



**ANNUAL REPORT
JULY 1, 2018 – JUNE 30, 2019**



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES AND PUBLIC PROTECTION
COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL**

**James C. Rovella, Commissioner
Peter S. Carozza, Jr., Chairman
Kevin J. Kowalski, Vice Chairman
Richard H. Nicol, Secretary
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 – 10 (General Fund)*

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

Division Mission

***To prevent or mitigate the effects of fire and disasters through leadership and collaboration
with municipalities, fire departments and regional fire schools by delivery of quality
consulting services, technical assistance, training, education and professional competency
certification of career and volunteer fire service personnel.***

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

One of six Divisions of the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP), the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control (CFPC), serves as the focal point for fire service training, public fire and life-safety education and professional competency testing and certification in support of Connecticut's fire service. Appointed members of the Commission represent the statewide fire service organizations and serve to advise Commissioner James C. Rovella under the leadership of Chairman Peter Carozza, Jr.

The Division continues to leverage limited resources in an effort to provide quality services. Economies and efficiency are gained through partnerships and synergy with other DESPP divisions as well as with numerous state and federal agencies including Department of Homeland Security, United States Fire Administration and the National Fire Academy. These collaborations yield expanded 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.

Division staff actively participate on state and national committees, boards and organizations in an effort to maintain a positive, proactive impact upon services as well as to advocate 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. Agency staff and Adjunct Instructors represent the division on the Department of Public Health's Office of Emergency Medical Services Advisory Board and National Fire Protection Association Technical Committee's as well as various other agency/professional committees and working groups.

Staff and adjunct instructional staff are to be commended and recognized for their professional expertise and selfless commitment to those they serve. Their dedication has been instrumental in our ability to meet the professional development needs of the fire and emergency services community.

Improvements/Achievements 2018-19

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

- A total of 113 fire officers from throughout Connecticut attended this year's *Connecticut Fire Officer's Weekend* at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Six courses were offered resulting in 1,808 contact hours at the nation's premiere fire education institution.
- Hosted the 16th annual Connecticut Firefighters Memorial Service. Fortunately, no additional names were 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, eight calls were received with five referred to local fire, EMS, and other emergency response related organizations. Career guidance was provided to the remaining callers. Since its inception, 453 callers have been referred to local fire departments.
- The Commission's Regional Foam Trailer program continued to be available for emergency response to spills and fires involving flammable and combustible liquids. We recognize and extend thanks to our partners from the Hartford, Willington, Norwich, New Haven, Waterbury, Fairfield, Danbury and Winsted Fire Department's for hosting and responding with these assets. Utilizing homeland security funds, we initiated replacement of the fixed foam eductors on each of the trailers.

- Using federal Hazardous Materials Planning Grant funds hosted a Foam Technician II & III course to include a comprehensive pre-plan of a critical infrastructure petroleum terminal.
- As a result of concerns regarding PFAS contamination, established a Working Group to identify a next Fluorine Free foam to replace the current National Universal Gold AFFF product currently being utilized in the foam trailers. In June 2019, in cooperation with DEEP issued to fire departments an Advisory Bulletin regarding Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF) Containing Per- and Polyfluorinated Alkyl Substances.
- Completed three deliveries of the highly popular and successful *Introduction to the Fire Service* summer camp programs for youth 14 to 17 years of age reaching 84 students.
- Academy dormitory rooms were occupied 6,571 Room Nights by students attending Connecticut Fire Academy and New England Disaster Training Center programs.
- Continued support to the Joint Council of Connecticut Fire Service Organizations including the Annual Fire Service Day at the Capitol held on May 29, 2019.
- The agency's electronic mail Listserv continued to provide a medium for the dissemination of important and timely information to more than 5,372 subscribers, an increase of 740 from FY2017. A total of 248 messages were transmitted during the fiscal year containing thousands of news items of public safety interest. Our use of Social Media sites including Facebook and Twitter continued to expand. We added 234 new Twitter followers and Tweeted 65 messages during the year promoting division activities and news of interest to the general public. An upgrade of the agency's web site now allows for an improved customer experience on mobile devices.
- In the area of Public Fire and Life Safety Education, continued dissemination of press releases to the news media. Staff provided radio, television interviews and commentary on a wide range of fire service related topics. Again this year we assisted with the coordination and promotion of *Operation Save a Life* with thousands of smoke and CO detectors donated to fire departments state-wide. Participated in several high school career fairs and provided facility tours and education. Further, we rebooted delivery of an annual Public Fire and Life Safety Conference with 61 attendees.
- Continued support to the Connecticut Statewide Honor Guard (CTHG). This group of volunteers provides direct support to local fire departments for both celebratory and grief assistance as a result of a line of duty death. Each year, the CTHG continues in a leadership role in the planning and execution of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundations (NFFF) Memorial in Emmitsburg, MD. Once again, the Connecticut Fire Academy served as a host field training location for the National Honor Guard Academy.
- Restarted use of the Saba Learning Management System for on-line registration services. Continue to primarily focus upon CPAT registrations however we have added a number of training registrations not requiring a fee. Plan for more widespread implementation in the 3rd quarter of FY2020.
- Construction and dedication of the K9 Mattie Memorial was completed in July, 2018. The Memorial recognizes Mattie and all the Connecticut State Police Accelerant Detection Canines as pioneers in arson detection.
- Took delivery of a Residential Sprinkler Side-by-Side Burn Demonstration Trailer donated by the National Fire Sprinkler Association. The Trailer will be made available to local fire departments for the purpose of promoting life-saving sprinklers.

Office of State Fire Administration

The Office of State Fire Administration provides overall coordination, management and support of division activities and facilities including the administration of grants. The Office provides consulting services to communities regarding fire department administration, Juvenile Firesetter Intervention and Volunteer Recruitment and Retention. In addition, oversight of the Statewide Fire Rescue Disaster Response Plan continues as a priority with staff serving as Fire Service Liaison's in the State Emergency Operations Center during statewide exercises and emergencies.

The Connecticut Fire Academy facility celebrated its 25th Anniversary of serving Connecticut's fire service on February 1, 2019.

In collaboration with the leaders of the various statewide fire service organizations planning began to strategically chart our future and address challenges facing the fire service. The title of this initiative was coined as Fire 2025 CT – The Connecticut Fire Service Summit. Six regional planning sessions were held statewide in the early spring of 2019 to allow stakeholders to identify and prioritize challenges as they saw them. Work continues to identify a path to a final Fire 2025 CT Summit.

Coordination and collaboration with the independent Regional Fire Schools continues. Opening of the new Litchfield County Regional Fire School became a reality in October, 2018. This \$13.5 million project includes a 16,650 square foot Administration/Classroom/Maintenance Garage building, a new 5,900 square foot Class A Burn B, Training Tower and exterior burn props and vehicle extrication training area. Construction of a new \$17.5 million Eastern Connecticut Fire School in Willimantic began and is expected to be completed during the second quarter of FY2020. Allocation of additional funds by the state Bond Commission is necessary for any of the remaining school projects to move forward.

Staff members closely monitor and address emerging trends in the fire and emergency services arena. Information dissemination from the Connecticut Intelligence Center (CTIC) continues to Connecticut Fire Chiefs regarding homeland security related issues. In August, 2018 we were awarded a federal FY2017 Assistance to Firefighters Grant totaling \$420,466. Equipment to be purchased under the grant includes a heavy duty, large capacity Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Washer/Extractor, a replacement Mobile SCBA Maze, a Vent Trailer and 35 sets of PPE for Instructors.

A number of facility enhancements were completed during the year including replacing classroom projector units and digital computer interface. Further, cosmetic renovations to the Academy's Auditorium saw the installation of new carpet, paint, fixed seating expansion and upgrades to the audio visual equipment. In an effort to improve customer support and interaction, the Certification Division office space was relocated and space renovated. The food service and custodial contracts were placed out for bid with contract awards expected in late 2019.

Finally, the CFA Bookstore realized \$369,715 in external sales with a total of 7,567 items sold. Revenue derived from sales at the Connecticut Fire Academy Bookstore is reinvested into maintaining and expanding available publications, internal printing and support of Connecticut Fire Academy programs.

Certification Unit

The Certification Unit of the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control under the direction of Director Jason Decremer assesses fire service personnel in areas ranging from basic firefighting skills to technical rescue specialties and from instructional methodology to executive officer leadership, public education and fire prevention. This knowledge and skills evaluation of specific competencies legitimizes the pre-requisite training requirements and instruction associated with fire service-related training courses and education. The certification process is an independent third-party evaluation of requisite firefighter skills developed from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) in support of the statewide fire service educational framework developed from the same standards. The certification process ensures emergency services personnel are better qualified to conduct significant incidents while routinely operating in highly hazardous exposure areas when serving the citizens of Connecticut.

A multi-year effort to comprehensively review and modernize the Division's Certification Regulations was rewarded with their adoption by the General Assembly in September, 2018.

In December, 2018, the Certification Unit attained its five year reaccreditation by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (ProBoard) following a site visit. The International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) has scheduled its reaccreditation site visit for August, 2019. . Accreditation of the certification process validates the professionalism and commitment of full and part-time staff and provides national/international portability to our customers as they pursue careers in the fire service.

The Certification Unit conducted 41 NFPA 1403 compliant Live Fire Training audits, 111 psychomotor examinations and 179 cognitive examinations, and 21 ADA compliant examinations; including for the first time foreign language examinations, assessing 3,359 candidates in FY2019 resulting in 2,555 Pro Board and IFSAC accredited certifications (Figure 1). The overall written examination success rate was 77.25 percent. In addition, the Unit developed and administered five promotional examinations and three entry level examinations for municipalities. The Unit began computer based certification testing for Fire Fighter I and Hazardous Materials levels in FY2019 and will continue to add additional testing levels in FY2020.

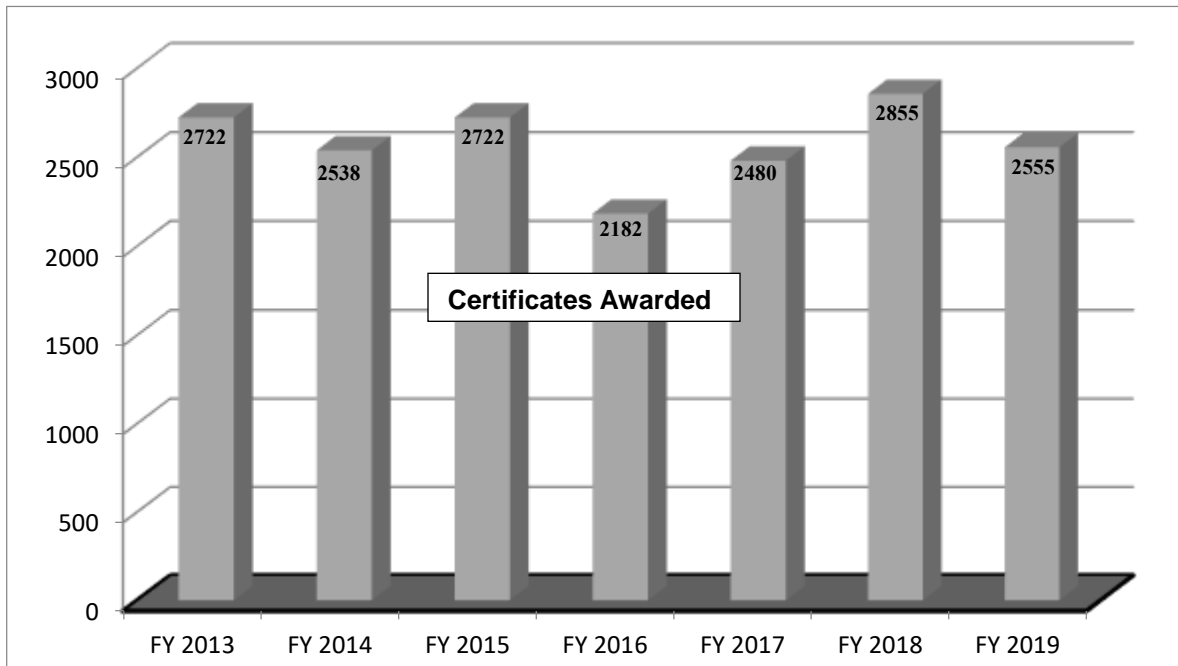


Figure 1 - Total Number of Certificates Awarded Over the Past Seven Fiscal Years

Training Unit

The Training Division under the direction of Director William Higgins delivers a diverse range of training and education programs ranging from the comprehensive 14-week resident Recruit Firefighter Training program to Fire Officer and technical specialty level courses with collegiate transfer credits. Courses are available for delivery throughout the state and at the Connecticut Fire Academy in Windsor Locks.

During FY2019 247 training programs were delivered reaching 5,223 students, providing a total of 185,258 contact hours. From these totals, specialized training including Rescue Week, Connecticut Fire Officers Weekend and the Annual June Fire School provided training to over 1,000 students. In addition, the Division continued to offer Candidate Physical Ability Testing (CPAT) to assist municipalities in identifying future firefighters with the capability of career and lifelong success. This past year, 1,850 candidates registered with 1,399 testing and 963 passing for an overall passing rate of 68.8%.

As a result of attrition through retirements and resignations, approvals were received to refill one full time Fire Academy Trainer position and approximately 16 per-diem Fire Service Instructor positions.

The divisions Severe Weather Training Policy was comprehensively review and updated, currently in draft form full adoption is expected soon.

To add value to our students, 13 Connecticut Fire Academy training programs continue to be eligible for college credit through Charter Oak State College. Collaboration with the Military Department and Department of Public Health at the New England Disaster Training Center at Camp Hartell in Windsor Locks provides unique training opportunities for all emergency response personnel.

Commissioners

Members of the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control are appointed by the Governor and represent statewide fire service organizations. Commissioners serving during this fiscal year: Peter S. Carozza, Jr., Chairman, West Hartford; Kevin J. Kowalski, Vice Chairman, Simsbury; Chief Richard H. Nicol, Secretary, Ret., Middlebury; Chief Charles M. Stankye, III, Ret., Derby; Chief John J. Brady, Ret., Madison; Deputy Chief Harry Tulier, Hartford; Chief Timothy S. Wall, Yalesville; Chief Frank C. Hilbert, Mystic; Megan Murphy, Fire Marshal, Trumbull; Chief Peter Buonome, Ret., Avon and Richard Fontana, New Haven. Victor Mitchell, Director of Continuing Education and Workforce Services, Tunxis Community College and William Abbott, State Fire Marshal, Department of Administrative Service, Office of State Fire Marshal, served as ex-officio voting members.