

# MEETING MINUTES

## Oregon Fire Casualty Review Committee



**Meeting Date:** Thursday, March 1, 2012

**Time:** 10:00 a.m. - Noon

**Location:** Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal  
Mt. Hood Conference Room  
4760 Portland Rd. NE  
Salem, OR 97305

### **Attendees:**

Claire McGrew, OSFM Fire & Life Safety Education  
Dave Gullede, OSFM Data Unit  
Troy Buzalsky, OFCA  
Curtis Ryun, Oregon Burn Center  
Bryan Emmons, Public at Large  
John Phillips, OSFM Data Unit  
Colleen Olson, OSFM Fire & Life Safety Education  
Renee' Stryker, OSFM Fire & Life Safety Education  
Curtis Ryun, Oregon Burn Center  
Earl Diment, Pioneering Tech., Inc. & NFPA

### **Introduction:**

- Claire called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.
- Draft minutes from the Nov. 17, 2011, were approved.

### **Agenda Items:**

#### **Key Performance Measures:**

Claire discussed the OSFM's key performance measures and distributed a copy of the February 2012, Gated Wye article from the desk of State Fire Marshal, Chief Wallace. The article reviewed "Key Performance Measures". Claire will provide more information as it becomes available.

#### **Committee Charter: (New Item)**

Claire distributed a "*draft*" copy of the Oregon Fire Casualty Review Committee Charter for March 1, 2012. The committee discussed this thoroughly, notes and changes were made. They discussed the:

- 1) Mission statement - (which was constructed in a previous meeting).
- 2) Purpose - The decision was this group provides "useable data" and is very important.
- 3) Objectives - The group determined the focus should be on the data and the role of this group is to identify the trends of fatal fires, solutions, and ideas to legislate. They felt that it is important to assure that the data collected is disseminated and as well as collected. These changes will be completed on the existing draft and presented to the committee via email for suggestions prior to the next meeting. Claire's goal would be to have items updated and in final form to clarify the committee's purpose to ensure a clear vision and commitment from the group and their sponsoring agencies.

As a sidebar, Curtis added that a great source of accurate data is the national data, which comes from the American Burn Association (ABA). The ABA's next conference is April 24-27 in Seattle. This is a very large convention with many vendors. They identify crucial data and statistics and it could be useful to utilize this comparable data in our reports.

For more information, contact: [claire.mcgreg@state.or.us](mailto:claire.mcgreg@state.or.us) and 503-934-8236

*The group discussed Vision 20-20 and whether there should be some tie to the objectives this plan. For review, Vision 20/20 is not a group or an organization. It is a strategic plan for fire prevention in the country. It relies on data collection and use of data for targeted programs. Vision 20-20 produces accurate and measurable of the data, evaluations, and model programs. Try to stay focused on what is provided, and that is the statistics from the data. It is important Oregon stays involved with this because of the importance of fire service, to increase advocacy of fire prevention, marketing, through the Chiefs, the Fire Marshal Association and the stakeholders.*

- 4) Membership - The membership was reviewed and is being updated. Claire requested the group's feedback on whether they felt the committee the membership should expand or remain the same. Claire will be sending out some additional invites to several insurance parties to see if there is interest in participating with this committee. The group agrees to invite the insurance industry, and possibly having Judy Okulitch or Krista Fischer join this committee because of the youth fire problem. Additionally, it was noted that representation from the Oregon Fire Code Committee would be valuable. Claire will make contact on this connection as well. If there are other connections, please communicate this through Claire.

#### **Oregon Fire Injury Review Handout:**

This document was distributed. This report was previously compiled by the prior OSFM research analyst and now John Phillips is continuing on this project. We rolled the data into a 2007-2011 data report. The purpose of the report is for it to be an addendum to the original report. Claire reviewed these two handouts and the data they represent. She requested feedback from the committee on the structure of the report. Discussion ensued on the fire fatalities, and fire injuries versus non-related injury statistics. The overview and methodology should be noted did change from the original 2004-2008 report. For the future of this report this group should probably include some recommendations to be included.

A member of the committee questioned if fire service and civilian fire fatalities are separated. Dave Gullede explained that this is a challenge with reporting as NFIRS reports should only have **fire** fatalities reported. The current report includes the fire service and civilian fire fatalities separated. Many times the fatality is reported as heart attack even though the circumstances were possibly a fire fatality or fire related. In terms of coding, if the incident code you are reporting does not begin with a "one" then it would not be considered a fire fatality. It gets complicated when a fire is involved and someone may have been killed due to fire but it was within a motor vehicle accident. Claire explained to assist with clearing this confusion up and to allow better clarification the DPSST has been approved to bring in next year an NFA course for the NFIRS data.

The group reviewed the Key Data Findings section. John indicated that this was a challenge as the reporting mandates are much more stringent on fatality reports than the injury report.

Claire distributed a copy of the full Fire Fatality Report 2004-2008 so that the group could review the recommendations section. These recommendations from the 2004-2008 report include 1.) Older adult education programs identified that this was target groups that needs it. 2.) To improve the smoke alarm program. 3.) To increase home fire escape planning efforts. 4.) Promote the installation of home fire sprinklers. 5.) Target fire safety education to at risk juvenile population. 6.) Increase the cigarette fire safety education. 7.) Monitor legislation regulatory processes, this need to be continued. 8.) Improve data collection reviews,

Claire reminded the committee that this group is looking at injuries and asked if there are trends in injuries in which would require an additional recommendation that should be included in the addendum that was not addressed in the original Fire Fatality Report? Remember that we want to tie these two reports together. Claire asked if Dave or John had any notable statistics that we should address. Dave mentioned there was smoke alarm data that could be misconceived and that was 60 percent of the time with a smoke alarm present, if you look at the statistics you see that it would appear that when a smoke detector is present one is more likely to die. When

you look at the age group the people are escaping but there are injuries happening. This is not the case. This can be from not knowing the exits, exits being blocked and or injuries from trying to get out.

There was discussion on the training and experience of using a fire extinguisher and whether civilians should tackle putting the fire out, since many of them are not trained in using a fire extinguisher or should they “exit” the building. It was recommended that we use this as a recommendation for public education efforts.

The group discussed the challenge with incident reporting, not receiving data from very small fire districts and ones that have only volunteers and there is not really any information or data to report, their call volume is very low. There were approximately 60 of these small ones out of 319 in 2010. The data was about the same for 2010 and 2011.

The group further reviewed the recommendation for escape planning. The data appears to demonstrate that victims are attempting to engage in fighting the fires instead of taking the few minutes they have to dedicate to escaping. The committee discussed the many challenges associated with escaping, however mostly directly referred to mobility issues, older adults, and poor housekeeping. From the data, it appears they are trying to fight the fire, going towards it rather than trying to get out of the building. The items that the committee would recommend adding to escape planning are:

Increase knowledge of exiting routes,

- Increase knowledge of when to attempt to control a fire and when to leave. (When to know to get out and stay out).

This has been promoted in Oregon to all age groups, that persons should know how to get out, two ways out. Not only does this need to be focused on the young age groups, also the elderly and to promote the familiarization of knowing “two ways out”. Judy Okulitch has developed a home escape plan with the intent to engage parents, caregivers and family member to have discussion about safety features, escape planning and preparation for special needs that families may have when developing their individual escape plan. Claire will add something to this effect in the report and send out and ask for comment on it.

The group discussed smoke alarms; the campaigns, different types of detectors and how this information is provided to the public.

#### Good of the order:

The Oregon Fire Marshal’s Association will be working towards legislation on the 2013 Session in regards to the smoke alarm language. It ran unsuccessfully in 2010. Want to see if the language that was used is still what we want to go with or go with something else. We know that technology is driving some of this shift.

Claire reminded the group that she will be asking for recommendations on the injury report via email.

#### **Adjourn:**

Meeting adjourned at 12 noon.

#### Next meeting

The next meeting is **May 24, 2012**, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at OSFM, Mt. Hood Conference Room.