

**Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency/
U.S. Fire Administration
Academy Board of Visitors for the National Fire Academy
Teleconference
February 21, 2012**

Attendees:

The following Board of Visitors for the National Fire Academy (BOV NFA) members were present for the meeting:

Ms. Helen Johnson (Chairperson)
Executive Director
State Firemen's and Fire Marshals'
Association of Texas
5810 Charles Schreiner Trail
Austin, TX 78749

Mr. Randy Novak
Bureau Chief
Iowa Fire Service Training
3100 Fire Service Road
Ames, IA 50011-3100

Mr. Chris Neal
Executive Director
International Fire Service Training
Association
930 North Willis
Stillwater, OK 74078

Mr. Adam Thiel
Alexandria Fire Department
900 Second Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

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

Dr. Manuel Fonseca
District Chief
Nashville Fire Department
63 Hermitage Avenue
P.O. Box 196332
Nashville, TN 37210

Captain Jack Reall
President, Columbus Firefighters Union
IAFF 67
379 West Broad Street
Columbus, OH 43215

The following board members were not present:

Mr. Robert Cumberland
Director
Cumberland Valley Volunteer
Firemen's Association
222 Shipley Avenue
Westminster, MD 21157

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)/U.S. Fire Administration (USFA)/NFA staff in attendance:

Ms. Ruth MacPhail, Secretary, NFA
Mr. Rob Neale, Deputy Superintendent, NFA
Dr. Kirby Kiefer, Deputy Superintendent, NFA
Dr. Denis Onieal, Superintendent, NFA
Chief Glenn Gaines, Deputy Fire Administrator, USFA
Ms. Terry Gladhill, Program Analyst, NFA
Ms. Beth Miller, USFA Budget Analyst, NFA
Mr. Perry Joy, Branch Chief, Support Services, NFA
Mr. Ed Kaplan, Chief, Education, Training, and Partnerships Section, NFA
Ms. Alex Furr, Director, National Fire Programs, NFA

Convene BOV Meeting/Opening Remarks

Ms. Helen Johnson, Chair, Board of Visitors
Chief Glenn Gaines, Deputy Fire Administrator, USFA
Dr. Denis Onieal, Superintendent, NFA
Dr. Kirby Kiefer, Deputy Superintendent, USFA
Mr. Robert Neale, Deputy Superintendent, USFA

Ms. Helen Johnson called the meeting to order at approximately 1 p.m. A role call was taken and one board member, Mr. Bob Cumberland, was not present. However, there was a quorum reached. Ms. Johnson welcomed a new board member, Dr. Manuel Fonseca. She then briefly reviewed the agenda.

Chief Glenn Gaines addressed the group and thanked the board members for their service to the Academy. He expressed his condolences to Mr. Adam Thiel and the rest of the Alexandria Fire Department for the loss of one of their firefighters in the line of duty. Chief Gaines stated that the U.S. Fire Administrator Ernie Mitchell could not be in attendance today due to an Appropriations Meeting with the Senate. He briefly discussed the budget deduction of \$1.5 million and the cut of some capabilities including video production studio closure. He stated that the USFA is up for reauthorization this year. There are four items on the list currently in process and he will not go into detail until they are accepted. We currently are in the process of updating the Strategic Plan. There will be a meeting held with the division chiefs and managers this Thursday to review and make updates and changes to the plan.

Dr. Onieal welcomed Dr. Fonseca to the board and described his background. He discussed in brief the decline in Executive Fire Officer (EFO) rates. He stated that the dorm in Building A should be completed and housing students by May.

Election of Board Officers

Mr. Randy Novak nominated Ms. Johnson to retain her seat as chairperson. All members were in favor.

Mr. Novak nominated Mr. Thiel to retain his seat as vice chairperson. All members were in favor.

Approval of October 2011 Meeting Minutes

Dr. Sandy Bogucki motioned for the October 2011 meeting minutes to be approved as submitted. There was a second by Mr. Thiel. All members were in favor.

Budget/Campus Maintenance & Capital Improvements Update Mr. Ron Face, Director, Management, Operations, and Support Services

Mr. Ron Face could not be present for the meeting so Mr. Perry Joy and Ms. Beth Miller used a handout to review updates on the budget and facilities.

Ms. Miller stated that 99 percent of the FY2011 budget was spent. She stated that the FY2012 budget is \$1.5 million dollars less than the FY2011 budget. We requested \$3 million less and were given \$1.5 million more than requested. The FY2013 budget request has been submitted. There is an error on the budget request for the National Fire Programs section. The actual number is \$6,306,000.

Mr. Joy briefly reviewed National Emergency Training Center (NETC) repairs and capital improvements. He stated that money has already been received from the FY2012 budget for capital improvements which is earlier than it is usually received. One larger item that is in the waiting is the upgrade of the kitchen preparation area and the flooring. Mr. Joy also discussed the USFA contract conversions. The NFA Evaluation Center and the Admissions Office conversions were completed by December 2011. The second phase of the conversion for the Facility and Maintenance Operations personnel has been ceased and will remain under contract pending DHS approval.

National Fire Programs Update Ms. Alex Furr, Director, National Fire Programs

Ms. Alex Furr discussed several areas of interest in the National Fire Programs.

- Fire Estimate Summary Series: Completed 17 summaries that address the fire problem for residential and nonresidential building fire trends including deaths, injuries, and dollar losses. Data were used from 2010 highlighting the period between 2006 to 2010.
- Blue Campaign – Combat Human Trafficking: Developed a laminated reference card to be provided to both fire service and emergency medical services (EMS) personnel. The card lists indicators such as scars, infections, visions impairments, respiratory problems, and malnourishment for response personnel to be alert for. The card also lists an 800 number for reporting suspicious activity. There also was a video and a Coffee Break Training released on this issue.
- Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR): Activity similar to the Blue Campaign to raise terrorism awareness is in development.

- Emergency Support Function #4 (ESF #4): Coordinating with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service (FS) to elevate USFA to a greater leadership role to facilitate access to structural firefighters and resources. The National Response Framework (NRF) is currently in revision so this is an opportune time to modify the ESF #4 annex.
- Firefighter cadre: USFA is exploring the establishment of a firefighter cadre within the FEMA reservist workforce. Due to the workforce hiring and rostering process (availability requirements and no backfill compensation), retirees and volunteers will find it easiest to participate although career firefighters will be encouraged as well. USFA expects the initial cadre to serve as a platform to spotlight the structural firefighter skills and resources available for national response. From this base USFA can explore options to expand the cadre and more easily accommodate all qualified personnel including career firefighters.
- Smoke alarms: USFA has worked with the Oak Ridge National Laboratories and Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to develop a smoke alarm device that will differentiate between nuisance smoke and actual danger. Consideration is being given to possibly incorporate carbon monoxide (CO) detection in smoke alarms as well. Significant progress has been made although extensive testing and validation is still ahead.
- "Consumer Reports" article on kitchen fire safety: A report was developed from National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) data on applicant fires including dishwashers, refrigerators, stove ranges, etc. Interactive house with room-by-room identification of potential hazards can be found on CPSC's Web site at: www.consumerreports.org/content/cro/en/consumer-reports-magazine-march-2012/kitchen-fire-safety.html#Interactive:_More_details_about_appliance_fires

Status of Subcommittees

Applicant Outreach (Adam Thiel)

Mr. Thiel reported that the committee attempted to hold a teleconference, but due to issues with the conference line being double booked, the committee held a vote via email on the last edition of the report. He will report out on the final outcome at the next face-to-face meeting to be held in April.

EMS Program Steering (Sandy Bogucki)

Dr. Bogucki stated that this committee's work has been completed and was closed out at the meeting in October.

FESHE (Adam Thiel)

Mr. Thiel stated that a meeting was previously held to finalize the report, but due to illness, the report is not completed. He stated that there is a Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE) Conference set to be held in June. Mr. Ed Kaplan gave a brief summary of points.

TRADE (Randy Novak)

Mr. Randy Novak stated the Training Resources and Data Exchange (TRADE) Committee's work has been completed and was closed out at the meeting in October.

NFA Academy Updates**Dr. Denis Onieal, Acting Deputy U.S. Fire Administrator, USFA****Dr. Kirby Kiefer, Acting Superintendent, NFA****Mr. Robert Neal, Deputy Superintendent, NFA**

A briefing summary handout was distributed to all for review.

Ms. Terry Gladhill reported on the mediated online course *Advanced Principles of Fire and Emergency Services Safety and Survival* alpha pilot. The course has five modules and was run over a 12-week period. Testing the Learning Management System (LMS) for support and instructor skill set. A back briefing is scheduled to be held February 22, 2012. The beta pilot is set to start in May. We are currently recruiting external students to assist in this pilot test.

Mr. Rob Neale reviewed briefly selected subject areas on the handout.

- DHS network has security constraints. Money has been set aside to acquire an off-network educational server to pilot test curriculum and applications. Working with information technology (IT) and computer security.
- Conduct a pilot study with the National Guard Bureau to employ its online Emergency Management Staff Trainer application to deliver command and control training in real time to personnel in the field. We are hoping to pilot it this year.
- Conduct a study of the uses and limitations of tablet-style computers in lieu of Student Manuals (SMs).
- Closing Building R's wet/dry lab facilities by October 2012 and replacing them with a digital training experience. Task group to meet in February to conduct a cost-benefit analysis (CBA) of alternative training methods.
- Instructor evaluation: Retain an independent contractor to develop a valid Contract Instructor Evaluation Program and assessment instrument.
- Harvard Fellowship Program: Due to a lack of funds, the USFA will no longer support the two fellowships for 2012. We will continue to administer and support the selection process for the program.

Mr. Kaplan reported to the group on the NFA Online course review. There has been a review of 58 online courses. He also stated that the Coffee Break Training exams had been shut down for several months due to the distribution and selling of exam answers online. This issue has been resolved and the exams are now back online.

Dr. Kirby Kiefer reported on the American Council for Education (ACE) review. Changes were implemented in 22 courses. The first set of courses in which grades were given began in December. The next batch of courses to implement the new grading policy will be due for approval in September 2012.

Mr. Kaplan reported on the FESHE Recognition Program. There have been 22 requests received for recognition with 13 being sent to the State Training Directors for approval. There have been well over 50 inquires about the recognition program. He stated that there is an article in "Firehouse Magazine" on the program. Mr. Kaplan also reported that all the TRADE and FESHE Adobe Connect sessions have been going extremely well under Mr. Mike McCabe's advisory. All of their meetings have been scheduled for the year.

Dr. Kiefer discussed the new admissions system that is being implemented this week. The old system had applicants use their Social Security Number as their identifier. The new system now will require applicants to go online and register to get a student ID number. The change will be FEMA-wide and will be implemented as of the first of the fiscal year. Dr. Kiefer also stated that the enrollment numbers are breaking even from last year even after a decline in the economy. The application numbers have risen from 2,490 applicants in 2011 to 3,053 in 2012.

Public Comments

There were no public comments to report.

Meeting Schedule

The next face-to-face meeting is scheduled for April 25–26, 2012, with travel days being April 24 and April 27, 2012. This meeting is scheduled in conjunction with the Congressional Fire Services Institute Dinner in Washington, DC, on April 26.

Dr. Onieal asked that the board develop ideas for the next steps that they would like to see the subcommittees take.

Dr. Bogucki motioned for adjournment. There was a second from Mr. Thiel. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.