

Firefighters Employment, Standards and Training Council Meeting  
 Ocala, Florida  
 October 9, 2008

**ROLL CALL:**

**PRESENT:**

<b><u>NAME</u></b>	<b><u>REPRESENTING:</u></b>	<b><u>TERM ENDING:</u></b>
James Angle Palm Harbor Special Fire Control Dist.	FL Association of Special Districts	10-2010 (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)
William Bryson Miami Fire Department	FL Fire Chiefs' Association	10-2010 (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)
Julie Downey Davie Fire Rescue	State Fire Marshal	6-30-2010 (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)
Greg Gay	State Fire Marshal	11-21-2010 (1 <sup>st</sup> term)
Dr. Ron Nutter	State Fire Marshal	6-30-2010 (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)
Jon Pasqualone Fl Fire Marshals and Inspectors Assoc.	FL Fire Marshals & Inspectors Assoc.	10-2010 (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)
Laurie Sweeney Orange County F/R Dept.	FL Professional Firefighters	6-30-2010 (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)
Charles "Scotty" R. Taylor Gainesville Fire Rescue	FL Professional Firefighters	10-2010 (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)
Ron Williams Lake County Vo-Tech	State Fire Marshal	10-11-2010 (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)

**ABSENT:**

John Drago City of Longwood	FL League of Cities	10-2010 (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)
Rick Talbert South Walton Fire District	FL Fire Chiefs' Association	01-13-2010 (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)

The Firefighters Employment, Standards and Training Council meeting was called to order at 2:04 p.m.

On a motion duly made, the minutes from the Firefighters Employment, Standards and Training Council meeting held on July 25, 2008 were approved.

Motion carried.

On a motion duly made, Chief William Bryson was voted official Chairman of the Council.

**REPORT FROM DIVISION:** *given by Director Hallman*

Director Hallman had nothing further to add to his Division Report from the earlier (FFIRS) meeting. He asked that each of the council members review the new chart listed on the July minutes showing each member's term ending date and to make note of any needed changes.

**REPORT FROM THE BUREAU:** *given by Bureau Chief Dave Casey*

Good News:

Henry Sheffield is now on-board as one of the Bureau's new full time instructors.

The Bureau has already approved Karl Thompson to begin at the end of the month.

There are two more instructors who are waiting for approval and who will hopefully be on-board very shortly.

These new hires will bring the Fire College up to full staff for instructors.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

69A-37 Revisions:

The public hearing process has been completed. Everything was submitted for final advertisement and has gone to the Joint Administrative Procedures Committee (JAPC). JAPC has flagged about nine items that are being worked through with their council right now. None of the items are substantial changes, mostly punctuation. In revisions, some of the section numbers changed and were not reflected so that is being changed. Several of the forms listed for revision in the upcoming process JAPC is requiring be changed now. There has been a change in Ch. 120, F.S. pertaining to how rules are developed and the adoption process. One of those revision states that the forms have to accompany the process as it goes through. Although these changes were submitted before this law was changed, we still have to meet the new law. Form changes are all minor and are mostly changes to language. The form changes should be completed within the week. Worst case scenario would be that we will have to advertise the forms as a change. The changes would have to be advertised in Florida Administrative Weekly.

Director Hallman stated that at the last meeting, all council members had a copy of 69A-37 including all changes. At that meeting, the council voted to add 50 hours of physical training (25 hrs. Part 1, 25 hrs. Part 2). If those hours had been added in, the process would have had to begin from the beginning. Due to the time it takes for changes to move through the system the 50 hours will be added/discussed at the next rule hearing workshop. They could not just be “thrown” in at the last minute without going through the proper process.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### 69A-37 New Proposed Revisions:

The intent is to have a rough draft ready for the next meeting (January).

- 69A-37.034 High School Education Requirement
- 69A-37.0385 Termination of Employee
- 69A-37.050 Types of Training Certificates Issued
- 69A-37.059 Types of Instructor Certificates Issued
- 69A-37.060 Certification as an Approved Firefighter Recruit Training Facility
- 69A-37.062 Procedures for State Firefighter Certification Examination Day
- 69A-37.065 Programs of Study and Vocational Courses

### 69A-37.401 – 408 New Proposed Revisions for Live Fire Training:

The current edition of NFPA 1403 is not what is adopted. We have the previous edition so we need to bring it up to the current edition. The new edition has a lot of familiar language that is from the current 69A-37. Buck Tomlinson (former FSFC instructor) testified to the NFPA Committee and gave them copies of the Florida requirements up and above 1403, a lot of those requirements are now a part of 1403.

We would like to bring up for discussion/consideration the possibility of allowing for exceptions for certified fire training centers for facilities that are totally 1402 and 1403 compliant, that are using engineered systems such as Miami-Dade Colleges or Broward Fire Academy’s new center. At the time of the original adoption, a firefighter academy had made a request that they wanted a variance from the staffing requirements of 1403 based on an acquired structure needing more people than you do for an engineered system. NFPA 1403 and 1402 do not recognize the differentiation at this point. Chief Casey stated that personally he thinks it is a good idea for what has been requested. The manufactures and architects have been contacted and asked for help with language that would allow for a clear delineation between a “home-grown” versus a professionally engineered system. This is new territory and up for discussion.

Chief Bryson stated that he thinks this will be a controversial issue and worth future discussion.

The new proposed revision to 69A-62, primarily 69A-62.004 “Uniform Minimum Firefighter Employment Standards: Presence of Toxic Substances; Notice to Fire Departments” is to remove the 36 page list of chemicals and adopt the “current to the moment” US EPA list.

Chief Bryson requested clarification on the selection of one book for Firefighter 1/2.

Ron Williams explained that using multiple books caused some challenges for testing purposes. The Training Directors, after a lot of discussion, voted unanimously to go to one book. The different vendors were contacted with the cooperation of the Bureau and a meeting was held at the Fire College. The vendors each made a presentation. At the July Training Directors meeting, a vote was held on which text to pick. The vote was to use the IFSTA book only.

Chief Casey stated at the July meeting, that it didn’t make a difference to the Bureau if one or multiple books were to be used. The problem was there were differences in terminology and practices etc. between the different texts. The consensus of the training centers was to go to one book.

The state tests had already been cross-walked but it was still too narrow because of the differences in materials. There is still a possibility of using a Florida specific book that can be produced but this of course will drive the cost of the book up.

Ron Williams stated that for the most part, the training centers are pleased.

Further discussion was held on the text book issue and the possibility of going to a Florida specific text.

On a motion duly made, the letter submitted stating that the Council supports the “Everyone Goes Home Safe Seat Belt Initiative” was approved.

Motion carried.

**AUDIENCE:**

**Chief Bob Bertone, Coral Springs Fire Academy/Coral Springs Fire Department**

Three years ago, Coral Springs was running an EMT program using one text and had been using it for two years. The pass rates on the state exam were terrible as well as the course exams. The text was changed and the pass rates went up significantly. No other changes were made besides the text. The pass rate went from 52% to 84% in two cycles. Chief Bertone attributes that to a more readable text with better information. A well written text book, selected because it is well written makes a difference.

### **Chief Bill Trinder, Jasper VFD – Volunteer Officer with FFCA**

Speaking as a Volunteer Officer with the Florida Fire Chiefs' Association, Chief Trinder stated that they are opposed to any additional hours (50 hours of physical fitness training) to the 69A-37.055 curriculum. The additional hours of physical fitness education and training should be left up to the local department just as is bunker gear, communications and apparatus. Currently all fire departments are required to meet existing physical fitness for duty regulations or are responsible for determining what level of fitness for duty their members must meet. Adding additional standards to the state educational curriculum is not necessary. State minimum standards training is wholly based on technical as well as educational criteria and should remain as a training curriculum and not enter into a physical fitness duty realm. As we continue to add required hours for volunteers over the past years we have seen a decrease of 15% in the volunteer force. Volunteer firefighters are willing and want to serve their communities on a volunteer basis in many rural areas in the state can not afford to transfer from volunteer to paid fire departments. As safety and fitness is the main concern over every firefighter, we still have to maintain reasonable training hours that volunteers can meet in a timely basis while still maintain a full time job and support their families. We must remember that volunteers are just that, those individuals that volunteer their time for the protection of their community. We must maintain the required training hours as is to teach our volunteers the basic firefighting techniques and safety so that they can do the job in a safe manner and protect their communities without continually adding more hours which volunteers can not meet.

Director Hallman reminded everyone that the Council agreed to split the 50 additional hours between Firefighter 1 and Firefighter. Firefighter 1 – 25 hours, Firefighter 2 – 25 hours.

Chief Trinder stated that he is all for safety but feels the hours should be left out of the curriculum and left to the local level.

### **Jim Bliss– Palm Bay Fire Rescue**

Mr. Bliss feels that an example needs to be set for physical fitness. It shouldn't matter if a firefighter is career or volunteer, physical fitness should be a part of the training.

Councilman Scotty Taylor stated that one of the charges of the Council is to maintain safety for all firefighters, whether career or volunteer. The standards of physical fitness should be in place to protect and maintain the safety of Florida's firefighters. Firefighters need to be physically fit. The leading cause of death for firefighters is a heart attack.

### **Chief Bob Bertone, Coral Springs Fire Academy/Coral Springs Fire Department**

Chief Bertone stated that the volunteer training could be modularized. To perform the physical fitness portion doesn't necessarily mean the whole group would have to do it together. How they achieve that 25 hours can be made flexible. What is important here are the long term health and fitness requirements.

### **Richard Darby – Volunteer Chief, Clay County**

Speaking on behalf of volunteer departments throughout the state, the department's ability to recruit and train volunteers to the Firefighter 1 level is a big concern. The volunteer departments can not afford to give the training and the volunteers can't afford to take the time off from their jobs for the required training. In some cases, this may be the only fire department in the community so where is the safety then? Where is the safety for your un-trained firefighters and for the community?

Chief Darby suggested possibly have a physical fitness entry test to ensure physical fitness, something that is at the discretion of the local agency. We are losing volunteers due to the training requirements that they can not meet.

### **Chief Richard Knoff – Clay County**

Chief Knoff stated that the focus is not in the right place. When most people start in the fire service they are healthy and physically fit. The concern is when they get older and develop poor eating and exercise habits and are then are high risk for a heart attack. We need to be looking at the fire department level of training and physical fitness.

Chief Knoff concurs with not adding the additional hours into the curriculum but possibly another type of program could be rolled out to the current career and volunteer firefighters to address that rather than at the recruitment stage.

Councilman Greg Gay agrees that if an environment is not created for the firefighters to continue with their physical fitness training that nothing is being accomplished towards health and firefighter safety for the future of the firefighter. An ongoing program would make more sense.

Chairman Shorty Bryson stated that some departments already have these types of programs set up. The programs are not a state requirement. Chief Bryson invited everyone to attend the January meeting in Daytona for further discussion on this topic.

Councilman Ron Williams stated that what is being requested is not only a physical workout, part of the physical fitness training is going to be lectures on lifestyle, nutrition, those types of things to try to get people going in the right direction.

Further discussion was held on adding the additional hours into the curriculum. Councilman James Angle feels that the discussion should be held in the rule making workshop”

Director Hallman stated that three rule making workshops will be held throughout the state and this issue will be discussed. Input received at these workshops is extremely important and is used to develop the rule.

**Michelle Delaney – North Naples Fire Department**

Ms. Delaney stated that the big picture here is the recruits. Unless some type of physical fitness training or testing is done, we are putting candidates into our schools that shouldn't be there. If a doctor signs off on the candidates physical (using 1582) they are accepted as physically fit. This is not always the case.

Councilman John Pasqualone fully supports physical agility testing and fit for duty testing for any recruit going into any academy.

Chief Casey reminded everyone of the Health and Safety Conference being held December 8 – 10 in Orlando. Registration can be done on the FFCA web site and there is also information here at our front desk. Chief Casey also invited everyone to stay for the Firefighter Memorial which will be held tomorrow at 10:00 a.m.

**NEXT MEETING: January 29, 2009 9:00 a.m.  
Daytona Beach (Fire Rescue East)  
Ocean Center at Ocean Walk Village**

**ADJOURN.**