

Fire and Life Safety Competency Recognition Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes

1:00 PM ♦ Tuesday, June 10, 2008 ♦ Office of State Fire Marshal/Cache Mt. Room

Members Present

Stacy Warner, Asst. Chief Deputy, OSFM
Traci Cooper, Fire Marshal, Redmond Fire & Rescue
Eric McMullen (for Chuck Chaffin), Deputy FM, TVF&R
Terry Riley, Fire Training Supervisor
Mark Wilson, Fire Marshal, Lebanon Fire Dept.

Representation

Office of State Fire Marshal
Non-exempt Jurisdictions
Oregon Fire Marshals Assoc.
Dept Public Safety Standards & Training
Non-exempt Jurisdictions

Others

Randy Simpson, Chief Deputy State Fire Marshal
Connie Dalke, staff
Mary Olson, Training/Development Specialist II

Office of State Fire Marshal
Office of State Fire Marshal
Office of State Fire Marshal

Members Absent

Bill Bench, Fire Marshal, Forest Grove Fire Dept.
Ed Wilson, Fire Chief, Lake Oswego Fire Dept.
Nathan Philips, Governor, OR-Pacific-Cascade Chapter

Exempt Jurisdictions
Oregon Fire Chiefs Assoc. / GFSPC
Nat'l Electrical Contractors Assoc.

APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY MINUTES

Stacy Warner called the meeting to order and welcomed Eric McMullen who substituted for Chuck Chaffin as the Oregon Fire Marshal Association representative. Traci Cooper moved to approve the minutes from the February 5, 2008 meeting; Mark Wilson seconded; no discussion; motion carried.

Appreciation from Randy Simpson

Randy Simpson thanked everyone for serving on the committee and for all of their hard work, especially the work of Mary Olson and Stacy Warner. Stacy also expressed his appreciation for Mary Olson's work.

EXEMPT JURISDICTIONS REPRESENTATIVE SELECTION

Stacy sent an email to fire chiefs representing exempt fire jurisdiction asking them to nominate a representative to serve on the committee to replace the vacancy created when Dan Patterson, Fire Marshal with Medford Fire Department retired. Three exempt jurisdictions indicated an interest Portland Fire and Rescue, Salem Fire Department, and Eugene Fire and EMS.

The committee recommended selecting a candidate from southern Oregon, as the northern part of the state is represented by Bill Bench, Fire Marshal with Forest Grove Fire and Rescue. Mark Wilson moved to accept the nomination of Mike Thrapp, Fire Marshal with Eugene Fire & EMS. Mike has a history of participation and has been helpful in establishing the competency recognition program. Traci Cooper seconded; the motion carried.

Stacy Warner will thank the chiefs who offered to provide a representative, and will contact Mike Thrapp to confirm his appointment.

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STATUS OF THE PROPOSED RULE REVISIONS TO OAR CH. 837 DIV. 039

Stacy Warner provided information related to the ongoing efforts of the Office of State Fire Marshal's (OSFM) to address statewide issues brought forward by the Governor's Fire Service Policy Council (GFSPC) related to inconsistent application of the fire code. Over the last three years, the OSFM has implemented a series of administrative rule revisions that raise the competency bar for fire officials who are responsible for enforcing the state fire code.

First Rule Revision, May 2006

The first rule revision, effective Dec. 2007, raised the competency bar for fire officials who provide plan review input for fire department access/water supply, and review plans for new construction, alterations, and specifications to the building official. It also established training on our minimum expectations of local fire officials who, by statute, are "assistants to the SFM." This rule revision requires:

- Every Oregon fire chief and fire marshal must successfully complete the OSFM's Fire and Life Safety Awareness I: Scope of Authority training.
- Any fire jurisdiction that wants to only provide plan review input to the building official related to fire department access and water supply must successfully complete the OSFM's Fire and Life Safety Awareness II: Fire Department Access, Water Supply and Fire Flow training.
- Any fire jurisdiction that wants to provide full plan review input for new construction, alterations, and specifications to the building official must obtain their ICC Fire Plans Examiner in addition to the previous requirement of their ICC Fire Inspector II certification.
- Lastly, the OSFM will provide a list to Building Officials of personnel by fire jurisdictions that meet the competency requirements listed above for providing plan review input.

Second Rule Revision, (effective July 1, 2008)

The second rule revision will establish statewide standards for certification and training requirements for fire officials responsible for administration and enforcement of the fire code in Oregon. The proposed rule change identifies four levels of statewide competency standards and the associated timelines for compliance. The competency standards are based on a series of core training requirements, state certifications, and national certifications.

Competency Levels and Compliance		
Competency Level	Compliance Timeline	Compliance Date
Level 1: Company Inspector	six months from the effective date of the rule	January 1, 2009
Level 2: Fire & Life Safety Specialist I	24 months from the effective date of the rule	July 1, 2010
Level 3: Fire & Life Safety Specialist II	30 months from the effective date of the rule	January 1, 2011
Level 4: Fire Marshal	36 months from the effective date of the rule	July 1, 2011

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General Feedback Regarding Rule Revision

The OSFM has received minimal feedback from the fire service. The general areas of concern were related to availability of training, compliance timelines, and fire officials that are newly hired or move to Oregon. The discussion of statewide training and availability is as follows:

- Excellent classroom training continues to be offered by Oregon Fire Marshals Association (OFMA), Oregon Building Officials Association (OBOA), Oregon Mechanical Officials Association (OMOA), and others.
- The OSFM has provided and continues to provide Fire and Life Safety Awareness 1 and 2, Company Inspector, and Company Inspector Train-the-Trainer trainings to Oregon's fire service. In addition the OSFM continues to sponsor additional trainings like the Oregon Fire Code Amendment and ICC Fire Plans Examiner Preparation training at little to no cost to Oregon's fire service.
- The OSFM's computer based training for the Basic Mechanical Code is expected to be available through the OSFM in July 2008. The Basic Building Code computer based training is projected to be available to Oregon's fire service in July 2009. The Oregon Fire Code Amendment training is scheduled to be released in January 2010. These timelines ensure that the core training requirements established in the rule revision will be available and accessible to the fire service within the allocated timelines to meet recognition compliance.
- Lastly, the OSFM is in the process of being integrated into the Oregon Department of Administrative Services (DAS) Enterprise Learning Management System (E-LMS). The Office of State Fire Marshal is one of a handful of agencies chosen for Wave 2 implementation. The E-LMS will enable the OSFM to post computer based trainings, computer based testing, and notification of upcoming trainings onto the internet. Oregon's fire service will be able to access training, take online tests, enroll in trainings, and track their training history with the OSFM from this website.

The concerns brought forward related to newly hired or promoted fire officials from within or outside the state of Oregon are addressed within the rule revision. The rule revision gives these individuals 12 months from date of hire to meet compliance with the rule. The committee discussed availability of statewide training and future training implementation dates. The OSFM is continuing to gather input received related to concerns with the rule revision.

Portland Metro Fire Marshal Meeting

Mary Olson, Nancy Orr, and Stacy Warner were invited to a Portland Metro Fire Marshal meeting to discuss concerns and answer questions related to the proposed rule changes. One of the primary concerns brought forward during the course of the meeting was related to the Company Inspector recognition level and the six month timeline to meet compliance. Two fire jurisdictions represented at the meeting have had a Company Inspection program in place for a number of years. The question raised was would the OSFM require existing company inspectors

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to formally take the OSFM's Company Inspection training or is there some other alternative to meet compliance with the new rule?

After much discussion the following compromise was reached. Fire jurisdictions with existing company inspectors will not need to formally take the OSFM's Company Inspector training. However, they will be required to pass the Company Inspector competency examination portion of the training by January 2009 to be in compliance with the new rule requirement. Any fire jurisdiction that will be initiating a Company Inspection program or training new staff at the Scope of Practice for Company Inspector as of June 2008 will be required to successfully complete the Office of State Fire Marshal's Company Inspector training program. This training program is currently available in a Train-the-Trainer format for Oregon's fire service.

OAR Rule Clarification Document

Mary Olson distributed the OAR Rule Clarification Document to the committee members that was created to provide additional clarification related to the rule change and provides answers to frequently asked questions. This document was sent out to all Oregon fire chiefs and fire marshals. The document was also posted on the OSFM's website. Eric McMullen asked Mary to email it to him, to forward to OFMA members.

Next Steps in Rule Revision Process

The OSFM e-mailed Oregon fire chiefs and fire marshals notifying them of the proposed changes. In addition to sending out e-mail notification the proposed rule change was published in the June 2008 issues of *The Gated Wye* and *The Oregon Bulletin*. The OSFM will conduct a public hearing at their Salem office at 1:00 on June 23, 2008.

BASIC MECHANICAL AND BUILDING CODE TRAINING

Background on Basic Mechanical Code Scope of Training

Stacy Warner and Mary Olson provided historical information related to the development of the OSFM's Basic Mechanical Code scope of training. An education sub-committee was formed representing Oregon fire officials and building officials. The committee members cross referenced the fire code and extracted references made to the mechanical code. The committee then reviewed the list and narrowed the scope of the training to the 2007 Oregon Mechanical Specialty Code, Chapter 5: Exhaust Systems. The training focuses on critical elements that originate in the mechanical code, but are not reproduced in the fire code.

Computer Based Training Development and E-LMS Integration

The committee was pleased with the computerized Basic Mechanical Code training. Mary Olson reported on the status of the Basic Mechanical Code training. The training is currently being beta tested by fire officials and building officials. After all of the beta-tester worksheets are submitted to the OSFM, Mary Olson will make appropriate modifications and identify the number of continuing education units will be awarded for the training. The training is designed so that a person cannot skip through the training; the user must complete various types of

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interactions before the computer based training will allow the user to advance to the next section. Only after all of the topics have been completed will the link for the challenge review exam activate. The challenge review exam portion of the training will be available on the E-LMS website. This test is comprised of fifteen random questions. After modifications have been implemented, this training will be available to Oregon's fire service at no cost.

Determine Equivalencies for the Basic Mechanical Code Training Requirement

The committee discussed equivalencies to the mechanical code training and a method for challenging the training based a combination of experience and previous training. The committee discussed the wide range of mechanical code trainings that are available, accredited college classes, and code certifications. Based on these discussions, the committee determined that there would be two separate processes reciprocity; and a process for challenging based on experience and previous training. Mary Olson offered to develop a flow chart for the committee to review based on the equivalencies discussed during the meeting.

When an applicant is challenging based on an equivalency, the OSFM will consider that they meet or exceed the training requirement. When applicants meet the equivalency requirement the OSFM will give them credit for meeting the Basic Mechanical Code training requirement. The committee determined the following equivalencies for this training:

- Applicant has an active ICC Commercial Mechanical Inspector certification, or
- Applicant has successfully completed an accredited college course on the International Mechanical Code.

When an applicant is challenging based on previous experience and training, the committee determined that the applicant must provide proof of experience and related training. Once the OSFM determines that the applicant has the necessary experience and training. The applicant will be required to take the Basic Mechanical Code challenge review exam. The committee suggested that the test should be timed and issued in a controlled environment (perhaps the OSFM supervising deputies could proctor the tests). If the applicant successfully completes the exam, the OSFM will award the applicant a certificate of completion.

Determine Equivalencies for the Basic Building Code Training Requirement

Although the Basic Building Code training is still in development, the committee discussed current equivalencies and future equivalencies. Mary Olson reported that the OSFM currently considers eight classroom hours related to building code to meet the requirement, an accredited college course on the building code, or if an applicant has their ICC Fire Plans Examiner or ICC Building Plans Examiner as also meeting the requirement.

The committee agreed with the current practice and will implement a similar solution for equivalencies as identified in the Basic Mechanical Code class. Meaning fire officials will be able to challenge the requirement based on equivalency or challenging the requirement based on previous experience and training. The committee agreed to revisit this closer to the implementation of the computer based Basic Building Code training.

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OTHER BUSINESS

Stacy Warner provided a progress report that was submitted to the GFSPC last April. He contacted the original or current representatives, of the groups who sat on the task force in 2003 for input. Their feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and they noted dramatic improvement.

NEXT MEETING AND ADJOURN

The next Fire and Life Safety Competency Recognition Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, **September 17 at 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM at the OSFM in Salem.**

Stacy Warner adjourned the meeting at 3:00 PM.