



**ANNUAL REPORT
JULY 2008 - JUNE 2009**

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 (General Fund)
Recurring operating expenses - \$2,380,844.29
Capital outlay - \$168,465.02*

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

The Commission proudly presents the following summary of activities for Fiscal Year 2009.

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 Authority

Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §§ 7-323(j) - 7-323(s) the Commission is charged with and has primary responsibility for training, public fire and life safety education and professional competency certification for members of Connecticut's fire service.

Public Service

The agency works to leverage its limited resources in an effort to provide quality service to its customers. Economies and efficiency are gained by partnerships and synergy with state agencies like the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, Military Department, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Public Health, Department of Public Safety, Department of Developmental Services, and the Department of Corrections. Further, we partner with the federal agencies; Department of Homeland Security, United States Fire Administration, National Fire Academy, and the Department of Transportation exchanging grants, curricula and data. Such collaborations yield significantly increased opportunities for Connecticut's fire service. A conscious effort is made to schedule programs and services within

every geographic region of the state to ensure equal access to both the career and volunteer fire service.

Agency staff members actively participate on state and national committees, boards and organizations in an effort to maintain a positive, proactive impact upon agency services as well as serve in an advocacy role on behalf of Connecticut's fire service. By Connecticut General Statutes, the State Fire 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 is currently serving his second three-year term 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 other agency/professional committees and working groups.

Improvements/Achievements 2008-09

The following accomplishments suggest the wide variety of activities offered by the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control:

- A total of 131 fire officers from throughout the state attended Connecticut Fire Officer's Weekend at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Students successfully participated in one of five courses resulting in 2,096 contact hours at the nation's premiere fire education institution.
- Hosted the 6th annual Connecticut Firefighters Memorial Service. The name of Gary Remling (Belltown Fire Department 4/25/08) was added to the Memorial Honor Roll as a result of a line-of-duty death.
- Continued administration of the 800 FIRE LINE program, a national volunteer fire and emergency services recruitment tool. During the fiscal year, 40 calls were received with 11 referred to local fire, EMS, and other emergency response related organizations.
- The Commission's Regional Foam Trailer program was activated for responses to incidents at several locations throughout the year, providing resources not available locally.
- Following significant revision, two *Introduction to the Fire Service* programs for youth 14 to 18 years were delivered to 69 students.
- Continued offering the Fire Officer Seminar Series headlined by national speakers presenting on a variety of contemporary topics. Seven, single day-long sessions were held with 397 students resulting in 3,176 contact hours.
- Academy dormitory rooms were occupied by students an equivalent of 4,882 room nights during the year. A transition to double bunking for numerous occasions does not permit a comparison to previous year statistics.
- Continued support to the Joint Council of Connecticut Fire Service Organizations including coordination of the 11th Annual Fire Service Day at the Capitol.
- The agency's electronic mail list service continued to provide dissemination of important and timely contemporary information to subscribers. Communications were reduced to a single daily message however multiple messages are typically packaged. A total of 251

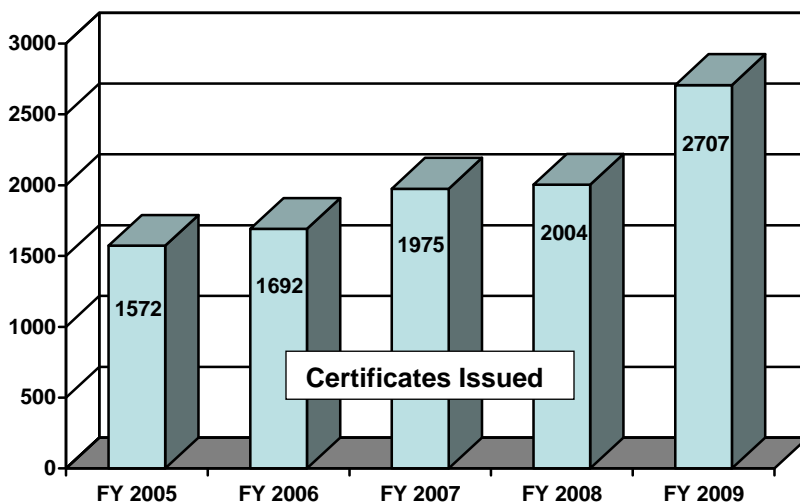
messages were transmitted during the fiscal year on well over 1,000 items of public safety interest.

- 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 a whole host of fire department, fire and life safety issues.
- Our public fire and life safety efforts have produced 19 presentations of the Kids Fire Safety House reaching 3,651 students. Staff also participated in six Career Day presentations and a roundtable discussion at the University of Bridgeport about national volunteerism.
- Actively participated on the Connecticut State Firefighters' Association Education Committee in support of the Regional Fire Training Schools. Final plans for construction and improvements to the New Haven Regional Fire School were completed. Preliminary plans were prepared for improvements to the Hartford County Regional Fire School located at the Connecticut Fire Academy.
- Continued support to the Statewide Honor Guard initiative. This group of volunteers provides direct support to local fire departments for both celebratory and grief assistance. Hosted a week-long National Honor Guard Academy with 22 participants from throughout the United States.
- Coordinated a two-day State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) annual conference with 106 attendees.
- Periodic use of the Department of Corrections Work Release program resulted in an estimated savings of \$38,000 in facility painting and maintenance expenses.

Certification Division

The Certification Division significantly increased its testing and examination deliverables without increasing staffing levels. A primary reason for the increase was the implementation of the revised National Fire Protection Association 1001 Standard on Firefighter Professional Qualifications for entry-level firefighters.

Figure 1 - Total Number of Certificates Issued Over the Past Five Fiscal Years



The twenty-five percent (25%) increase in the number of certificates awarded to Connecticut fire service personnel during FY 2009 (Figure 1) also reflects an apparent increase in requirements by Connecticut fire departments for highly qualified fire service personnel as evidenced by their commitment to training and certification.

Effective with the revised national standard, Connecticut fire service personnel must demonstrate competency through testing procedures in Hazardous Materials and Weapons of Mass Destruction (HMWMD) as part of their firefighting basic entry level skills training. The Certification Division is required to test each competency objective.

In anticipation of this demand, the Certification Division revamped its delivery of services. A threefold action plan was implemented to 1) respond to our constituency with a “can do” attitude, 2) realign delivery tasks for greater efficiency without substantial inconvenience, and 3) reduce overall cost in a tight economy. This effort reduced the number of site-visits by one third, generated a 30% cost savings, reshaped the office workload and increased the number of positive customer service responses.

FY2009 Goals:

- Continue the development and sustainability of the Commission through the maintenance and improvements offered by the national professional qualifications.

Coincident with revisions to several NFPA standards (Fire Fighter I and II , Fire Officer, Fire Service Instructor, Rescue Technician and Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction), the Certification Division pursued and received permission from its accrediting entities, National Board of Fire Service Professional Qualifications (ProBoard) and the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) to offer certifications in Fire Service Instructor III, Fire Officer III and IV and Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist I.

- Prepare and Submit application and re-accreditation by IFSAC.

A comprehensive application package was developed and submitted to IFSAC 60 days before deadline, allowing confirmation of a comprehensive re-accreditation Site Team visit in early November, 2009. This allows for an effective and efficient inspection that will not disrupt ongoing Division operations.

- Rehabilitate the CFPC website to a simplified approach for locating and disseminating information relative to the Certification process.

Continuing efforts have culled several obsolete documents, consolidated pertinent references, published the Division’s Administrative Manual policy document and created a dynamic Frequently Asked Questions segment to advise customers of nuances pertinent to the adoption of current editions of the NFPA 1001 and NFPA 472 standards.

The three person full-time staff includes Director, Thomas McGowan and two highly dedicated customer service professionals who maintain the daily operations of the Division:

Coordinator, Ed O'Hurley and Registrar, Denice Fortin. Fifty adjunct examiners are responsible for field administration of the cognitive and psychomotor skills examinations.

Office of State Fire Administration

This Office provides fiscal and administrative support to the agency and Connecticut's fire service. We continued to be impacted by limited staffing, budget reduction and rescission issues. As such, we rely heavily upon numerous contracted services, including custodial, food service, information technology, facility maintenance and instructional/consulting support.

This Office administered a legislated Supplemental Grant program for 160 eligible volunteer fire companies paying out a total of \$162,784 in direct payments and service vouchers.

Funding totaling \$783,046 was disbursed to the nine independent Regional Fire Schools through the Connecticut State Firefighters' Association. This represents an approximate 5% reduction due to mandated budgetary rescissions during the fiscal year.

For a second year, administration was provided in support of a program to reimburse municipalities or fire departments for 50% the cost of training their entry-level personnel achieving certification. The original appropriation for this program was \$795,000 however; only \$355,250 was reimbursed as \$439,750 in funding was rescinded mid-fiscal year.

Two major projects were completed during the year; the first being the replacement of the Academy's telephone system and installation of a comprehensive facility wide security system.

The Office continued to provide consulting services to communities regarding Juvenile Firesetter Intervention. More than a dozen juvenile firesetter referrals were handled through the Commission. In preparation for offering certification of Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialists, work continued on revising the curriculum to meet the current National Fire Protection Association Standard.

The Commission co-sponsored and provided funding to produce the Connecticut Public Television documentary and live call-in program *On Watch: Connecticut's Emergency Service Volunteers* which aired on September 11, 2008.

On the legislative front, Commissioners and staff provided technical assistance to members of the General Assembly, Office of Legislative Research and Office of Fiscal Analysis in support of numerous legislative proposals.

As part of long term plans, the State Fire Rescue Disaster Response Plan Coordinators are in the final stages of organizing and typing fire service resources throughout the state, according to county and Department of Emergency Management Homeland Security (DEMHS) region. These resources are organized into Task Forces and Strike Teams for an organized and efficient response to large scale incidents and disasters, as defined in the Connecticut Statewide Fire and Disaster Response Plan (SWFRDP) and National Incident Management System (NIMS). With the recent update and revision of the SWFRDP and Task Force and Strike Team responses, a series of exercises were conducted during the past year to test the new system. In conjunction

with the exercises, a training program was developed and multiple deliveries conducted throughout the state for fire service personnel. Plan staff and Coordinators took part in WEBEOC training at the State Emergency Operations Center and a full scale exercise is planned for the Spring, 2010.

Training Division

The Connecticut Fire Academy (CFA) fulfills the training and education missions of the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control to develop a qualified fire service workforce. A cadre of 200 part time adjunct instructors delivers diverse classes ranging from the comprehensive entry-level Recruit Firefighter Training program to Fire Officer level courses with collegiate transfer credits, as well as individual technical specialty programs. Using a reverse hierarchy, the adjuncts are empowered and supported by 10 full time staff led by Director, Adam D. Piskura.

During the year, the division offered 513 training programs reaching 9,448 students resulting in 199,897 contact hours. This represents a slight decrease in deliveries (110) with (1,787) fewer students and a consequent negligible decrease in student contact hours of (30,335). Several circumstances contribute to this decrease, including 1-NIMS requests continue to spiral downward from traditional classroom deliveries to internet based access, 2-Department of Environmental Protection requested less than half the usual CPR and First Aid classes, 3-Employment (both volunteer and career) and optional training is down due to the economy and municipal cutbacks.

The June Fire School is our largest on campus event. This year 55 classes were offered over a six day period garnering 896 students. During the reporting period we assisted the National Fire Academy in delivering 7 grant workshops statewide and empowered over 339 local fire department instructors.

A vivid example of a synergistic partnership is our exchange of classroom use with the members of the New England Disaster Training Center located at Camp Hartell. The state's military department has affiliated with Department of Public Health, Air National Guard, Army National Guard, DEMHS and the Connecticut Fire Academy to create unique learning experiences for first responders worldwide.

The CFA is responsible for a 50' trench rescue prop designed to safely instruct first responders about victim protection and extrication. A railroad crossing, passenger platform and hazardous materials tanker car will be joined by commuter passenger cars situated on a dummy track for multiple rescue scenarios and Hazardous Materials plug and patch response.

A special initiative was the design, creation, review, and production of the Department of Developmental Services Fire Safety Project for staff and group home families. This federally funded project was led by CFA Public Life Safety Coordinator, adjunct Alan Zygmunt.

Co-hosted with the Milford Fire Department; the International Association of Fire Fighters Peer Fitness program to develop a career and life long health and fitness culture within the fire service.

Supported the newly created Capitol Region Education Council's Public Safety magnet school in Enfield. The Director of Training serves on the board and numerous staff provides learning opportunities to visiting grades during regular and summer school sessions.

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 605 tests were administered to 19 different organizations ensuring compliance with Code of Federal Regulations 1910.134.

The Academy processed 657 Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) registrations with 473 (71%) individuals testing resulting in 422 (89%) passing, 51 failing (11%).

The Connecticut Fire Academy's Bookstore enjoyed its eighth year of supplying books and study material to instructors, students, fire department promotional candidates, chief officers and family members. Bookstore sales attained \$343,882, an increase of \$28,897 over the previous fiscal year. The total quantity of items sold is 11,816. Profits continue to be reinvested into inventory which helps to reduce the contributory cost of CFA 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, Old Saybrook; David J. Dagon, Mansfield; John J. Blaschik, Jr., Middletown, Matthew Nelson, Glastonbury; Richard H. Nicol, Middlebury; Charles M. Stankye, Jr., Derby; Robert Walsh, Plantsville; John J. Brady, Madison; Megan Murphy, Trumbull; Victor Mitchell, Bristol and Philip K. Schenck, Avon; Frank C. Hilbert, Mystic.