



**ANNUAL REPORT  
JULY 1, 2022 – JUNE 30, 2023**

**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  
Peter Buonome, 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 – 11 (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 on Fire Prevention and Control 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.

**COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL**

Appointed members of the Commission represent the statewide fire service organizations and serve to advise the Commissioner. A number of Commission appointments remain pending action by the Governor's Office. Longtime Commission Secretary Richard H. Nicol passed away in July, 2022 following a brief illness. Commissioner Peter Buonome was elected to fill the vacant position of Secretary.

## **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 offers consulting services to communities regarding fire department administration and operations. Oversight of the Statewide Fire Rescue Disaster Response Plan continues with staff serving as Fire Service Liaisons to the State Emergency Operations Center during statewide emergencies and exercises. A transition to hybrid activations, when feasible, has alleviated concerns related to sustainment of staffing of the Fire Desk for long duration activations. The Office actively supports the Connecticut Fallen Firefighters Memorial Foundation and the Connecticut Statewide Honor Guard, ensuring Connecticut honors its fallen firefighters and their family members consistent with the profession's highest standards. Communication, collaboration, and coordination continue with the nine independent Regional Fire Schools. Further, we coordinate the state's Regional Foam Trailer program with eight local fire departments, hosting these resources and responding to emergencies requiring firefighting foam. In partnership with DEEP replacement of the foam trailer units is currently underway due PFAS contamination by the AFFF foam carried on the units. The old trailers will be decommissioned and properly disposed of in a hazardous waste landfill. The AFFF Foam Take-Back Program for municipalities was paused while additional funding was sought to address continued efforts to drain and rinse municipal fire apparatus on-board foam storage tanks and associated educator and piping systems.

As a result of retirements, normal attrition and an employee's passing three vacant full-time positions were refilled during the year in addition to twenty-two per diem Fire Service Instructors. We have retained two retirees on a Temporary Worker Retiree (TWR) part-time status as we evaluate long term staffing needs.

Authorizations by the State Bond Commission in December and June have provided \$2.7 million in funding for long needed facility related repairs and improvements on the Connecticut Fire Academy campus. Project management for these investments is reliant on DAS-Construction Services staff.

We are finalizing contract provisions for an ARPA funded 3-Year Pilot Fire Service Response Data Collection project. The project will commence early in FY24.

Working with the Connecticut Fire Department Instructors and Fire Chiefs Associations publicized guidelines for training and certification of minor firefighters.

Communications and information dissemination to fire service constituents continued primarily through expanded use of social media and the CFPC email Listserv.

During FY23, with funding received from the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) we were able to provide additional Hazardous Materials training and administered the annual SERC Haz Mat response exercise held in September at Camp Hartell. Dozens of local, regional state and federal partners participated.

For a second year administered funding to distressed communities with volunteer fire departments for entry-level Firefighter I training. This FY we distributed \$25,740 from the \$70,000 appropriation.

FEMA awarded a 2022 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) totaling \$354,820 to procure replacement SCBA cylinders, a containerized mobile Forcible Entry Prop with trailer and Tow Vehicle. Further, we continue to serve as the point of contact with several fire departments receiving state and ARPA funding for projects ranging from \$100,000 to \$8.6 Million.

The Limited Access Highway program that provides payment to volunteer fire companies for response to emergency incidents on limited access highways was reestablished after many years of not being funded. A total of 3,000 claims were approved for payment totaling \$1.5 million. By fiscal year end, 2,811 claims were paid totaling \$1,405,500.

In October 2022, the Connecticut Fire Academy Bookstore Supervisor unexpectedly passed away following a brief illness. As a result, annual gross sales were reduced to \$199,144.90 due to seven months of curtailed activity.

A total of 7,531 dormitory room nights were used by firefighters attending training at the Connecticut Fire Academy.

### **Training Unit (Connecticut Fire Academy)**

The Training Unit delivers a wide range of training and education programs extending from the comprehensive 15-week resident Recruit Firefighter Training program to Fire Officer and technical specialty level courses, many with collegiate transfer credits. Courses are available for delivery throughout the state at local fire stations, Regional Fire Schools and at the Connecticut Fire Academy (CFA) campus in Windsor Locks.

During FY23, the Training Unit delivered 255 training programs reaching 4,508 students, providing 226,130 contact hours. In addition to training activity, the Unit continued administration of N-95 respirator fit testing services supporting the COVID response by health care professionals. A total of 1,975 N-95 respirator fit tests were administered at 44 separate locations statewide. Also, a total of 659 Self Contained Breathing Apparatus respirator fit tests were conducted at 36 separate locations.

The Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) continued to be offered to municipalities to assist in identifying future firefighters with the capability of career and lifelong success. This past year, 768 candidates registered with 493 passing for an overall passing rate of 64.1%. The Academy's Introduction to The Fire Service (ITTFS) and the Advanced Skills and Concepts (ASAC) programs were designed to provide high school students with an opportunity to learn more about the profession by attending a residential camp and performing training evolutions at the Connecticut Fire Academy. Over the last 25 years, the program has evolved from the two original five-day sessions each summer to three, six-day residential based sessions. Many alumni have moved on to become full members of their fire departments, have attended college in Fire and EMS programs and have earned employment as career Firefighters. During FY23, 121 cadets benefited from attendance at these residential camps.

Recruit Class #70 conducted in the Fall of 2022 was the Academy's largest to date with 70 students.

Worked with the Manchester Fire Department prior to their July 1 consolidation with the 8<sup>th</sup> Utilities Fire District to deliver a six-week bridge Recruit Firefighter Training program for twelve certified members who had not previously attended the CFA Recruit Program.

During the fiscal year we implemented the new Acadis® Learning Management System to streamline division course registration and course management activities. A streamlining of equipment and prop inventory and asset management was achieved using SLATE Pages® software.

New course development initiatives during the fiscal year includes EMS Officer and a UTV/ATV curriculums. A firefighter skills video library is being produced to ensure standardization in instruction and fire scene operations.

The Spring, we partnered with UCONN to produce a Lithium-Ion Public Service Announcement video that has received national recognition.

Charter Oak State College continues to approve 22 CFA training programs for collegiate transfer credit adding value to our students. Collaboration with the Military Department and Department of Public Health at the New England Disaster Training Center (Camp Hartell) located in Windsor Locks provides unique training opportunities for all emergency responders.

### **Certification Unit**

The Certification Unit assess fire service personnel in areas ranging from basic firefighting skills to technical rescue specialties and from instructional methodology to executive officer leadership, curriculum development, public education and fire prevention. This knowledge and skill 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 National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards in support of the statewide fire service educational framework developed from those same standards. The verification process ensures emergency services personnel are better qualified to respond to significant incidents while routinely operating in highly hazardous exposure areas when serving the citizens of Connecticut.

The Certification unit retains accreditation from two international entities, The National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (Pro Board) and the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC). Accreditation of the certification process validates the professionalism and commitment of the full and part-time staff and provides portability to our customers as they pursue careers in the fire service. In January 2023, the Certification Unit Registrar represented the agency at the Pro Board Conference in Dallas, the Certification Unit Director represented the agency at the annual spring IFSAC Accreditation Conference in Oklahoma City in April 2023.

Certification activities continued to expand in FY2023 with the Unit administering 33 NFPA 1403 compliant Live Fire Training audits, 22 Vehicle Extrication Audits, 95 psychomotor skills examinations, 177 cognitive examinations, and 28 ADA compliant examinations, assessing 3536 candidates resulting in 2763 Pro Board and IFSAC accredited certifications. The overall written examination success rate was 81.9 percent. The Unit also developed and administered nine (9) promotional and five (5) entry level examinations for municipal fire departments. The Unit also administered 7 cognitive written examinations in cooperation with Bucks County (PA) Public Safety Training Center. Lastly, Reciprocity was awarded to Connecticut fire service personnel certified by other accredited entities for 88 levels of certification.

The Certification Unit also worked to transition to the new Acadis® Learning Management System to consolidate all training and certification records in one database. This will allow firefighters to self-register for certification examinations, access and print certification transcripts, and self-print certification certificates, eliminating the need for Certification Unit personnel to print and mail certificates resulting in savings in both man hours and postage costs. The Unit also updated test materials for NFPA 1033 Fire Investigator and continues to update both psychomotor skills examinations and cognitive written examinations in preparation for the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standards five (5) year consolidation and revision plan that began in calendar year 2021.