



**FEMA**

May 5, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: Ernest Mitchell  
U.S. Fire Administrator

THROUGH: Glenn Gaines  
U.S. Deputy Fire Administrator

FROM: Adam Thiel //signed//  
Chairperson  
Board of Visitors for the National Fire Academy

SUBJECT: Managing Officer Program Recommendations

At the April 17, 2014, Board of Visitors for the National Fire Academy (BOV NFA) meeting, the chairs of the Managing Officer (MO) program subcommittees presented recommendations from their respective subcommittee. Mr. Randy Novak served as chair of the MO Admissions and Final Project Guidelines Subcommittee, and Captain Jack Reall served as chair of the MO Curriculum Subcommittee. Both of the individual subcommittee reports are attached.

Members of the two MO subcommittees actively participated in discussions and provided valuable input/insight to the final reports.

Copies of the reports were distributed to all participants of the April 17 meeting. The BOV NFA unanimously agreed to the recommendations submitted from the subcommittees with some modifications.

#### MO Curriculum Subcommittee

The MO Curriculum Subcommittee was asked to determine the appropriate curriculum for the program. The goals of this subcommittee were:

1. To determine the appropriate four 6-day NFA On-Campus courses that should be part of the students' two Academy visits.
2. To determine the number of 2-day NFA Off-Campus offerings and make recommendations of which ones should be in the program.
3. To determine the number of NFA Online offerings and make recommendations of which ones should be in the program.
4. To make a recommendation on how to address those students who have already completed one of the off-campus or online programs prior to entry into the MO.
5. To make recommendations, if any, of the off-campus or online programs that should be pre-requisite.

## Managing Officer (MO) Program Recommendations

Based on the subcommittee's recommendations, the Board recommends the following curriculum for the NFA Managing Officer program, with modifications as noted.

- NFA On-Campus Courses (four 6-day)
  - ✓ 21st Century Training for Fire/EMS Training Officers (R0354)
  - ✓ Conducting Local Risk Reduction for Company Officers (R0186)
  - ✓ Safety Program Operations (R0154)
  - ✓ Technology for Emergency Services (R0153)
  - ✓ Cultural Competence in Risk Reduction (R0394) – added based on discussions during the April 17 meeting

It is recommended that R0186 and R0394 courses be blended, with a concentration on ethics and cultural competency as the courses are revised.
- NFA Off-Campus Courses (four 2-day)
  - ✓ Leadership I for Fire and EMS (F/W0803)
  - ✓ Leadership II for Fire and EMS (F/W0804)
  - ✓ Leadership III for Fire and EMS (F/W0805)
  - ✓ Shaping the Future (F/W0602)
- NFA Online Courses (online)
  - ✓ Introduction to Emergency Response to Terrorism (Q0890)

The Board recommends that the off-campus courses not be prerequisite due to the timeframe hindrances that may be caused by the variables of course offerings at the state or regional level.

The Board also recommends that any candidate who has successfully completed the most recent revision of the off-campus or online coursework be permitted to use those courses toward completion of the MO program. Any coursework that is not the most recent revision should be re-taken.

The Board understands that the Academy may need to change or alter courses titles, as appropriate.

### MO Admissions and Final Project Guidelines Subcommittee

The MO Admissions and Final Project Guidelines Subcommittee was asked to recommend admissions requirements and define final project guidelines. The goals of this subcommittee included:

1. Determining admission requirements, to include academic requirements (considering credit hours, life experience, institutional accreditation, transfer hours, etc.), experience (as a supervising officer, etc.), certifications (firefighter, fire officer, etc.), and any other necessary requirements. Also determine if a “tiered” selection process is appropriate for admissions in this program.

## Managing Officer (MO) Program Recommendations

2. Determining requirements for a capstone project (after completion of core courses).

This Board reinforces the idea that the candidates for the MO program should have a strong background as supervising officers, supported by education, training, and experience. In particular, the following recommendations are provided with that thought in mind:

- **Education:** Recommend that candidates should have earned an associate degree (or 60 credit hours towards a bachelor degree) from a nationally or regionally accredited institution recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. In addition, only 25 percent of those credit hours earned should be from non-traditional credits, and these non-traditional credits should come through a structured learning environment. Recommend credits mirror those required for the Executive Fire Officer program. For example, 15 credits non-traditional, 15 credits for life experience, and 30 credits classroom.
- **Training:** Recommend that candidates should have a strong record of attending training at the local, regional, and state levels. Their training should have exposed them to more than just local requirements, such as regional and state training with responders from other jurisdictions.

As noted by the subcommittee, the Board does not recommend particular levels of certification; however, there should be evidence of training that supports the candidate's role as a supervising officer [fire or emergency medical services (EMS)]. This training can be demonstrated in one of many forms, which may include, but not be limited to the following:

- ✓ Certification at the Fire Officer I level (based on National Fire Protection Association 1041).
- ✓ Credentialed at the Fire Officer designation through the Center for Public Safety Excellence.
- ✓ Training at the fire or EMS leadership level.
- ✓ State/regional symposiums, conferences, and workshops supporting leadership, management, and supervision.
- ✓ Other training that supports the competencies identified in the International Association of Fire Chief's Officer Handbook for the managing officer.

The Board recommends the following prerequisite training as a requirement for admission to the MO: IS-700, IS-800, ICS-100, and ICS-200. These training programs are available both locally and online (through the FEMA and NFA).

Managing Officer (MO) Program Recommendations

- Experience: Recommend that candidates have experience as a supervising officer (fire or EMS), which could include equivalent time as an “acting officer.” The fire/EMS chief of department should verify this experience through their signature on the NFA application. While the Board does not recommend a separate letter from the fire/EMS chief of department, it is recommended that a checklist be developed to assist the chief in ensuring all the requirements for admissions are complete.

The Board does not recommend using a tiered selection process for admission to this program.

- Capstone Project: The Board recommends that the “capstone project” be an applied project that benefits the fire/EMS agency, or the community it serves. In particular, the candidate’s chief of department or immediate supervisor should help vet the project prior to final approval. The scope of the project should be appropriate to the candidate’s duties/responsibilities in their organization, and be appropriate to the MO program. The Board recommends that these projects may be based on one of the following, but not limited to:
  - ✓ Lessons learned from one of the core courses required in the MO program.
  - ✓ Taken from the listed experiences of the managing officer as identified in the IAFC Officer Handbook Officer Handbook.
  - ✓ Equivalent issue/problem identified by the candidate’s agency, or in the agency’s served area/jurisdiction.

If you or any of your staff would like to discuss these recommendations, please contact me by phone at (804) 786-5351 or email [adam.thiel@governor.virginia.gov](mailto:adam.thiel@governor.virginia.gov).

The Board members thank you for the opportunity to serve.

Attachments

cc:

Dr. Denis Onieal, NFA Superintendent