



**ANNUAL REPORT
JULY 2000 - JUNE 2001**

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL

JEFFREY J. MORRISSETTE, State Fire Administrator
Established - 1975 Statutory authority - Chap. 7-323
Central office - Connecticut Fire Academy, 34 Perimeter Road
Windsor Locks, CT 06096
Average number of full-time employees - 22
Recurring operating expenses - 2000-2001 - \$2,192,663
Capital outlay - \$78,717

***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 responsibilities entrusted to it 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; and others.

Public Service

The commissioners and staff are committed to Public Service Excellence. Feedback on services is continually solicited through the use of student comment sheets, surveys and regular interaction with fire service organizations.

In an effort to promote and market agency services, a display booth was staffed at two state and regional conferences during the year. Agency staff members continued to serve as a resource to network television, radio and newsprint media positively impacting local public fire and life safety education efforts.

The staff continues to conduct informational tours and demonstrations of the Connecticut Fire Academy facility on a regular basis in response to requests from legislators, local civic organizations and other interested citizens.

Improvements/Achievements 2000-2001

A conscious effort is continually made to schedule programs and services within every region of the state. The needs of both the volunteer and career fire service are gauged in consideration of program development and delivery.

Reducing Waste

The Commission remains a small, efficient, organizationally streamlined agency. Through the use of full-time staff serving as facilitators and coordinators, per-diem adjunct instructors actually deliver a majority of agency services.

Administrative Projects

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 maintaining a communications link. The Director of Training serves as the Commission's representative to the Department of Public Health's Office of Emergency Medical Services Advisory Board. Administrative projects completed or ongoing include:

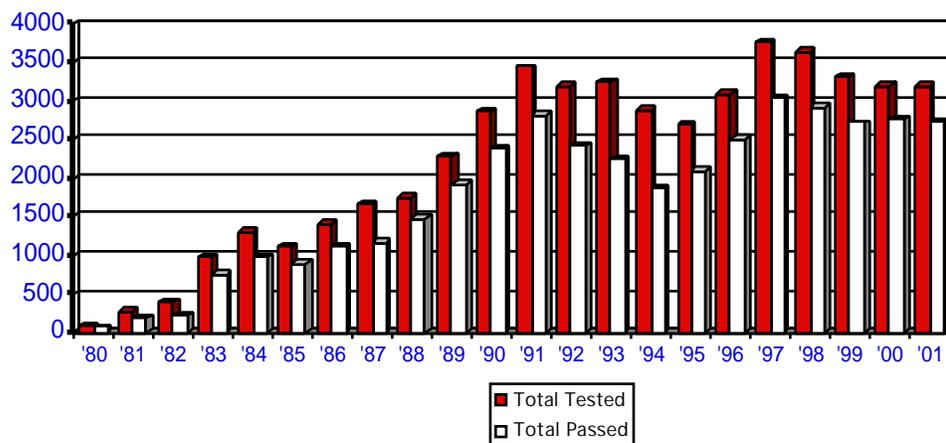
- Continued administration of the 800 FIRE LINE Program, a national volunteer fire and emergency services recruitment tool. During the fiscal year, 299 calls were received with 109 referrals to local fire and EMS organizations. A public service announcement (PSA) featuring Lt. Governor M. Jodi Rell promoting volunteerism was produced and aired by WVIT 30. This resulted in a significant increase in calls to the FIRE LINE. A second video PSA was produced by the Commission and distributed to local towns for use on local cable public access.
- Continued to host regional forums on volunteer recruitment and retention. Forums were held in East Haven, Thomaston, Windham and Windsor Locks with 80 attendees.
- In conjunction with the Connecticut Fire Chiefs Association conducted a two-day conference on Leadership and Administration in Volunteer/Combination Organizations with 70 attendees.
- Continued to assist the Connecticut State Firefighters Association Fallen Firefighters Memorial Committee with fundraising and memorial design efforts. Nearly 300 people attended a groundbreaking ceremony held on June 12, 2001 with construction expected to begin in the fall.
- Delivered at no charge to each county, an overview training program on Rapid Intervention Teams.
- Assisted the City of New London in their recruitment efforts of protected class members and females.
- Delivered two Introduction to the Fire Service summer training camps for youth 14-18 years of age.
- Continued upgrade of agency computer hardware including an increased capacity file server. In addition, installed ceiling mounted computer video projectors in three classrooms.
- A total of 3,141 dormitory room reservations were handled during the year.
- Distributed statewide an Entry Level Firefighter Training Guidance Document.
- Provided ongoing assistance to the Joint Council of Connecticut Fire Service Organizations including coordination of the 3rd Annual Fire Service Day at the Capitol.

- Maintained the agency's homepage presence on the Internet. During the fiscal year our web site experienced 34,604 user sessions with a total of 223,027 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 383 messages were transmitted during the reporting period.
- Continued in an advocacy role on fire service issues to members of the Connecticut General Assembly and United States Congress.
- Disseminated to Regional Fire Schools and interested fire departments a CD-ROM based training program on the Tactical Use of Thermal Imaging Cameras.
- Engineering and design plans for improvements to the Academy's Training Tower are complete and the project is expected to be placed out to bid in August, 2001. Administrative Office modification plans are complete with work expected to commence in the fall.
- Finalized acquisition and enhancements of a new facility in Meriden which now serves as a central location for the delivery of Candidate Physical Agility Testing (CPAT).

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. The certification system is nationally accredited by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (NBFSPQ) and the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC). During the past fiscal year, the agency proudly and successfully completed a required site visit and received re-accreditation for an additional five years by the NBFSPQ. A total of 355 fire personnel in Connecticut applied for and received grandfather certification as a result of the agency's accreditation by 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 that the system be able to withstand legal challenge.

Fiscal Year 2001 saw a total of 3,196 personnel tested within the 13 levels of professional competency offered with an 85 percent passing rate realized. A total of 1,470 persons completed all requirements for a given certification level. Individuals certified by the Commission are eligible to voluntarily apply for national certification offered by our accrediting boards.



Two major projects were accomplished during the year. The development of a Fire Officer III examination system designed to more realistically examine the capabilities and knowledge of the executive fire officers via a combination oral and written topic examination process was completed.

The second project, the development of a training program designed to educate local training officers who serve as psycho-motor skill evaluators, was completed and delivered to over 120 participants. It is believed that this is the first program of its kind in the country.

Question review sessions for the review of three test item banks were conducted utilizing a wide cross section of local fire service personnel who volunteered their time for this task. This helps to ensure that test banks utilized by the Commission are both valid and reliable.

The division continues to assist a number of fire departments with the administration of local promotional and entry examinations through the use of the Commission's test item database.

Fiscal Services Division

The Fiscal Services Division is led by Director Peter F. O'Neil. The division is responsible for all of the Commission's accounting, budgeting, personnel, purchasing, payroll, contracting and physical plant functions at the Connecticut Fire Academy. The Commission also uses a contracted custodial, food service and facilities management company for its customers and staff.

The division administers payments to volunteer fire departments for emergency responses to limited access highways. A 10 percent increase has been approved to the agency's annual appropriation to allow timely payment for a greater number of claims to be paid. The most recent appropriation, as well as a transfer of \$32,000 in allotted funding, assisted in expediting over 2,500 payments this past fiscal year.

The agency's recycling program continues to move forward. Recycled totals for the past year are as follows: newspaper – 1.2 tons; bottles and cans – 1,200 pounds; cardboard – 3.5 tons and white office paper – 7.8 tons.

A substantial amount of publishing continues to be accomplished by this agency. Materials range from student workbooks and manuals to class flyers and course catalogs. Our contracted audio-visual library remains productive, loaning to local fire departments in excess of 1,000 training/education slides, videotapes and multi-media programs on CD-ROM.

The Commission's database has allowed this division to increase its effort in collecting 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 of Training, Adam D. Piskura. The division is responsible for the development and delivery of Fire, Hazardous Materials/OSHA Compliance, Emergency Medical Services and public education safety training programs.

The division is comprised of both full-time staff and 150 part-time adjunct instructors all dedicated to keeping Connecticut's firefighters well-trained and safe through quality training and education. Working primarily under the banner of the Connecticut Fire Academy, instruction is available in both cognitive and psychomotor development. During the year, the division conducted 532 training programs reaching 8,285 students resulting in 161,240 contact hours. The Annual June Fire School enrollment was 773 individuals participating in 45 different training programs resulting in a modest increase over the previous year.

A new policy was instituted committing to reproducing the Academy's entire curriculum on CD-ROM. Curriculum development projects included revising and pilot testing an updated Fire Officer I curriculum. New Fire Officer III curriculum has been pilot tested and revised incorporating a unique approach to certification and classroom delivery. Development of a new 16-hour rescue course titled Breaching and Breaking Concrete has been completed. Other projects included Hazardous Materials Awareness and Awareness Refresher Train-the-Trainer offered to all certified fire service instructors statewide. This curriculum was disseminated to local fire department training officers on CD-ROM at no cost to the participants. Currently under development is a curriculum for hybrid vehicles.

Based upon reputation and by request, the Academy sent adjunct instructors to Portland, Maine; Salt Lake City, Utah; Lawrence, Kansas; Indianapolis, Indiana and Boston, Massachusetts to offer instruction.

The Academy's bookstore operation was formalized with the construction of a retail bookstore and the employment of a full-time Bookstore employee. This will expand and enhance our customer service efforts in providing full service training and educational resources to local departments and individuals.

The division was awarded a contract by the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) to administer Candidate Physical Ability Tests for firefighter applicants. In addition to CRCOG communities, numerous Connecticut fire departments and municipalities have adopted this program.

As in past years federal grant assistance was pursued and received in the following areas:

Hazardous Materials Training	\$ 130,000.00
Emergency Response to Terrorism Training	\$ 80,000.00

During the fiscal year, a cooperative effort with the Connecticut Department of Health and the University of Connecticut was accomplished to present a table-top exercise on bio-terrorism hazards. This exercise brought together first responder agencies on the local, state and federal levels including hospitals and health districts making this experience a first of its kind in the country.

Federal funding is used to subsidize or offer tuition free learning opportunities for Connecticut's firefighters and emergency responders.

Membership

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 Carozza, Jr., Waterbury; Vice Chairman Kevin J. Kowalski, Simsbury; Secretary Edward F. Haber, Berlin; Clifford C. Brammer, Jr., Thomaston; Robert J. Chatfield, Prospect; Edward B. Gomeau, Old Saybrook; William Johnson, West Haven; Wayne Maheu, Middletown; Daniel Milewski, Stratford; Peter Mullen, Branford; George J. Munkenbeck, Jr., Waterbury; Richard H. Nicol, Middlebury; Charles M. Stankye, Jr., Derby; James P. Wilkinson, Milford and John Vendetta, Hartford.