

# THE INSTRUCTOR'S DISPATCH

NOVEMBER, 2005

## WILLIAM PERKINS PROMOTED TO FIRE CHIEF FOR UCONN HEALTH CENTER

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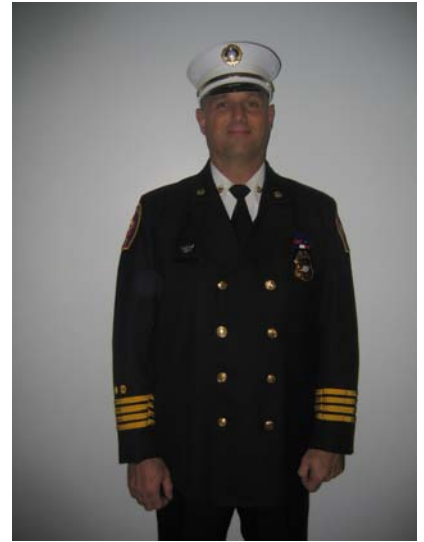
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The University of Connecticut Health Center is proud to announce that acting Deputy Chief William D. Perkins III has been offered and has accepted the position of Assistant Director of Public Safety/ Fire Chief.

Bill has been a member of the University of Connecticut Health Center FD for 23 years and has worked his way up the chain of command.

Bill will officially start his new position on November 25, 2005.

The Staff at the Connecticut Fire Academy are very proud of Bill and wish him a fun and rewarding experience as chief of the department.



William D. Perkins III

## DPS INQUIRY DATA ON-LINE CENTER

Reports received for incidents occurring from July 1, 2005 through September 30, 2005 are now on our website.

Go to [www.ct.gov/dps](http://www.ct.gov/dps) if you are interested in checking out information for your department or the state summary reports for that period.

If you have any questions, please call Norma Ruiz or Jo Lynn VanWart at 860-685-8372.



## NFIRS 5.0 CHANGES

In accordance with the NFIRS 5.0 Specification Cycle, the United States Fire Administration will be adopting new changes to the National Fire Incident Reporting System.

A notification to vendors was posted on the USFA website on September 30th.

The changes that affect incident documentation are as follows:

### Basic Module –NFIRS-1

A relational edit is being added that specifies that confined fires must be limited to those fires that have no associated deaths or significant dollar losses.

A new edit is being initiated that specifies that the “Arrival Time Year” must be equal to the “Alarm Time Year” unless the Incident date is December 31st.

### Structure Fire Module—NFIRS-3

Added a new code -- 2 “Partial System Present” This is to be used for partially sprinklered buildings. **NOTE:** if code = 1 or 2 the rest of the AOE sections should be completed.

### Fire Module – NFIRS-2

You will now be able to use Heat Source 80’s codes even if the exposure is 000. This will help document fireplace fires.

Mobile Property Codes now have codes that include farm vehicles.

The definition for equipment Involved in ignition is now for the piece of equipment that provided the principal heat source to cause the ignition.

The fire module is not required for mutual aid given incidents.

### Hazmat Module – NFIRS-7

#### Units: Capacity

#### Units: Released

Codes were added to include WMD biological and radioactive agents.

The Department of Public Safety Office is advising all fire departments and fire marshals that report electronically, to check with their software vendors as to the date the upgrades will be available. The new changes take effect on January 1, 2006.

If you have any questions, please call Jo Lynn VanWart at 860-685-8372.



## Mandatory Adjunct Instructor’s Meeting

Save the Date...

Jan. 17, 2006 (Night)

6:30 PM—9:30 PM

Jan. 19, 2006 (Day)

2:00 PM—5:00 PM



## RETIRED STATE EMPLOYEES REMINDER...

As a reminder, anyone who has retired from Connecticut state service can work no more than 120 days (960 hours) in a calendar year without it impairing their pension rights.

In the event they work more than 120 days, such members must reimburse the retirement fund for all retirement income payments received during the period of reemployment.

General Notice 2003-15: Reemployment of Retired Employees (April 9, 2003) is available to view at: <http://www.opm.state.ct.us/olr/Notices/table03.htm>



APPLICATION FOR ANDREW J. FLANAGAN MEMORIAL FUND ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIP

2005-2006 Academic Year College Level Program

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Fire Dept: \_\_\_\_\_

Years in Fire Service: Career \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_ Junior \_\_\_\_\_ Total Years \_\_\_\_\_

List your educational background, beginning with High School and including any resident National Fire Academy courses, CT Fire Academy courses, or other specialty programs. (Use separate paper if necessary)

School or Location Dates Courses of Certificate or College Attended Study Degree

Please attach a transcript of any college level courses you may have taken or; a list of such courses, the institution where taken, and the grades received.

Please attach a statement of approximately 250 words indicating: 1) Your educational goals; 2) Instructional program or courses in which you plan to enroll; 3) Why you believe this educational program will be useful to you; 4) Why you are applying for financial assistance.

Please provide 2 references with name, address phone number, and e-mail address.

Personal: \_\_\_\_\_

Fire Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you eligible for receiving educational funding from another source? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

If I receive a scholarship, you may \_\_\_ may not \_\_\_ use my name when making public announcements of the awards.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return your signed application and any supporting Documentation by January 15, 2006 to:

Peter E. Beckwith, Secretary

Flanagan Fund Scholarships

230 Union Street

Manchester, CT 06042

860-646-4242

Committee Assessment: \_\_\_ Recommended \_\_\_ Not Recommended - Reason:

\_\_\_\_\_

Committee Chairman's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPLICATION FOR ANDREW J. FLANAGAN  
MEMORIAL FUND (CONT'D)**

**ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR FLANAGAN MEMORIAL FUND AWARDS**

1. Grants are made for participation in college level courses.
2. Application for grants for the 2005 - 2006 academic years is due not later than January 15, 2006.
3. Applicants must be residents of the state of Connecticut.
4. Applicants must be active members of a fire department within Connecticut.
5. Applicants must have been members of a fire department for the 12 months proceeding the closing date for receipt of applications.
6. Applicants shall submit a list of any college level courses that they have taken, including the name of the institution attended, and the grades received. All courses need to be from a nationally accredited college or university.

Preference in giving awards will be given to firefighters who have demonstrated their ability to perform college-level studies.

7. In order to receive this grant, the student must furnish the committee with appropriate documentation, **including an official transcript or grade report.** Grants will be awarded for the first half of the academic year in February 2006.
8. Having completed at least one course in the first half of the academic year, a grant recipient may be awarded a second grant upon successful completion of an additional course during the second half of the academic year.

In order to receive this second grant, the student must again furnish the committee with appropriate documentation as stated above. Grade Transcripts or Reports should be **submitted by June 15, 2006.** The second grant will be awarded in July

**CONNECTICUT FIRE DEPARTMENT INSTRUCTORS ASSOCIATION AWARD**

The Connecticut Fire Department Instructors Association will also make a similar award. To be eligible for the CFDIA award, the applicant must be:

- A) A child of a deceased firefighter with preference being given to a child of a firefighter killed in the line of duty, and meeting the requirements of 1-3, and 6-8 above.

OR

- B) A firefighter meeting the requirements of 1 through 8 above, with preference being given to firefighters who have an interest in instructing firefighters.

Please check all applicable items below:

I am a:

Child of a deceased firefighter \_\_\_\_\_

Child of a firefighter killed in the line of duty \_\_\_\_\_

Certified State Fire Instructor \_\_\_\_\_

Regular Member of the CFDIA \_\_\_\_\_

## ACADEMY BURN BUILDING

The burn building is going to have a “protective” curb and stone barrier installed around the areas where ground ladder butts have been snapped off.

Around the same time, Yankee Gas will install a non-operative industrial sized gas train (approx 8’) along the wall under the single story balcony.

It will have four meters with vertical feeds disappearing into the building overhead. It will take supply from the ground within the newly installed barrier.

It is anticipated that this new prop will be used by instructors to send firefighters to shutdown utilities.

Rather than shut off all the gas to multiple occupancies, the

student must decipher which meter feeds what area of the structure.

If you have any suggestions for enhancements of this installation, please contact Adam Piskura, Director of Training at 860-627-6363 ext. 272. or e-mail Adam at: adam.piskura@po.state.ct.us.



**We always start smart when the first-arriving fire department human gives an accurate, brief, initial radio report.**

# BUDDIES FOR LIFE...

## “I CHOSE TO LOOK THE OTHER WAY...”

AUTHOR: DON MERRELL

I could have saved a life that day, but I chose to look the other way.

It wasn't that I didn't care, I had the time, and I was there.

But I didn't want to seem the fool, or argue over a safety rule.

I knew he'd done the job before, If I called it wrong, he might get sore.

The chances didn't seem that bad, I've done the same, he

knew I had.

So I shook my head and walked on by, he knew the risks as well as I.

He took a chance, I closed an eye, and with that act I let him die.

I could have saved a life that day, but I chose to look the other way.

Now every time I see his wife, I'll know I should have saved his life.

That guilt is something I must bear, but it isn't something you need to share.

If you see a risk that others take, that puts their health or life at stake,

The question asked, or the thing you say, could help them live another day.

If you see a risk and walk away, then hope you never have to say,

I could have saved a life that day, but I chose to look the other way.



### **Attention all Flashover instructors...**

The 4 apparatus bay doors, and side entrance doors located on the Fire Station must always be closed during training evolutions with the Flashover.

## 5TH ANNUAL FILL A FIRE TRUCK WITH TOYS FUNDRAISER

The Yalesville Volunteer Fire Department is hosting "The 5TH ANNUAL FILL A FIRE TRUCK WITH TOYS FUNDRAISER".

All toys and proceeds will be donated to and distributed by the Wallingford Holiday For Giving Committee.

Please bring new, unwrapped toys to the Yalesville Volunteer Fire Station at :

143 Hope Hill Road  
Yalesville, CT

**Friday:** December 9th  
from 4-8PM

**Saturday:** December 10th  
from 9AM-5PM

**Sunday:** December 11th  
from 8AM-2PM



The fire always plays  
for keeps and is  
unforgiving, color  
blind and  
democratic...

# Happy Holidays To All...

## NATIONAL FIRE ACADEMY TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Vacancies exist in the following NFA courses at the National Emergency Training Center in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

You may refer to the internet at : [www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov) for more information, or contact the Admissions Office via email at: [netc-admissions@dhs.gov](mailto:netc-admissions@dhs.gov) or by phone at (301) 447-1035.

Completed applications may be faxed to (301) 447-1441.

If interested, apply immediately! **Note:** The NFA policy of only 1 stipend-supported trip per fiscal year remains. However, a qualified individual may seek to participate without stipend assistance. **PLEASE INDICATE** with your application that you are aware of this restriction when you apply for the course.

### R280: Leading Community Risk Reduction

12/12 /05-12/23/05

1 Vacancy

### R309: Strategic Analysis of Community Risk Reduction

2/6/06- 2/17/06

7 Vacancies

### R816:Community Education Leadership 2/26 - 3/3/06

1 Vacancy



### FYI

Safety Committee Meeting...

Date:Dec.6, 2005

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Place: CFA Commission Conference Room.

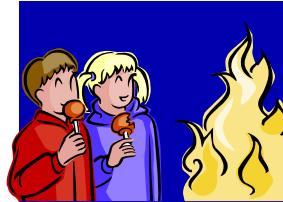
Any Instructors wishing to attend are welcome.

## JUVENILE FIRESETTER BASIC PROGRAM OFFERED

The Commission on Fire Prevention and Control will offer, at no charge, a two-day "Juvenile Firesetter Basic Program" training program at the Wallingford Police Department on December 10 & 11, 2005.

Kindly pass on the information to anyone in your department that may be interested in registering for this program.

Registration is on a first come, first served basis and class size will be limited to 20 seats. All participants must attend both days for completion. If you have questions, please email Brian Mello at [bmello@southington.org](mailto:bmello@southington.org) or feel free to contact Yvonne Lewis at 860-627-6363 ext.231. or e-mail Yvonne at [yvonne.lewis@po.state.ct.us](mailto:yvonne.lewis@po.state.ct.us).



Don't take "no" from a person who isn't authorized to say "yes"

## 2005 NINTH ROUND CT RECIPIENT

**Washington, DC**  
October 28, 2005 - The U.S. Department of Homeland Security today announced the ninth round of the Fiscal Year 2005 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFGP) awarding 540 grants to fire departments throughout the United States.

**Bethel Volunteer Fire Department—** Operations and Safety \$69,445.00 Personal Protective Equipment (\$73,100.00)

**Suffield Fire Department—** Operations and Safety \$69,445.00

Personal Protective Equipment (\$73,100.00)

**Town of Colchester Fire and EMS—** Operations and Safety \$120,650.00 Equipment (\$7,000.00) Personal Protective Equipment (\$120,000.00)

**Town of East Haddam—** Operations and Safety \$34,950.00 Personal Protective Equipment (\$21,000.00)

**Washington Volunteer Fire Department Inc.—** Operations and Safety \$117,967.00 Equipment (\$33,175.00) Modify Facilities

(\$91,000.00)

**Germantown Volunteer fire Department—** Vehicle Acquisition \$261,250.00 Vehicle Acquisition (\$275,000.00)

**Hebron Volunteer Fire Department—** Operations and Safety \$62,700.00 Modify Facilities (\$66,000.00)

**Mohegan Tribal Fire Department—** Operations and Safety \$44,570.00 Equipment (\$41,529.00) Training (\$995.00) Wellness Programs (\$6,998.00)



## INSTRUCTORS NEEDED FOR STRATEGY AND TACTICS PETERBOROUGH CLASS

The Glastonbury Fire Department has requested a Strategy and Tactics - Peterborough class on January 12, 2006, (6-10 PM), January 17, 2006, (6-10 PM), and January 21, 2006, (8-4 PM).

Please contact me ASAP by e-mail: [robmassicotte@aol.com](mailto:robmassicotte@aol.com) if you have experience with this class and are interested in teaching.

Thanks,  
Bob Massicotte



Talk is cheap  
because supply  
exceeds demand.

## 2006 CFA TRAINING CALENDAR

The 2006 Connecticut Fire Academy Training Calendar is now available on the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control's website at [www.ct.gov/cfpc](http://www.ct.gov/cfpc). The direct link to the calendar is <http://www.ct.gov/cfpc/cwp/view.asp?Q=306774&A=832>.

Options available for downloading include the entire calendar with cover, or just the main body of the calendar. Course applications are also available for download.

The 2006 CFA Training Calendar contains a schedule of nationally known fire oriented presenters that will be speaking as part of the 2006 Fireground Seminar Series. There is also a date scheduled for the Annual Fire Service Instructors Development Seminar on public speaking and presentation skills.

This year the calendar contains a greater percentage of certification level classes. If you are looking for a class that is not listed in the calendar, or a non-

certification class of shorter duration, please feel free to contact one of our program managers for assistance. The Connecticut Fire Academy has an extensive list of additional fire and emergency responder classes available.

Printed copies of the 2006 CFA Training Calendar will be mailed soon throughout the state.





# BATTLE OF THE BADGES

Tense relations between police and fire departments, long a fact of life in many cities, are now emerging as a serious domestic-preparedness problem. **BY JOHN BUNTIN**

**"An airplane is falling on the company!"**

"A what?"

"An airplane! An airplane!"

"An airplane hit your building?"

"Yeah, yeah, it hit the building. I need an ambulance, because one guy is hurt."

That was one of the stomach-churning calls made to emergency dispatchers in suburban New Jersey on a cold February morning earlier this year. A corporate jet had failed to take off from the Teterboro Airport and skidded across a busy highway in the middle of the morning rush hour before crashing into a warehouse.

Because of its proximity to New York City—Teterboro is just 12 miles west of midtown Manhattan—and its fleet of private jets, the airport is precisely the kind of facility that has worried counterterrorism experts since the 9/11 attacks. Yet the initial response to this aviation disaster was chaotic. The smallest municipality in New Jersey (population 18), Teterboro has no fire department of its own. Instead, it relies on neighboring jurisdictions for fire-fighting and law enforcement services. That makes things complicated under the best of cir-

cumstances. However, the possibility that the crash might be a terrorist incident brought large numbers of police officers to the scene—and ratcheted up the tensions.

First, came the Port Authority police with their mobile command post. Local fire and police rebuffed their efforts to take charge, pointing out that the incident was not occurring on Port Authority property. Then the Bergen County police showed up with their command post. Then the Bergen County Sheriff's Department appeared with its command post. Then came the New Jersey state police with, yes, their own command post. None of them were working together. As a result, some local fire fighters who left the scene briefly found that when they attempted to return to their job, they were barred from "the crime scene" or asked to sign back in.

Miraculously, no one was killed in what turned out to be an ice-related accident, and Teterboro muddled through. But the uncertainty over lines of command and protocols for operations hardly reflected a coordinated response. At the heart of the difficulty that morning was an intractable

problem—tension between fire fighters and law enforcement officers.

For more than a century, competitive, sometimes strained, relations between police and fire departments have been the norm in many American cities. Indeed, the rivalry between the two public safety entities is one of the most enduring fault-lines in municipal government. To some extent, such tension is unavoidable. At the policy level, police officers and fire fighters compete for the same municipal dollars. Higher wages for one profession (usually the police) often come at the expense of the other. "The system puts us in an adversarial position," says Phoenix Police Commander T.J. Martin, "and if you've got a culture that lets it flourish, it continues to go and go."

For the most part, police and fire agencies work through these tensions. But when police and fire are called upon to work together in a crisis, all too often coordination has broken down—and turf wars have broken out. Among the most innovative police and fire chiefs, there's a growing awareness that the status quo is unacceptable, even dangerous, in the event of a large-scale ter-



rorist attack or natural catastrophe, and that tabletop drills and management protocols aren't enough to overcome the animosity. "If you think dropping a bomb on a city is going to get people to hug and kiss and get along, I don't think it is," says Phoenix Fire Chief Alan Brunacini.

What's needed, he and other officials say, is a concerted and ongoing effort to bridge the divide between the two professions. "Weapons-of-mass-destruction responses," Brunacini argues, "will emerge

from everyday local responses." A look at the New York metropolitan area underscores the perils of the status quo and illustrates what more healthy relationships might look like in the future.

### PAPER PLANS

The difficulty of coordinating emergency services operations is hardly an unrecognized problem. In recent years, the federal government has attempted to address the situation by requiring cities to manage emer-

gencies using a management protocol called the Incident Command System. At the heart of ICS is the concept of a unified command where police, fire and other emergency services agencies meet to develop and oversee a coordinated response. By the end of this federal fiscal year, all cities will be required to have ICS plans in place before they can qualify for federal funds.

But formal agreements alone are not enough to overcome years of rivalry and distrust, as the experience of New York



Tensions ran high among the array of public safety officials who responded to a plane crash in Teterboro, New Jersey.

City has shown. The Big Apple is a singular place. No region of the country has been more affected by terrorism; none has a greater incentive to set fire and police relationships aright. With 36,000 police officers and 11,000 fire fighters, its scale and resources are unparalleled. However, greater resources have never meant better coordination. On the contrary, the NYPD and the FDNY have more overlapping services than most urban police and fire departments. Both are tradition-bound and aggressive about their turf. The result has been a uniquely tense relationship.

Since at least the late 1970s, New York's mayors have recognized that the strained relations between the two departments were a potentially serious problem and have tried but largely failed to rectify the situation. The administration of Mayor Rudolph Giuliani was more aggressive than most. In July 2001, Giuliani updated a directive called "The Direction and Control of Emergencies in New York City." Its purpose was "to eliminate conflict among responding agencies which may have areas of overlapping expertise and responsibility"—particularly the fire and police departments. The directive set forth a variety of scenarios and specified which agency would function as the "incident commander" in those circumstances. The Office of Emergency Management, itself created by Giuliani in 1996, was charged with serving as "the on-scene interagency coordinator." Two

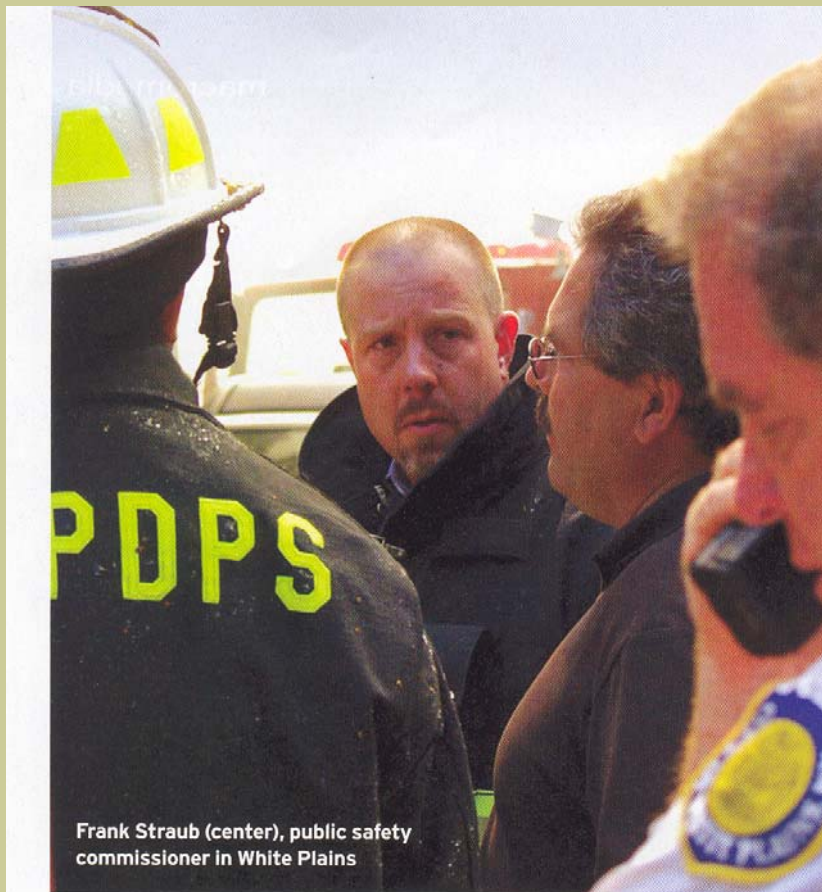
months later, on September 11, the new emergency management system got its first test.

By most accounts, cooperation was not as effective as it could have been. While noting that "to some degree the Mayor's directive for incident command was followed on 9/11," the 9/11 Commission nonetheless concluded that "response operations lacked the kind of integrated communications and unified response contemplated in the directive." An investigation by the National Institute for Standards and Technology found that FDNY and NYPD department chiefs "were not working together at the same command post, and that they did not formulate unified orders and directions for their departments."

The consequences of this failure in terms of lives lost have been hotly debated. In his memoirs, Giuliani defended establishing dual police-fire command posts to deal with the attack on the World Trade Center, asserting that given the circumstances there was no other practical course of action available. Many fire fighters believe that information from NYPD helicopters might have led to an earlier evacuation of fire fighters from the second tower. The 9/11 Commission itself concluded that the answer was ultimately unknowable. However, it left no doubt as the seriousness of the shortcoming: "If New York and other major cities are to be prepared for future terrorist attacks, different first-responder

agencies must be fully coordinated," the commission report concluded.

Yet many experts believe the administration of current Mayor Michael Bloomberg has moved away from more effective coordination. In May 2004, the city adopted an emergency response plan that called for joint operations between police and fire departments rather than a unified command—a plan criticized by the 9/11 Commission. This April, the city unveiled its version of the ICS, dubbed the Citywide Incident Management system. CIMS shifted authority away from the fire department to the police department. Instead of entrusting police with responsibility for responding to crime scenes and vesting fire with responsibility for commanding response operations, CIMS allows the NYPD to make the initial determination on whether a hazardous materials incident involves a crime or terrorism. If it does, the NYPD is in charge. That decision angered the fire department and puzzled many fire experts. "I don't get it," says Glenn Corbett, a professor of fire science at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice. "They have now split hazmat function down the middle. The police are in charge of assessment; fire is in charge of life safety... The duplication not only didn't get better, it got worse." The Bloomberg administration has rejected these criticisms. Indeed, it has rejected the notion that there's a systematic coordination problem between the police and fire department at all. "Realize this. Po-



Frank Straub (center), public safety commissioner in White Plains

lice and fire every day work an excess of 100 to 200 incidents," says Joseph Bruno, the head of New York's Office of Emergency Management and former FDNY fire commissioner. "The overall level of cooperation is outstanding." The only area where New York "has had problems," says Bruno, "is communications."

That's a claim that astonishes Councilwoman Yvette Clarke, who chairs the city's Fire and Criminal Justice Services Committee. "I share the belief that there were no coordination problems because there was no coordination," she says sarcastically.

## BUILDING NEW RELATIONSHIPS

Thirty miles north of Manhattan, in a conference room at the White Plains public safety building, a very different kind of police-fire relationship is being built. It's 9:15 on a Monday morning and a group of 20 or so public safety officers are gathered for a weekly Compstat meeting. It's the kind of meeting that now plays out in any number of American cities but for one thing—this Compstat session includes both police and fire officers.

At the head of the table sits the architect of this unusual arrangement, Frank Straub, White Plains' commissioner for public safety. Straub's determination to bring White Plains' police and fire departments together on a regular basis reflects his experiences on September 11, 2001. At the time, Straub, a veteran of several federal law enforcement agencies, was serving as executive deputy inspector general in the New York State Inspector General's office. His offices were only three blocks south of the World Trade Center complex. When the first plane hit the north tower, he, like many other law enforcement officers, hurried to the scene.

"I was saved by a fire truck when the second tower came down," Straub says quietly. "For me, it's a very real thing. I saw an awful lot of people—police, fire and civilians—die that day, needlessly in many cases."

Two weeks after 9/11, Straub joined the NYPD as deputy commissioner for training. He stayed with the department—moving over to serve as assistant commissioner of internal training for the counterterrorism bureau when Ray Kelly took over as

commissioner—until the summer of 2002, when he accepted the job of public safety commissioner in White Plains.

"I knew a lot about emergency services, and this was very personal for me," says Straub. "We all were saying we couldn't let it happen again. The biggest thing for me is that unless you have fire and police [working together], you're looking at a disaster. No one agency can do it themselves"—not even the 36,000-officer NYPD.

When Straub arrived in White Plains, however, he found a familiar tension. "I really had two separate and distinct departments," says Straub, "and very rarely did they talk." Indeed, fire fighters had become so estranged from the previous public safety commissioner that they were even seeking their own freestanding department.

Straub set out to find areas where police and fire could act together. First, he moved their respective chiefs onto the same floor and into offices that are next to each other. Then he required both to participate in a weekly Compstat meeting. Finally, in order to demonstrate his commitment to the fire department, Straub went through the training to be certified as a fire fighter. He also has made a point of going in person to most fire scenes.

All of Straub's actions have been aimed at one thing: persuading fire and police officers to work together on a routine basis. One such area concerns safe housing. Every spring, hundreds if not thousands of immigrants move into affluent Westchester County for seasonal jobs. Many of them crowd into run-down boarding houses, which often fail to meet code. At Straub's initiative, White Plains police answering calls in these areas learned how to identify problems and report them to the fire department. Likewise, fire fighters have received training in how to look for telltale signs of gang activity, such as graffiti tags, and report them to the police. The two bureaus' elite rescue and emergency services units also have trained together on an increasingly regular basis.

"Every opportunity we get we keep putting them in the room together and making them work together," says Police Chief James Bradley. The goal is routine interaction. "You can break out a protocol sheet and say we've agreed to do this or that," he says, "but unless you're used to doing it at

the level of daily execution, it doesn't work."

"It's the day-to-day things: Compstat meetings, safe housing, bar and restaurant inspections, accident calls or doing rescue off the side of a building together," says Straub. "That's what builds collaboration and cooperation, and that's what tears down the traditional 'go to hell' mentality."

Straub worries that that is what New York City is neglecting. "Fundamentally the problem when you look at New York City and probably other cities is there's not that baseline coordination and cooperation.

Places like New York need to find small areas where they can work together on a daily basis," says Straub.

### OTHER MODELS

Straub's work in White Plains has been made easier by his organizational chart: As public safety commissioner, he has clear authority over both the fire and police bureaus. However, public safety departments of this sort are relatively uncommon. Nonetheless, other cities interested in improving police-fire relations have

found ways to bridge bureaucratic divides.

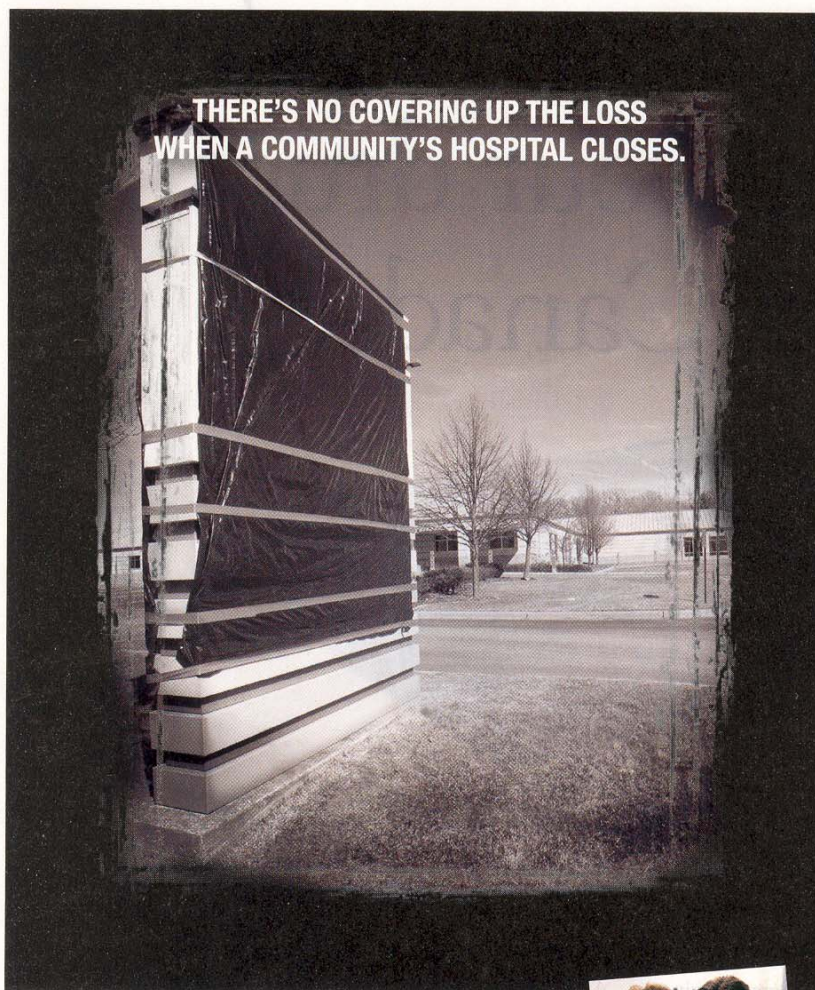
Charlotte-Mecklenburg, the government in North Carolina's largest metropolitan area, has made a concerted effort to improve police-fire relations since the 1970s, when the county decided to situate its fire and police departments in the same building. That daily interaction, says Police Chief Darrell Stephens, "contributes a lot to what has happened on the street." The county also supports a special 90-person outfit—known as ALERT (Advanced Local Emergency Response Team)—that includes a mixture of fire fighters and police officers, as well as personnel from the FBI, EMS, the County Medical Examiner's Office and the Carolinas Medical Center. "We still have our moments," concedes Stephens, "but when they happen, we sit down and deal with it or develop a new protocol."

Phoenix has gone even further. There, in the months after 9/11, the police and fire departments teamed up to staff a unified Homeland Defense Bureau. It started out with six police officers and fire fighters. Today, it encompasses more than 100. A new utility tax will provide a dedicated source of funding for its operations. As in Charlotte, co-location is central to Phoenix's effort, although Police Commander T.J. Martin concedes that he took some flack from other officers when it was revealed that the bureau would be housed with the fire department.

"By virtue of co-locating, it's a lot easier to communicate," says Alan Brunacini, the fire chief. "It's a lot easier to use their expertise in a routine way. They see each other, go on calls. They like each other. I think there's a different dynamic when people are in a day-to-day way just closer."

"We train together, we eat together, we shoot the breeze. We play the 'what if' game a lot," adds Martin. In the process, the two departments have found that they rely on the integrated communications and operations of the Homeland Defense Bureau on a daily basis—and perform better as a result.

"When you start doing this, it's almost impossible to separate the two functions," says Brunacini. The goal, he notes, is not to combine functions but rather to make cooperation natural, almost reflexive. "There are things fire does best and another set of things police do best. When you can put those together, two and two is six."



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John Buntin can be reached at [jbuntin@governing.com](mailto:jbuntin@governing.com)

## OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF TRAINING

The State of Connecticut has lost a national fire service pioneer. **Richard Pratt Sylvia** was a competent, meticulous man of refined breeding. Most may remember him as the editor of *Fire Engineering* magazine or the author of the *Volunteer's Corner*.

It was there that I learned a lot in a short amount of space. I clipped every one of his articles and placed them into a file for future reference. His topics were always relevant to improving a particular fireground method or facet of the fire service. His style was plain spoken; but with careful selection of his phrases and words used.

He carried that attribute into the classroom when he taught for Norwalk State Technical College.

It was quickly learned by all his students that you must return his words back to him exactly as he said them, or you were wrong. No amount of caterwauling or logical pleadings would deter him from his position.

That helped me become more exacting. While he was not an exciting teacher; he was an effective one. You were in his presence to learn a concept or process, and you learned it correctly, sequentially and by rote. It wasn't always pleasant being the student of such a demanding instructor, but I certainly credit him with my development as a firefighter and officer.

From his obituary you can learn that he served as Vice Chairman of the Commission on Fire Prevention and

Control, an active member of Fairfield County Fire Chiefs, the Connecticut Fire Department Instructors Association, contemporary and friend of Connecticut fire service luminaries like Andrew Flannigan and Larry Ford.

Many people pass through our lives. Some we become attached to until death parts us. Others are only temporary contacts over a defined period of time. Richard Sylvia left me with greater knowledge and comprehension of firefighting methods, than I could ever appreciate at the time. His passing through my life made me better at my occupation.

*Adam D. Piskura,*  
*Director*  
*Connecticut Fire*  
*Academy*

### Mandatory Adjunct Instructor's Meeting

Save the Date...

**Jan. 17, 2006 (Night)**

**6:30 PM—9:30 PM**

**Jan. 19, 2006 (Day)**

**2:00 PM—5:00 PM**

**We're on the Web!**

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877-5CT-FIRE  
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