

## **Good News From Your Standards And Training Council**

Hello Brother and Sister Firefighters. I am hopefully bringing many of you some good news and an awesome educational opportunity. Just a few weeks ago, a variance was allowed for those who hold Associate of Science in Fire Science degrees to enter the Bachelor Degree program as a junior. This means the door is open now for many of us who hold a degree that was often taunted as a “dead end degree,” to enroll in the University of Florida and pursue a Bachelors and then Masters degree in our field. The only catch is that you need to complete the core courses that are required in the program before graduation. If you wish to have more information on enrolling or just have general questions, please contact the Fire College at (352) 732-1330 or visit [www.fsfc.ufl.edu](http://www.fsfc.ufl.edu)

In other education news, the Fire College staff has been hard at work meeting with many of the community colleges around the state to obtain an articulation agreement, so if you take a class through the Fire College, credit can be obtained toward your degree.

Another high note is that many of our programs have received National Accreditation. This goes to show that our state offers high quality programs and you can be proud to have such great people providing excellent opportunities. To learn which programs are accredited, call the Fire College.

We received reports from the Division Director and the Chief of the Bureau.

Division Director Clark brought the council up to date on our new State Fire Marshal, Treasurer, and Insurance Commissioner, Tom Gallagher. He also told us of upcoming legislation concerning restructuring of the Cabinet. Watch SB-164 this session. He also commented on the Two In – Two Out Rule proposed. It seems that the League of Cities has challenged the Fire Marshals Office on their authority to make such safety rules, and that it is an unfunded mandate to local governments. The Florida Fire Chiefs have sided with the League, while the Florida Professional Firefighters have sided with the SFM. A hearing was scheduled for February 21, 2001. 33 other states currently observe the OSHA Rule. As progressive as we are, why are we not the 34<sup>th</sup> state to conform? A motion was made and passed unanimously for the Council to support the 2-in, 2-out rule.

Bureau Chief Napoli reported to us that the Division of Forestry, the Bureau, and the U.S. Forest Service are developing a standard of training that will be taught to structural firefighters to enable them to fight wildland fires safer and more efficiently. A program of 20-24 hours is being looked at. It will be brought to the Council when completed for our input as well. Vicki Sheppard will be the Council liaison to keep us informed on this matter. There will come a time when all must have this training to be allowed to respond to mutual aid requests for wildland fire suppression.

Be aware that the new Fire Prevention Code will go into effect on July 1, 2001. All but a few hundred fire inspectors have completed the required training. The School Evaluation System will also be going into effect, and a program to teach inspectors is being developed at this time.

In other news, if you wish to contact a member of your Standards and Training Council, you may do so via E-mail through the Fire College Web Site. We want to hear your input. If you cannot attend a meeting, then please drop us a line with your concerns, ideas, or questions.

It was concluded that an Officers Candidate School was not needed on a statewide basis. If a department wishes to develop one on their own, the Fire College should be able to lend a hand with which classes would be best.

On April 10, the Florida Fire Service Awards ceremony will be held in Tallahassee, Once again, the Council will award a plaque to the Firefighter Training Center of the Year. If you are interested in knowing whom that is, along with all the other award winners, make your way to the Capital on the morning of the 10<sup>th</sup>.

And finally, we lost a great member of the Council due to his no longer being a Fire Chief. Orange County Fire Chief and Chairman of the Florida Firefighter Standards and Training Council Mike Iacona has resigned his post. Chief Iacona has been a member of the Council for 5 years and has been a great leader. We have passed many important items out of our group, and he has been there for all of it. Thanks for all your hard work Mike, you will be missed. The Council has voted Fire Officer Member Mike Randolph as the new Chairman. He is a Lieutenant with the City of Tallahassee Fire Department. Mike has been instrumental in helping pass the new Fire Officer programs through our group. We all know Mike will be a fine Chairman.

Our next meeting will be in Tallahassee on April 9, 2001, at 1:00 in the afternoon. Location of the meeting will be in the Conference room at the Atrium Building. We hope you will attend.