

**Department of Homeland Security
Preparedness Directorate/U.S. Fire Administration
National Fire Academy Board of Visitors
Teleconference
February 14, 2006
Building R, Room 108**

Attendees:

The following National Fire Academy Board of Visitors (NFA BOV) members participated in the conference call:

Dr. Robert S. Fleming (Chairperson)
Professor, Rowan University
1406 Heather Lane
West Chester, Pennsylvania 19380

Ms. Helen Johnson
Executive Consultant
State Firemen's and Fire Marshals'
Association
5810 Charles Schreiner Trail
Austin, Texas 78749

Chief Art Cota
Shasta College Fire Department
11555 Old Oregon Trail
Redding, California 96003

Chief Donald R. Oliver
Wilson Fire/Rescue Services
307 West Hines Street
Wilson, North Carolina 27893

Mr. Gary Tokle
National Fire Protection Association
1 Batterymarch Park
Quincy, Massachusetts 02169-7471

Captain Jack Reall
President, Columbus Firefighters Union,
IAFF 67
1380 Dublin Road, Suite 103
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dr. Sandy Bogucki
Associate Professor
Section of Emergency Medicine
Yale University School of Medicine
464 Congress Avenue
New Haven, Connecticut 06519-1315

The following member was not present for the meeting:

Chief Warren McDaniels (Retired)
100 City Park Avenue
New Orleans, Louisiana 70119

U.S. Fire Administration (USFA)/NFA staff in attendance:

Dr. Denis Onieal, Superintendent, NFA

Mr. Ron Face, Director, National Emergency Training Center (NETC) Management, Operations, and Support Services (via teleconference)

Ms. Cindy Wivell, Secretary, NFA

Mr. Ed Kaplan, Education Specialist

Convene BOV Meeting/Welcome

Dr. Denis Onieal, Superintendent, NFA

Dr. Robert Fleming, Chair, Board of Visitors

Dr. Denis Onieal convened the meeting and proceeded to review the agenda. He welcomed everyone to the teleconference and thanked all who could join in on the call. Dr. Robert Fleming welcomed everyone as well.

Budget Update

Mr. Ron Face, Director, NETC Management, Operations, and Support Services

Mr. Ron Face gave a brief update on the USFA budget. There was a 1 percent rescission across the Government. It is unknown how much money USFA may be asked to contribute towards the working capital funds for DHS and for Preparedness (this is money used for payroll, procurement, etc.—infrastructure support). In the past, the Federal Emergency Management Agency absorbed these costs, but now USFA will have to pay for those services. It is hoped to be worked out within the next 4 to 5 weeks. Mr. Face also stated that the money has been loaded into the accounts.

Transition to Preparedness Directorate

Mr. Face discussed the continuing transition to Preparedness with the BOV members, including the loss of on-campus support from HR (human resources) and the IT technical support. HR has been transferred to the D.C. area, and the IT employees are being split between D.C., Mount Weather, and Emmitsburg. One IT employee will be stationed here on campus until the end of the fiscal year; the need for a continued presence will then be re-evaluated. Also there is a transition towards a new employee performance system, MAX-HR. When implemented, it will be piloted for approximately 15 months. Individual pay will be based on performance. MAX-HR moves from the GS system to paybanding.

Challenges that NFA is Facing

Dr. Onieal made a brief statement regarding the challenges the NFA is facing. He stated that he has a very positive outlook for the future. He expects the challenges that the future holds will be simple and very easily managed—mainly internal processes.

Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE) Matrix Mr. Ed Kaplan, Education Specialist, NFA

Mr. Ed Kaplan presented a brief overview of the FESHE matrix. He sent the matrix to the State Training Directors and the State Fire Marshals for suggestions. Mr. Kaplan has received no responses. Mr. Billy Shelton, Virginia Fire Programs, presented the FESHE matrix at the Pro Board meeting and received a very positive reaction from the group. Mr. Kaplan is currently pushing to get the matrix online as well as having it presented at State summits.

Credentialing Initiative (Status Report)

Dr. Onieal stated that the Credentialing Report had been sent to Mr. David Paulison who in turn sent it to the NIMS (National Incident Management System) Integration Center [NIC] for implementation. Mr. Al Fluman has been named the new NIC Director. Mr. Gil Jamieson is now the Deputy for the Federal Coordinating Officer in New Orleans. Dr. Onieal reported to the group that he presented the report at the International Association of Fire Chiefs' National Fire Service Intrastate Mutual Aid System Stakeholders Meeting in Denver, Colorado, last week. There were some questions with regard to the volunteer fire service. Chief Art Cota noted that one of the recommendations in the Credentialing Report included funding—was that approved? Mr. Paulison approved all the recommendations. What is the next step and timetable? Dr. Onieal is unsure. Impacts on NFA? No impacts are anticipated, possibly managing the process. NFA is not in the business of credentialing. Most of the training is done at the State level. Captain Jack Reall noted that credentialing is tactical focused.

DHS Chief Medical Officer (Status Update)

Dr. Runge, DHS Chief Medical Officer, is interested in communicating within the communities on issues such as the avian flu. Dr. Runge is putting a lot of pressure on the fire service to help get the messages out. He is trying to instill the Centers for Disease Control message--nothing more, nothing less. Everyone needs to be aware of the consequences of a mass epidemic where many people would be affected and unable to perform their normal duties, especially in the fire service when they are short-staffed and are expected to respond to emergencies.

Reduction in On-Campus Length of Selected Courses (Status Report/Selection Criteria)

Dr. Onieal gave a brief overview of what has been happening since the last BOV meeting regarding the NFA courses that have been selected to be condensed. The training specialists selected ten or eleven courses to be possibly shortened in length; that is, reducing a 2-week course to a 1-week course. There has been at least one course selected from each curriculum area, and one selected from the Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP) courses. There are no new updates to report other than the training specialists are still working to ensure the selected courses can be condensed without losing their meaning and information.

EFOP Program and Symposium (Status Report)

The Symposium will be held. Dr. Onieal was unsure of the dates. Mr. John Chase from DHS Intelligence will be a speaker; he has a very good reputation for giving wonderful speeches and presentations. Please help to get the message out that beginning in 2009, an EFOP applicant must have a bachelor's degree to be a candidate for the program.

Board Discussion

Dr. Robert Fleming, Chair, BOV

October Meeting Minutes

Dr. Fleming asked the members if there were any discrepancies or remarks regarding the October 2005 meeting minutes. Nothing was stated. Mr. Gary Togle moved to approve the minutes. There was a second from Ms. Helen Johnson. The minutes were approved as presented.

Annual Report

Dr. Fleming asked the members if there were any changes or issues with the annual report that they would like to discuss. It was noted that on page 2, fourth paragraph, that there was a blank where the number of courses that were to be revised was to be stated. The number to be placed in the blank is 93. Also on page 4, third paragraph, the sentence stating, "The control of this funding for the curriculum development should be within the NFA" should begin "The direction and control...." There were no motions made for these corrections. Dr. Fleming asked that the members look over the report and send him any revisions deemed necessary before the end of the week.

April Meeting Dates

The next BOV meeting will be held April 4 and 5, with travel days April 3 and 6.

After some discussion, the group asked if a breakdown of the FY01-05 course development delivery activities could be provided at the next meeting. This ties back to the NFA development/delivery data that Ms. Terry Gladhill provided to the Board members recently. And how does information gathered from course evaluations get fed back into the courses/programs?

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m. EST.