



**ANNUAL REPORT
JULY 2005 - JUNE 2006**



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL

**PETER S. CAROZZA, JR., Chairman
Kevin J. Kowalski, Vice Chairman
Jeffrey J. Morrissette, State Fire Administrator**

Established - 1975 Statutory authority - Conn. Gen. Statutes. Sec. 7-323

*Central office - Connecticut Fire Academy, 34 Perimeter Road
Windsor Locks, CT 06096*

Average number of full-time employees - 18

Recurring operating expenses - \$2,095,233

Capital outlay - \$247,912

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

The Commission proudly presents the following summary of activities as evidence that the responsibilities entrusted to us 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 Connecticut's fire service. Conn. Gen. Statutes Sec. 7-323(j) - 7-323(q).

Improvements/Achievements 2005-2006

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

Events/Activities

The State Fire Administrator and staff continue to remain active in state and national committees, boards and organizations in an effort to maintain a positive, proactive impact upon agency services. By Conn. Gen. Statutes, the Administrator serves on both the State Emergency Response and Enhanced 911 Commissions in addition to the Emergency Management and Homeland Security Coordinating Council and the Statewide Highway Incident Management Task Force. The Administrator also serves as the Executive Board Chairman for the International Fire Service Training Association. The Director of Certification serves on the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications Board of Directors and is Chairman of its Advisory Committee. Agency staff represents the Commission on the Department of Public Health's Office of Emergency Medical Services Advisory Board and various committees and working groups established by the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security.

Agency events and activities included:

- Provided technical expertise and assistance to support other state agencies such as the Governor's Office, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Corrections, Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, Department of Administrative Services, Department of Public Safety, Department of Public Health, Connecticut General Assembly and the Department of Mental Retardation.
- Continued support to the Connecticut Fire Chiefs' Association in the implementation of the Statewide Fire-Rescue Disaster Response Plan. To date, 145 fire departments have agreed to participate, an increase of 14 over last fiscal year. With the assistance of federal homeland security grant funds, procured resources for county and regional fire coordinators including global positioning satellite units, laptop computers and incident command resource vest kits.
- Provided staffing and assistance to the state's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) as needed for exercises and activations. Coordinated the development of fire service asset lists for possible deployment in support of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.
- Continued to host and provide logistical and staff support to the Department of Public Safety for their annual Advanced Fire Investigation and Vehicle Fire Investigation training programs.
- A total of 160 fire officers attended Connecticut Fire Officer's Weekend at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Students successfully participated in one of six classes resulting in 2,240 contact hours with nationally recognized instructors.
- Hosted the 4th annual Connecticut Firefighters Memorial service. The names of six Connecticut firefighters who had died in the line of duty were added to the Memorial.
- Continued administration of the 800 FIRE LINE program, a national volunteer fire and emergency services recruitment tool. During the fiscal year, 16 calls were received with 6 referred to local fire, EMS, and other emergency response related organizations. Hosted two regional forums on volunteer recruitment and retention.
- Delivered one Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Training program highlighting the revised assessment tool with 15 participants. Made 8 referrals of at-risk youth to local Juvenile Firesetter Intervention programs or mental health professionals.

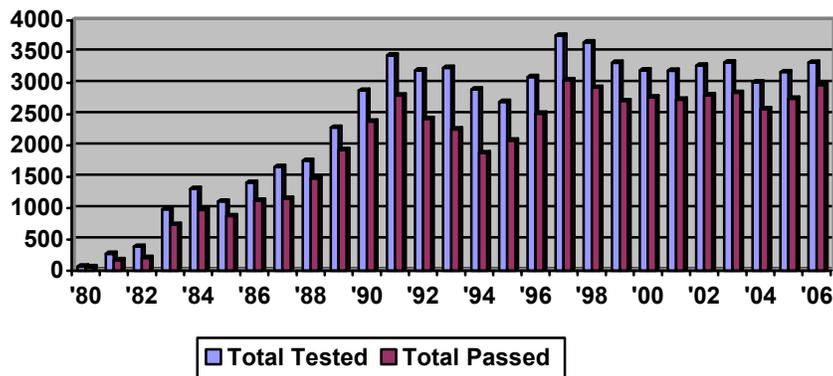
- Procured and placed into operation a new self-contained breathing apparatus compressor/cascade system with multiple fill stations. Also procured new self-contained breathing apparatus units, wash extractor unit, 3M Digital Display Boards, personal protective equipment and numerous metering devices in support of Homeland Security related training. Received donations of a LTI Tower unit from the city of Danbury and a LP Gas powered 2001 Honda Civic automobile from Honda America.
- With the support of federal Homeland Security funding, procured an additional 4,500 gallons of vapor suppressing firefighting foam concentrate to be shared by the foam trailer host communities. Three additional foam trailer units have been ordered and are expected to be delivered by the 1st quarter of fiscal year 2007.
- Coordinated the delivery of two specialized Incident Command training programs for 59 participants.
- Delivered two, five-day “Introduction to the Fire Service” summer training camps for youths 14 to 18 years of age with 86 participants.
- Initiated the Fire Officer Seminar Series headlined by national platform speakers presenting on a variety of contemporary topics. Four, day-long sessions were held with 280 participants.
- Academy dormitory rooms were occupied by students an equivalent of 6,065 room nights during the year, a slight decrease from the previous fiscal year.
- Continued support to the Joint Council of Connecticut Fire Service Organizations including coordination of the 8th Annual Fire Service Day at the Capitol.
- Continued extensive use of the agency’s electronic mail list service providing immediate dissemination of timely information to subscribers. A total of 677 messages were transmitted during the fiscal year. The agency’s web page was accessed in excess of 21,000 times and was maintained to enhance communication efforts.
- Continued regular dissemination of press releases to the media, most specifically, in areas of public fire and life safety education. Assisted several television news stations with the production of news stories promoting fire safety or fire service issues.
- Assisted 10 Connecticut fire departments with the development and administration of local promotional and entry level examinations through the use of the Commission’s test question database.
- Developed a procedure to automatically register all eligible candidates for national certification. This will become operational in fiscal year 2007.
- Developed and implemented new certification levels for Tanker Operator, Hazardous Materials Awareness, Hazardous Materials Operations, Rescue Technician Rope; Confined Space; Trench; Vehicle and Machinery; Structural Collapse, Incident Safety Officer and Health and Safety Officer.
- In support of the Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Assistance to Firefighters Grant program, conducted outreach grant writing workshops in six locations with a total of 141 attendees.
- Continued in an advocacy role on fire service issues to members of the Connecticut General Assembly and United States Congress.
- Actively participated on the Connecticut State Firefighters’ Association Education Committee in support of the Regional Fire Training Schools.

- Continued support to the Statewide Honor Guard initiative. This group of volunteers provides direct support to local fire departments. Hosted a week long National Honor Guard Academy with 22 participants representing the fire service, law enforcement and emergency medical services.
- A wireless internet network was established within the Connecticut Fire Academy for use by students, guests and residents.
- Coordinated the delivery of the annual State Emergency Response Commission's annual conference attended by 106 participants from both the public and private sector.

Certification Division

Director Frederick W. Piechota, Jr. oversees the Certification Division that consists of three full time staff members assisted by a number of part time adjunct instructors who serve as proctors and examiners. The division is responsible for the development and administration of a voluntary certification and examination system for the fire service of Connecticut. The Certification System maintains national accreditation as granted by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications and the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress. Both of these entities have certified that the Connecticut certification process meets the high standards established for national certification of the fire service. The security and integrity of the system remains a high priority as it must be able to withstand legal challenges.

Fiscal Year 2006 saw a total of 3,325 examinations delivered within 18 levels of certification offered with an 89 percent passing rate realized. This represents an increase of 152 examinations over last fiscal year. All individuals who completed requirements for certification to national accredited levels of State Certification were provided with an application that allowed them to voluntarily apply for National Certification to these levels. The following chart is provided to give a graphical representation of the history of the Certification System since its inception in 1980:



Fiscal Services Division

This division was consolidated into the Department of Administrative Services Small Agency Resource Team resulting in a net loss of two positions to the agency. Support to the agency in the areas of fiscal and human resources is now provided from a centralized location in Hartford. This action has caused delays in agency planning, procurement and decision making capabilities. The agency relies heavily upon various contracted services, including custodial, food service, information technology and instructional/consulting support.

The Fiscal Division administered a \$100,000 Supplemental “Limited Access Highway” Grant Program to eligible local volunteer fire companies.

Completion of the Connecticut Fire Academy Administration Building’s Heating Ventilation Air Conditioning (HVAC) system automation project is resulting in energy savings.

Training Division

The Training Division, operating under the banner of the Connecticut Fire Academy, is led by Director Adam D. Piskura with the support of 9 full time staff and 160 per diem adjunct instructors. Combined, these individuals develop curriculum and deliver diverse classes from the entry level Recruit Firefighter Training program to Fire Officer courses with collegiate transfer credit and technical specialty programs including hazardous materials/OSHA compliance, weapons of mass destruction response, emergency medical services and public fire and life safety education training.

During the year, the division offered 528 training programs reaching 9,785 students, a net increase of 186 classes. The single greatest factor for the increased number of programs and students is state and municipal agencies moving toward compliance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) as per Presidential Directive 5. The largest on-campus event was the annual June Fire School where 48 classes were offered over a five-day period with 862 students participating. This represents an increased participation by 103 students with two less days.

Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Quantitative Face Piece Fit Testing continues to be a popular service offered to fire departments. A total of 1,897 tests were administered to 52 fire departments, law enforcement and state agencies.

Participation in the Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) continues to grow in popularity among the state’s career fire departments as part of their entry-level testing of firefighter candidates. The Academy processed 1,634 registrations an increase of 461 resulting in 709 passing, 371 failing and 569 no-shows. The agency continues to investigate options to move the CPAT test indoors as it is currently subject to the weather, thus complicating scheduling and testing.

The Connecticut Fire Academy's Bookstore completed its fifth year of operation continually enhancing our customer service efforts. Bookstore activity the past fiscal year surpassed 11,279 items sold, a 10 percent increase over last fiscal year resulting in sales of \$296,889. Profits continue to be reinvested into inventory which also helps to reduce the contributory cost of course material. Connecticut Distance Learning has been engaged to develop an online sales capability feature.

Commissioners

Members of the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control are appointed by the Governor and represent statewide fire service organizations. Commissioners serving during the fiscal year: Chairman Peter S. Carozza, Jr., Waterbury; Vice Chairman Kevin J. Kowalski, Simsbury; Secretary James P. Wilkinson, Milford; Edward B. Gomeau, Greenwich; William S. Johnson, Jr., West Haven; John J. Blaschik, Jr., Middletown; Adrian Ouellette, Broad Brook; Richard H. Nicol, Middlebury; Charles M. Stankye, Jr., Derby; Robert Walsh, Plantsville; John J. Brady, Madison; Richard E. Morris, Niantic and Philip K. Schenck, Avon.