!

Chief John Corbett, Bureau of Fire and Arson Investigations



Chief John Corbett

This quarter we had the distinct honor of recognizing Arson Awareness Week during a press conference held with CFO & State Fire Marshal Alex Sink, Tampa Fire Rescue Chief Dennis Jones, and Florida Advisory Committee on Arson Prevention (FACAP) President James Smallwood in Tampa, Florida. The event was a success as CFO and SFM Sink placed an heavy emphasis on the effectiveness of working with law enforcement and our professional firefighters to fight arson in our communities, sending a strong message that Arson robs people and communities of their most valuable assets—their lives and property.

While we continue to battle the crime of Arson, we are fortunate to have partners around the State such as local fire and law enforcement services, state and federal

organizations and the private sector, supporting this common goal. Immediately following the press conference, members attended an educational demonstration by the Tampa Bay Arson Task Force (comprised of the State Fire Marshal's Office, Hillsborough County State Attorney's Office, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, Tampa Fire Department, Tampa Police Department, and the Tampa Fire Marshal's Office) to learn how to properly board and secure a vacant home. This demonstration was important and timely since a nearby neighborhood had suffered a number of losses in the past year as a result of arson and other crimes of opportunity. It was designed to provide further assurance to the public that the Task Force was diligently working all facets of the arsons to find those responsible for such devastating actions.

Statistics show an estimated average of 316,600 intentional fires are reported annually each year causing injuries to 7,825 fire-fighters and civilians. In addition to needless injury and death, an estimated \$1.1 billion in direct property loss occurs. Last year our office made 390 arrests for arson which is four percent above the national average.

Leadership Messages and Notes

Chief Carl Chasteen, Bureau of Forensic Fire and Explosives Analysis

In the last issue we reported that we were very close to achieving our accreditation through the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors Laboratory Accreditation Board (ASCLD-LAB *International*). On July 26 we received formal notice that our accreditation in fire debris, explosives, and unknown chemical analysis was approved. This accreditation shows that we met the requirements of both ASCLD-LAB International (who specializes in the forensic applications of laboratory accreditation) as well as the International Standards Organization's "General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories" (ISO/IEC 17025:2005).

The accreditation is assessed on the laboratory's management (the organization of the laboratory, the quality system, document control, processing requests, use of outside providers, purchasing of supplies, customer service, complaint handling, control of non-conforming work, plans for improvement, corrective actions, preventive actions, records control, internal auditing, and management review) and technical categories (personnel, facility, methods, equipment, sampling, handling of evidence, quality assurance tests, and reporting protocols). At a reception held on September 2, 2010, Executive Director of ASCLD-LAB International, Mr. Ralph Keaton, formally presented our accreditation certificate. This is just our first step. We must now pass an annual assessment and a full accreditation review every five years. Many who have tread this path before us have explained that getting the accreditation is the easy part. The hard part is maintaining it. With the quality of the personnel of the Bureau, I am certain that we will be successful.



Bureau Chief, Carl Chasteen

Chief James Goodloe, Bureau of Fire Prevention

Seasonal Celebrations with Sparklers!

Sparklers can be seen in the eyes of most Floridians as American as apple pie. Twice each year the Division of State Fire Marshal's, Bureau of Fire Prevention gears up for the significant increase in sparkler sales and sparkler use related inquiries. This flurry of activity occurs during the seasonal retail sales periods of June 20th through July 5th and December 10th through January 2nd.

New Year's Day and Independence Day are two periods of time that call for a celebration each year. The increase in activity begins with the onset of neighborhood tents and stands advertising the sale of sparklers and similar flaming entertainment products. They include devices under such names as glow worms, snappers, booby traps, and trick noisemakers. Each sparkler device which is legal in Florida must be approved by the State Fire Marshal before they can be sold to the public. On the State Fire Marshal's website www.myfloridacfo.com/sfm, the list of approved sparklers is available for review by anyone with internet access. The approved list is updated during the month of February to include the array of new products introduced each year.

While sparklers handled with some basic safety precautions in mind are relatively safe to use, they still account for over 32% of fireworks related emergency room visits. Sparklers should always be used with adult supervision and a pail of water should be nearby to fully extinguish or cool the remnants. Most sparklers are designed only to throw off showers of sparks however; they can reach temperatures that may exceed 1200 degrees. Now that the Independence Day activities are behind us, the Bureau is now gearing up for the next surge over the New Year Day holiday period.



Bureau Chief James Goodloe

Leadership Messages and Notes

Chief Barry Baker, Bureau of Fire Standards and Training



Bureau Chief, Barry Baker

Succession Planning and Mentoring - Developing Future Leaders

When added to our Strategic Plan last year, few people understood the concepts of succession planning and mentoring. In a nutshell, Succession Planning provides the ability to identify, assess and develop talent at every level across the organization and ensures continuity of leadership. Succession Planning helps managers identify, prepare, and track candidates for placement, advancement, and promotion. As key positions open up in the Division or Department, employees who are involved in formalized Succession Planning efforts often rise to the top, being familiar with the job duties of the vacated position due to Succession Planning efforts. A succession system can also highlight areas where a potential candidate may need reinforcement and project a timeline for readiness.

Earlier this year our senior leadership team received a detailed briefing on Succession Planning and Mentoring at a staff retreat in Tallahassee. The long term plan is to roll out these processes to all, providing the opportunity to those who wish to advance tangible direction to aid their desires. Succession Planning is often the key to a long term organizational success. With Succession Planning, employees will find that they are better equipped to work within the structure the leaders in their organization have implemented. When mentoring is a part of your company's Succession Planning strategy, you will find that it is possible to create contentedness within the work place, a high level of job satisfaction, and a high level of employee retention. Mentoring is the key to creating a strong leadership Succession Plan on many levels because it addresses the following points:

- Mentoring helps to bring the right staff on board and up to speed quickly. On some levels, this is because leaders work as a group and create a team while others view mentoring as a means to help ensure those who become a part of the organization learn and understand their position quickly, knowing that they can advance as they are ready to do so.
- Mentoring ensures that employees are more satisfied with their positions. Simply put, those who are involved in a mentoring program in the workplace understand what they are doing and feel good about doing it, which ultimately leads to high levels of employee retention.
- Mentoring ensures greater levels of productivity and higher quality work. Because members of your staff will be comfortable with the position that they are filling and because they will have easy access to those who can answer questions when needed, fewer errors will be made and work will be completed in a more timely manner.
- Mentoring ensures that you staff will have increased motivation. When a company's employees know that they are able to do the job well and that there is room for growth, they are more likely to commit to the position and to the growth within the organization. When employees truly understand the potential for career growth, they become more committed to the company and most likely will set goals and become more willing to help others succeed.
- With a mentoring program as a part of your leadership succession strategy, you will find that your organization will be positioned to have a team in place -- a team in which the staff members work together, give their best, and recognize that, as time goes on, they will have the opportunity to grow into leadership roles. Although the process requires a significant commitment of time and energy, the organization, mentors, and their protégés stand to gain significant benefits from such a system.

I encourage each of you to monitor the upcoming classes being offered and to take advantage of learning more about Succession Planning and Mentoring.

Bureau of Fire & Arson Investigations

Northeast Region News

Homicide/Arson Investigations

On December 13, 2008, the Clay County Fire Rescue responded to a residential structure fire at 3159 Dothan Road in Green Cove Springs, Florida. During the fire departments suppression activities, a deceased victim was located inside the residence. Lieutenant Stephens, Detectives Jerry Baker, Robert Redding and Canine Molly responded to the scene, along with the Clay County Sheriff's Office. Examination of the scene revealed that Maria Ruiz, a 49 year old Hispanic female was murdered and the fire was set to cover up the crime. Detectives Redding and Canine Molly discovered ignitable liquids throughout the scene. The subsequent investigation revealed a suspect, Leo Kaczmar III, and a warrant was obtained for his arrest.



On December 24, 2008, Leo Kaczmar III was arrested for Murder and Arson to a dwelling and was taken into custody without incident.

On August 12, 2010, Kaczmar was convicted in Clay County Circuit Court for First Degree Murder, First Degree Arson and Attempted Sexual Battery. The jury recommended the death penalty. The final sentencing will take place at a later date.



Leo Kaczmar, III

Smoke Detectors - Fire Fatalities and Injuries

One of the largest concerns and topics of discussion among law enforcement and fire service personnel are ways to prevent fire loss, fire related deaths, and injuries. Even though there has been a decrease in actual fire-related deaths, it still remains a major problem in our society. Many residential fire-related deaths are preventable.

Smoke alarms have saved thousands of lives in the United States since their introduction and widespread use during the past two decades. The good news is that more than 90% of homes in the United States now have at least one smoke alarm. The bad news is that a substantial proportion of those smoke alarms do not work. In on-site surveys of homes with smoke alarms, approximately 25% to 30% of the alarms did not function when tested. Some failures were due to malfunction of the alarm itself while others were found to have a dead battery or no battery at all.

The State Fire Marshal's Office has worked 43 fire related deaths this year. Only 15 of the households reportedly had smoke detectors and it is unknown if they were in working condition at the time of the fire.

As responsible agencies, we need to maintain programs to assist citizens in recognizing and learning the values that an early warning device provides. We must continue to educate citizens of Florida in the proper installation of the smoke detectors. Units not properly installed will provide a false sense of security. The manufacturer's installation instructions as well as the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA 72) guidelines provide proper installation of smoke alarms. Our local fire departments often sponsor programs that supply and install free smoke detectors to local residents. The new smoke detectors now provide a longer lasting battery that could last up to 10 years.

The danger of fires and their destructive force will always create a peril to lives and property. The use of properly installed and maintained smoke detectors save lives and reduce property loss. It is imperative that we continue to educate the public on the importance of this early warning devise. Information in this article was obtained from the National Fire Protection Association by Crime Intelligence Analyst Sylvia Mathis.

Bureau of Fire & Arson Investigations

South Central Region News

Serial Arsonist Rein of Criminal Activity Squashed!

July 2010 brought closure to a series of arsons in northern Polk County and ended an exhaustive investigation that lasted several months, beginning in February of 2010. On February 11, 2010, Haines City Fire Rescue responded to a fire set to pallets outside the structure of the Orange Ring Inc. packaging plant in Haines City. This fire was determined to be intentionally set and was the first of at least five separate fires that were ultimately attributed to the same perpetrator.

A few days later, a second fire occurred to a semi-trailer at a tire shop across the street from the Plant. A suspect was identified after he was found having a seizure at an abandoned restaurant one block from the fire scene. The suspect was identified and determined to live in the immediate area. During an interview at a local hospital, the suspect placed himself at the Orange Ring Plant at the time of the first fire, yet he denied any involvement in either fires.

It was discovered during initial research that the State Fire Marshal's Office already knew the suspect, David Giles, from prior fires that occurred in 1994. A pattern was recognized by Lake Wales State Fire Marshal Detectives, and an intense investigation began. Unresolved previous cases were reviewed with the State Attorney's Office who felt that older cases filed under the "Williams Rule" —in which relevant evidence of similar crimes are admissible in jury trials to show motive, intent, knowledge, or methods and allows prosecutors to "link" a series of criminal acts and allows prosecution under a single umbrella of probable cause—could be reviewed.

In March, 2010 a dumpster fire occurred twice at the trailer park where Giles lived. Prior to the fires occurring, Giles requested Haines City Officer's to Baker Act him due to "voices in his head". At that time, no direct connection could be proven with the dumpster fires.

Later in March, SFM detectives were requested to assist the Haines City Police Department with a fire that occurred at an abandoned Sonic which happened to be the same abandoned restaurant Giles was found suffering from a seizure a month earlier. He was detained and interviewed and eventually confessed to the Sonic fire. He was arrested on the charge of Arson. Damage to the restaurant was estimated at \$3,500. Over the next several months multiple interviews were conducted with the suspects' family, neighbors, and the suspect himself. During these interviews Giles confessed to another fire that occurred in 2008 that, at the time was considered accidental on the basis of his mental capacity.

In June and July, 2010, more chargers were filed against Giles. Detectives from the Lake Wales office have discussed the charges with the State Attorney's Office who has agreed to a series of mental evaluations for the suspect. The Lake Wales office detectives were successful in determining a pattern of escalation and the suspect responsible for the arsons.



It is hopeful that the efforts made, and ultimate arrest, while working these cases will prevent the arsonist from ever having the opportunity to harm life or property of the citizens of Florida again, whether it be through imprisonment or civil commitment.

Bureau Detectives worked closely and collaboratively with local authorities on putting this case together that eventually cleared several substantial fires as well as a number of "nuisance" fires that placed public safety personnel in harms way unnecessarily.

Good Job by Team Lake Wales!!



Bureau of Fire Prevention

Prevention Happenings

By: Michael Cox, Fire Protection Specialist – Tampa Office

March 31, 2010, was Raymond Mehaffey's final day as a member of the Tampa Prevention Office. When I asked him what he was going to miss the most Raymond said; "I am really going to miss the people.....(along with a little smile and chuckle).....but not enough to stay".

Raymond winds up a 38 year association with the fire service. He served 22 years with the Tampa Fire Department where he retired as a Captain. Not satisfied with retirement, Raymond became a senior inspector with the Florida Department of Agency Health Care Administration and then joined the SFM's Office after ten years. He has worked in the Tampa office for the past six years. Recently, Raymond was heard saying, "this time, I am ready." Prevention supervisor Augie Valdes stated, "I am losing a good friend as well as a good inspector. Raymond will be sorely missed". Retirement will find Raymond out on the golf course or on his boat fishing. Some travel is also in the offing and he will continue his volunteer work at church. It has also been rumored that he is working on a book titled *1001 Ways to Prepare Chicken*.



Staff Updates

John Jones, known as "JR" recently joined the staff following a career spanning 25 years at the Tampa Fire Department. JR is a certified Fire Safety Inspector and decided to get back into the fire service after just a few short months of retirement.

Carlos Suescun, after serving over 18 years as a Boiler Inspector for the State, has taken on a new position as a Fire Protection Specialist.

Fire Protection Specialist Mike Cox represented the State Fire Marshal's Office at the Unified Command Center in Mobile, Alabama, during the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. He stated, "it was quite an experience and one we don't often have the opportunity to be part of."

Also over the past few months, the Prevention Office represented State Fire Marshal & CFO Sink at two hurricane expos. Mike Cox staffed a display with a representative of Consumer Affairs for an expo in St. Petersburg in early June.

Several hundred people stopped by to pick up fire safety information. Consumer Affairs was responsible for the second event in Tampa late in June. Supervisor Augie Valdes and Fire Protection Specialists Carlos Suescun and Mike Cox made a presentation about staffing the Emergency Operations Center and provided fire and hurricane safety information.



Transfer

Boiler Inspector Kevin Burke has recently transferred from Orlando to the Ft. Myers office. Kevin has worked for the State for 3 years, however, has over 30 years in the field.

Bureau of Forensic Fire & Explosive Analysis

Bureau Receives International Award

By: Carl Chasteen

The International Association of Chiefs of Police announced that the Bureau of Forensic Fire and Explosives Analysis (BFFEA) was the 2010 winner of the August Vollmer **Excellence in Forensic Science Award** for “Enhancement of Forensic Capability by a Forensic Science Provider”. They were nominated for this award by Deputy Chief Financial Officer Brian London based on the Bureau’s continuing development of improving the quality and timeliness of its analyses for customers. The Bureau’s goal of seeking to return analytical results within less than two weeks to the investigator is based on its philosophy that results are needed by the investigator while the case is open and fresh in their mind. Laboratory results need to be used as an investigative tool in addition to providing direct evidence when the case is at trial.



In a recent evidence collection class taught at the United States Fire Academy, students (who were seasoned investigators) were questioned about their typical turnaround time for fire debris analysis reports. The students, comprised of individuals from across the United States, responded “two to three months”; one student indicated that it could take as long as eighteen months to receive results from his state laboratory. When results are delayed for an extended period of time, the analysis is no longer a significant factor in the investigation. When processed early in the investigation, the results may be utilized to establish the suspect’s access or exposure to the ignitable liquid used to set the fire or be used in early interviews and interrogations. The forensic report may only be used during a trial as prima facie evidence that the fire was not accidental.



Since 1992, the Florida State Fire Marshal, through the BFFEA, has recognized the importance of laboratory results being concluded in a timely manner and strived to lower the turnaround time for analyses of fire debris evidence. After the construction of a new facility equipped with state-of-the-art instrumentation and hiring a new staff of scientists, the average turnaround time for fire debris analyses was lowered to 18.5 days for the period measured from July 1, 1992 to July 1, 1993. Since then the average turnaround has dropped even further to 7.7 days from July 1, 2008 to July 1, 2009. This is a 58.4% reduction in turnaround time and a staggering 54.3% increase in the number of samples processed. This speedy turnaround ensures that the fire debris results get to the investigator in sufficient time to be factored into the preliminary investigation.

During FY2008/2009, the BFFEA began conducting an annual customer satisfaction survey. The Bureau received approximately half returned surveys sent to customers. One question in the survey was “how useful the BFFEA fire debris analysis reports were for completion of investigations?”: Over 51% of the respondents rated the reports “extremely useful”. Statistics show that the BFFEA has improved fire debris analysis in the State of Florida. The reduction in turnaround, processing of significantly more evidence by the staff, and the rating of “extremely useful” in completion of the investigations show a clear enhancement of forensic capability.

The Bureau was formally recognized at the IACP Conference in Orlando, Florida on October 24, 2010.

Bureau of Fire Standards & Training

Florida State Fire College Hosts Urban Search and Extraction Training United States Army Reserve Command (USARC) Urban Search and Extraction Training Program

Members of the United States Army Reserve Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) Consequence Management Response Force (CCMRF) recently completed the USARC Urban Search and Extraction Training Program presented by Safety Solutions Incorporated (SSI), Advanced Technical and Educational Consultants, Inc. (ATEC), and the Florida State Fire College (FSFC) in Ocala, Florida.

This training program, which lasted 65 days, prepares soldiers in the location, extrication, and initial medical stabilization of victims trapped by natural and man made events. The Program of Instruction is presented in accordance with National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) 1006 *Standard for Rescue Technician Professional Qualifications*. The Soldiers were trained to the Technician level in all five disciplines identified by the UN's International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) to signify an Urban Search and Rescue Team. Those disciplines include Confined Space, Structural Collapse, Trench, Rope, and Vehicle/Machinery Rescue. Additional training was conducted to incorporate a response to a simulated Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) terrorist attack and/or natural release of a hazardous material associated with these types of events.

The search and extraction element is just one part of the overall USARC CCMRF training and this task is assigned to the Fire Fighters from an Army Reserve Engineer Battalion. Other Reserve elements are responsible for the decontamination, medical treatment, and command and control of the Response Force.

The command and control team directs the overall activities of the CCMRF and coordinates with the Joint Task Force and the on-scene Incident Commander to determine its incident priorities and how to most effectively deploy the Search and Extraction element. The USARC Search and Extraction Element may operate independently or as an additional resource assisting Local, State or Federal Urban Search & Rescue Teams already operating at an incident.



Retired Delray Beach Fire-Rescue Battalion Chief and Vice President of Operations for ATEC, Inc., Richard M. Murphy said, "Because the Soldiers have been trained to the Technician level they are able to provide support at the same level as a Local, State or Federal civilian urban search and rescue team. This is the main difference between the USARC CCMRF Search and Extraction Element and a NGB CERFP Search and Extraction Element that is only trained to the operation level."

Bureau of Fire Standards & Training

It's a New Brand World!

Those jogging shoes that you're wearing -- one look at the distinctive swoosh on the side tells everyone who's got you branded. Or, the coffee travel mug you're carrying -- ok, so you're a Starbucks woman! The T-shirt with the distinctive Champion "C" on the sleeve, the blue jeans with the prominent Levi's rivets... the list can go on and on.

Big companies understand the importance of brands. And, so does the staff of the Bureau of Fire Standards and Training (BFST) at the Florida State Fire College!

But, what is a "Brand"?

At the BFST, a brand is the embodiment of how we interact with our customers every day – in the training we provide, how we communicate, and how we serve our customers across all functions of the Bureau.

An organization's brand can be defined by its employees when they answer the phone as well as by the music its customers listen to when placed on hold. For every finely worded public statement by the Public Information Officer, the brand is also defined by upbeat customer comments overheard in the Fire College hallway or by the students willingly returning to the Florida State Fire College to attend additional courses.

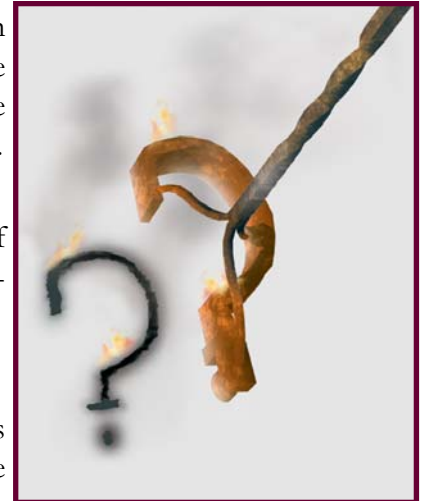
When a customer comes in contact with a brand, they are like a sponge; absorbing sights, sounds, and feelings. And, once these sights, sounds, and feelings are held in the minds of the customer; they may stay forever. Some organizations find it difficult to gain complete control over their brand, however at the Bureau of Fire Standards and Training, we work hard to guide and influence the entire concept.

The Brand's Creed

In June 2010, the Bureau formed a Brand Development Team with the goal of developing a comprehensive Branding Strategy. The team's first (and most important) task was to identify and establish the Bureau's Core Values. The Core Values represent the operating philosophies and principles that guide the Bureau's internal conduct as well as its relationship with the external world. The employees of BFST identified their Core Values to include: Teamwork, Respect, Equitability, Accountability, and Integrity. Though these Core Values are not specifically called out to BFST customers during every transaction; they are evident in every aspect of the Bureau's business routine, from customer service to training classes to teleconferences and to the treatment of BFST employees and strategic partners.

Consideration for these values is never taken lightly because these values represent the "BFST's Creed", and function as the cornerstone for developing its Mission Statement. While it is possible that the BFST Mission Statement may change from time to time, the Bureau's Core Values should never change.

Once the Bureau adopted its Core Values, the journey towards developing a meaningful Mission Statement and Vision Statement began. Simply put, a Mission Statement succinctly answers the question, "Why do we exist?", whereas the Vision Statement answers the question, "Where do we want to go?"



Bureau of Fire Standards & Training

It's a New Brand World! *(Continued)*

To ensure a successful outcome, the Team conducted comprehensive and objective research involving; the Florida Statutes governing the Bureau, as well as the Florida State Fire College, the Bureau's and Fire Colleges strengths and weaknesses, internal and external customers, and the potential for growth and new direction.

The Target Audience Holds the Keys to Your Brand's Success

The most challenging (and most important) research involved identifying the internal and external customers and understanding their needs and desires. Knowing our customers and truly understanding their needs is invaluable in the development of an effective Mission Statement and Vision Statement. The information derived from this research has also provided insight into how the Bureau can continue engaging the customer in a relevant and consistent manner.

An example of this on-going customer engagement can be seen in these customer-focused initiatives kicked-off at the Florida State Fire College in August 2010. At the beginning of each week, members of the BFST Staff visit each classroom to speak directly with the students about "what's new" at the Fire College and at the BFST. Students are given an opportunity to participate in a "Brown Bag Discussion" with the Standards Section Manager. The goal of this session is to provide students the opportunity to ask questions about such subjects as certifications, accreditations, or how the Florida Statutes might affect them.

Every Thursday, the Bureau Chief and one or two Staff Members schedule a lunch discussion with a student representative from each class. Assigned on the first day of class, the student representatives are asked to poll their classmates during the week and to bring a list of grievances and compliments to the Thursday Meeting. The feedback received at these meetings is responsible for actions ranging from adding healthier selections to the vending machines to an initiative requesting wireless internet access at the Fire College.

Developing the Mission Statement

Once the research had been completed and now knowing the BFST's strengths and weakness', our customer's expectations and the Bureau's and Fire College's potential for growth; the Team established our Mission Statement – our reason for existing!



Mission Statement — *By knowing their needs and exceeding their expectations; We enable the success of Florida's Fire and Emergency Services Community!*

The BFST Mission Statement contains only nineteen words, but these are extremely powerful and memorable words! Most notable, these words are not only a reminder to all BFST employees and our customers of why the BFST exists, these words are our promise of value to our customers!

Bureau of Fire Standards & Training

It's a New Brand World! *(Continued)*

Winning their Hearts and Minds

The goal of the Bureau of Fire Standards and Training at the Florida State Fire College staff is to convey an engaging, unique, relevant, and consistent message to our customers. Our customers already expect “good service” from us. This “good service” isn’t an engaging message nor is it unique. Exceptional Service will be the norm! To achieve this goal of providing exceptional customer service, constant and effective communication with our customers is essential. In fact, this philosophy is quite evident in the BFST Vision Statement.

Vision Statement — *We will be known as a customer-driven organization, delivering an unrivaled learning advantage to Florida’s Fire and Emergency Services educators and students... passionate about operational excellence, collaboration, and stakeholder success!*

In closing, an important aspect of an effective brand is to create a positive emotional attachment to the brand which creates a response in its audience without the audience directly experiencing the service. Think Godiva chocolates for a moment: the very name, perhaps even the logo, conjures up an image of sinful indulgence. Yes, it represents chocolate or a dessert, but it is the feeling and the anticipation of that feeling that the brand conveys most compellingly.

Positive emotional bonding comes from a mutually beneficial relationship built on intrigue, trust, understanding, and support. These are qualities that often separate colleagues from friends, and friends from family and are the basis of the Bureau of Fire Standards and Training at the Florida State Fire College BRAND.

If you have any comments or questions about the Branding Initiative at the Florida State Fire College, please contact patrick.giacobbe@myfloridacfo.com

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Mission Statement

"To reduce the loss of life and property to fire and other disasters statewide through internal and external leadership, standards and training, prevention and education, and fire and arson investigation."

Visit Us On the Web !!!

<http://www.myfloridacfo.com/sfm/index.htm>

The Division of State Fire Marshal is located within the Department of Financial Services, where Alex Sink not only serves as Florida's Chief Financial Officer but also as Florida's State Fire Marshal.

The Division of State Fire Marshal is dedicated to providing the highest quality services to all of our customers, from local fire departments who request our assistance with conducting fire investigations to citizens who want to attend one of the finest fire training colleges in the state. Our Headquarters is located in Tallahassee, Florida; however, we have numerous field offices located across the state to help us serve our customers better.

Report Arson; Rewards up to \$2,500



In cooperation with the Florida Advisory Committee on Arson Prevention

Call Anonymously 1-877-662-7766

