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From the Director

VADM Vitale recently announced the winners of our CY2009 F&ES Awards programs. I echo his comments congratulating our Navy Award winners. The competition for the awards was highly competitive, as many of our departments and firefighters are truly deserving of the recognition. It was refreshing to read all the nominations; clearly any one of the nominees could have been a Navy winner, as the nominees had already won their Region competition before being nominated for the Navy competition. We had the opportunity to review the best of the best. Unfortunately we could only select one winner in each category. We are pleased to honor and recognize all of the deserving personnel, programs, and departments. Best wishes to our nominees for the DoD Awards. Please see a list of all of our Winners and Runners Up on Page 4 of this newsletter. Again Congratulations to all of the Winners, Runner Ups, and Nominees.

Also, in this edition of *What's Happening*, you will see a note and some pictures on our Service Life Extension Program (SLEP). This program has proven to be highly successful for P-19 rebuilds and our current KME rebuild project is no different. Special thanks to our BSVE and NAVFAC partners for their total support. Coupled with our SLEP rebuild and our new vehicle purchase programs the Navy Fire Apparatus Modernization Program is operating at full speed. We continue to make progress with Navy wide fleet enhancements, i.e., the last Navy Amertec is gone (finally !!), Navy Open Cab structural units are almost completely out of the inventory, and overage apparatus are being replaced. As always, we appreciate any feedback on our vehicle programs, you can send feedback to your regional fire chief and cc copy to Navyfire@navy.mil.

In closing I wanted to offer a welcome aboard. First, I attended the latest graduation of Reserve ABH Firefighter class in NDW this week. The class of 13 Reserve firefighters are now fully trained and certified to perform shore installation F&ES support. Welcome aboard to our *Newest Navy Military Firefighters*. Also, Chief Kevin King and Asst Chief John Smithgall have accepted positions on our CNIC F&ES staff. Kevin is currently onboard and John will be starting in July. *Welcome Aboard Kevin and John.*

Buckle Up/Drive Safe ... and Make "Everyone Goes Home" more than a slogan !

v/rCarl

From the Director (Cont.)

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Before SLEP



David Rupert is a Certified Emergency Vehicle Technician assigned to CNRMA (NAVSTA Norfolk). Dave is very involved with day to day management and maintenance of a very large fire apparatus fleet in the entire Hampton Roads area. Additionally, he is available to respond anywhere in the CNRMA Region to inspect fire apparatus, or provide specialized expertise when needed. CNRMA has allowed

Dave to travel in support of CNIC HQ. While supporting CNIC Dave participates in new pre-delivery inspections for Navy fire apparatus, Hazmat/rescue units, and our trucks in the Service Life Extension Program (SLEP). A special Thanks to Dave and CNRMA for his time and efforts to improve our Navy fire apparatus fleet!



We have shifted our SLEP focus from ARFF units to structural apparatus. We had previously rebuilt a number of P-19 ARFF vehicles and those units continue to serve at many Navy installations. Last year we recognized a deficiency in our structural pumper program with over-age apparatus that was beyond their normal service life. We selected our

KME pumpers as candidates for the SLEP program as we had a large number of nearly identical (94-97) units that were in need of major rebuild to continue the units in service for an additional 7 to 10 years. Similar to the P-19 program, we wanted a complete rebuild, and also added some new features to enhance operational capability and safety. As you can see from the pictures the first trucks are nearly complete and will be ready to delivery this month.

Fire Trucks Unlimited was selected to perform the overhaul and their performance has been nothing short of astonishing. We never imagined the trucks would come out looking so good. More importantly Fire Trucks Unlimited staff was very understanding and did an outstanding job of rebuilding the trucks for the Navy. There are currently five trucks in the rebuild process. Unit 1 is for Great Lakes, Unit 2 is for Kings Bay, and Unit 3 is for Ventura. Future destination for Unit 4 & 5 is still to be finalized.

Additionally, we have a large number of KME units in storage waiting funding for SLEP rebuild. A special thanks to NAVFAC for providing SLEP funding and the contract ability for the SLEP program (Tina Hastings, John Laszik, and Becky Fraley). The program is a success and significantly enhances our ability to provide quality fire apparatus for our departments.

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Last Alarms

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Taking Care of Our Own Update



Eyjaffallajökull



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Last Alarms

To date, 25 deaths were reported for 2010. The following line of duty deaths were reported since we published our last issue:

Dennis Robinson ♥

Age: 61
Tucson, AZ

Leo Powell ♥

Age: 74
Lucasville, OH

Donald Schaper ♥

Age: 53
Gainsville, MO

Garrett Loomis

Age: 26
Sackets Harbor, NY

Harold Reed, Sr.

Age: 74
Peru, KS

2010 Totals

♥ 15 (60%) ➡ 5 (20%)

♥ Indicates cardiac related death

➡ Indicates vehicle accident related death

Taking Care of Our Own

Check with your Fire Chief if you wish to make a leave donation. There are currently seven DoD firefighters in the Taking Care of Own program.

Name	Location	Point of Contact
Ralph Huston	DSC Richmond, VA	Clyde.Hipshire@dla.mil
Christopher Capps	Fort Sill, OK	Ronald.D.Pyle@us.army.mil
Gregory Feagans	NIOC Sugar Grove, WV	Nanette.Kimble@navy.mil
Paul Hartman	NIOC Sugar Grove, WV	Nanette.Kimble@navy.mil
Joey Tajalle	NAVBASE Guam	Julie.Quinene@fe.navy.mil
Thomas Cartwright	NAVSTA Norfolk	Marc.J.Smith@navy.mil
Theodore Olson	NAS Oceana	Marc.J.Smith@navy.mil



Photo provided by Retired Fire Chief and Member of the Navy F&ES Hall of Fame Halli Stephansson

Navy F&ES Awards

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CY 2009 Navy F&ES Award Winners

LARGE FIRE DEPARTMENT OF THE YEAR



NAVY REGION SOUTHWEST

RUNNER UP



NAVY REGION NORTHWEST

MEDIUM FIRE DEPARTMENT OF THE YEAR



NAS KINGSVILLE

RUNNER UP



NAVSTA ROTA

SMALL FIRE DEPARTMENT OF THE YEAR



COMFLEACT CHINHAE

RUNNER UP



NSA THURMONT

FIRE PREVENTION PROGRAM OF THE YEAR



COMMANDER NAVAL FORCES JAPAN

RUNNER UP



NAVY REGION SOUTHWEST

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HEROISM AWARD



NAVY REGION NORTHWEST

MILITARY FIRE OFFICER OF THE YEAR



ABHC (AW/SW) Gilbert Chavez
NAVSTA ROTA

CIVILIAN FIRE OFFICER OF THE YEAR



FIRE CHIEF PAUL MURRAY
NAS JRB FORT WORTH

RUNNER UP



ASSISTANT CHIEF BRETT JOHNSON
CNF JAPAN

MILITARY FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR



ABH3 (AW) JUSTIN FAUVER
NAVSTA ROTA

RUNNER UP



ABH2 (AW/SW) ALONZO TRAMIEL
USS BATAAN (LHD 5)

Navy F&ES Awards (Cont.)

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CIVILIAN FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR



JUNICHI NAKAMURA
CNF JAPAN

RUNNER UP



ANDREW PENSKI
FIRST COAST F&ES

FIRE SERVICE INSTRUCTOR OF THE YEAR



HIDEYUKI KUSABA
CNF JAPAN

RUNNER UP



TIMOTHY DIAS
NAS KEY WEST

EMS PROVIDER OF THE YEAR



JEFFREY CRUZ
NAVBASE GUAM

RUNNER UP



JASON HANAGAMI
NAVY REGION HAWAII

NAVY FIRE CHIEF OF THE YEAR



FIRE CHIEF RUBEN PEREZ
NAS KINGSVILLE

RUNNER UP



DCC (SW/AW) RAMIR PULIDO
COMFLEACT CHINHAE

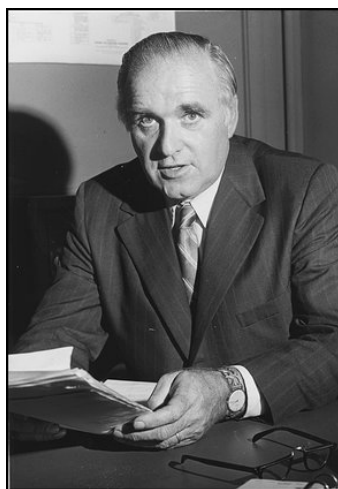
Navy F&ES Hall of Fame

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Navy F&ES Announces Class of 2010



Francis L. "Frank" Brannigan (Posthumous)

1942 Enlisted USN January 1942, commissioned Ensign Dec. 1942

1945 Appointed Fire Marshal, 5th Naval District

1948 Wrote first article on preplanning published in January 1948 issue of Fire Engineering

1971 Wrote the first edition of *Building Construction for the Fire Service*

Designated by FIRE CHIEF magazine as one of the 20 people who most influenced the fire service in the 20th century.



Lewis E. Meyer

1955 Firefighter NAS North Island

1967 Assistant Fire Chief, Naval Security Agency, Da Nang, Vietnam

2004 Earned U.S. Department of Defense "Exemplary Career" Award

2010 Awarded Prisoner of War (POW) Medal

2010 Awarded two Purple Heart Medals



Roy G. Grubbs (Posthumous)

1945 assigned to Bolling Army Airfield,

Established intern program for fire protection engineering students

Established fire science program at the Charles County Community College

At least 12 firefighters under his mentorship achieved the rank of Assistant Chief, eight earned Fire Chief positions in the Philippines, Cuba, Virginia and several other federal fire departments

USMC News

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USMC F&ES Holds Mid-Year Meetings

By Tom Ruffini, USMC F&ES Program Manager

The USMC Fire & Emergency Services held our annual Mid-Year Meetings February 23-25, at The Clubs at Quantico on Marine Corps Base Quantico. The meetings were attended by approximately 80 F&ES personnel, as well as our ARFF Marines, and other representatives from the regions and installations.

We kicked off the meetings in a joint session of structural and ARFF departments and reviewed several key initiatives, including the enterprise records management system (MCFIRS) and the annual USMC/DoD F&ES awards program and training conference. We spent the remainder of the week in programmatic breakouts. On the structural side, we reviewed several areas including FY10 funding execution, FY10 apparatus procurement, and POM12/Installation PEB results. We spent a good bit of time discussing the Program Evaluation and Improvement mandates established by the DoD Instruction 6055.06, and focused on the development of Standards of Cover documentation. A status update was provided on the update to Marine Corps Order P11000.11 and I am happy to say we are closer than ever to getting our Order signed out. We are in the final stages of staffing and I firmly believe we will have version "Charlie" released before we meet again in Chicago this August.

As part of our structural program review session, Mr. Randy Smith (DC, PP&O, PS, PSM - Mission Assurance Branch) briefed the status of the Emergency Management Command and Communications (EMC2) initiative which will provide for state of the art 911 dispatch capability and enterprise land mobile radio (ELMR) services at USMC installations. He also briefed the group on the Mission Assurance Campaign Plan, a review of draft DoD policy for Integrated Installation Protection, the USMC installation anti-terrorism (AT) program exercise schedule for the remainder of FY10, and the upcoming annual USMC Security Conference hosted by DC, PP&O (PS) 7-12 March, Austin TX. Attendees discussed and ultimately recommended that the annual F&ES mid-year meeting be co-located with the annual USMC Security Conference beginning in 2011. HQMC (LFF-1) will pursue this recommendation in an effort to enhance collaboration between the F&ES program and others with similar installation protection missions.

Following Mr. Smith's updates, he and I teamed up to present a recap of the DoD Independent Review of the Fort Hood shootings of November 5, 2009, authorized by the Secretary of Defense. Randy and I spent several weeks on detail to Secretary of Defense as part of the Independent Review panel. The findings and recommendations that will most closely impact the F&ES program were reviewed.

Two important working groups met on February 24 and 25. The Marine Corps Fire and Incident Records System (MCFIRS) working group met to review progress on implementation of our new records management and reporting system. Attendees reviewed the plan to migrate historic F&ES data into MCFIRS; reviewed the phased implementation by system modules; and continued to refine the draft Standard Operating Guidelines for the enterprise

USMC (Cont.)

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system. This enterprise system will become the standard, web-based system for management of F&ES records management and incident reporting for both ARFF and structural fire departments.

The other working group session focused on the implementation of firefighter health and safety program requirements required by the DoD Instruction. Among the items discussed were candidate and incumbent medical examinations, wellness-fitness programs, and workplace safety requirements. Commander David McMillan, M.D., from Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED), joined us on Wednesday's breakout session. He provided valuable insight and input from the Navy physician perspective. Captain David Konczal, Health and Safety Officer of the Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Department joined us on Thursday and gave a presentation on his department's health and safety program. Many thanks to Doc McMillan and Captain Konczal for sharing their insights with us in our effort to mature our firefighter health and safety related programs.

The meetings also provided an opportunity to recognize two retiring fire chiefs. Chief William Frankel of MCB Camp Pendleton and Chief Matthew Germain of MCAS Beaufort were honored for their years of service by those who attended dinner at the Globe and Laurel restaurant in Quantico. Chief Frankel retired March 1 and Chief Germain is scheduled to retire in May. Congratulations to Chiefs Frankel and Germain! Thank you for your years of dedicated service and professionalism to the USMC fire service. Semper Fi!



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USMC F&ES Program Manager Tom Ruffini recognizes Fire Chief William Frankel of MCB Camp Pendleton (CA) and Fire Chief Matthew Germain of MCAS Beaufort (SC) at the USMC F&ES Mid Year meeting at MCB Quantico in February to commemorate their retirement from the USMC Fire Service.

Lately it occurs to me what a long, strange trip it's been.

- Hunter, Weir, Lesh, & Garcia

New CNIC Staff

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Auf der Job - Florida



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The Return of the King



Kevin King returns to Navy F&ES after a seven year absence following his most recent assignment as the Fire Chief at MCB Quantico Fire Department. Kevin has extensive experience working in a headquarters level position, having served at various levels to include 15 years as the F&ES Program Manager for HQ USMC and one year as the Deputy Program Manager for Navy F&ES (NAVFAC). Kevin is a Professional Fire Protection Engineer and a graduate of the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program. We could not be more excited to welcome Kevin back to Navy

F&ES and look forward to his contributions to our team.

Welcome Back Kevin!!

First Coast F&ES Drill With German Frigate



The First Coast Fire and Emergency Services, Mayport Division firefighters participated in a drill with the Damage Control crews of the visiting German Frigate Hessen., F-221, to test response capabilities and show procedures of both crews. The drill included a fire in the mechanics work space with a casualty involving facial burns with smoke inhalation.

Firefighters from Mayport give the Captain and XO of the Hessen a different view of their ship.

The Mayport firefighters established an ICP and deployed fire crews to assist the German crews in the firefighting efforts. Crews were rotated and sent to rehab on the hanger deck. The casualty was evaluated by the Mayport Paramedics and simulated to be transported the trauma center via Medevac. The drill, lasting approximately one hour, was successful and rewarding for both sides.

Afterwards the Mayport firefighters showed off their newest apparatus, the Pierce 105' Tower Ladder, by taking the ship's Captain and XO on a lift in the rescue bucket for a birds-eye-view of their ship and the US Navy's newest ship the tri-hull USS Independence berthed astern the Hessen.

OB-GUAM

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Guam Firefighters Deliver Just in Time

By Steve Hagen, Assistant Fire Chief, Fire & Emergency Services Guam



On April 16, 2010 Mercy 3 EMS from Naval Communications Station was dispatched to respond to a mutual aid request from Government of Guam Fire Department. The call was for a 25 year old female who was reportedly complaining of abdominal pains.

Firefighter/EMT David Wienert and Firefighter/Driver Andrew Salas responded to a residence located in Yigo, Guam and were met by a Government of Guam Fire unit. Initial reports of abdominal pain were further exacerbated by the fact that the female was determined to be nine months pregnant and had not had any neonatal care throughout her pregnancy.

Mr. Wienert completed all necessary vitals and attempted to interview the patient. Due to a language barrier, it was very difficult to ascertain the degree of

the woman's complaints. The patient was then loaded into the ambulance for transport to Guam Memorial Hospital (GMH).

En route to hospital, Firefighter Wienert conducted a cursory check of the woman and concluded that there was no apparent crowning. It appeared that abdominal pains, now concluded to be labor pains, were coming closer together and Wienert calculated she was getting close to delivery.

Firefighter Wienert continued to attend to the patient as Firefighter Salas ran code towards GMH which was approximately 10 miles away. One block from GMH Emergency Entrance the woman began to crown. At this point, the baby was then guided out, suctioned properly and stimulated to effect good crying (breathing). Firefighter Salas, knowing they were close to GMH, continued onward to GMH and the emergency room entrance. Once parked, Firefighter Salas went to the rear of the ambulance to assist Firefighter Wienert. When he opened the rear doors of the ambulance, he was taken aback by the unexpected sight of Firefighter Wienert holding a newborn infant in his hands.

Without delay, both firefighters prepared mother and baby for transport from the rear ambulance to the emergency room entrance located five feet away. Not until mother and child were taken to Obstetrics and under medical care did these two "storks" begin to fathom the unexpected chain of events which led to the birth of a healthy baby girl five feet from the finish line.

Congratulations to Firefighter Wienert on his first delivery and to Firefighter Salas', now a veteran, with two.

Amtrak Safety Alert

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Operations In Close Proximity To Railroad Property

By Chief Gary Hearn, Amtrak Fire Safety/Station Action Team, Pennsylvania Station, NY



In light of a recent incident in Detroit, Michigan, involving a ladder truck struck by an Amtrak Train, emergency response personnel are reminded to keep the following points in mind prior to, and when responding to incidents on, or in close proximity to railroad property:

- Know what railroad controls train movement on the tracks that run through your response area.
- Make sure that your communications center/dispatcher has the proper emergency telephone contact numbers for the railroads in your response area.
- If the railroad(s) in your response area is equipped with an AC or DC overhead catenary system, or DC 3rd rail system used for traction power, know what railroad controls those systems.
- Pre-plan with the railroads that run through your response area (as you would for a target hazard building).

Prior to allowing your personnel to operate on, or about the tracks, ask yourself, do they really need to be on or about the tracks (risks vs. benefits), or can the railroad personnel handle the incident? If your answer is yes, then:

- Do not operate on, or in close proximity to a track (15 feet) unless you have received confirmation from the railroad, through your dispatch center, that all train movement has been stopped on the affected tracks.
- For areas where trains are powered by an overhead wire (catenary system), do not operate within 15' of the overhead wire until you receive confirmation, from the railroad, through your dispatch center, that power has been removed and the overhead wire has been grounded.
- For areas where trains are powered by a 3rd rail system, do not operate on or about the tracks until you receive confirmation, from the railroad, through your dispatch center, that 3rd rail power has been removed.
- Establish a command post and notify the railroad of the location of the command post.

To be prepared against surprise is to be trained. To be prepared for surprise is to be educated.

- James Carse

A Message From...

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Charleston (SC) Fire Chief Tom Carr

From The Secret List, www.FireFighterCloseCalls.com



Photo from CharlestonCityPaper.com

As you may know I am a strong advocate of the organization supporting fire fighter health. In order to establish confidence in the medical support system, fire fighters must have total confidence that their personal medical situation is confidential. I do not take the decision to share my medical information with you lightly. But I feel it's important that I share some personal health information with you.

I have been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease (PD). Parkinson is not fatal, but currently it is a non-curable, degenerative, and a debilitating disease. It generally doesn't affect critical thinking and normally advances slowly.

You may know this as the disease that Michael J. Fox, Pope John Paul, Janet Reno and Mohamed Ali have. It is difficult to diagnose because there aren't specific tests for Parkinson's and each person is affected differently.

I still wake up every morning ready to get at the days activities

Currently my symptoms are a soft, raspy voice, some balance issues, some tremors in my hands and face, and a lack of facial expression. Symptoms are controlled to some degree by medication although there can be fluctuations during the day. My soft voice is the most frustrating. In the past I had a strong voice and rarely used a microphone.

But I still wake up every morning ready to get at the days activities. As the chief executive officer of the Charleston Fire Department, my responsibility is not fighting fires but fighting, cheerleading, and facilitating for you folks on the street.

My career plan is to continue to implement our CFD vision. We have made a great deal of progress but there is plenty left to do. We have established a great leadership team which is very effective.

I also want to help other fire fighters understand Parkinson's, its risk and how your environmental exposure as a fire fighter increases your risk of having PD. There is a study that states in the general population the probability of PD occurring is 3-4 out of 1,000 and for a fire fighter the risk increases to 30 per 1,000. It is thought that people develop PD either genetically or environmentally or a combination of both factors. I went through genetic testing to determine if my children were at risk. I do not have the genetic markers for PD. Given the genetic test results, I most likely developed PD as a result of environmental exposure, such as, chemicals released from normal room and contents fires as well as exposure to pesticides and other chemicals. We need to assure our fire fighters have the information they need to understand the risk and reduce exposure.

Chief Carr (Cont.)

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I have talked at length to my doctor and have been evaluated at the Mayo Clinic. They believe, and I know, that I am able to continue fire chief executive duties. I don't take this lightly, my responsibly is to support you. I take this commitment seriously and would do nothing to compromise you or the CFD. I plan to continue working for you as long as I am able. My doctors say that 5-10 years is a reasonable expectation.

I am totally committed to you and the CFD. In fact you are the CFD and many of you have experienced devastating impacts on your family and on yourselves personally.

My initial diagnosis of PD felt devastating on my life, but the opportunity it presents can't be overlooked. I am committed to getting the word out about PD and the possible links to fire fighting.

Have no doubt that I will continue to lead the CFD on its current path.

Chief Tom Carr
Charleston Fire Department

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FROM CHIEF CARR:

Parkinson's disease (PD) is one of a larger group of neurological conditions called motor system disorders. Historians have found evidence of the disease as far back as 5000 B.C. It was first described as "the shaking palsy" in 1817 by British doctor James Parkinson. Because of Parkinson's early work in identifying symptoms, the disease came to bear his name.

Approximately, 1 million Americans are living with PD today.

PD results from a progressive loss of a dopamine producing cells in a portion of the brain. This chemical, dopamine, normally transmits signals within the brain to produce smooth movement of muscles. In Parkinson's patients, 80 percent or more of these dopamine-producing cells are damaged, dead, or otherwise degenerated. This change in nerve activity affects a person's ability to control their muscle movements. Symptoms usually show up in one or more of four ways:

- Tremor, or trembling in hands, arms, legs, jaw, and face
- Stiff muscles
- Slow movement
- Problems with balance or walking

What causes PD? The exact cause is not yet known. Factors that have been implicated in the development of PD include genetic abnormalities, environmental exposures, or some combination of the two. A small amount of people have an early onset form which is typically caused by an inherited gene defect.

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Chief Carr (Cont.)

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How is PD diagnosed? There are no tests to definitively diagnose PD. Physicians use a combination of physical exam, patient history, radiological imaging and patients' response to medication to establish the diagnosis.

How is PD treated? Medications which increase brain levels of the chemical dopamine are the mainstay of PD treatment. Patients also benefit from physical and speech therapy. In select cases, patients may improve their symptoms through surgical procedures.

What is the prognosis for PD? Each patient's prognosis is individual. No one test can predict how rapid or slow the disease will progress. Importantly, with aggressive management and physical therapy, patients with PD will lead active productive lifestyles.

For additional information about Parkinson's logon to the following websites:

www.FireFighterswithParkinsons.org

www.Parkinsonsaction.org

www.michaeljfox.org

www.parkinsons.org

Combs Cartoon



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Snake Charmer



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Modern F&ES Challenges

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Intermittent Staffing is No Open-and-Shut Case

By Ronny Coleman

What is the symbol of modern fire protection? In other words, what one thing tells members of our community that they have fire protection? Is it the profile of a firefighter's helmet? Is it a sign on the outside of a fire station down the boulevard? Or, is it the fire truck parked in the apparatus bay that can be seen as they drive down the street? The answer is that all three of those symbols have come to mean different things to society; simultaneously they may mean nothing to the average citizen. While it may seem to be contradictory, those symbols stand for the idea of fire protection but they in fact may or may not be present when a person demands their availability.

What I am talking about is the fact that fire trucks, firefighters and fire stations do not mean fire protection. They are the resources that we use to provide fire protection. And I would submit that when all three are in place, it is very likely that something positive will happen when they are called upon. However, I also would submit that a fire station that has no fire truck in it or a piece of apparatus that has no firefighters on it might be symbolically present, but that is not fire protection.

The reason for this contemplation has to do with the contemporary term that is emerging as a result of our economic problems. How many of you have heard about a concept described as “browning out a fire station”? The idea is that under certain economic conditions, a fire station can be turned off and on like a light switch. The use of the phrase “brown out” sort of sounds like we are treating this phenomenon the same as we treat the phenomenon of lower levels of electricity being available to a community — a short-term phenomenon with short-term consequences.

In contrast, I believe fire protection is like an umbrella. You either have it or you don't. If you go out when it's raining and you have an umbrella and you can open it up above your head, there is a possibility that you will remain dry. But, if you walk out in a rain storm without that umbrella, then you are going to get wet.

The notion of closing a fire station for economic reasons is very serious. Whenever you provide a community with a fire station, there is an expectation that it will be readily available for the majority of the population whenever there is a demand for service.

In the fire service, there are — metaphorically speaking — two types of umbrellas. Constant availability is defined as a fire station that has a crew and apparatus ready to deploy 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. An interim-availability fire station only is open for specific hours and for specific reasons.

Constant staffing means the umbrella is open. Intermittent staffing means that the umbrella is at least partially closed, which makes the department less effective. The latter case isn't a brown out. Rather, I would characterize it as a black out — a much more serious phenomenon.

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Fixing a Hole

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Fireground Succession

By Bill Sager

The fire service is neither a sprint nor a marathon; it's a long-distance relay race. Each generation of fire chiefs and officers passes the baton on to the next.

There's a lot of baton-passing going on these days. With the lowering of the retirement age and the concurrent increase in retirement allowances, institutional knowledge is exiting the fire service at a rate unheard of even a few years ago. This loss is felt everywhere, but nowhere as critically or as strongly as in emergency operations.

U.S. Army research confirms the long-held suspicion that experience is the key component to effective fireground command. The Army developed the recognition-primed decision-making model from a psychological study done to understand how fire officers consistently make competent decisions under stressful conditions with time pressures and a rapidly changing environment. Some years ago, Larry Miller, the former chief deputy fire chief of the Los Angeles County Fire Department, described this phenomenon as being similar to having a slide tray in the fire officer's head. When the fire officer responds to an emergency, he or she quickly reviews all the slides in this mental tray, finds the one that most closely fits the current situation, and uses it as the starting point for developing a strategy. Upon conclusion of the incident, based on that experience, the fire officer can add another slide to the tray.

Due to many factors, not the least of which is improved codes, fire officers have fewer opportunities to practice their craft as fireground commanders on structure fires. The fire officers who are retiring had many opportunities to develop their command skills because they inherited communities that primarily consisted of buildings built before the 1950s, when codes started to have an impact on fire. Whereas responses to emergencies are way up, in many jurisdictions, responses to fires are way down and dropping. While that's reason for applause, it also gives us pause to consider how to prepare the next generation of officers and chiefs to be fireground commanders.

Firefighters simply aren't getting the experience necessary to fill up their slide trays. It's common for a firefighter in a modern city to be on the department for six months or more before encountering a fire of some consequence. Over a 30-year career, that's not a huge experience base. The members who currently are retiring often have 10 or 20 times that experience. Their slide trays are bulging.

Fire chiefs are struggling with this predicament. As part of succession-planning, departments need to prepare this generation for fireground command and its awesome responsibilities of making correct decisions and maintaining cool. Development of fireground commanders is simple; however, it requires a long-term commitment to fireground command.

Succession Plan (Cont.)

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This will take steadfastness on the part of the fire chief. There are a million and one distractions, all of them important. Because even with all the emphasis on leadership, management and administration that's in vogue for fire chiefs, the simple fact is that it's only the fire department that puts out fires, and only well-trained and well-grounded incident commanders get it done correctly.

Prepare a plan

As with anything in life, some people are natural-born fireground commanders, and others struggle with it their entire careers. Most fall in the middle and grow and develop their craft.

The first step in developing future fireground commanders is to develop a realistic action plan. While there will be some broad similarities for everyone involved, the plan needs to be tailored to the needs of each individual officer. This requires the chief and senior staff to do the painful work of realistically assessing the fireground command strengths and weaknesses of each officer. Firefighters tend to be sensitive about their fireground abilities, but it's unfair to potential officers if the department fails to do a straightforward assessment.

The plan for each individual should consider the following components:

- Attending training courses
- Previewing pre-plans
- Mentoring
- Simulating
- Doubling-up

This plan needs to be comprehensive and include the appropriate components for each individual's development. For example, one officer might only require a couple courses and a mentor, while another might need to have a lengthy development process that includes all of the components. Remember that we are talking about people making some of the most important decisions of their careers. A mistake in the budget or being late for a council meeting may seem important at the time, but a correction or an apology can usually fix it. You can't say the same for a mistake in fireground command; it's impossible to undo the loss of a business or house or the death of a firefighter or civilian.

Attend training courses

This is so obvious it hardly seems worth mentioning, but every potential company officer and chief officer should attend training in fireground command. Unfortunately, that isn't the case. If there were a legal requirement for all command officers to have a fireground command license similar to a pilot's license with classroom training, practice in the field with a training officer, and a graded first solo fire, a lot of current practitioners would be grounded.

Succession Plan (Cont.)

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Fire chiefs need to demand that all officers attend fireground command training and ICS courses. The National Fire Academy offers a number of excellent courses both at the academy and regionally. Most states have similar training available, and private vendors offer excellent training as well. Virtual training over the Internet also is becoming popular: More than 2,000 firefighters use the USFA's "virtual campus" every day. Fire chiefs should not allow officers who do not take advantage of training courses into command positions.

Training courses provide the foundation for the formation of fireground commanders. It's no different from the basic training we provide for new firefighters. Until someone shows a recruit firefighter a gated wye, for example, all the practice in the world about the use of gated wyes is meaningless. The development of fireground commanders requires that they have a basic understanding of the terminology, expectations and best practices. It's only the first step, but it's an important one.

Preview pre-plans

Chief Ronny J. Coleman calls this the Walter Mitty approach: "If I had a fire in the back storeroom of the Zydeco Zinc plant, how would I handle it?" New fireground commanders need to get out the Zydeco Zinc's pre-plan that has languished in the files and imagine how best to handle that situation. They should follow up with a visit to the facility to get firsthand, up-to-date knowledge.

After senior officers decide which pre-plans are the most critical, the pre-plan preview then can be a topic at the monthly staff meeting, where junior officers orally present what they observed and learned. This will provide an opportunity for feedback and challenges, with the added bonus of everybody learning the game plan for the Zydeco Zinc plant. If the real thing strikes, a new officer will be able to think, "I already fought this fire in the pre-plan." To accomplish this pre-plan preview, the chief has pull officers off other critical tasks, such as rewriting an SOP or managing the hose-purchasing budget.

Assign mentors

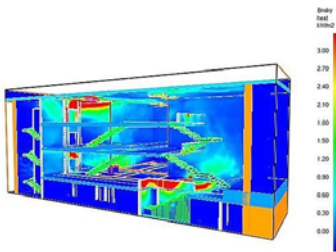
Some departments have the tradition that the first lesson a new recruit receives is how to make a good cup of coffee. The wisdom of this approach, while not obvious, is nevertheless valid. After making a good cup of coffee, the new recruit can sit down with the seasoned captain and learn how the fire department operates.

Before the corporate knowledge gets completely out the door, provide opportunities for up-and-coming fire officers and chief officers to ride-along with the more senior officers. Tour the territory, or as we used to say, "Go chieffing." Identify both everyday and target hazards. Talk through the possible situations. For certain facilities, there often has been more than one opportunity for the fire department to demonstrate its prowess. Those definitely should be on the list. The senior chief can explain how they did it last time and the time before, what worked and what didn't, and why.

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The mentor also provides the new officer with a confidante who can provide honest feedback, not only on the operational outcome but also on the new officer's style and demeanor. Both of these are critical to the formation of good fireground commanders.

Many retirement systems allow the jurisdiction to hire back retirees on a limited basis without affecting retirement status. For a relatively low cost, the department can re-capture some of the institutional knowledge and put it to work mentoring new officers. What a tremendous opportunity to take advantage of experience!

Conduct simulations

In the old days, an aspiring railroad engineer spent years as a fireman in the cab of a locomotive learning the craft of starting and stopping a train. With today's diesel locomotives, there's no fire and no fireman to tend it. Today's railroads teach their new engineers train-handling through simulators. Airlines have been doing this with pilots for years. Simulators allow students opportunity after opportunity to crash the train or plane until they get it right, with no cost in lives or property. Simulation allows the instructor the occasion to throw every possible curve at the students. From this training, command officers gain experience and confidence.

Fire department simulators have been around for a long time, but the fire service hasn't taken full advantage of them. Even now, most departments use them sporadically, even as simulators become increasingly refined. The advent of computer-controlled simulation adds a greater dimensions of realism, with the promise of future simulation products offering a real-time, three-dimensional perspective.

Even with today's computer-assisted simulations, a small army of support personnel is required to play the roles of dispatcher, simulator operator and on-scene and off-scene resources. An overall simulation manager controls the activities of this support system to coordinate the system. In addition, an instructor ensures that the training effectively targets the student's needs. Many departments have difficulty finding the funds that this requires and are reluctant to commit this level of resources.

Require doubling-up

Assign two chief officers to every fire alarm. This doubles the exposure of officers to the command experience. The second officer can play a critical role as well by serving as the planning section chief, taking a large burden off the back of the incident commander. In other words, the position can be considered "planning in the street." The planning section chief provides the IC with the status of the situation and resources. He or she helps formulate the plan and, as an added bonus, earns more fireground experience.

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Cooperate with others

The development of effective fireground commanders is a problem for the entire fire service. Departments, particularly smaller ones, can work cooperatively on this issue. Does it really matter that much if an officer from one department learns the craft at another department? Do fire departments really do things that differently?

Combining resources to provide simulation is a good example. Sending firefighters off to training academies is another expensive proposition. Often departments can work through a local chiefs or training officers association to bring the trainers to the area. Then all the fire chief needs to do is commit the members to the training.

It's usually general knowledge in an area who the sharp fireground commanders are. I had the pleasure of working alongside one of these people most of my career. People from other departments also knew this individual and respected his reputation. Over the years, he has mentored firefighters from many departments. If such a person works nearby, but for a different department, use his or her skills to mentor.

While one department may not be able to set up a big simulation program, by working with two or three other adjacent departments, perhaps enough personnel could be committed to train all the officers. This may require an instructor from one department commenting on the member of another department; fire chiefs will have to abandon their parochialism.

For some small departments there's only one duty chief. To get the advantage of doubling-up, the second officer will have to come from an adjacent department. However, the converse is also true, and both departments still gain from the experience. Doubling-up on alarms may require reciprocal-response agreements with the neighboring departments.

Fireground command is a crucial skill set of the fire service, but the members who possess the institutional knowledge have either left already or are about to depart. The formation of fireground commanders is a long-term task. Making certain that there are officers in the future who can perform these tasks in a credible fashion requires planning, commitment and cooperation. Fire chiefs can't afford to ignore this important obligation.

Bill Sager is currently working as a fire protection consultant and trainer after a 32-year career with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, where he served as a CDF team incident commander, planning section chief on a National Interagency Incident Management Team, the Butte Unit chief and the Butte County fire chief. He is a designated chief fire officer, a state-certified fire chief and a graduate of the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program. He has taught for the NFA, National Interagency Fire Center, the U.S. Coast Guard, the CDF Academy and community colleges in California. A retired naval officer, he graduated from the University of California — Berkeley in 1966.

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A teacher is one who makes himself progressively unnecessary.

-Thomas Carruthers

Overseas Pay Discussions

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Standardized Pay For Civilians Overseas?

By Alyssa Rosenberg arosenberg@govexec.com

The Office of Personnel Management and departments of State, Defense and Labor soon will introduce a legislative proposal to standardize pay and benefits for civilian employees on assignment overseas, OPM Director John Berry said at a Senate hearing on Wednesday.

"Providing consistent, comprehensive and competitive benefits must be part of our efforts to support our troops," Berry told members of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee's federal workforce panel.

Berry said the legislative proposal, which the administration will send soon to Capitol Hill, grew out of an interagency work group established in 2009 after the Government Accountability Office identified weaknesses and inconsistencies in pay and benefits for civilians sent overseas.

He said one of the most significant changes in the proposal would guarantee that all civilian employees going overseas receive at least the level of locality pay in Washington, and retain their rights to the locality adjustment they earn in the United States if that rate was higher. Currently, employees on temporary rotations overseas receive both their base pay and locality pay, while employees on longer assignments could receive different pay allocations depending on their agency and job. Berry said those changes could help agencies recruit volunteers for overseas assignments.

"Not only were we going to ask them to put themselves at greater harm, we were going to financially disadvantage them," Berry said. "That [change] is going to be a great relief to a number of civil servants as they're making this decision."

Berry said that while it was impossible to completely standardize all pay and benefits for civilians, because State Department employees could be working under the Foreign Service pay system, employees from other agencies are paid according to the General Schedule. Both groups will work alongside service members who receive military pay. But he said creating consistent policies would make it easier for federal pay processing centers to avoid errors and ensure that employees receive the pay they deserve.

Members of the work group said at the hearing they were not ready to unveil the full proposal yet. But Clifford Stanley, Defense undersecretary for personnel and readiness, said the bill also would include recuperation leave to keep civilians fresh during their assignments and readjustment leave to help them manage personal matters when they return home.

"I know that civilians serving in harm's way proudly answer the call of duty," said Sen. Daniel Akaka, D-Hawaii, who chairs the subcommittee. "We must ensure they have the training and support that they need."

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ESAMS Corner

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ESAMS Corner

By Clarence Settles, ESAMS Fire Technical Support

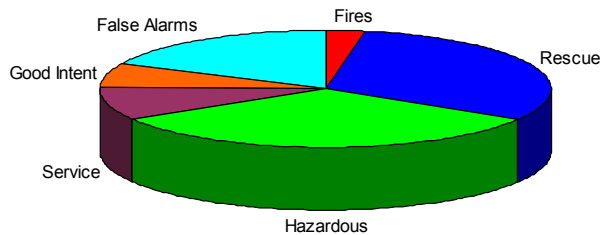
ESAMS is the Navy’s Web Fire Management System. We will try to post Navy-wide statistics for the previous month as well as any changes that are coming to the system.

March 2010 Statistics

Operations

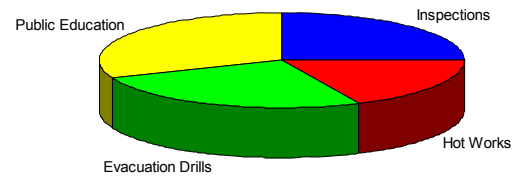
Total Incident – 6,102

- ❖ Fires - 164
- ❖ Rescue & EMS – 1,893
- ❖ Hazardous – 1,972
- ❖ Service Call - 567
- ❖ Good Intent – 388
- ❖ False Alarm – 1,095



Prevention

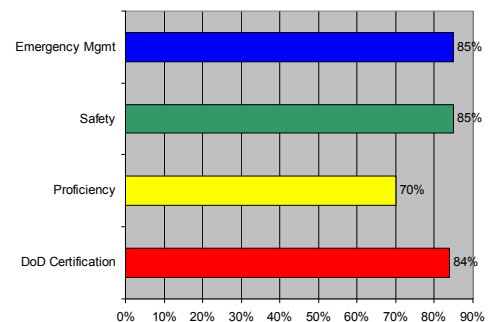
- Fire Inspections Completed – 3,504
- Building Evacuation Drills – 4,349
- Hot Works Permits Issues – 2,493
- Public Education – 4,349



Training

Fire Training Report Card:

	Percent Compliance
DoD Certification	84 %
Proficiency, Skills, and Practice	70 %
Safety Training	85 %
Emergency Management	85 %



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F&ES On Duty Mishaps Report

Mishaps Reported - 23
Total Lost Work Days – 46

ESAMS (Cont.)

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New ESAMS Features or Changes:

NFIRS Master Report has been streamline so it runs faster and will not time out on you.

The following Equivalency Certification has been added under DoD Certification:

Firefighter I - Equivalency Certification
 Firefighter II - Equivalency Certification
 Airport Firefighter - Equivalency Certification
 Fire Officer I - Equivalency Certification
 Fire Inspector I - Equivalency Certification
 Fire Instructor I - Equivalency Certification
 Fire Officer II - Equivalency Certification
 HazMat Awareness - Equivalency Certification
 HazMat Operations - Equivalency Certification

Equivalency certifications are awarded to Navy F&ES personnel (host nation) who have received on-the-job training in a particular F&ES subject, but have not received Pro-Board or IFSAC training certificate leading to DoD certification. Fire Chiefs will ensure Host Nation employees working within the F&ES department are certified to regional standards. CNIC F&ES approves equivalency certification training subjects.

New Course Type has been added: EMS - Proficiency, Skills, and Practice.
 36 EMT-B Classes
 49 EMT-P Classes
 20 First Responder Classes

Changes regarding NFIRS EMS Incident Codes:

1. Add two additional +1 codes for EMS:
 3211 Interfaculty - Emergent and 3212 Interfaculty - Non-Emergent (Scheduled) NOTE: 3211 and 3212 should not be used in the calculation of the ART time and excluded from response time based reports.

2. Change of business logic to make the NFIRS EMS page mandatory for data entry for the following Incident Codes: 311 Medical assist, assist EMS crew. 320 Emergency medical service, other (Conversion only). 321 EMS call, excluding vehicle accident with injury. 322 Motor vehicle accident with injuries. 323 Motor vehicle/pedestrian accident (MV Ped). 324 Motor vehicle accident with no injuries. 661 EMS call, party transported by non-fire agency.

If you need further assistance working in ESAMS, contact Clarence Settle, Fire Technical Support for HGW:

Office 865-693-0048
 E-Mail csettle@hgwillc

Navy F&ES POCs

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Job Links

Job Links

Interested in becoming a DoD firefighter? Follow these links;

OPM: <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov>
Army: <http://www.cpol.army.mil>
Navy: <http://www.donhr.navy.mil>
Marines: <http://www.usmc.mil/>
Air Force: <https://ww2.afpc.randolph.af.mil/resweb/>



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