

MISSOURI VALLEY DIVISION OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS

**POSITION STATEMENTS
ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
March 8, 2004**

USFA/NFA

The Board of the Missouri Valley Division of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (MVDIAFC) fully supports the efforts of the administration of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), United States Fire Administration (USFA) and the National Fire Academy (NFA) to continue the implementation of changes as outlined in the Blue Ribbon Commission recommendations. The implementation of these recommendations will enhance the operation of these agencies and in turn greatly assist the emergency service on a national, state and local level.

FIRE ACT

The Board of the MVDIAFC strongly supports all efforts to insure that funding is continued for a re-authorized Fire Act even in light of any Homeland Security initiatives. Further, the Board feels that it is imperative that the Fire Act grants stay as a permanent program and be held separate and distinct from any other Homeland Security funding, and that these monies continue to go directly to local fire service.

The Division will assist with the "grass roots" efforts to ensure our congressional representatives bring forth our wishes. The Division would also ask that our International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) Governmental Affairs Staff continue a constant vigil over issues in Washington that affect fire safety and emergency services.

NATIONAL FIRE CODE

The MVDIAFC Board supports the IAFC in its continued efforts to work with both major building code groups. Further, the Board urges the IAFC to stay active in both code development processes to insure that the Fire Service's needs are being met in both. The Division will strive to allow both code groups to be represented at any Division conference.

FIREFIGHTER SAFETY, MEDICAL AND WELLNESS

The MVDIAFC Board is committed to support the IAFC/IAFF initiative in developing standards that will ensure the safety and health of all fire service employees. The Division believes that with the proper training and conditioning the Candidate Physical Agility Test (CPAT) should be used as an entry-level standard. The MVDIAFC Board also supports the development of an Incumbent Physical Agility Test (IPAT) and appropriate fitness standards for incumbent employees, again with the proper training and conditioning to reduce injuries and deaths.

HAZ-MAT CHEMICAL PLACARDING

The MVDIAFC is opposed to any measures that would remove or eliminate the current standards for placarding of hazardous chemicals used in any application. This would be an infringement on the safety of not only our personnel but also the general public.

DIVERSITY

The Board of the MVDIAFC would encourage the IAFC and all members to take a proactive approach to addressing the issue of diversity. It is incumbent on our organization to be the leader in assuring diversity is a goal. This goal will make our organization strong and representative of all our members. Further, the MVDIAFC supports the efforts of all the chief officer organizations including but not limited to the Women Chief Officers (WCFO)

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

The MVDIAFC strongly supports the IAFC efforts to increase communications between the International, Division and State organizations. The Board is committed to assisting the IAFC in any way possible to insure our members get accurate and timely information.

The Board would also encourage each Division and Section to initiate a strategic planning process as well as position statements, involving their state organizations in that process, and sharing such information throughout the IAFC. This is key to ensuring that the IAFC is the single voice for the leaders in the fire service. Further, while total open communications between the IAFC, Divisions and State organizations is essential, the IAFC must be cognizant of and work at guaranteeing, the strength and necessity of the Divisions.

LEADERSHIP PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The Board of the MVDIAFC would encourage the IAFC to continue to support this program in any way possible. The Board feels this program is important not only to the future of emergency services but also to the ability of managers to function in a positive manner at the local level. To that end, the Division Board also urges the IAFC to develop and implement a parallel program, designed for departments without IAFF designation, but whose leaders wish to partner in a shared leadership environment. Further, the MVDIAFC urges the development of a supplemental program for departments in trouble which would include representatives from the IAFF and IAFC to travel to a troubled department and offer assistance in restoring or initiating a partnership environment.

Furthermore the MVDIAFC strongly encourages all Divisions of the IAFC to actively support and sponsor these programs within their divisions.

FEDERAL MANDATES

The Board of the MVDIAFC would support development of an IAFC position to encourage the Federal Government to fund any staffing, equipment or programs mandated on state or local fire departments.

COMMISSION ON FIRE ACCREDITATION INTERNATIONAL

The Board of the MVDIAFC encourages the use of the Fire Emergency Self Assessment Process as a means to enhance organizational performance and provide a means for continuous improvement in service delivery. The Board feels this model can evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of an organization and set a course for improvement.

CHIEF FIRE OFFICER DESIGNATION

The Board of the MVDIAFC encourages all members to undertake the process to become Chief Fire Officer Designate. This designation program, along with the Officer Development Guide is a roadmap designed to enhance the education and professionalism of chief fire officers throughout the world.

IAFC EDUCATIONAL TELECONFERENCES

The MVDIAFC encourages the IAFC to continue the Educational Teleconferences. The teleconferences provide membership with cost effective, timely and important information to assist in the management of today's emergency service organizations.

HOMELAND SECURITY RESPONSES

The Board of the MVDIAFC feels that the IAFC should remain as a key player in Homeland Security by providing expertise and current information at all levels. The IAFC must work to gain fair and equal treatment of intelligence information for the fire service as the first responder for the safety and security of its members. The IAFC should continue to be the lead fire service agency in the timely distribution of any information dealing with response to terrorist actions, particularly in the area of recommended policy and procedures.

NATIONAL RESPONSE SYSTEM

The MVDIAFC supports the National Incident Management System (NIMS) of response to large and catastrophic incidents in order to coordinate the best use of resources while ensuring proper safety and accountability standards. The system should include a national carding or identification system and a process by which transfer orders are drawn and delivered when certain skill types or certification skills are required at the incident site.

It is also the opinion of the Board of the MVDIAFC that such a response structure should be built upon a host of regional response systems throughout the country. Further, in order to remove all roadblocks for mutual aid and reimbursement for departments that respond to areas of national disaster, that the requirement for written mutual aid contracts be removed from FEMA's policies.

CHILDREN'S SLEEPWARE

The MVDIAFC is supportive of legislative efforts in the 109th Congress that seeks to reinstate the 1972 flame-resistant standard for children's sleepwear.

DRUG/ALCOHOL FREE WORK PLACE

The MVDIAFC strongly supports the concept of a drug/alcohol free work place to insure the safety of our firefighters and those we protect. Further, it supports all drug/alcohol testing procedures and policies currently in place, and random drug/alcohol testing for members of the fire service.

IAFC LEGISLATIVE ACTION

The MVDIAFC supports the IAFC in the creation of a legislative group through the use of division, section, and state association representatives to meet on a regular basis to discuss the challenges and legislative needs on a state and federal level. This group not only can meet to share ideas and challenges but could also be significant through the use of a grass roots e-mail tree for networking and contacting elected officials to express the fire service's stance on issues.

DIRECTED VOTES BY IAFC REPRESENTATIVES

In order to promote a unified front and single voice from our membership, the MVDIAFC Board agrees that any representative appointed by the IAFC to any standards development committee must be willing to vote on that committee or work group in the direction given to them by the IAFC. This must be understood by any appointee prior to beginning to work on such committee or work group.

RESIDENTIAL SPRINKLERS

The MVDIAFC supports the IAFC and USFA initiative for the implementation of residential sprinkler systems to be used for fire and life safety.

ISO

The MVD Board encourages the ISO to evaluate their current program and make modifications that take into account modern technologies and current standards. We stress the importance of a strong partnership with the IAFC and ISO in the development of this document.

IAFC LINE OF DUTY DEATH

The Board of the MVDIAFC supports the IAFC in the development and adoption of a guideline in how the organization addresses and responds to LODD. A formal structure will ensure our organization is consistent in recognizing and honoring not only our members but also any Chief Officer that has gone before us.

IAFC STRATEGIC PLAN

The MVD Board encourages the IAFC to continue the biennial Strategic Planning Process in conjunction with the biennial budget. This process is one of the key elements that will not only prepare our organization for the future but will insure that everyone is working together. The success of our organization depends on every member and we must make every effort to narrow the gap between the International, the Divisions and the state chiefs organizations.

NFPA 1710 & 1720

The MVD Board concurs with the IAFC Board of Directors in recognizing NFPA 1710-1720 as deployment standards, not safety standards. We urge the Board to closely monitor the use of

these standards and the code change process. MVD Board continues to support the IAFC Accreditation system as a model for fire departments to use to reach "equivalency" with the requirements found in NFPA 1710. The MVD Board joins the IAFC Board in declaring opposition to either standard being adopted for use by the federal OSHA administration or any state OSHA agency.

IAFC BOARD OF DIRECTORS SEATS

The MVD Board feels that it is incumbent on the IAFC to maintain an elected executive Board of Directors composed of chiefs currently serving as "Chief of Department". Representatives of Divisions and Sections should be left to the discretion of the Division and Section based on their constitution and bylaws as approved by the IAFC. Division and Sections should guarantee that any representative that they elect to the IAFC Board would be an active participant in the duties assigned. We must continue to make every effort to project a vision of the organization as a professional organization ran by professionals. We must do everything possible to live up to the ideals of LEADERSHIP, EXPERTISE AND INTEGRITY.

NFPA STANDARDS

All future National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards developed after September 2001 should be required to include a needs assessment and cost benefit analysis. In addition, the MVD Board remains firmly opposed to any further standards development that differentiates between career, volunteer and combination fire serviced entities unless a clear succinct definition can be provided. The NFPA must also ensure that its regulations on balanced representation on all standards committees are followed to the letter of the regulations as new standards are developed.

IAFC DISASTER RESPONSE GUIDLINE

The MVD feels the IAFC should adopt the following:

With the disasters that occurred on September 11, 2001 a new need to defin proper responses to the scene of catastrophic emergencies/disasters has emerged. While the IAFC recognizes that inherent desire of all firefighters to lend a hand in the face of such devastating events, they also realize the need for the coordination of resources to maximize abilities, focus efforts, ensure safety, and provide assistance in an already confused situation.

STAFFING FOR ADEQUATE FIRE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE (SAFER) ACT

Recognizing that our local firefighters are America's first line of defense for a myriad of events, and because of economic downturns in many fire departments or the fast growth of others, the MVD Board supports the efforts of the IAFC to work for legislation to fund the SAFER Act which provides funding directly to local governments to hire additional firefighters.