

FIRE LINK

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PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

by Jim Keating

Seems like just a few days ago that I wrote my article entitled, "Greetings from the New President." A year has now nearly passed since I stepped into the Division President position. The endeavor has been both educational and enjoyable for me.

As most of you are aware, our problems and challenges in the delivery of emergency services within our respective states are often similar, just different faces behind them. As I have had the opportunity to travel to many of the states and participate in your state meetings and conferences, I have noticed that an endeavor just starting in one state may have miserably failed in another state. This leaves me thinking wow! what a great assistance, what dollar savings could be realized if the state just beginning the project had all the information from the other state's attempt!

Since 9-11 many new programs, grants and training requirements have flowed down to the state level for dissemination within that state. Many of these came without timely guidance as to their implementation requirements. Probably one of the most recent issues is the dissemination of O.D.P. monies now required to be done within regions in the respective states.

Some states are just beginning this endeavor while others have tried, had failures and are now beginning a revamped attempt. This is just an example of what great assistance transmitting such information to other states in the Division could be. As I move on, my one request is that each state please take the time to communicate your endeavors, successes and failures within your local, state and federal government affiliations through the Division's communi-

cation sources, the Web Site and *FireLink* articles. Those few minutes in sharing that information could be very beneficial to another state's emergency services.

Since our conference last July, the Division has seen continued growth and success. I have witnessed new and renewed interest within several states to become more involved within the Division, interest in running candidates for positions within the Division and bidding to be a future conference host. We are a Division. Each state has the same opportunities for representation and participation. I strongly encourage all states to become active, send participants to conferences, participate in Division activities and submit candidates for Division offices. This is a must if this Division is to remain one of the most effective and active Divisions in the IAFC.

In closing, I want to offer my, and the Missouri Valley Division's, thanks to the leadership of our Public Education Section. This Section just completed holding their Annual Fire, Burn and tremendous success and that is attributed to the continued hard work of their section leaders who are committed to fire safety and the Division's values.

As we view the future of the Missouri Valley, we see opportunities. Opportunity is in the form of strong leadership and representation. Within the Division, we have qualified energetic persons moving up through the Board positions. Soon we will have our current International Director, Steve Westermann, stepping into the IAFC 2nd Vice President position. You can be assured that there Steve will show the same outstanding committed leadership that he has always exhibited with his positions on the Missouri Valley Board. He will also carry

the Division's banner and allegiance as he moves through the chairs to the position of I.A.F.C. President.

In closing, thank you for the opportunity. I have sincerely enjoyed serving as your President. Please take time to travel to, participate in and enjoy the Division Conference in Columbia, Missouri, July 6-8, 2005. And, also just as important, attend Fire-Rescue 2005, "this year hosted in our own Division" in Denver, Colorado, August 11-13, 2005.



Calendar of Events

July 6-8, 2005
Columbia, MO
MVD Annual Conference

July 25-29, 2005
Greeley, Colorado
Colorado Fire Mechanics

August 11-14, 2005
Denver, CO
IAFC-FRI



The Missouri Valley Division of Fire Chiefs is dedicated to supporting professional development of its members through educational, leadership, and networking opportunities, while serving as a liaison between State Chiefs' organizations and the International Association of Fire Chiefs.

“THE ART OF READING SMOKE”

by Kevin Joles, Battalion Chief

Heart of America Metro Fire Chiefs Council was fortunate in being able to bring former Battalion Chief and Safety Officer David Dodson to Kansas City April 5, 2005. Chief Dodson (ret.) was full of knowledge for the newest of firefighters to the wisest to the flames. The class was a renewed look at the “lost art” of how to read the smoke and not the flames from structure fires. With the changing components of fire, such as the fuels and construction, this class advised the fire officer how to outwit the fire and go for the brains of it, the smoke!

An essential part of the Missouri Valley Division’s recent Strategic Plan was to ensure that regional classes be announced to those in the Division, allowing more training opportunities to all. Thus, while Heart of America Chiefs represents 72 departments in the Kansas City Missouri/Kansas region, they opened the class to the Division, hoping

to fill the course. This being the first class of many to come was so popular and in such high demand that the Division had to turn away many of the registrations. The MO Valley Division had 121 attendees with 14 coming from outside the Kansas City area. The Division was represented by the following states: Kansas, Iowa, Missouri, and Nebraska. Interest in the class was so high that approximately 85 persons had to be turned away, including 30 outside of HoA. With such an interest the Heart of America Chiefs plan to bring Chief Dodson and “The Art of Reading Smoke” back to the area in late fall or early 2006.

Arrowhead Club at Arrowhead Stadium near downtown Kansas City, Missouri was host to this event. The registration fee of \$65 not only included the class but a perfectly prepared gourmet Kansas City BBQ. However, a big lunch was no match for the material that was

covered in this class. The ability to predict fire events before the actual occurrence is a tool that no one in fire suppression can live without. Using the colors and speeds of smoke to anticipate the fires next move will not only save property but also ultimately save the lives of fire company personnel.

Chief Dodson was an entertaining and enthusiastic instructor who kept the class energized and motivated to learn more about the smoke and not the flames. The chief officers, fire company officers and firefighters in attendance learned the advanced basics of rapid decision-making, told by smoke that will remain with them throughout their careers. With expectations of having this essential course and Chief Dodson back to the area, early registration is strongly encouraged. Without the information gained through this class, your next fire may go up in smoke!

MAKE PLANS NOW TO ATTEND IAFC FRI – Denver, CO August 11-13, 2005

Fire Service Leaders from around the world will meet in Denver, Colorado to attend the International Association of Fire Chiefs’ Fire Rescue International. This is the premier fire conference and trade show for fire and EMS managers in the United States. On the FRI exhibit floor there will be more than 600 exhibitors of the newest fire service innovations in apparatus, technology, equipment and more.

FRI 2005 workshops will cover the most critical and timely issues facing fire chiefs around the world. Presented by renowned, respected fire service leaders, comprehensive pre-conference workshops and conference breakout sessions will provide you with the practical, valuable information you need to lead your department. FRI’s educational sessions are designed to meet the needs of all fire service leaders—from aspiring chiefs to the most seasoned chief officers in all types of departments (volunteer, combination, career, metro, suburban, rural, etc.).

The Missouri Valley Division has selected the Marriott Hotel as our headquarters for the conference. The Marriott will be served by the convention bus service and is located one block from the 16th Street Mall with its free shuttle service that runs every 90 seconds. For those who enjoy shopping, Denver is a delight. From the many quaint shops and boutiques along the Mall to the upscale Cherry Creek Shopping District with its over 420 department stores, shops, galleries and specialty boutiques. Nearby is the Cherry Creek Shopping Center, home to 140 stores including Neiman Marcus, Tiffany’s and Saks. Also in the area are more than 60 restaurants (most with outdoor cafes).

Important Note: While FRI will begin with pre-conference sessions on Tuesday and Wednesday August 9th and 10th, the official start of the conference will be Thursday, August 11th at 7:00 am with the MVD Luncheon held on Friday at the Convention Center at 11:30 am.

There is so much to do in Denver, this will be a real treat for the partners. You may want to schedule your travel to allow a few extra days to visit Colorado either before or after the conference. So make your plans to attend FRI now!

See you in Denver!

Just Another Year with FireRescue GPO?

by Chief Richard Carrizzo

Here we are at the one-year anniversary of the FireRescue GPO. As I preach with each article for *FireLink*, some of you still don't know what FireRescue GPO is. You are not alone. FireRescue GPO is a "Group Purchasing Organization" for the members of Missouri Valley Division. As a matter of fact, it is a group purchasing program for all but one of the IAFC's Divisions. The New England Division is still holding out on whether to participate or not (at the time of this printing the NE Division may have already voted to participate at their May 19th meeting).

The Advisory Board met in Phoenix at the beginning of May for our bi-annual meeting. As a Division, we are fortunate compared to some of the other Divisions. I am not really sure that we are too fortunate though as a Division, because most of the complaints that we discussed dealt with the poor webpage that exists and the inability to access contracts that are available. Thus as I concluded, the members of our Division are not taking advantage of the FireRescue GPO.

Yes, we need to get all of our members involved in the GPO. For the others that are not IAFC members, we need to lead them in the right direction and show them why they need to join the IAFC. The GPO is just another exclusive member benefit for IAFC members.

The meeting was filled with three full days of sitting, discussing our weaknesses, working to improve the successes and assisting vendors with what is needed for you, the outlying customers.

The weaknesses that were discussed are not ones that will be overnight "fixes." One of the major issues with the Council is the lack of reporting back to each of the Divisions. This is a very important issue for it affects the revenue that the Divisions receive. One of greatest weaknesses for you, the customer, is not just that the website is not a tool that is making our job easier, but the lack of fire equipment contracts. These items were voiced with passionate concern from the Council to the administrators.

Although, I can not stress the impor-

ance of allowing the process to build. Yes, the Council did expect the program to be better than it was a year ago. I would say that a more intense infrastructure has been formed since January with a full staff and more employees to assist in improving the program. During this meeting the Council discussed the partnership of this program and the changes necessary to form an equal partnership between all the Divisions and how to plan for the future success of the program. Over the next few months it is hoped that this change in the organizational structure will allow for a more intense delivery of the goals and expectations with time constraints.

One of the greatest benefits of meeting with the vendors was the meeting with Ferno's President and EMS Director of Sales. What the Council learned was that there has been a breakdown of who the GPO members are, from the vendors. This then causes a possible lack of the group pricing for our members, a reduced rate, and a lack of "rebate" back to the GPO. This is a process issue that is in need of immediate attention from the staff to ensure you are getting the best price on goods and the Divisions are receiving what they are entitled to.

A short presentation was given on new technology that has been developed by Masimo. They have engineered a device, "RAD-57" that initially appeared to be just another pulse oximetry device. What we discovered was that this is a meter that also measures carbon monoxide levels in the blood stream within seconds and can provide continuous monitoring of carbon monoxide levels, along with all the normal functions of a pulse oximetry device. These units are available to all members of the GPO at the reduced pricing.

Fastenal, an industrial and construction supply company, also presented the partnership program that has been developed with FireRescue GPO. Fastenal has over 1,600 stores that will be offering the FireRescue GPO members reduced prices. They are working to implement a system that will also be

offering these prices to all firefighters, of GPO departments in the future. Fastenal will remind you of another company, Grainger, but with better pricing for us. I had never heard of Fastenal, but when I look at the different stores in my area, I saw that there were 13 stores in the Kansas City region along with a distribution center.

How do I sign up to get these savings?? As an IAFC member you are already practically signed up. Being a member of IAFC is the first step. For this is an exclusive membership benefit. The next step is just as simple. On your web browser type in: www.firerescue-gpo.com, then, you hit the "Register Now to Sign In" link and follow the simple steps. Most importantly, there is NO COST, yes no cost to you or your department. In the future, the Board still projects a "no cost" to the user because the vendors are making money due to the high volume of sales. The "Not for Profit" FireRescue GPO support staff are paid through the percentage that comes back to them from the vendors, based on each individual contract.

Understand that you as the end user are not paying any type of surcharge for this service. You are just paying a reduced price for goods and saving your department and citizens tax dollars. It is a win-win for you.

Hopefully you are now receiving your free FireRescue GPO e-Newsletter. In it you will stay abreast of all that is happening at GPO, including free classes and target buys.

I will continue to keep everyone posted through email and FireLink articles to assist with the ability to purchase at reduced rates and assist our Division. However, I need your help by letting me know if there are any problems with buying, receiving, or if there are different items you may want, etc. Without your input, we cannot make this a better program for all. In the mean time if you have any questions, please contact me at rcarrizzo@spfpd.com.



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IS YOUR DEPARTMENT TALKING SMART?

by Bill Pessemier

Interoperability is a critical issue affecting the ability to deliver emergency services, yet it continues to be an elusive goal for most fire and emergency medical services organizations. Communications problems and the inability to coordinate with other disciplines and jurisdictions have been recognized as major operational limitations in every major incident, from the shootings at Columbine High School to the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center.

Interoperability is important because it dramatically improves operational effectiveness and personnel safety. Whether an emergency response involves the fire and police departments from a single city, or the regional

response of numerous fire, emergency medical and law enforcement personnel and equipment to a terrorist attack, the ability to establish a common operating picture, make rapid decisions and take effective action using a mix of public safety services can only be achieved through interoperability. Interoperability is essential to operability. Public safety services cannot operate effectively without the ability to share information and resources with other disciplines and jurisdictions.

Impact of Limited Interoperability

Limited interoperability reduces the ability of emergency services to accomplish our mission, increases the risk to emergency responders, and creates the perception that some organizations are more interested in protectionism than professionalism.

More specifically, limited interoperability decreases the effectiveness of resources and limits the ability to form a common operational view of the incident. Compared to resources deployed under operational and technical interoperability, resources deployed with limited interoperability have the following limitations:

Decreased ability to coordinate operational tasks with other jurisdictions or disciplines at a peer-to-peer level while

responding to and operating at the scene of an emergency.

Decreased ability to coordinate operations with commanders and make decisions in the field.

Emergency response personnel must resort to ad-hoc workarounds to accomplish operational tasks in cooperation with other jurisdictions or disciplines. This situation can lead to increased freelancing, which jeopardizes personnel safety and reduces the ability to main-

Fire and emergency service professionals, whether volunteer or paid, have a responsibility to the public and to ourselves to work together to provide the best service to the public while protecting the safety of our people.

tain operational command and control.

Delays in completing tactical objectives and tasks owing to unfamiliarity with the operations and procedures of other disciplines and jurisdictions or the inability to communicate during integrated operations.

The reaction or cycle time required to complete assigned tactical objectives is increased owing to delays in communication between commanders and resources.

Commanders take longer to make decisions and are less confident in the incident action plan owing to incomplete, inaccurate, conflicting and ambiguous information.

Different disciplines or jurisdictions operating at the scene of an emergency are not able to share mission-critical information about the incident owing to intermittent or missing communications links.

The fire service must put aside concerns about protecting turf, and refocus efforts on protecting the public and personnel. Fire and emergency service professionals, whether volunteer or paid, have a responsibility to the public and to ourselves to work together to provide the best service to the public while protecting the safety of our people. Building

interoperability can accomplish both of these goals.

Action Steps to Implement Interoperable Communications

Combine the talents and resources of the various public safety services in your area into your interoperability systems plan. The jurisdictions and disciplines involved in operations should collaborate in planning so that they can operate under a unified command and control structure. Begin interoperability planning by examining the operational context of emergency services.

What types of incidents require operational interoperability? Where do they occur? How often?

What resources are needed from what jurisdictions or disciplines to effectively respond to these incidents?

How will these jurisdictions or disciplines work together? Will operations be integrated or partitioned?

What assignments will be given to which jurisdictions or disciplines? What information will they need?

How often will information need to be exchanged?

What systems will be used to exchange information?

Are there back-up systems available if systems become inoperative?

Which systems need to be connected to provide the necessary information exchange?

Do these systems need to be fixed or flexible in how and when they are linked?

Each jurisdiction and discipline involved must be open to the needs and desires of the others. Include line and staff personnel in the planning process. Planning must be collaborative rather than competitive. Each emergency service brings certain capabilities based on their mission, resources, training and equipment that can support other emergency services. Collaborating builds on the strengths of each agency so that the operational impact of emergency services is maximized.

**COLUMBIA, MISSOURI
FIRE DEPARTMENT
HOSTS
2005 MISSOURI VALLEY
DIVISION CONFERENCE**

**LEADERSHIP VISION
INSPIRATION ACCOMPLISHMENT
"SHOW ME STYLE"**

WEDNESDAY, JULY 6, 2005

Golf Outing

THURSDAY & FRIDAY

Speakers:

Robert DiPoli – President of IAFC

Gary Wilson – Topic: Fire Service Leadership

Garry Briese – Executive Director of the IAFC

John Buckman – Past President of IAFC and Fire Academy

Instructor; Topic: NIMS – What you need to know –
What you need to do

Mark Wessel – Keokuck Fire Chief –

Topic: Fire Fighter Safety & Training

FUN AND BANQUET

Theme Night: Dinner & Casino Night

"Show Me The Money"

Banquet and Installation of New Officers

IAFC PROVIDES HANDBOOK TO ENHANCE FIRE SERVICE COMMUNICATIONS

Numerous reports have been published supporting interoperability; unfortunately, most of them have been largely ignored. Many view interoperability as desirable but not essential. This view can no longer be supported. The International Association of Fire Chiefs, with support from Nextel Corporation, has developed "Top Priority: The Fire Service Guide to Interoperable Communications." This 32-page handbook provides fire and emergency services with a comprehensive understanding of interoperability and steps to improving communications in their region. Although written from a fire-service perspective, the handbook can be used by fire departments, emergency medical services, law enforcement agencies and emergency managers.

Interoperability is a critical issue affecting the ability to deliver emergency services, yet it continues to be an elusive goal for most fire and emergency medical services organizations. Communications problems and the inability to

coordinate with other disciplines and jurisdictions have been recognized as major operational limitations in every major incident, from the shootings at Columbine High School to the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center.

The 9/11 Commission Report is the latest in a long line of after-action reports that have identified interoperability issues as a major factor limiting the effectiveness of emergency operations. Interoperability clearly impacts command and control, situational awareness and resource management. Despite numerous after-action reports, public safety services have yet to make significant progress in comprehensively addressing interoperability.

"Interoperability is important because it dramatically improves operational effectiveness and personnel safety," says Bill Pessemier, the handbook's author and former fire chief in Littleton, Colo. "Whether an emergency response involves the fire and police departments from a single city, or the regional

response of numerous fire, emergency medical and law enforcement personnel and equipment to a terrorist attack, the ability to establish a common operating picture, make rapid decisions and take effective action using a mix of public safety services can only be achieved through interoperability. Interoperability is essential to operability. Public safety services cannot operate effectively without the ability to share information and resources with other disciplines and jurisdictions."

This handbook provides a common operational definition of interoperability, discusses the foundation for interoperable communications, and provides direction to establish interoperability between and among public safety services, including fire, emergency medical and law enforcement organizations. For a free copy of the handbook, go to www.iafc.org and click on Talk Smart.

NEW MEMBERS

A BIG WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

Trng. Officer Doug Schneider – Arvada, CO

BC Tim Webb – Emporia, KS

Chief Dale Goetz – Parker, CO

DC David Bunting – Golden, CO

DC Chris Malmgren – Golden, CO

Chief Bob Reilley – Clark, CO

Galvin Maurer – Evergreen, CO

David Dodson – Brighton, CO

DC Jeff Petersma – Peyton, CO

Chief Matthew Branch – Colorado Springs, CO

AC Matthew Love – Colorado Springs, CO

Captain Duane Stohs – Rawlins, WY

Chief Duane Stolns – Mills, WY

Chief Randy Beherens – Kirksville, MO

DC Charles Jones – Lees Summit, MO

Frie Marshal Mark DeMaranville – Leavenworth, KS

Chief William Hoffman – Windsor Heights, IA

Chief Kerry Meyer – Wayland, IA

VP Michael Shea – St. Louis, MO

Trng. Chief Andrew McGovern – Clinton, IA

EMS Chief Michael Thompson – Rapid City, SD

DC Steve Olshwanger – Saint Louis, MO

Chief James Henry – Butler, MO

BC David Hall – Springfields, MO

Director Wayne Way – Mission, KS

McConnell AFB – McConnell, KS

BC David Daley – Centennial, CO

BC Robert Baker – Parker, CO

Captain Stacy Donlan – Golden, CO

Safety Officer Willie Geyer – Loveland, CO

BC Dick Krisley – Jackson, WY

BC Jim Tucker – Jackson, WY

AC David Rayburn – Burlington, ND

DC Kevin Hammons – Franktown, CO

Chief Dennis Estes – Torrington, WY

REEL IN WINNING STRATEGIES BY USING THE RIGHT BAIT!

by Janet Jost

Wichita, Kansas was the site of the sixth annual fire, burn and life safety conference. This year, the conference actually started a couple of days early with the NFPA 1035 Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist I (JFSIS I) class and certification test. The Monday and Tuesday class, coordinated through Kansas Fire and Rescue Training Institute, was taught by Pat Mieszala, a nationally recognized expert in youth firesetting assessment and intervention. Thirty-six public educators from Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma, Texas and North Carolina completed the class. Twenty-eight of these people went on to take the JFSIS I Certification test administered by Oklahoma State University instructors. All 28 successfully completed the two practical portions of the test and are waiting to hear the results of the written exam.

Reel in Winning Strategies started off on Thursday morning with the keynote address "The Fish! Philosophy. A Better Way to Live at Work". Carr Hagerman from ChartHouse Learning showed participants how to bring more fun, passion, focus and commitment to their own work. On Thursday evening, Mr. Hagerman led the group in a fun, interactive session applying what was learned in his morning keynote address. As a sideline, there was a great deal of fun verbal exchange about political correctness.

Other sessions addressed issues including youth firesetting, pub ed 101 for beginners, marketing and strategic planning, managing stress and burnout at work, burn disasters, changing paradigms in fire safety and burn prevention, legislative issues, dealing with the media in a crisis, digital photography in public education, using resources that are already out there, and measuring outcomes.

During the final session on Saturday morning, a panel of survivors — people whose lives were directly affected by a fire or burn — spoke emotionally of their

own experiences, what they learned, and how they use these experiences to teach others. This closing panel emphasized the reason fire, burn and life safety educators really do what we do — the human consequences if we don't continue our work.

The conference was not all work! There was plenty of time for the 50 participants to have fun and network. Over 75 door prizes were given out during the conference activities. Almost everyone went home with something.

The cost of the conference registration was kept at \$135 because of generous contributions by the following corporate sponsors:

Missouri Valley Division of the IAFC
Kansas State Fire Marshals Office
Via Christi Regional Medical Center
Bank of America
Cusick Jost Consulting
Fire Marshals Association of Kansas
Kansas Chapter Association of Arson Investigators
Smoke Eaters Benefit Softball Tournament
State Farm Insurance
The Idea Bank
University of North Carolina Jaycee
Burn Center

The conference was a huge success thanks to the hard work and dedication of people too numerous to name. Verbal and written comments regarding the conference were extremely positive. In the written words of one participant "This was the best conference that I have EVER been to. And I am not just



talking about pub ed related stuff, but all the other ones I have ever been to! It was an incredible experience and I wish that I would have brought a few members of our fire safety team! Next time hopefully!"



MVD
Web Site

The Missouri Valley
Division web site is
www.mvdiafc.org



Call to Action

Help your IAFC Division by helping the FireRescue GPO

by Crosby Grindle

Through a partnership with your IAFC Division, the FireRescue GPO is working hard to provide the best products and services at the lowest price needed for your department. The success of this program is directly related to your participation and will result in increased revenue for your IAFC Division.

The FireRescue GPO wants your RFPs!

Are you putting together an RFP for products or services? Share your RFP with the FireRescue GPO to post on the website. This will help your department get a more competitive response to your RFP. Send your RFP in an electronic file to breanne.priest@firerescue-gpo.com; please include any bid instructions, deadline and contact information. If you would like us to

post your department's logo or any pictures, please include them as well. The FireRescue GPO can assist you with your RFP writing process!

The FireRescue GPO will provide you with templates or help you write specifications. Let us know how we can assist you in this process. If you would like to discuss this free service, please contact breanne.priest@firerescue-gpo.com by e-mail or phone: 800-752-5446.

Thank you for your participation – together we will reduce costs and improve service delivery. To learn more about the FireRescue GPO, visit our websites: www.firerescue-gpo.com, www.firegpo-newsletter.com, and www.firegpo-euniversity.com or call us today: 800-752-5446.

Overland Park Fire Chief is Retiring

Overland Park Fire Chief Dennis Meyers plans to retire on May 31. Meyers, who has served as chief for seven years, has a business opportunity selling fire equipment, he said. "That opportunity is here now and won't be later," he said. "So I'm going to take it."

Meyers, 54, first worked in a fire department as an 18-year-old and has spent more than 30 years in the Overland Park Department. He said he would miss the post, but that he had accomplished each of the goals he set when he became chief.

"It's a very rewarding job," he said. "I'm very blessed to have a good staff here. I'm going to miss the people the most."

Meyers' replacement has not been named.

— Henry C. Jackson/The Star