



**ANNUAL REPORT
JULY 2006 - JUNE 2007**



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 - 17

Recurring operating expenses - \$2,271,932

Capital outlay - \$147,951

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

The Commission proudly presents the following summary of activities for Fiscal Year 2007

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 2006-2007

The State Fire Administrator and staff continue to actively participate on 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. Agency staff and Adjunct Instructors represent

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, the International Association of Fire Chiefs as well as the North American Fire Training Directors Association. The Commission is an active participant in the Mid-Atlantic Association of State Fire Commissions.

A most notable event was the swift teamwork of several staff members led by William Auclair who put training into practice and saved the life of a co-worker in cardiac arrest. Employees receiving special recognition from the Connecticut Fire Department Instructors Association this year included Adjunct Instructor Mark Amatrudo who was awarded the Instructor of the Year Award, Commissioner Adrian Ouellette's receipt of the Harry Kelly Award and Adjunct Instructors Ian Tenney and Tony Leca's receipt of special recognition for their efforts leading the Academy's Recruit Firefighter Training program.

Agency events and activities included:

- Provided technical expertise and assistance to support various state agencies including 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.
- In cooperation with the Department of Public Safety in support of their Geographical Area Courthouse Bomb Threat Protocol served as a secondary contact point for the notification of local fire departments with threats in their jurisdiction.
- 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. Also served as a co-host for their Abandoned Building Seminar held in New Britain.
- A total of 117 fire officers attended Connecticut Fire Officer's Weekend at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Students successfully participated in one of five classes resulting in 1,872 contact hours at the nation's premiere fire education institution.
- Hosted the 4th annual Connecticut Firefighters Memorial service. Fortunately there were no line-of-duty deaths, therefore no additional names 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 five referred to local fire, EMS, and other emergency response related organizations.
- With the support of federal Homeland Security funding, procured three additional foam trailer units. This new equipment hosted by the Danbury, Willington and Winsted Fire Departments became operational on July 1, 2007. There are now eight of these specialty units strategically located and operational throughout the state.
- Two summer Cadet Firefighter Programs for youths 14 to 18 years of age were delivered with 106 students resulting in 11,236 contact hours.
- Continued offering of the Fire Officer Seminar Series headlined by national speakers presenting on a variety of contemporary topics. Seven, day-long sessions were held with 539 students resulting in 4,312 contact hours.

- Academy dormitory rooms were occupied by students an equivalent of 7,265 room nights during the year, an increase of 1,200 over the previous fiscal year.
- Continued support to the Joint Council of Connecticut Fire Service Organizations including coordination of the 9th Annual Fire Service Day at the Capitol.
- Continued extensive use of the agency's electronic mail list service providing immediate dissemination of information to subscribers. At the request of the Department of Information Technology messages were reduced to a single daily message however multiple messages are typically combined. A total of 673 messages were transmitted during the fiscal year disseminating information on over 1,000 items of interest.
- Continued regular dissemination of press releases to the news media, most specifically, in areas of public fire and life safety education. Staff provided radio interviews and commentary on issues regarding holiday fire safety, juvenile firesetter intervention and other contemporary issues. Actively participated in a press conference initiative to blitz the public with information on a rash of fatal fires within our state.
- Our Public Life Safety efforts have produced 39 presentations of the Kids Fire Safety House reaching 5,148 students. Flashy the Fire Dog has delivered his fire safety message five times.
- 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 14 participants from throughout the nation.
- Coordinated delivery of the State Emergency Response Commission's annual conference attended by 148 participants.

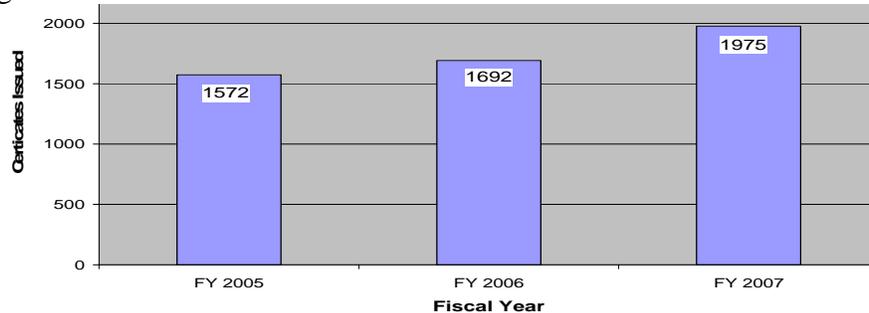
Certification Division

Director Thomas McGowan oversees the Certification division. The focus of this division is to assure customer-orientation, quality and competence for the Connecticut fire service community. Within the Certification division there are three full time staff members and thirty-five adjunct examiners responsible for the development and administration of fair and consistent examinations based on National Professional Qualification Standards. As independent entities, the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (ProBoard) and the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) have accredited the Commission for having met the high standards necessary for such recognition.

Fiscal Year 2007 saw a significant change within the division. Director Fred W. Piechota, Jr. retired following thirteen years of service. Denice Fortin, Certification Registrar and Ed O'Hurley, Certification Coordinator, continued to serve the Certification division during the transition with professionalism toward meeting the customers' certification needs. Special thanks are in order for both of these people.

Over the past three fiscal years there have been substantial increases in the number of fire service personnel voluntarily becoming certified within the twenty-one competency levels available. The reasons for these increases may be correlated to: local fire department demands for competent personnel, the diversification of recognized specialty training to stay current with public safety trends, the need to be recognized by the community for state certification, offer assurance to the public that the fire service provides competent firefighters and fire officers in time of need, and legal obligations.

Figure 1 – Total Number of Certificates Issued Over the Past Three Years



From FY 2005 to FY 2007, the number of certifications granted increased by 403. This represents a 20.5% increase in the total number of certificates granted over the past three years.

Three significant areas appear to offer insight to the increasing trends in certification testing: 1) the steady and continued growth in Firefighter I and II examinations, 2) the increased numbers of fire service personnel required to meet local mandates and 3) the specialist opportunities now available in technical rescue.

In order to receive certification to the fire officer level requires prerequisite certification in firefighter basic skills and Fire Service Instructor I and II. A correlation between these increases and the increase in fire officer certification may be suggested.

The number of Rescue Technician-Confined Space Level Certification increased to 103 certificates being granted. The incentive for fire service personnel and the community achieving this status is beneficial.

The Commission authorized the Certification division to implement an action plan designed to adopt the National Registry ALS Practical Examination. Thanks to the efforts of Brenda Murphy-Tenney, ALS Coordinator and Ed O’Hurley, this program further enhances the services available to our customer-base.

Office of State Fire Administration

This Office, supported in part by the Department of Administrative Services Small Agency Resource Team, provides fiscal and administrative services to the agency. We continue to rely upon numerous contracted services, including custodial, food service, information technology and instructional/consulting support.

This Office administered a legislated \$200,000 Supplemental Grant Program to eligible volunteer fire companies who had previously benefited from the Limited Access Highway Reimbursement Program.

As of this fiscal year, funding totaling \$636,482, to support the operations of the nine independent Regional Fire Schools was transferred to the agency. Allotments were disbursed through the Connecticut State Firefighters' Association to the fire schools.

The Office continued to provide consulting services to communities regarding Juvenile Firesetter Intervention. Work commenced on revising the Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist curriculum to meet the latest National Fire Protection Association Standards. This effort should allow the agency to become nationally accredited to certify in this area. Six juvenile firesetters were referred to existing intervention programs and provided assistance to three juveniles under court referral.

Commissioners and staff were actively engaged in the development of two guidance documents. These include *Guidelines for Fire Service Cadets, Explorers and Junior Firefighters* and *Model Guidelines for Volunteer Emergency Personnel*.

Utilizing federal grant funding, established two durational State Fire Rescue Disaster Response Plan Coordinator positions. Responsibilities included revising the Statewide Fire Rescue Disaster Response Plan ensuring compliance with the National Incident Management System. Provided technical assistance and support to Regional and County Fire Coordinators, standardize fire service equipment typing as well as updated procedures for the Fire Liaison position at the state Emergency Operations Center. Presently, 151 Connecticut Fire Departments have signed agreements acknowledging active participation in the State Fire Plan.

Training Division

The Training division better known as the Connecticut Fire Academy is led by Director Adam D. Piskura assisted by nine dedicated full time staff and 160 part time 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 as well as technical specialty programs. With our nation's focus upon domestic security we work very closely with the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security and other state agencies to plan and prepare our first responder workforces for contemporary situations.

The individuals comprising the Training division have increased their productivity despite the prolonged one year vacancy of a Program Manager position. During the year, the division offered 707 training programs reaching 12,550 students resulting in 240,449 contact hours. This represents a net increase of 179 training programs, 2,765 students and 83,546 contact hours over last fiscal year. 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. Coordination for these services is provided by a durational position supported by pass through federal funding. Our most visible on-campus

event during the fiscal year was the annual June Fire School. This year 37 classes were offered over a five day period garnering 583 students.

Another proud initiative was creation of a Tanker Shuttle program that the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has recognized by offering to sponsor the course with federal pass through funding for local fire departments protecting populations of less than 10,000. The Academy offered three programs with 76 students resulting in 1064 contact hours. Department of Environmental Protection Forestry division also teamed up to sponsor a seminar highlighting the Insurance Service Organization Rating Schedule. During the year we researched and developed or revised curriculum in Water Rescue, Wilderness First Aid, Discipline and Conflict Resolution, Public Fire and Life Safety Educator I, EPA Technician and the Fire Service Instructor I and II programs.

Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Quantitative Face Piece Fit Testing continues to be a popular service offered to fire departments, law enforcement agencies, state agencies and private industry. A total of 1,413 tests were administered to 31 different organizations ensuring compliance with Code of Federal Regulations 1910.134.

The Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) process changed this year as the result of a State of Texas court case. The changes to the test process and administration were significant requiring an increase in the testing fee from \$65 to \$150. This fee increase was necessary to cover the expense of the additional proctors required to meet the revised testing methodology. The Academy processed 1,434 registrations with 1,023 candidates testing resulting in 746 passing, 277 failing, and 411 no-shows.

The Connecticut Fire Academy's Bookstore is enjoying six years of supplying books and study materials to instructors, students, fire department promotional candidates, chief officers and family members. Bookstore sales reached \$368,939, an increase of \$72,049 over the previous fiscal year. Profits continue to be reinvested into inventory which also helps to reduce the contributory cost of course material.

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.