



**ANNUAL REPORT
JULY 2002 - JUNE 2003**

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL

JEFFREY J. MORRISSETTE, State Fire Administrator
Established - 1975 Statutory authority - C.G.S. Sec. 7-323
Central office - Connecticut Fire Academy, 34 Perimeter Road
Windsor Locks, CT 06096
Average number of full-time employees - 20
Recurring operating expenses - \$2,349,718
Capital outlay - \$335,464

***Organization structure - Office of State Fire Administration, Training,
Certification, and Fiscal Services***

The Commission proudly presents the following summary of services, programs and activities as evidence that the entrusted responsibilities have been faithfully administered.

Agency Mission

To prevent or mitigate the effects of fire and disasters, either natural or man-made, on the citizens of the State of Connecticut. This objective shall be accomplished through the development and delivery of state-of-the-art educational programs designed to meet nationally recognized standards, certification of individuals to such standards and maintenance of up-to-date resources for use by fire service personnel, public educators and other first responders.

Statutory Responsibility

The Commission is charged with and has primary responsibility for training, public fire and life safety education and professional certification for members of the fire service. Connecticut General Statutes Title 7; Sections 7-323(j) through 7-323(q), 13(a)-248.

Public Service

The commissioners and staff are committed to Public Service Excellence. Every effort is made to continually promote and market quality agency services as well as enhance communications with our constituency.

A trade show display booth was again staffed at several occupationally related state and regional conferences during the year. Agency staff members continued to regularly serve as an expert resource to network television, radio and newsprint media. This has positively impacted and reinforced local public fire and life safety education efforts.

Improvements/Achievements 2002-2003

A conscious effort is continually made to schedule programs and services within every geographic region of the state. To fairly balance program development and delivery the competing needs and priorities of both the volunteer and career fire service are considered.

Reducing Waste

The Commission remains a small, efficient, organizationally streamlined agency. Full-time staff serve as facilitators and coordinators to per-diem adjunct instructors that deliver a majority of agency services.

Events/Activities

The State Fire Administrator and staff remain active in state and national committees, boards and organizations in an effort to maintain a positive proactive impact upon services. By Connecticut General Statutes, the Administrator serves on both the State Emergency Response and Enhanced 911 Commissions. He also serves on the state Domestic Preparedness Senior Steering Council and the Urban Search and Rescue Advisory Board maintaining vital communication links. The Director of Training serves as the Commission's representative to the Department of Public Health's Office of Emergency Medical Services Advisory Board. He also serves as the President of the North American Fire Training Directors. Agency events and activities included:

- Due to the state budget crisis, two agency employees were laid-off and a third bumped from his position. The ability to deliver services was further impacted by the death of one of our full-time Trainers and the early retirement of the agency's Executive Secretary.
- Assisted the Connecticut Fire Chiefs' Association to implement the Statewide Fire-Rescue Disaster Response Plan. Encouraged local fire department participation through a formal Memorandum of Understanding. To date, approximately 60 municipalities have agreed to participate.
- Orientation training was provided for agency staff who may be called to serve as Fire Service Liaisons in the state Office of Emergency Management's Emergency Operations Center.
- Finalized distribution of Thermal Imaging Cameras (TIC) to local fire departments and several state agencies. A total of 322 TIC's were distributed with the assistance of the Office of Policy and Management.
- Continued administration of the 800 FIRE LINE program, a national volunteer fire and emergency services recruitment tool. During the fiscal year, 84 calls were received with 27 referred to local fire, EMS, and other emergency response related organizations.
- In cooperation with the Clinton Fire Department, hosted a regional forum on volunteer recruitment and retention.
- Coordinated and delivered a regional Juvenile Firesetting Intervention Training program for representatives from Connecticut and Rhode Island fire departments with 68 participants.
- Continued staff assistance to the Connecticut Fallen Firefighters Memorial Committee. Dedication of the Memorial was held on August 18, 2002. Phase II of the Memorial project incorporates compiling and inscribing the names of those firefighters that died in the line of duty onto the Memorial.
- Delivered two, five day "Introduction to the Fire Service" summer training camps for youths 14 to 18 years of age with 76 participants. Delivered one weekend session with 16 participants.
- Academy dormitory rooms were occupied an equivalent of 3,367 room nights during the year.

- Provided ongoing assistance to the Joint Council of Connecticut Fire Service Organizations including coordination of the 5th Annual Fire Service Day at the Capitol and the annual Legislative Reception.
- Maintained and further improved the agency's presence on the Internet. While the Department of Information Technology (DOIT) was only able to provide web page activity for the first six months of the fiscal year it shows a significant increase over past years. Six months web activity indicates our web site experienced 100,860 user sessions with a total of 1,696,637 hits on the entire site.
- Continued use of the agency's electronic mail list service providing immediate dissemination of information on a wide range of topics to subscribers. A total of 751 messages were transmitted during the reporting period, a 31.5% increase over the previous year.
- Continued close contact and dissemination of press releases to the media most specifically in areas of public fire and life safety education. Several generated in-depth media interviews.
- Agency staff, in support of the Department of Public Safety's Homeland Security Division, has assisted with planning for the organization of a state Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) team.
- Hosted the Chemical, Biological, Incendiary and Radiological Weapons of Mass Destruction Training program for military and Department of Public Safety Emergency Response Unit personnel.
- With the assistance of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), presented four Assistance to Firefighters Grant workshop programs throughout the state with 292 participants.
- Continued in an advocacy role on fire service issues to members of the Connecticut General Assembly and United States Congress.
- Continued participation on the Connecticut State Firefighters' Association Education Committee in support of the Regional Fire Training Schools. A Mission Delineation agreement was approved between the Connecticut Fire Academy and Regional Schools.
- Specified, bid and purchased five mobile Foam Trailers to serve as a resource to local fire departments on a regional response basis. Units have been located and are operated by the Hartford, New Haven, Norwich, Fairfield and Waterbury Fire Departments.
- Coordinated the delivery of the State Emergency Response Commission's Annual Conference with 170 participants. The conference theme was Unified Command.
- Staff held a September 11th Remembrance Ceremony at the Connecticut Fire Academy.
- Participated in the United States Postal Service Heroes Stamp Dedication held at Fairfield University.
- Represented the State of Connecticut at two Line of Duty Death funerals during the year.

Certification Division

Director Frederick W. Piechota, Jr. administers the Certification Division. The division is responsible for the development and administration of a voluntary fire service testing and certification program. All examinations are based upon the Standards for Fire Service Professional Qualifications developed by the National Fire Protection Association and adopted as agency regulations. The certification system continues to be accredited by both the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (NBFSPQ) and the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC). The security and integrity of the system remains a high priority as a majority of Connecticut's fire departments have mandated certification through contractual or organizational requirements making it crucial the system be able to withstand legal challenge.

Fiscal Year 2003 saw a total of 3,328 personnel tested within the 14 levels of professional competency offered with an 85 percent passing rate realized. Individuals certified by the Commission are eligible to voluntarily apply for national certification offered by our two accrediting boards.

The division continues to refine practical skills testing to comply with the Testing-in-Context model. Significant progress has been made on the completion and initiation of a scenario based

examination process designed to closely examine the Job Performance Requirements of national standards in real life situations. Working closely with curriculum developers, the division has collaborated on the development of an innovative examination methodology for the level of Fire Officer IV that will result in tangible and functional long-range plans for local fire departments.

The Commission has entered into an agreement with a nationally recognized subject matter expert to develop computer based simulations to examine the decision making process of Hazardous Material Technicians. Project rollout is expected by the third quarter of fiscal year 2004.

The division assisted a number of fire departments and municipalities with the development and administration of local promotional and entry level examinations through the use of its test item database.

Fiscal Services Division

The Fiscal Services Division is led by Director Peter F. O'Neil. The division is responsible for the Commission's accounting, budgeting, personnel, purchasing, payroll, contracting and physical plant functions at the Connecticut Fire Academy. The Commission continues the use of contracted custodial and food services for its customers and staff.

The division has spent a considerable amount of time this past year transferring many of its administrative procedures over to CORE-CT, a statewide system that utilizes enterprise resource planning (ERP) software. This new system will replace Connecticut state government's core financial and administrative computer systems including central and agency accounting, purchasing, accounts payable, asset management, inventory, payroll, time and attendance, workers' compensation, personnel and other business systems. Benefits of this single integrated system are: eliminates duplication of data entry; provides for more timely and accurate vendor payments; ability to view and update all information on-line in real time as well as better reporting and analysis of human resource and payroll information.

The division continued administration of payments to volunteer fire departments for emergency responses to limited access highways. Allotted funding permitted 2,364 individual payments this past fiscal year.

Cooperation and progress continues with the agency's recycling program. Recycled totals for the past year are as follows: newspaper 1.25 tons; bottles and cans 1,150 pounds; cardboard 3.25 tons and white office paper 7 tons.

As in past years, a substantial amount of publishing continues to be accomplished by the agency. Materials include student workbooks and manuals, instructor guides, class flyers, and course catalogs. Our contracted audio-visual library remains very active loaning local fire departments over 1,000 training/education slides, videotapes and multi-media programs.

The division has continued success in its efforts to collect on past due accounts. Total accounts receivable over 120 days continues to be less than one percent outstanding.

Training Division

The Training Division is led by Director Adam D. Piskura. The division is responsible for the development and delivery of Fire Suppression, Hazardous Materials/OSHA Compliance, Emergency Medical Services and Public Fire and Life Safety Education training programs.

The division is comprised of full-time staff and 150 part-time adjunct instructors. Each individual is dedicated to keeping Connecticut's firefighters well trained and prepared for safe operations through the delivery of quality training and educational programs. During the year, the division conducted 216 training programs reaching 4,138 students resulting in 93,025 contact hours. Our largest single training event, the annual June Fire School, enjoyed an enrollment of 652 students participating in 41 unique training programs.

Curriculum development projects included pilot testing a lesson plan for Commercial Driver License (CDL) for students to achieve their Class-1 vehicle operators license. This was in response to a request from the Connecticut State Police to train their Emergency Services Unit personnel. The initial training was successful leading to a 100% pass rate on the Department of Motor Vehicles examination. This program will be used to train those hospitals and fire departments that received a mass decontamination trailer from the Office of Emergency Management.

The Connecticut Fire Academy's Bookstore completed its second year of operation enhancing our customer service efforts in providing multimedia training and educational resources to local fire departments and individual firefighters. It also provides curriculum support materials to our internal customers charged with program delivery.

The Academy continues to offer the Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) to evaluate applicants for career fire department positions. CPAT is located at the Academy's Meriden facility. The pass rate is currently averaging 70 percent. An increased number of fire departments and municipalities throughout Connecticut have adopted this test to identify firefighter candidates with the greatest ability for a successful career.

Federal grant assistance was pursued and awarded. Funding is used to subsidize or offer free learning opportunities in the following areas:

Hazardous Materials Training	\$ 130,000.00
Emergency Response to Terrorism Training	\$ 80,000.00
Fire Officer Programs	\$ 25,000.00

The Academy, sensitive to Connecticut's emergency responder's needs, has offered over 25 Environmental Protection Agency Emergency Response to Hazardous Materials Incidents (40-Hour) programs allowing the responders to safely respond to and investigate/mitigate incidents involving unknown chemical and biological agents. We also conducted 25 deliveries of Emergency Response to Terrorism: Basic Concepts classes to prepare the states responders and municipal officials in the event of a terrorist incident.

Commissioners

Members of the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control are appointed by the Governor and represent statewide fire service organizations. The following commissioners served during the year: Chairman Peter S. Carozza, Jr., Waterbury; Vice Chairman Kevin J. Kowalski, Simsbury; Secretary Edward F. Haber, Berlin; Clifford C. Brammer, Jr., Thomaston; Edward B. Gomeau, Greenwich; William S. Johnson, West Haven; Wayne Maheu, Middletown; William H. McDonald, Ph.D., Farmington; Daniel Milewski, Stratford; Andy Ouellette, Broad Brook; Richard H. Nicol, Middlebury; Charles M. Stankye, Jr., Derby; James P. Wilkinson, Milford and John R. Vendetta, Hartford.