

**Fire and Life Safety Competency Recognition Advisory Committee
Minutes**

1:30 PM ♦ Wednesday, June 10, 2009
Office of State Fire Marshal/Mt Hood Room

Members Present

Stacy Warner, Assistant Chief Deputy
Greg Keller, Fire Chief, Salem Fire Dept (by phone)
Debbie McDermott, Deputy Fire Marshal, McMinnville FD
Bill Bench, Fire Marshal, Forest Grove Fire Dept
Traci Cooper, Fire Marshal, Redmond Fire & Rescue (by phone)
Gene Durnin, Salem Fire Alarm, NW Automatic Fire Alarm Assoc

Representation

Office of State Fire Marshal
Oregon Fire Chiefs Assoc / GFSPC
Oregon Fire Marshals Assoc
Exempt Jurisdictions
Non-exempt Jurisdictions
Industry

Others Present

Randy Simpson
Rolanda Ayers
Steve Forster
Joel Stein
Hugh Holden
Al Gerard
Gary Marshall
Tom Bohm
Anita Horsley, Training & Development Specialist II
Connie Dalke, staff support to the committee

State Fire Marshal
TVF&R
TVF&R
Keizer Fire District
Jackson Co Fire District #3
Springfield Fire & Life Safety
Bend Fire & Rescue
Hermiston Fire & Emergency Svcs
Office of State Fire Marshal
Office of State Fire Marshal

Welcome/Introductions

Stacy Warner welcomed everyone. This is a special meeting of the advisory committee, called specifically to review the Fire & Life Safety Competency Recognition program. Stacy invited about 40 fire marshals from departments statewide.

Randy Simpson thanked the people who showed up today to give input, and asked everyone to introduce themselves. The review is being driven by a couple of things - it's time, and we're facing budget shortfalls that make us want to assess what's working and where we can streamline.

Background

The idea for the program started in 2001 when the trades industry brought their concerns to the Legislature about inconsistent application of the fire code. The Governor's Fire Service Policy Council appointed a Task Force to validate the industry concerns and recommend solutions. Hence, the Recognition Advisory Committee was formed, and with their guidance, the Recognition process has evolved.

What's Working

Randy hears from the fire service that the program is a success, and that things have improved. It's nice for him to be able to report this to the legislature. To date, 3,056 members of the fire service have completed various courses offered by OSFM, and we've issued 103 recognition certificates.

Randy noted that DPSST has a better handle on the prevention side of the fire service as a result of the Recognition process.

Stacy said other states have requested information about Oregon's program.

Hugh Holden thinks it's an outstanding well thought out process.

Streamline the Process

Steve Forster asked about some of the overlap in the process. Look at our requirement for national certification, followed by re-certification at the local level, where the criteria for local certification *is* the national certification. Specifically, the Oregon Fire Plans Examiner (FPE) endorsement is tied solely to ICC FPE certification.

Then, there's the requirement to certify, what seems to be the same level, through two different agencies. Recognition at the inspector levels is dependent upon ICC and DPSST certification. The recognition process, as it currently exists, has brought in a third agency - first ICC, then DPSST, and now OSFM.

Add the IMT certification process into the mix, and there's even more paperwork and record keeping.

Debbie McDermott agrees. Al Gerard is totally sympathetic.

Could we add a check list to our application: step 1 get this, step 2 send it here, etc.? When Hugh Holden submitted his task book and application to DPSST he assumed that OSFM got it, too.

Could the DPSST application include a check box; something like, "Are you applying for a Recognition Certificate and do you want information sent to OSFM?".

Could the OSFM curriculum be made a part of the certification application that is filed with DPSST - have you taken and passed Basic Mechanical, Building Code, etc.?

Randy and Stacy both said "we hear you."

We'll work to reduce duplication and streamline the process, and still satisfy our individual objectives. DPSST sets a standard, and certification through them is voluntary. OSFM oversees enforcement of the Code, and certifying to the standard we set is required by rule.

Curriculums

When will the curriculums be complete? Some departments offer a pay increase to employees who receive an OSFM Fire Marshal recognition certificate. They need the training to get it.

Basic Building Codes

The Basic Building Codes curriculum is under development now. We'll follow the same process that we used for the Basic Mechanical Code: we'll draw from the Building Code all references to the fire code as they relate to inspections. For now, we're accepting equivalencies. The training will be available on-line, and testing will be available on-line through iLearn.

ICC FPE

A fire official needs ICC Fire Plans Examiner certification *only* if they wish to give input to the Building Official.

Stacy clarified that the Building Official can take input from anyone. By statute, the fire service has to be allowed an opportunity to provide input, so we established a criteria to do that. The SB 498 agreements provide a framework for the fire service to give input to the Building Official, and the other statutes provide a criteria to qualify a person to give fire plan input to the Building Official.

Joel Stein expounded, if we don't do plan review, then we can by-pass the ICC FPE requirement: we can still apply for recognition as a Company Inspector, Fire and Life Safety Specialist, or Fire Marshal.

The OSFM Basic Building Code curriculum is not yet available through OSFM. Until then, a person applying for an OSFM Recognition certificate may use their ICC Fire Plans Examiner certification as an equivalency for the Basic Building Code requirement.

Company Inspector

OSFM has offered an on-line process to a few of the larger departments in the metro area to meet their Company Inspector training and testing requirements.

Greg Keller says it's very beneficial that the State Fire Marshal is willing to work with departments who have documented programs in place.

Steve Forster has heard positive comments about how easy it is to go through the Company Inspector (CI) process. There is some thought that it goes beyond the original scope of the initial work group. There is no national certification for CI, so it adds another level; still, the standard provides consistency.

Other Curriculum

We're committed to making the training and testing available on-line through iLearn as much as possible. The Basic Mechanical Code test is already there. We intend to put the training there as well. We intend to add Basic Building Code, and Fire & Life Safety Awareness: Module II-A Fire Department Access and II-B Water Supply and Fire Flows.

This just leaves the Fire Code Amendments piece.

Fire Code Amendments Curriculum

John Caul and Eric McMullen will be involved in developing this training. We're thinking about taping the class and making it available on CD, although the interaction of a live class may be preferable.

Steve Forster offered, there are highly qualified staff out there who can teach the code class.

Stacy said we can entertain that, but we may require the train-the-trainer coaching to come from John Caul and Eric McMullen. John and Eric have a history with the Oregon Code Committee and know the background concerning the amendments. When the new code comes out there will be a number of training sessions offered throughout the state. We're trying to get teleconferencing set up in the OSFM Mt Hood Conference Room, too.

Stacy noted, the code amendments curriculum will pertain to the *amendments only* - it won't cover all of Chapter 1.

Please let Stacy know if you have ideas or suggestions for equivalencies. Attending the Oregon Fire Code Committee meetings may work, if attendance is consistent.

Recertification

Hugh Holden asked about re-certification.

The recognition certificates will renew every three years, for Fire & Life Safety Specialist I and II, and Fire Marshal levels. If a person renews their ICC certifications, and maintains their DPSST certifications, then their recognition certificate renewal is automatic.

Anita Horsley said it's possible for OSFM to handle it internally, without asking the fire service to submit anything. She can determine who's certificate is due for renewal, and access their ICC records on-line. We are attempting to get approval to access DPSST records on-line as well. If both ICC and DPSST records are accessible, we can renew the Recognition certificates for another three years.

Randy and Stacy agreed to contact Eric Gabliks to see if OSFM may be granted access to DPSST training and certification records for all fire service personnel.

Steve Forster asked about sanctions if a certificate cannot be renewed. Stacy replied, there are no sanctions: the local chiefs accept responsibility and liability for their jurisdictions.

Poll the Fire Service and Formalize the Findings

In 2008, Stacy contacted the people who served on the original Governor's Fire Service Policy Council (GFSPC) Task Force and asked them if things are better. All of them said yes. This issue is a three-legged stool involving the fire service, building officials, and the trades. We are doing our part, and things have improved. He got a lot of positive feed-back.

Greg Keller asked Gary Marshall for his insights, since Gary was on Council at the start.

Gary Marshall said things are better. People in the trades were upset. The Task Force identified problems and solutions, and we have come up with real successes. We need to streamline the recognition process, so it's achievable - and he thinks OSFM hears it.

Greg Keller suggests we formalize that - re-poll those folks, document their input, and pass it on to the GFSPC. If this group today is in favor, he will take it to the Council to charter it and come up with a formal product.

Stacy and Randy like the idea and will work towards making that happen.

Greg added, the report to the Council should mention how many Oregon chiefs have gone through Fire & Life Safety Awareness I: Module I-A Scope of Authority. Stacy said, there's a bigger turn-over for chiefs in volunteer departments, so reaching a goal of 100% is always in the works.

Anita Horsley agreed to pull together some statistics about the program - number of trainings, number of certificates.

Adjournment

Randy Simpson and Stacy Warner thanked everyone for coming and for their valuable input!

Stacy adjourned the meeting at 3:10.

Note

OSFM records show, Fire & Life Safety Awareness I: Module I-A Scope of Authority and Module I-B Group A Assemblies has been attended by:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| Assistant/Acting or Training Chiefs | 63 |
| Battalion Chiefs | 23 |
| Deputy Chiefs | 12 |
| Division Chiefs | 11 |
| Fire Chiefs | 333 |
| Fire Marshal/Fire Prevention Officer | 78 |
| <u>Fire Fighters</u> | <u>482</u> |
| Total | 1,002 |