

CUMBERLAND VALLEY VOLUNTEER FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION NATIONAL FIRE POLICE SUMMIT

I. Introduction

CVVFA President Joseph Bukowski welcomed guests to the Cumberland Valley Volunteer Firemen's Association (CVVFA) National Fire Police Summit. The history of the CVVFA, Bukowski said, was well suited to foster this type of summit. In its 98th year, the CVVFA has made numerous contributions to the fire service, helping to standardize hose threads in its early years, and continuing to foster mutual aid and continuing education in the organizations' five member states.

CVVFA deliberately chose Halfway, Maryland to host this Summit. Halfway lies at the heart of the CVVFA's membership area, and the Halfway Volunteer Fire Department has been a key CVVFA supporter. Most important, though, less than one year before the Summit, Halfway VFD Fire Police Captain Joe Kroboth Sr., father of the department's then fire chief and one of the department's most respected members, was struck and killed in the line of duty while directing traffic at an accident scene. The summit's objective, said Mr. Bukowski, was to develop a White Paper to share lessons learned and begin to formulate an agenda for the future to ensure that fire police are properly trained and equipped to safely perform their duties, with an aim of preventing future tragedies.

Mr. Bukowski made a moving presentation to Joe Kroboth Jr., chief of the Halfway VFD. Chief Kroboth thanked Mr. Bukowski for the gift, and thanked the fire service community for its outpouring of support upon his father's death. Chief Kroboth said the fire service community has three key obligations, to:

- (1) honor our heroes and tell the world of their heroics;
- (2) support families as they face a whole new world;
- (3) figure out what went wrong, and make changes.

John Brenner, Summit Co-Chair and Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Fire Services Institute, welcomed all in attendance. While he said the Summit would not focus solely on the tragedies, he noted that 1998 had been a particularly bad year, with fire police in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania paying an especially high price. Mr. Brenner explained the role of the PFSI, a coalition bringing together emergency service organizations throughout the Commonwealth to help develop a uniform voice for the emergency services and to generate solutions to problems. In this Summit, Brenner said, the participants would not agree on everything, but would agree on many issues and make great progress. The Summit, he said, would focus primarily on four topic area:

- (1) operations;
- (2) training;
- (3) human resources;
- (4) law and legislation.

Saying that the fire service has always taught prevention, Brenner said “now it's time we teach ourselves prevention.”

Summit attendees were welcomed to Halfway by Washington County Commissioner Paul Schwartz. Commissioner Schwartz noted the Commissions' delight that the CVVFA chose Halfway to promote safety for fire police, and said that lives lost have not been in vain -- that this Summit would seek solutions to prevent future tragedies.

Summit Co-Chair Steve Austin welcomed and recognized elected officials, thanking them for taking the time to attend the Summit. Mr. Austin also recognized longtime fire service visionary Lou Amabili, whose contributions have helped the fire service nationwide. Mr. Austin then introduced Steve Robinson, Executive Director of the National Fallen Firefighter's Association.

Mr. Robinson said that with his background in both firefighting and law enforcement he felt very much at home at the Summit. He told attendees about the National Fire Academy's annual memorial service, which memorializes heroes and helps survivors. The families, Mr. Robinson said, have helped educate the rest of the fire service community about what to do and say. Moreover, the families have taught us that we should not just honor these fallen heroes, but find out why their loved ones died, whether it was preventable, and most importantly, how to prevent similar tragedies from happening again.

II. Keynote Presentation

Mr. Austin introduced John Valenzuela, Division Chief of Personnel Services for the Phoenix, AZ Fire Department, who offered the keynote presentation.

Chief Valenzuela began his program by noting that Phoenix, though it does not have fire police, has a very safety conscious department. This safety orientation is necessary, he said, because Phoenix was recently named the 3rd deadliest in which to drive.

Chief Valenzuela called for a show of hands asking how many in attendance have had near misses while operating in traffic, to which nearly all raised their hands. The core of his presentation, said Chief Valenzuela, would focus upon an incident that occurred in Phoenix on February 11, 1994. What began as a call for a sick woman left Phoenix Fire Department Engineer Tim Hale dead, and a department asking a lot of questions.

Prior to the 1994 incident, departmental standard operating procedures just addressed safe parking. New standard operating procedures (SOPs) state to block traffic, which conflicts with the Department of Public Safety's goals of keeping the roads open. Chief Valenzuela described the accident that took Tim Hale's life. Responding to the call, a basic life support ambulance parked behind a first responder fire engine. Engineer Tim Hale, standing directly behind the ambulance, was struck at about 60 MPH by an impaired pickup truck driver, pushing the ambulance into the engine, and pushing both about 12 inches forward. Though transported immediately to the hospital

and in surgery within 15 minutes, engineer Hale succumbed to his injuries.

Chief Valenzuela said that dying in the line of duty in Phoenix is **not acceptable**. Phoenix firefighters will not die for property or for lives already lost. The 1994 accident spurred two studies which led to a revised SOP and to extensive new training. Chief Valenzuela discussed several recommendations. In looking at parking and lighting at emergency scenes, at one time the notion was to light up the whole scene as bright as possible. Now, studies have shown that at night that both fewer, and amber colored, lights are better. More lights actually tend to attract drivers, especially impaired drivers. Moreover, beacons and headlights should be turned off. Most importantly, said Valenzuela, firefighters need to remain aware of their surroundings.

The revised SOP was discussed. The key is increased awareness -- firefighters must practice safe parking habits while operating in or near traffic. Special calls are made for engines and trucks to help block traffic, the key being to protect the scene from all sides.

The fire department goal of protecting all sides conflicts with the highway patrol goal of keeping the road open. But the fire department contends their goal is to block traffic, get the patient out, make the scene safe, and expeditiously reopen the road to traffic. To facilitate cooperative police relations, there must be a fire department - police liaison.

Chief Valenzuela introduced a video tape describing the accident that took Tim Hale's life. After fully detailing the accident, the tape delved into a series of recommendations developed from research the department conducted:

- C never trust moving traffic;
- C apparatus must be parked to protect the scene and personnel;
- C position vehicles to block traffic based on priorities of traffic flow (block highest traffic flow first);
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- C yellow lighting is superior -- impaired drivers are drawn to red flashing lights;
- C flashing lights blind drivers so they can't see what's going on around apparatus;
- C patient loading presents special hazards;
- C always wear a safety vest;
- C traffic cones are useful, and when equipped with reflective tape are especially good for night time operations;
- C the Police Department should help protect the scene;
- C on highway operations, the first apparatus must block the scene;
- C decommitment of personnel and apparatus must be as aggressive at the initial placement;
- C REMEMBER-every time you are on the street, you may die.

After the presentation, an attendee commented that helicopter pilots have asked for years for lights to be shut down, and that it's time we learn from them.

John Brenner thanked Chief Valenzuela and offered him a token of the CVVFA's appreciation.

III. Operations Panel -- The Role of Fire Police in Scene Safety

A panel on the role of fire police in scene safety presented next. This panel began with a video presentation of a focus group produced by State Farm Insurance Company in which consumers were asked a series of questions about their reactions to various types of emergency vehicles while driving. The tape revealed the disdain many in the driving public have for emergency response vehicles, something which many emergency responders have long sensed.

Presenter Joseph Vattilana, Delaware Department of Transportation (retired) presented first. Mr. Vattilana recommended the use of both the U.S. Department of Transportation manual, which contains incident management protocol, and individual state traffic control manuals. Mr. Vattilana described the concept of various zones at accident scenes. Traffic first approaches a taper zone where the lanes narrow prior to the incident. Next is the transition area between moving traffic and the scene, then the actual activity area at the incident. Last is the termination area, where the controlled scene ends and shifts back to moving traffic.

Mr. Vattilana stated that departments should preplan for accidents just as they do for fires. Considerations to keep in mind during preplanning exercises are that firefighters and fire police should be wary of closing highway shoulders so as not to preclude other emergency responders from getting to the scene, and to carefully plan detour routes so as not to divert vehicles to large for detour roadways.

Fire police, said Mr. Vattilana, are the eyes and ears for the fire crew to let them get their jobs done safely and easily. To do their jobs effectively, fire police must get the big picture of the accident site, and have a full understanding of what lanes to block and where to be positioned in intersections.

Lieutenant Kathy Beck, Delaware State Police (retired) presented next. Asking rhetorically "why we need fire police," Lt. Beck said the question really ought to be "how can we survive without fire police." Lt. Beck spoke of the role fire police play. Frequently, she said, the fire department receives accident calls long before the police. By using their own vehicles to travel to the scene, fire police frequently arrive first, where they can begin to divert traffic.

Fire police, Lt. Beck said, generally purchase their own equipment, though police departments usually provide them with flares. Other roles fire police can play, she said, include preserving both fire and accident scenes, and assisting with disorderly people. Lt. Beck urged fire police, however, to develop a standard way of signaling traffic and using signaling devices, because maintaining use of standard signals is very important.

Lt. Barry Beck, Delaware State Police (retired) presented next, focusing his presentation on traffic control around helicopter medevac landing zones. In Delaware, a medevac helicopter is dispatched and hovers in the area until the fire department elects whether or not to utilize it. Once a decision to use medevac is made, the fire police can help establish the landing zone. Particular concerns at landing zones are to ensure that emergency vehicle beacons are turned off, and to use great care around the rotor blades, as they can and will take one's head off if careless.

John Bronson, Past President of the Pennsylvania State Fire Police Association presented next. Mr. Bronson echoed Lt. Beck's comments that in PA, fire police are generally first on the scene. Upon arriving, fire police establish a perimeter and try to inform the incoming ambulance crew about the situation.

Mr. Bronson said young drivers, in particular, don't stop or even slow down near accident scenes. Driver's education, he said, should incorporate more education about how to react around emergency vehicles and emergency scenes.

Mr. Bronson reported on fire police statistics in PA. In the five years from 1994 to 1998, 71,443 alarms were reported, utilizing 124,572 fire police personnel. Fire police logged 138,193 hours on emergency duty, and 103,870 hours at special functions such as parades.

But 3 fire police deaths in 1998, said Mr. Bronson, is not a good record. Mr. Bronson offered suggested solutions, beginning with educating the public through newspaper, television, and civic groups. Pennsylvania, he said, has also proposed increasing fines through legislation for accidents that occur at construction sites or emergency scenes.

Mr. Bronson said fire police are losing members because of age, training requirements, and other demands placed on volunteers. He suggested incentives, such as tax incentives, for fire police. Because of the burdens of training, he said the PA Fire Police Association opposed mandatory training, but recommended that fire police have at least a basic course. Mr. Bronson also suggested that fire police, at their option, could take both an advanced course and first response training.

Bronson said communication with fire chiefs, to ensure they are aware of fire police physical capability, mental capability, and how they will interact with the public, is necessary. Further, instruction must be standardized. Fire police are professionals – they must act, dress, and be trained like professionals.

Karl Kolbe of VFIS presented next. Safety, he said, is an attitude, and must be part and parcel of everything that goes on. This attitude must come from the top down, and be practiced at every scene. Mr. Kolbe spoke of one PA department, Scalp Level Paint, that requires all new members to attend basic fire police training. While likely not popular, he said, Mr. Kolbe thought this basic training was very necessary.

Mr. Kolbe spoke of how fire police functions are an integral part of the Incident Command System. By delegating traffic and hazard control to fire police, it is another item the chief does not have to personally focus upon. Finally, Mr. Kolbe focused on professionalism. From the professionalism comes the proper attitude. By running one's operations right and treating people right, you're way ahead of the curve, he said.

IV. Law and Legislation Panel

The Law & Legislation Panel presented next, with speakers: David Smith, Pennsylvania State Fire Commissioner; Representative Bruce Ennis, member, Delaware State Assembly; Delegate Bob McKee, Maryland General Assembly; Walter Smittle, West Virginia State Fire Marshall; and Matthew Banks, Esq., an attorney practicing in Virginia.

Representative Ennis stated that in Delaware, fire police are governed by statute, primarily Title XVI, ch. 67. This statute sets up the appointment process for fire police, allowing up to 6 per station, and establishes their basic jurisdiction as the county in which they are sworn in. The law permits them to serve, however, in any county in which they may be requested. Fire police are, in most cases, appointed by their fire chief, though some companies utilize an election process.

Beyond Title XVI, said Rep. Ennis, both the state's criminal and insurance codes touch on fire police. Title 18, the state's insurance code, immunizes any driver of an emergency vehicle responding in the performance of his duties who is involved in an accident. By this, they will not receive any points or have their insurance rates increased.

Delaware Title XVI also contains that state's fire chief's authority law. Delaware fire police do not supersede the authority of regular sworn police officers. However, the fire chief's authority law, from which fire police authority stems, can supersede police powers. The Delaware fire chief's law, said Rep. Ennis, is effective and probably about the only one of its kind in the nation. Rep. Ennis said that, under the fire chief's law, the chief may order a vehicle or building totally demolished if, in the opinion of the chief, that building must be razed for the protection of public safety.

Delegate McKee, who represents district 2A in Washington County, Maryland, spoke next. Delegate McKee said he went for his information to Maryland State Firemen's Association (MSFA) representatives Charles Riley and Bernie Smith, who pointed him to a collection of authorities. These authorities, he said, have different applicability -- some just to a particular county, while others are statewide -- and date to as far back as 1924. Md. Code article 87 grants the chief of each company the ability to select up to 3 fire police, who are then appointed by the sheriff of the county. State law authorizes fire police to operate at fires, accidents, floods, other emergencies, and other functions conducted by volunteer fire companies.

Delegate McKee spoke to the authority of fire police vis-à-vis state police. He said the law

gives fire police the authority to function, but that their authority can be overridden by a municipal chief of police, or on state roadways by the Maryland State Police. Delegate McKee said he thought the Maryland legislature would be receptive to proposals that enable fire police to do their jobs and to do them more safely and effectively. He pointed out, in particular, the PA proposal to increase fines for violations at emergency scenes.

Matt Banks, a practicing attorney and 16 year volunteer firefighter from Fairfax County, VA said that the State of Virginia does not have fire police, but that the fire chief or his designee in charge of an incident has a lot of authority. This authority includes the powers described of fire police and the power of arrest. Mr. Banks said there is a difference between where fire police authority comes from, and the authority fire police have on the scene. Authority comes from the statutes and how courts interpret the statutes, called case law. There is not much case law regarding fire police, he said.

Actual authority on the scene is based on the statutes, case law, and any contractual relations the department may have with the municipality to provide services. Departments are also guided by SOPs, which should be accurate and up-to-date. If there is confusion as to authority a fire department or its fire police have, they should contact their company attorney, the municipal attorney, or the attorney general of the state.

There is, said Mr. Banks, an Attorney General's opinion from the State of Ohio that speaks to the relative authority of fire police and state troopers at accident scenes. In 1994, he said, an incident occurred in Ohio similar to a recent conflict on Interstate 95 in Maryland between a chief and a state trooper that led to the arrest of prince George's County volunteer fire chief. The Ohio Attorney General said that while the fire department officer-in-charge had ultimate responsibility for scene safety, he had to work in cooperation with the state trooper. Such a decision really does not resolve the authority dilemma, Mr. Banks said.

Mr. Banks spoke about two recent Washington Post articles about the I-95 incident. The first, a news article, was well balanced, citing the fire officer's and state trooper's points of view, as well as the respective opinions of the Prince Georges County Fire Department and the Maryland State Police. The second article, a commentary piece appearing some days later in the "Style" section and written by an author with the byline of "Dr. Gridlock," opened with "three cheers for the Maryland State Police, faced with an obstreperous volunteer firefighter who had closed all lanes of southbound I-95." Many journalists, said Mr. Banks, obviously do not have a clue as to the hazards firefighters face on the highways.

West Virginia State Fire Marshall Walter Smittle noted as he began his presentation that his state has no fire police authority, but that the West Virginia legislature has empowered the fire department with the authority to do whatever is necessary at the scene to render it safe and mitigate the problem. Mr. Smittle presented definitions from Black's Law Dictionary of "emergency," and "emergency doctrine." These definitions are picked up in West Virginia's law that says the fire department, while responding to, operating at, or returning from a fire,

fire hazard, service call, or other emergency, shall have the authority “to do what is necessary to mitigate the emergency in which a reasonable person would believe that there exists an imminent threat of serious bodily harm or death to a person or significant damage to property.”

Mr. Smittle said this legislation has been drafted to refer generally to “emergency,” rather than fire because the bulk of calls in WV are non-fire calls. The fire department has the authority “to blockade any public highway, street or other private right-of-way temporarily while at such scene.” This conflicts with the priorities of law enforcement and the Department of Highways which frequently want the road opened up immediately.

WV law also provides, however, that when law enforcement arrives, nothing shall prevent them from controlling traffic or otherwise maintaining order at the scene of a fire. In many cases, however, especially when there are multiple accidents at once, it may be a long while before law enforcement arrives. It is a felony in WV to obstruct or hinder a fire department in any way, shape, or form.

WV poses special hazards due to its terrain. Four firefighters have been injured, 2 state troopers permanently disabled, and one out-of-state trooper offering assistance hit and killed on the highways. Mr. Smittle displayed a terrain map of one accident scene, showing how the lack of visibility or knowledge of an accident ahead – due to steep terrain – led a truck to wipe out a fire company’s full contingent of apparatus. We need, he said, to carefully consider how far back we need to indicate that there is an incident ahead.

There is a great need to talk about these critical issues – with superintendents of state police, the IACP, and other organizations, Mr. Smittle said. He concluded that he would rather shut down an interstate than attend the funeral of a colleague.

PA Fire Commissioner Dave Smith offered comments on the responsibility – both legally and morally – of people who employ and work with fire police. Commissioner Smith called for a federal emergency vehicle lighting standard. Lights, he said, are a sacred cow in Pennsylvania, where fire police feel they need red and blue lights, police need blue lights, ambulances use red and yellow lights, etc. Visual confusion, he said, abounds.

Commissioner Smith said we need to be more cognizant of the fire police role, and better understand the impact of the fact that they belong to the fire company, but work at the scene under the supervision of a law enforcement agency. Very few people, he said, recognize or understand the role of fire police.

Just two weeks earlier, Smith said, he saw a fire police officer directing traffic while on crutches. In his home department, he said, those who are longer fit to serve as firefighters become fire police officers. This, he said, is absolutely morally wrong, ethically misguided, and legally indefensible. Fire police organizations, he emphasized, cannot be made a haven for those who cannot serve. There must, he said, be solid health and safety standards in place for

fire police, firefighters, and everybody involved in the emergency services. They should be in place, he said, but we don't have them.

Because someone has a heart condition is no reason, said Commissioner Smith, to put that individual out directing traffic, but he noted that most line-of-duty deaths in PA have come from the fire police ranks, with individuals either being struck or having heart attacks. This, he said, is sad and stupid because we should not have situations like that. Smith said he understands the PA Fire Police Association's past actions opposing minimum training standards, but added he wished PA had them. Politically, he said, until the fire police and fire service of PA requests the imposition of standards, it is tough to get them.

Training must be based on good sound operating guidelines. Commissioner Smith suggested using the lessons learned from the morning session – turn out the lights, think the thing through, set up approach zones – and to reinforce these constantly. Scenes do not need to look as if from Star Wars, with strobes, flares, cones, flashlights, and blue and red lights. Sometimes, he said, the simplest technology is the best – flares and traffic cones properly placed, with visible garments.

Commissioner Smith asked how fire police can function at a scene if not as a part of a unified command system. PA is working hard to bring unified command to emergency scenes, and fire police must be part of it. There should not, he said, be an emergency responder -- whose duty it is to protect other responders -- who does not know ICS.

Not only do we need public education, he said, but we need to meet ahead of time with those we will interact with at emergency scenes, allowing problems to be resolved ahead of time. Commissioner Smith suggested that fire police units have their own incident safety officers, as well as to be integrated into the training evolutions that the fire service engages in. He analogized this to a football team, saying you could not take a football team where the first time they saw their wide receivers was game day.

Smith concluded that he is very proud of the work that fire police do, but that he is very concerned that unless they become a more integral part of what the fire service is doing, unless they want to be better trained, unless everyone learns to use ICS uniformly, and unless problems are not resolved ahead of time through preplanning and training, that they are doomed.

Panelists were asked about internet resources available about fire police. These resources will be compiled in a future reference document.

Major Victor Stagnara from the Prince Georges County Fire Department updated the Summit on the arrest of a PG volunteer fire chief on I-95. Major Stagnara reported that the PG Fire Chief had met with Maryland State Police (MSP) Superintendent David Mitchell, and that while the situation remained unresolved, they were moving towards the development of a

memorandum of understanding between the Department and the MSP. MSP will likely use this as a model to move forward with other Departments, he said.

Major Stagnara said the information he has suggests that the fire department has the authority to close down roadways and not be impeded upon when closing down roads or at an emergency scene. But, he said, it appears that the Maryland Code gives similar authority to maintain control of the roadways to MSP.

Major Stagnara reviewed in detail the I-95 incident. During a weekday afternoon rush hour at 4:15 PM, a call was received for a vehicle accident at I-95 and Powder Mill Road. Upon the fire department's arrival – and they arrived first – the officer in charge ordered the southbound lanes of I-95 closed. There was a 2 car accident, with vehicles partially in the roadway. The MSP trooper arriving at the scene felt it unnecessary to close the roadway, but asked whether the closure was being made to accommodate an MSP medevac helicopter. The fire chief replied no, there was no helicopter en route, but that the road was being closed long enough to enable a heavy rescue squad and medic unit to access the scene.

After an exchange of words, the volunteer chief was arrested and the road was reopened. The fire department, said Major Stagnara, argues that the state trooper was not in the best position to determine whether the road needed to be shut down or not. Furthermore, the fire department believed that whether or not the volunteer chief made the right call, he had the authority to make such a call.

Asked by a participant how much cooperation the trooper involved can expect to receive from the fire department in the future, Major Stagnara stated that the PGFD runs thousands of incidents every year along I-95 and the Capitol Beltway and in the vast majority receive great cooperation from the police.

Postscript -- The PG Fire Department and the MSP subsequently agreed to a memorandum of understanding (MOU) intended to guide future conduct and prevent future encounters. This MOU will be analyzed and included in a future publication.

V. Lunch Speaker -- Chief Bill Peterson, Plano, Texas

Plano, Texas Fire Chief Bill Peterson presented the luncheon address. Chief Peterson complimented the CVVFA for tackling this significant health and safety issue, but noted that while we recognize its significance, we do not yet have a good handle on the scope of the problem.

Chief Peterson updated the Summit on a number of IAFC health and safety issues, including a fitness / wellness initiative, the OSHA respiratory rule that includes 2-in/2-out and RIT, procedures to address a lost firefighter, and crew management. Additionally, a number of OSHA requirements will shortly impact the fire service, including confined space rules, safety

and health program rules, and an ergonomics rule.

The IAFC represents the fire service before OSHA, and stands ready to also assist at the local level. We've begun to realize over the past few years, said Chief Peterson, that traffic injuries and fatalities for emergency workers are a serious problem in this country, though there is great uncertainty as to how widespread the problem really is.

Limited data from the NFPA indicates that in 1996 there were 2 fire police killed in traffic accidents, 4 in 1997, and though the numbers are not yet in for 1998, with 3 killed in PA alone, the cumulative numbers will surely be higher. Chief Peterson related that in his research of emergency personnel traffic deaths, he looked to several FBI reports. But, he said, even on the police side, the data is poor and the reports tend to be anecdotal. Resources and a real focus, particularly from NHTSA, are needed to better understand this issue.

Moreover, not only is this a complex issue, but one we really don't have total control over, as a significant proportion of the driving public is in some way impaired. In fact, some reports suggest that anyone driving while using a cellular phone is operating their vehicle at the same level as someone who is legally drunk. Plano, about two years ago, participated in an exchange with a fire brigade from the United Kingdom. Traffic safety was one of the areas examined, and the UK appears to be 10-15 years ahead of the US in what they are using to protect their personnel. The UK has "blue light" services, which include police, fire, and ambulance. Those vehicles are equipped solely with blue lights, and just one or two blue lights at that, because they have realized that lighting up the scene like a Christmas tree doesn't work real well.

Plano has focused on two main areas – firefighter visibility and vehicle visibility. This close look has shown that the more visible the vehicle is by putting lights everywhere, the more the firefighters become invisible. Chief Peterson displayed a new style fluorescent yellow vest, only available in the UK, which is very visible both during the day and night, that his department is now testing.

Chief Peterson displayed several slides of his departments new vehicles, which feature diamond grade Scotchlite, a new yellow-green product from 3M increasingly used on highway signs. This product is visible at more than twice the distance of the old Scotchlite product. On the rear of the vehicle the Scotchlite is placed in diagonal stripes, while the rear of the vehicle itself features amber, rather than red, rotating beacons. Strobes, said Chief Peterson, are nearly invisible in the bright Texas sun.

Chief Peterson related that, when first ordered, he was apprehensive what his personnel would say about the color, and the factory even tried to talk him out of it. The response, however, has proven overwhelmingly positive, largely because most have had close calls. A night view of two firefighters – one in older style turnouts and the other in the new vest – and a new vehicle showed the marked brightness of the new products. The striping patterns on today's

turnout coats reflect the 25 year old thinking of NFPA 1971. NFPA 1971 makes a tradeoff between firefighter visibility and ability to withstand the fire environment, said Chief Peterson, and does not go far enough to protect firefighters when they are out on the street.

Lit by car headlights, the new Scotchlite is highly visible, and passive in that there is no need to worry about how bright the lights are or how many times they flash. Chief Peterson said 20-25% of calls in Plano are on roadways, and thanked the group for coming together to tackle one of the biggest manageable issues in the fire and emergency services.

VI. Training Panel

Training Panel moderator Tim Campbell began the panel discussion by recalling the line-of-duty death of a fire police colleague one year earlier on the PA Turnpike. These, he said, are the kind of things we need to stop and prevent.

Dr. John Bell of the Somerset / Cambria County PA Fire Police Association (FPA) began the presentation. Training, he said, is required for any sort of group to function properly regarding laws, SOPs, hazards, incidents, and individual members' personal safety. There is a duty to protect fire departments and municipalities from unnecessary workers compensation claims and frivolous lawsuits. In this battle, he said, training helps.

While the PA Fire Police Association has opposed mandatory training, the Somerset / Cambria FPA has always promoted mandatory training. Why, when all other emergency service workers must be trained, are fire police not mandated to be trained, asked Dr. Bell. Or, he asked, are we presently negligent?

Early fire police training in PA – then a one hour class – was delegated to the PA State Police. But often, when scheduled to teach, they were off responding to emergencies and would frequently delegate the duty of training to direct traffic to a local coroner who had never stepped off a street corner. In the early 1980's, the duty of training FP in PA was given to the PA State Fire Academy. The Fire Academy accepted Dr. Norman W. Boring's training manuals in 1983 as the state standard.

Dr. Bell expressed his opinion that fire police should have not only mandatory training, but also recertification, which might include not just testing, but also a yearly physical exam. We should know, Bell said, when we can no longer do the job. Training in traffic control, Bell said, should be directed by the state's fire academy training system – rather than the law enforcement training system – so that all emergency responders can be exposed to the training. The Somerset / Cambria FPA has promoted training in PA, and has distributed more than 34,000 training manuals, offered over 241 classes and issued close to 7,000 certificates. Somerset / Cambria believes strongly in training on ICS, and has classes on that topic.

Robert Wright from the Maryland Fire Rescue Institute (MFRI) began his presentation saying

that he had been tasked to develop a FP education program, but just 12 months earlier did not even know what fire police were. Pushed by fire police advocates in Cecil County, MFRI elected to develop a fire police training course.

In developing its 9 hour orientation course, MFRI established a technical advisory committee representing all the active fire police in Maryland, which in all represents less than a dozen of the 24 jurisdictions in the state. Particularly strong influence, said Wright, came from Washington, Frederick, Carroll, Kent, and Wicomico Counties. Also involved in the advisory committee are the MSP, sheriff's departments, fire police organizations, and support from the MSFA.

Maryland law requires that fire police be trained in traffic direction and control by sheriff's departments, but they must also be members of fire departments, so they get training through MFRI and their local jurisdiction. MFRI is developing a fire police training course, which takes 6 months to 1 year to develop. In developing this course, MFRI looked at the State of Maryland's DOT approved "flagger" training course and the CHARTS program (Chesapeake Highways Advisories Routing Traffic) which has developed its own program on multi-agency traffic incident management.

The MFRI course was pilot tested in Kent County on Maryland's eastern shore. Pictures and a story about the pilot are reported in the Maryland Fire Dispatch, and will appear in the MFRI Bulletin. The final product will be out from MFRI in the spring of 1999 for the county sheriff's departments to deliver. The course contains: 1 hour on personal conduct; 2 hours on traffic control; 1 hour on setting up flares and cones; 30 minutes on crowd control; 1.5 hours on haz-mat transportation regulation and standards; 30 minutes on helicopter operations; 30 minutes on traffic control review; and a 2 hour practical exercise.

This is not a 9 hour discipline, said Wright, but at least an orientation level start for the one-half of jurisdictions in MD with fire police. Hopefully as a result of this conference and other initiatives, said Wright, there will be other jurisdictions picking up the program and moving with it. MD has had fire police for a long time, but now has standardized higher quality education available for entry level personnel.

Rich Wessel, Sr., Instructor from the PA State Fire Academy offered his thanks to the Somerset / Cambria County FPA for contributing to the high caliber of fire police training in PA. Mr. Wessel particularly offered thanks to the late Dr. Norman Boring who developed the Somerset / Cambria training program, and Jeff Keyser, who is now filling his shoes as that organization's training officer.

Mr. Wessel complimented Somerset / Cambria on offering fire police ICS training. Over the last 10-12 years in PA, he said, nearly 20,000 PA emergency responders have been trained in ICS, but fire police had been conspicuously noticeable until this time in their absence. Seldom will fire police perform the control function, he said, but it's nonetheless vital that they

understand how the system works and how they fit in to the overall incident.

One of the reasons this is important, and one of the reasons fire officers and fire police sometimes butt heads with state troopers and transportation department colleagues is that the fire service hasn't had much experience dealing with them. The prevailing mind set is frequently "we're large so we're in charge," and the fire service therefore interacts poorly with other responders. This is particularly the case in PA, where, because of the size of the state, the fire service may be at the scene for upwards of an hour prior to a state trooper's arrival.

As the traveling public's expectations about wanting to arrive at a destination unimpeded and with a minimum of fuss increases, so will tension increase between decisions to close roads versus working in moving traffic. Fellow actors in the emergency services are being trained in ICS. As of June 1998, every state trooper in PA had been exposed to 16 hours of ICS training. The PA State Fire Academy is involved in a cooperative project with PennDOT, training PennDOT supervisory maintenance people in ICS. Though the fire service arrives first, it must be able to set ICS up well. Most troopers, arriving at a well controlled scene, will defer to the fire chief and offer their assistance.

Mr. Wessel continued that the fire service needs to do a lot of informal education with other actors who respond to emergency incidents. For example, others may not understand that the need to bring many pieces of apparatus to a scene may relate to daylight staffing problems, whereby it takes that much equipment just to get enough personnel to the scene. Others may not understand the fire services' reluctance or fear of working in moving traffic because we do not do so routinely, and may not have the time to set up the safety barriers and zones that other actors do. Similarly, fire personnel need to understand how it affects public safety when we shut roads down or have to detour traffic.

No one, said Mr. Wessel, will debate closing a road to protect personnel, but frequently roads are closed for 2 hours that could have been closed for 45 minutes. Incident commanders must understand that balance. To better assist the fire service, the PA State Fire Academy is looking at developing courses in how to use traffic diversion equipment to set up safe work zones. The Academy is using the state DOT's "Setting Up Safe Work Zones" manual, and is working on translating it into firefighter-ese.

Delaware State Fire School (DSFS) instructor Jamie Turner presented next. Fire police instruction in Delaware, he said, began over 25 years ago. During the course of that 25 years, said Mr. Turner, the duration of fire police training has varied from one to several days. Fire police and firefighters, Turner said, must always remain students; and when they no longer feel like being students then it's time to hang it up. There is constantly new equipment and technology, said Turner, offering the example that Delaware is looking at a version of the CHART system like Maryland is using.

Delaware has the advantage of having strong county and state fire police organizations. A

number of their meetings feature continuing education, and those meetings offer the opportunity to speak with the police liaisons. DSFS offers a one day orientation and three day advanced fire police training class. In legislation, fire police duties are spelled out, as is the fire police appointment process.

At the outset of fire police education, instructors conduct a review of all fire service organizations, and where fire police fit in to the chain of command on an incident. Other topics discussed include: a review of fire police duties; courtesies towards the public and professional colleagues, including public relations; authorities and arrest powers; basic equipment; personal and professional liability; safety; and the varieties of duties fire police perform in Delaware.

While impeding, diverting, and restoring traffic are major fire police functions, other topics covered include emergency vehicle access and egress, DUIs, multiple MVAs at the same location, emergency maternity cases, disabled vehicles, and road rage. Fire police are also taught about other functions on which they might be called, such as supporting the evacuation of special occupancies like hospitals, nursing homes, and schools, and given night and limited visibility operating tips. Topics covered in the advanced course include: haz-mat recognition and identification and container identification following the DOT emergency response guide; a 3 hour EVO course; a 3 hour CPR course; and a full day on traffic diversion techniques.

When the Delaware fire chiefs law was established, so was a Council on Police Training. As part of police training in Delaware, police recruits are offered fire service related training that includes: a 40 hour first responder / EMS program; haz-mat recognition and identification; characteristics of flammable liquids and ground ladders; one hour of search and rescue techniques; practical evolutions so police recruits better understand fire services role; and, to correct problems that have occurred in the past, a demonstration of what can happen when a car is driven through flammable liquids. When police recruits first hit the streets, said Mr. Turner, they have a learning curve during which they learn to interact with the fire service. When there are problems, he said, usually they can be resolved by a phone call.

Moderator Tim Campbell addressed several questions to the panel. Given the prominence over the past 5-10 years of firefighter safety and survival training, Mr. Campbell asked how safety officers being trained in and about safety issues facing fire police.

Mr. Turner said that in Delaware, those issues are captured in both a fire department safety officer program, as well as a haz-mat incident management program. Fire police education curriculum also addresses those issues.

Mr. Wessel said that the basic fire police curriculum developed by the Somerset / Cambria FPA covers the issue of practicing safety in traffic well, and is consistent with what the PA State Police and PennDOT teach their own personnel. For its general firefighter safety and incident safety officer training, the PA State Fire Academy uses the National Fire Academy

series of programs, and they address issues of traffic control and working in moving traffic quite well. Additionally, the PA State Fire Academy is looking at developing additional curriculum about working in traffic and setting up safety zones in moving traffic. PA is also making a big push towards unified command, and each of the 67 counties in PA will shortly have a turnkey training package on unified command, which should be a meaningful improvement in terms of safety.

Robert Wright answered that MFRI currently has a contract with the MD State Highway Administration Office of Traffic Management to develop a multi-agency traffic incident management guidebook, which will include elements that can be broken down for front-line troops. Mr. Wright said he knew of no other initiative in MD at this time. Mr. Wright said his TAG committee members feel that the mismatch will become clear – and training opportunities created – as certain counties use trained fire police to direct traffic and maintain scene control at incidents and neighboring counties continue to use untrained fire service personnel to do identical tasks.

Wright said he has encouraged the addition of a module on traffic direction and control to be added to basic FF and EMT training. At many scenes where there are no fire police, the rookies, or least qualified, are handed flares and told to go direct traffic, a particularly hazardous job. This is like making the least qualified person the point person on a mined jungle trail, he said.

Dr. Bell said that regardless of how much training or how many modules there are, there are too many “good old boys” who have been fire police for 25+ years without any formal training. Without mandatory training, there will still be accidents and fatalities on scenes – training must become an obligatory part of being a fire police officer.

Mr. Campbell next asked the panel what we are doing to teach fire command officers the skills and correct mechanisms to assess and evaluate fire police and traffic control resources as part of their decision making processes as on-scene command.

Bell said the biggest thing is already being addressed – ICS. You have to know what your counterparts are doing and what level of training they have had before you can really function efficiently and work together as a unit at an emergency incident.

Mr. Wright referred to the program being developed by the MD State Highway Administration, which will be a command course and command program to integrate all the agencies. There are also case studies that let everybody talk about and debate issues --for example, the I-95 incident -- that will allow for the development of a better integrated system. Incidents such as the I-95 incident are very uncommon in Maryland, and as such they get an intense amount of scrutiny and publicity, and allow everyone to learn and to develop new SOPs so they don't happen again.

Mr. Wessel said in PA they have not yet looked at developing a curriculum to address the issue on a command level, but that it is likely to drive itself. In PA, the decision has been made at the highest levels of state government that the state police and DOT are going to become much more proactive in responding to emergencies and having a part in the decision-making process. This doesn't have to be a negative, either, said Mr. Wessel, as it will cause command officers to assess more carefully a number of issues, including safety, vehicle movement, and road closure and diversion. The word is out among the other services that they must meet the folks they will be working with. The DOT people are being told and encouraged to speak to the fire chiefs and fire police organizations in their counties. The DOT people have been very receptive to being partners with the fire service and the fire police.

Jamie Turner said Delaware's fire officer training program has a module that deals with this issue. This module addresses the integration of resources, and specifically system dependent versus people dependent. The abilities of various people are diverse, but when a commander picks the best people to fill the spots in which he needs them, that includes fire police. Mr. Turner brought up another issue about which fire police should be aware, particularly in place like Delaware where fire police frequently arrive in advance of apparatus. There have been an increasing frequency of suspicious packages and letters, about which fire police should be very cautious and careful.

An audience member asked about whether the mandatory police introduction to fire service issues, including first responder, includes refresher training. Mr. Turner replied that, through the Council on Police Training, police officers must receive annual refresher training on various topics.

Another audience member asked whether fire police training is mandatory in any of the 5 states. In none of the states (MD-DE-PA-VA-WV) is fire police training mandatory.

John Bronson, Past President of the PA Fire Police Association offered a brief rebuttal regarding his organization's opposition to mandatory training. Funding and time, he said, have been key motivators behind their decision. The PA Fire Police Association, he said, is just trying to do the best it can, and has supported training for over forty years. In the past, he said, they have successfully used certified PA state police officers for training, but it has been more problematic of late since they have been using community colleges for training.

VII. Human Resources Panel

The Human Resources Panel was welcomed by Marko Bourne, Press Secretary for the PA Emergency Management Agency. Mr. Bourne noted that in his job, he has the good fortune of interfacing with PA Governor Tom Ridge and Lt. Gov. Mark Schweiker on a number of emergency services issues. But, he said, he also has the sad duty of having to join them, brief them, and be with them when firefighters, fire police officers, and other public safety officers die in the line of duty in the Commonwealth. The Governor and Lt. Governor, he said, are

disheartened at having to attend so many of these funerals and of hearing of so many reports of injuries, so anything that can be done to improve the safety of all emergency responders is very important.

Mr. Bourne introduced Lou Amabili, a member of the original America Burning Commission, who headed Delaware State Fire School for 32 years and who has 52 years of volunteer fire service.

Mr. Amabili offered a presentation entitled “Working With People – Tips for Success,” an appropriate topic coming right before the breakout sessions. When dealing with groups of people, said Amabili, if you’re really interested in their input, then it’s best to hear from them first. Conversely, if the situation is one where you want it to go in a predetermined way, then you should report first. So far, said Mr. Amabili, the conference had provided for very limited input, but later in the workshops, the moderators would be eliciting from attendees what they thought the issues were. What one wants from the group thus really drives how one approaches a group.

Every group, said Amabili, has an informal leader. Chief officers need to know who is running these informal groups, or cliques, and use these grapevines to their advantage. Care must be taken, however, not to expose the individual who has provided helpful information. The chief officer must also know how to, delegate, and effectively use delegation to accomplish tasks.

By knowing the personalities of coworkers, subordinates, and superiors—their idiosyncracies, strengths, and weaknesses – you can best achieve teams of people to work together to achieve a common mission. Recalling a lesson he learned from Ed McCormick, Mr. Amabili said your work is your bond, a handshake is a contract, and you never break either – and if you do break it, it will only happen once because important leaders such as politicians won’t listen a second time around.

Mr. Amabili presented a number of other keys to success and tips for managing, and maximizing gains from, groups and group dynamics. These keys are reprinted below:

- C think with your heart, not your head, but be compassionate
- C aim for satisfying 51% of the people
- C cooperation is a two-way street – both parties must give a little
- C do your homework – make sure you’re right – fight for what you believe is right
- C if you can sleep with yourself, you’ve had a good day
- C the price for authority is accountability
- C people who are accountable --- decide
- C people who are not accountable – advise
- C know how to listen
- C control emotions – loss of temper is loss of control

- C listen aggressively
- C don't jump to conclusions
- C treat others as you want to be treated
- C understand the other person's needs
- C compliment publicly, criticize privately
- C always leave a round corner (a way out)
- C you're way is not the only way – it's just one way
- C deal with issues, not personalities

Gary Tokle, Assistant Vice president of Public Fire Protection for the NFPA presented next. Mr. Tokle presented an overview, prepared by the NFPA, of how fire police officers are killed in the line of duty. Mr. Tokle presented a series of slides, discussed in depth herein.

From 1971 through 1997, 72 fire police died in the US of injuries suffered while on duty. The category of fire police as a subcategory of firefighter, said Mr. Tokle, is not widely recognized throughout the U.S., and all but a handful of the deaths occurred in 3 states – PA with 29, NY with 25, and NJ with 10. Other states include CT, MD, and NC with 2 deaths each, and WA and WV with one death each. All of the victims were male, ranging in age from 25-87 years of age, with a median age of 64.5, and all were members of volunteer fire departments. Excluding the 25 year old, said Mr. Tokle, would probably shift the median age up somewhat.

Most of the fire police officers killed during the 21 year period were assigned to traffic control. Of the 72 victims, 25 were working at the fire ground, 22 were at non-fire emergencies (predominantly MVAs), 20 were working responding to or returning from alarms, 3 were engaged in training exercises, and 4 were involved in other on-duty activities. Forty-nine of the 72 victims, or nearly 70%, suffered fatal heart attacks; 18, or nearly 25% were struck by vehicles; 2 died in collisions while responding to alarms; 1 fell from a fire apparatus while returning from a parade; and 2 were shot.

Of the 49 heart attack victims, medical documentation revealed that 15 had previously suffered heart attacks or had had bypass surgery – in other words they had known cardiac medical histories. Additionally, 3 victims had hypertension, and 2 were diabetic. Though no medical documentation was available for the other 29, a high percentage of them likely had known heart problems.

All 18 of the fire police officers struck by vehicles were directing traffic at the time. Of the 23 fire police officers fatally injured on the fireground, 22 were directing traffic, and 1 was on the radio reporting to the fire chief who had not yet arrived on the scene. Eighteen (18) of these 23 victims died as a result of heart attacks, 3 were struck by non fire department vehicles, and 2 were shot. Of the 2 shot, one was shot by an occupant of the fire involved structure who also shot and killed another firefighter at the scene, while the other fire police officer was shot by a motorist who refused to leave the scene of a fire. All 22 of the fire police officers who were killed at non-fire emergencies were directing traffic. Thirteen (13) of the 22 suffered fatal heart

attacks, and 9 were struck by non fire department vehicles.

The category of responding / returning includes fire police officers responding to or returning from emergency calls, as well as those directing traffic while apparatus responded. Fifteen (15) of these 20 victims suffered heart attacks, 4 of them while directing traffic. Two (2) were killed in collisions while en route to the emergency, two were struck and killed by non fire department vehicles, and one was struck and killed by a piece of fire apparatus while directing traffic.

At training incidents, two fire police officers were stuck and killed by a vehicle while directing traffic at a pumping drill. In other on-duty incidents, 2 fire police officers suffered fatal heart attacks while directing traffic, one at a football game and the other at a non-emergency fire department function. Two other fire police officers fell into this category, one dying of a fatal heart attack suffered at the fire station after a traffic detail, and the other fell from a piece of apparatus while returning from a parade.

Mr. Tokle offered the summit attendees – the leaders of the fire police services in the region – a challenge. After breaking into focus groups to examine, and develop solutions to, fire police health and safety issues, if the summit goers did not seriously address how to deal with the medical conditions of the people reporting to them, they would have made a big mistake. Seventy percent of fatalities are due to heart attack and regardless of how much reflective material is wrapped around someone or regardless of how many pieces of fire apparatus are blocking traffic, he said, that won't solve 7 out of 10 of the problems.

Firefighters, said Mr. Tokle, like to talk about “sexy” issues – like apparatus lighting and incident management – but the summit goers, he said, needed to talk about the real problems. In closing, Mr. Tokle asked a rhetorical question. How, as fire service leaders, he asked, can we feel more comfortable telling the spouse of a colleague that his or her husband or wife has died in the line of duty, than telling that colleague that he or she is not in the condition to do the job and that it's time for them to step aside and take on another role.

Personnel, said Mr. Tokle, need to be evaluated medically and get physicals, and there need to be criteria. Part of the reason for the current problem is that there are no established criteria and personnel need not get physicals, so it's hard to tell personnel why they cannot perform the function. Mr. Tokle challenged the summit goers to have developed by the time they left some good recommendations on the most serious aspect of being a fire police officer.

National Fire Academy Training Specialist Wayne Powell presented next, opening his presentation by noting that many would say we've known about this problem for a long time, while others would say we've known about it but didn't know what to do about it. This event, probably 15 years overdue – and not just in regard to fire police but with regard to the entire emergency services business – was the opportunity to do something.

Regarding safety issues arising from traffic, Mr. Powell offered both an urban perspective from his service at 2 fire stations on the Capital Beltway seeing 50,000+ cars passing by per day, and a rural perspective based on his service volunteering in Emmitsburg, home to the National Fire Academy. In the urban setting, said Mr. Powell, firefighters and fire police face routinely any sort of highway incident that can occur anywhere. Frequently, while at one accident scene, another would occur on the other side of the highway, in the traffic backup, or even in front of the original accident when a driver would turn their head to look back.

In the rural setting, said Mr. Powell, the issues are different, referring to a recently published study and news article reporting that individuals in a rural community are twice as likely to die in a traffic accident as individuals in an urban setting, on a per ratio basis. The study attributed this to things such as windy narrow roads, phone poles and trees on the edge, and animals on the roadway. There really are dramatic differences, said Mr. Powell, facing responders in the urban and rural settings.

Mr. Powell relayed his experience in working for a large British fire equipment manufacturer. Over 20 years ago, he said, they prided themselves on developing a piece of fire apparatus that the deemed and advertised as crashworthy. When showing that literature in his travels around the U.S., said Mr. Powell, most people were either incensed or they laughed at it. Echoing what Chief Peterson from Plano, TX had said earlier, Mr. Powell said we need to look across the seas, for there are many people way out in front of us – both in the volunteer and career sectors—regarding how we go about this business.

Mr. Powell recognized two Frederick County, MD fire police leaders present at the summit, Shirley King and Ben Henry. Frederick County, noted Mr. Powell, was the first county in Maryland to have fire police, stemming from Paul Kiepers – still alive and active in fire police issues though no longer in active duty – who helped establish fire police at Emmitsburg’s Vigilant Hose Company in 1949.

Vigilant Hose Company, said Mr. Powell, just experienced the line-of-duty death of one of its most active members, Terry Myers. Terry’s death brought the number of deaths at Vigilant Hose over about the past year to 4 – 4 of the most active members in operations, administration, and fund raising – at the ages of 43, 45, 49, and 50 respectively. A year before, a heart attack claimed a member at age 46. As Gary Tokle had just reminded everyone, said Mr. Powell, neither the career nor volunteer fire service focuses on health issues like they should.

Everyone had thought Terry Myers was in perfect health, said Mr. Powell, but he had, in fact gone to the doctor just two weeks prior to his death complaining of chest pains. In England, at age 45, Mr. Powell said, a white dot is placed on the front of a firefighter’s helmet, signifying that the firefighter can no longer don breathing apparatus.

Mr. Powell, echoing the words of others that “we need to tell it like it is,” said that the fire

service is no were near where it needs to be regarding selection, preparation, training, and evaluation. Vigilant Hose, said Mr. Powell, recently lost a fire police member – active to the end – who died of natural causes at age 95. They knew he might well walk into traffic some day and get hurt, but they didn't want or know how to deal with it. We don't, said Mr. Powell, no when to say when.

Not everybody, said Mr. Powell, is prepared mentally, physically, or emotionally to do the job of fire police. We need to screen better for the right kind of people. Some people are wonderful folks until the pager goes off and authority goes to their head and they think they're superman and do stupid things like getting into scrapes with law enforcement and people with guns. Some departments have gotten rid of fire police, finding them to be more trouble than they were worth.

A constant reminder of the scope of the problem is the flags at the National Fallen Firefighter's Memorial at the National Fire Academy, which Vigilant Hose serves. When advised of a line of duty firefighter death, the flags are lowered to half staff until 4:00 PM on the day of the funeral. Multiplied by the average number of deaths, the flags are down more than they're up. What we allow to happen astounds visitors from other countries, said Mr. Powell. Powell said he best analogizes the situation to the freedom, independence and autonomy that characterized colonial American thinking – the fire rescue services of America each want to do their own thing their own way.

We can't, said Mr. Powell, even agree on the colors of lights to put on vehicles, recalling how he remembered blue lights on snow plows and red lights on dump trucks and tow trucks not that long ago in Maryland. California, he said, where much of the innovation occurs in America, began using yellow lights nearly 20 years ago. A neighboring fire company to his in Montgomery County, he reminisced, prided itself on having 93 warning lights on the front of one vehicle – but, he, said, they wrecked it just like any other vehicle.

Many of those honored at the fallen firefighter's memorial have died of cardiovascular challenges, particularly heart attacks, and frequently on the highways. One example of bad experiences driving change is in Nevada, where they don't put emergency lights on fire tanks. After such bad experiences with tanker rollovers and firefighter deaths, they switched to yellow lights.

In addressing fire police issues, one piece is getting a handle on how many states and jurisdictions have fire police. It appears that perhaps 10 states have fire police, but even this isn't clearly known. The issues differ dramatically between urban and rural settings, said Mr. Powell, relating to his own experience where law enforcement in urban settings would be present within seconds after an incident, while it could take 30-45 minutes for a trooper or deputy sheriff to arrive in a rural region.

Mr. Powell briefly discussed other challenges facing fire police and the fire service generally.

Now that we have become more aware of violence calls, he said, the fire service hangs back, as probably do fire police. It's an odd feeling when you have to sit a block away waiting for law enforcement for 10 to 45 minutes, especially when people come down and say "you've got to get up there," and we say we can't. Rural settings also make it difficult where everyone knows everybody. In the urban setting where no one knows anyone else you might see in the paper a day or two later that a call involved someone of some significance, but in rural settings everyone tends to know one another.

Mr. Powell gave special mention to the outstanding contribution for so many years of Lou Amabili, who, he said, has been a mentor to so many, and whose vision explains the success of fire police in Delaware. Maryland and other states are not learning from Delaware's example. Mr. Powell also noted that in his jurisdiction in Frederick County, MD, fire police training is mandatory. This training is provided by the sheriff's department and, he said, works pretty well.

Charles J (C.J.) Bens, claims adjuster for the Provident Agency, presented next. Being a claims adjuster, he said, gave him some insight into the statistics Mr. Togle had presented. Mr. Bens said the fire service does not like looking at things like NFPA and OSHA standards. But, he said, if we're losing 50% of our fire police over 20 years to heart attacks then we need to look at such standards more stringently.

When we're already short of time and facing recruitment and retention problems, said Mr. Bens, it's very difficult to tell someone who had given 30, 40, or 50 years to the department that their health puts them or the department at risk. But certainly, though, this is not more difficult than telling their loved one that their spouse has died in the line of duty. By not implementing safety standards, asked Mr. Bens, are we doing our personnel a service or a disservice?

Pennsylvania, said Bens, always leads the nation in firefighter fatalities. Whether it be heart attack, traffic accident, or structure collapse, said Mr. Bens, they are all tough to deal with. Pennsylvania, he said, does not want to lead in such statistics.

Workers compensation insurers, Mr. Bens said, will deny heart related incidents. Workers compensation adjusters tell him, he said, that their first response to a heart attack death or survival is to deny it and make someone prove it was related to the incident. Why, he asked, can't we change that to get people to understand there is a causal relationship? Some states, said Bens, have a "heart presumption" in their workers compensation laws, but PA does not, leaving the survivors to battle with the workers compensation adjuster to prove the death or injury was as a result of fire service duty.

We must, said Mr. Bens, squarely address the fire police health and safety issues. He complimented the model of training young firefighters about the nature of fire police duties and traffic direction used by Scalp Level Paint Fire Department, mentioned earlier by Karl Kolbe,

as a good approach to begin addressing these issues. Ultimately, said Bens, citing Chief Valenzuela, the fire service should not risk its personnel's lives for property, or for lives already lost. While tough questions lay ahead, he said, we must face the health and safety issues facing fire police.

Mr. Bourne opened the Q & A period, beginning by relaying his own experiences. After 15 years as a career and volunteer firefighter, he said, he took himself off of active duty. This was not, he said, because he didn't have time, but rather because he had gained a few pounds over the years and he wasn't going to let his ego make his wife a widow and leave his son fatherless. We all, he said, need to recognize where our limitations are and when it's time to step aside. Issues to keep in mind, said Mr. Bourne, include age and age appropriate duty, how to keep people involved in the fire and emergency services, the selection of training of people we bring in, and recruitment and retention and motivation issues.

You can't, said Mr. Tokle, look just at age as the critical piece, particularly when looking at the heart attack issue, though it may be true that people may slow down as they age and become less effective. Age may be an indicator, he said, but it's not the only indicator. Medical evaluation, said Mr. Tokle, is what is needed, questioning how a department can spend \$300,000 on a fire engine but won't spend \$250 on a medical exam.

Joe Vattilana commented that he used to have an annual physical including an EKG and blood test, but in June of the previous year had a heart attack and didn't even know it. After a 4 valve bypass, he said, he's now passed his stress test and walks a mile every day. Mr. Vattilana challenged the notion that he could not handle traffic duty as a fire police, and, citing the statistics of 25 year-olds having heart attacks, said, "if you're gonna go, you're gonna go."

Bob Cumberland, Washington County Volunteer Fire Administrator, said he is fully in favor of health and wellness programs, saying that he is fortunate to come from a county in Maryland that has put up \$100,000 to allow for physicals for firefighters. He added, however, that we are our own worst enemies, and that there are people within his system fighting the physicals, largely because they are afraid of them and apprehensive of going to the doctor. Mr. Cumberland said his county uses NFPA 1500 and 582 as guidelines for the physicians. There are breakdowns for different age groups, and anyone over 40 who is a driver or member of the hazmat or ATR team gets a stress test.

In the 2 and one half years they have been requiring physicals, he said, they've saved 5 people from having heart attacks who did not know they had any cardiac problems, and saved 3 people who had no idea they had cancer. Still, said Mr. Cumberland, we are our own worst enemy, and, along with OSHA respiratory standards and 2-in/2-out, this has become another unfunded mandate. Working with our governments, though, we can tell them that if they want us to have safe and healthy conditions to work in and healthy people working, then they need to help support us, said Mr. Cumberland. We, however, he said, need to get off our doffs and do something.

Lou Jordan suggested a middle ground approach. We know, he said, that there is a problem. But, he continued, if you suggest we are going to mandate something you immediately get boos from one side and cheers from the other. Mr. Jordan suggested a policy of grandfathering present fire police members, but enacting standards henceforth to act as a safety net for the future.

Mr. Bens suggested there may be a middle ground, but questioned whether the fire services is doing its best to look out for its own if we are not telling our personnel they may be at risk, particularly when there are good guidelines out there to help save lives.

A police lieutenant from the City of Hagerstown Police Department spoke about how the City of Hagerstown has structured its system. The fire police, he said, were incorporated into the city police department in 1983, with the police department setting forth training and physical standards. As part of this, he said, they have identified the physical tasks that fire police may commonly be required to perform. Over the past 2 years, he said, he has several times been faced with the difficult task of removing people from the fire police unit because they were no longer capable physically of carrying out the job. One tool, he said, that has made this easier is that once the objective task list was developed, they required individuals to go to a physician to certify that they could perform the tasks. In two cases, the individuals were unable to perform the tasks, so, in essence, he said, the decision was not theirs but that of a medical doctor. That system, he said, has been used effectively on at least 2 occasions.

A summit attendee said that the issue of leadership had arisen frequently in the summit. One aspect of leadership, he said, is being a role model. Looking at the issue, he said, there has been a tendency to label live fire tasks as strenuous, but fire police tasks as light duty. We need, he said, to get a better understanding of the physical demands and requirements of the fire police role. This attendee provided his own example, as a former hazmat team member where, though he had passed the baseline medical testing, assessed that if he were to continue he would be putting others at risk. The attendee suggested that if each attendee, when in a situation approaching his or her limits, were to take a step back and let someone else complete the task, that it would do a lot to resolve many problems.

VIII. Dinner Speaker -- Bill Rehkopf

Professional journalist and Camp Hill, PA fire police officer Bill Rehkopf keynoted the Summit banquet. Mr. Rehkopf emphasized several points during his speech. Training, communication, proper attitude, and professional appearance, Rehkopf stressed, are keys to fire police success.

The public, said Rehkopf, by and large do not understand who fire police are. Ask the public who directs traffic at accident scenes, he said, and they will give answers ranging police officers to deputies to constables to security guards to rent-a-cops. The public neither know what "special fire police" are, nor what authority they carry.

Professional appearance, including uniform, badge, and identification are imperative to ensure that the public recognize and respect fire police. Departments, said Rehkopf, should supply their fire police with the necessary tools to perform their jobs effectively. Along with professional appearance goes a proper and professional attitude towards the public, which goes a long way towards garnering respect.

To foster better relations with the public, Rehkopf encouraged fire police to be proactive. At fire department events and community festivals, Rehkopf suggested that fire police set up booths and conduct public service activities like fingerprinting for children, as well as handing out pamphlets and fliers about the fire police and topics such as traffic safety. Another idea adopted by a fire police organization has been to set up roadside safety breaks on holiday weekends. Rehkopf suggested that fire police should be proactive by approaching civic groups, schools, and drivers education classes to speak, informing the public who the fire police are and about traffic safety around emergency scenes.

Rehkopf discussed fire police relations with the media. Rehkopf explained that, contrary to many emergency services personnel's understanding, the media do have an entitlement to special access to emergency scenes, so long as they operate safely and do not impede any emergency operations. This right of access, explained Rehkopf, stems from the fact that the media are performing a public service by keeping the public informed.

The media's right of access, said Rehkopf, does not necessarily extend to their vehicles, but he suggested that if a safe place can be found for them to operate, then to let them in. Special considerations that fire police should take when establishing a scene perimeter are to set aside a safe zone for the media to operate. Taking time to ensure that the media have access, said Rehkopf, goes a long way towards establishing good relations with the media. Once the media have access, Rehkopf suggested that fire police set reasonable ground rules, such as "you must operate behind the yellow fire line," and that the media will abide in 9 out of 10 cases.

Once they have established a good relationship with the media, where they know they will be able to get their story, Rehkopf said the fire police can turn to the media to promote fire police activities and functions. The media can and should be used as partners to build trust with, and inform, the public. By cooperating with them, they will cooperate with you.

IX. Law and Legislative Breakout Group

Lt. Barry Beck, Delaware State Police (Ret.) facilitated the Law and Legislative Breakout Group. The group first examined the question of what entity at the scene legally has control. Earl Moser said that in Pennsylvania, the authority first lies with the state police, then would devolve to the local police, then to the fire department. This differs significantly in Delaware and West Virginia, where strong fire laws grant the fire department great latitude over the scene. In Maryland, there seems to be a conflict in law over whether the fire or state police have command over highway closures, though it appears that the fire department has primacy.

Discussion ensued over where fire police receive their operating authority. In Maryland, fire police must be fire department members and are under the control of the fire chief. Fire police authority in Maryland, though, stems from the various county sheriff's departments, who deputize the fire police. The situation appears to be similar in other states.

This discussion gave rise to the question of how many other states have fire police, the answer to which appears to be unknown. In other states, auxiliary police, auxiliary sheriff's deputies, and "special police" often perform duties similar to that of fire police. The group thought it would be wise to team with a national association in an effort to survey the states to establish an accurate count. One potential outcome of such study could be a move towards establishing a more uniform identity and terminology for fire police.

Lt. Beck was asked about troopers point of view regarding delegation of authority. Beck said that troopers in Delaware are given an introduction to the fire service when they are in training, because it was clear that troopers did not understand that that states' fire chief law grants command to the fire department as long as there is a real or perceived threat to life or property.

The panel discussed and, and the group recommended that states pursue the adoption of, a number of legislative proposals, including:

- C a Pennsylvania proposal for doubling fines for traffic violations in emergency zones. A number of questions ensued on the practicality of actually enforcing such a law -- essentially asking just how it ever could be enforced. There was agreement that roll out of such a law would have to be accompanied by a strong education component. Everyone also concurred that Pennsylvania's experience with the law should be examined further;
- C the Delaware statute offering limited immunity fire police officers themselves involved in traffic accidents;
- C protections and benefits for fire police, including:
 - C workers compensation;
 - C length of service award programs / pension plans;
 - C presumptions in case of death or injury (i.e., presumption that a heart attack while on duty is service related);
 - C tax benefits; and
- C clarifying who has authority over various types of emergency scenes.

A good deal of discussion focused on exploring the utility of model fire police legislation. A

“cafeteria list” of possible fire police functions was debated, and reduced to an actual list. The panel strongly felt that any standards should be expressed as a set of minimum criteria embodied in law, leaving individual jurisdictions with the flexibility to adopt other, perhaps more rigid, standards. The group agreed the following elements should be included in model fire police standards:

- C fire police uniform / appearance regulations;
- C minimum standards for education and training;
- C minimum fitness for duty regulations;
- C standards for identity and terminology (e.g., fire police versus special or auxiliary police);
- C specification of the basis for fire police authority, (i.e., does authority flow from the fire chief or the police/sheriff’s department, or both)
- C any special powers granted by a state or local jurisdiction, such as powers of arrest/detention, or authority to carry firearms.

Beyond just the realm of fire police, the group was of a consensus that standards in the art of traffic direction should be developed to instruct anyone -- be they firefighters, EMTs, fire police, or otherwise -- who operates in or directs traffic around emergency scenes.

In discussion with the full summit, Dr. John Bell of the Somerset / Cambria Fire Police Association recommended that fire police expressly be precluded from carrying arms. The extensive training and certification requirements, as well as the exposure to liability, he said, outweighed any potential benefits. No one disagreed with Dr. Bell, though it was suggested that there may be unique circumstances or localities where, for some reason, fire police could or should be armed. Steve Austin noted that legislation need not always grant authority, but rather a statute could be passed saying that fire police may not carry arms.

X. Operations Breakout Group

The Policy Development Workshop, facilitated by Mr. Joe Vattilana (DELDOT (Ret.)), identified numerous areas in the operations of fire police, both during an incident and in preparation for service, where changes need to be made. The major focus of the group was a consensus that standardized policies and procedures be developed that meet a region-wide scope of authority and practice for all fire police. It was noted that statewide laws dictate the scope of authority provided each program, but that efforts be made to attempt to align those in some standard format. Laws governing the establishment and authority of fire police will have to be addressed through state legislation from recommendations provided by a more in-depth group familiar with the standards and laws applicable to each jurisdiction. The leadership of this summit, it was recommended, should develop a committee to address these concerns.

In identifying needs in the area of operations, issues consistent with all emergency services were used as a format. Fire police identification, dispatch procedures, response procedures,

emergency scene operations, interagency and intra-agency communications, and increased public awareness were areas incorporated in this discussion. The question of liability, both personal and corporate, became a focus of discussion in the group.

Having a clear understanding as to what liabilities are incurred and to what extent fire police officers are covered for their actions while responding and operating on an emergency scene need to be addressed more fully. It was felt that a comprehensive study be made as to what coverage should, and is, being made to these workers in performance of their duties.

Workers compensation insurance also became an issue highly debated as to what extent fire police officers are covered by this insurance. It was recommended that a policy be developed by the CVVFA, consistent with State regulations that cover fire police organizations, that could be utilized as a template for individual programs. Considering the health and safety factors inherent to the job of fire police personnel, a minimum standard should be developed for an applicant to be considered for the position of fire police officer.

The following recommendations were also made, with no priority given to the order presented.

- C Minimum standard equipment fire police officers must carry in the performance of their duties.** Providing a region-wide standard for fire police equipment required on all emergency scenes will ensure that all mutual aid agreements between agencies will be met according to the procedures established by these committees. Safety of the officers highlighted this debate, with reflective apparel and lighting equipment identified as standard safety equipment needed for fire police officers' protection.

- C Use of colored or emergency lights while responding or while operating on an emergency scene.** Consistent with current state laws, many organizations are prohibited from utilizing emergency lighting on the personal vehicles of fire police personnel. An established standard should be presented which addresses individually and collectively the issue of emergency response by fire police personnel. As a long term goal, it was decided that a committee representing each fire police organization and the state legislators who represent them should attempt to draft legislation making the use of emergency lights uniform throughout the region. This would facilitate statewide and region-wide response procedures that could be covered by a standard policy provided by the CVVFA.

- C Fire police vehicle marking, to include public and private vehicles.** A specification as to the type of emergency warning devices that are to be required on fire police vehicles should be developed. The issue of private vehicles being utilized as primary equipment was discussed and the implications involved in this debated. The insurance considerations placed on the owners of these vehicles need to be identified and made known prior to their utilization on emergency scenes. The use of warning lights on private vehicles is a common practice in many of the organizations operating fire police

programs. State laws should be researched as to the legality of this practice and standard guidelines established as to their use by each organization.

- C Communication, both inter- and intra-agency, should be prioritized as they are the vital link between police, fire, state roads, and fire police agencies. Presently, communications are a weak link in the system.** Each organization should be made responsible for developing a communications system that incorporates all of the appropriate agencies in the system. A standard FM radio frequency designated fire police may provide assistance to these agencies in this endeavor. As a minimum, guidelines as to the type of agencies needing communications on emergency scenes should be provided, with support of the CVVFA to assist in obtaining them.
- C Reciprocity agreements and mutual aid contracts should be developed between the different fire police agencies in the region in the event assistance is required from a surrounding jurisdiction.** Considering the legal and financial implications this involves, organizations should be encouraged to draft formal agreements outlining requests for assistance, response, both emergency and non-emergency, liability coverage, and communications. A standard agreement format may be developed by the CVVFA and distributed to all affiliated organizations to expedite and standardize the process.
- C Recordkeeping and documentation of incidents while engaged in official activities should be formalized that the organizational level.** Training reports, response documentation, and incident reports should be utilized in order to maintain appropriate records and facilitate information gathering by each organization. Statistical data is not currently available on a region-wide scale to support the efficacy or effectiveness of these programs. Documentation of hours worked, duties performed, and training accomplished will enhance the goal of providing a better and more professional service.
- C Standardization of lines of authority between fire, police, and fire police organizations.** Currently, many organizations derive their authority from police organizations around the region. A distinct organizational model must be developed specifying the organization or entity under which fire police agencies operate. In instances where fire police agencies operate under a single scope of command, policies should be developed in each organization that outline that structure for all individuals affected.
- C Incident Command System Operations on emergency scenes.** Currently, most fire department organizations operate under some type of Incident Command System. The inclusion of fire police agencies in this structure will ensure a better utilization of resources and a clear outline of command structure while operating on an emergency incident. Training for this system should be included with the minimum training standards set by OSHA for fire response personnel.

- C Dispatch and/or notification procedures for fire police personnel.** The communications procedures currently utilized by fire police agencies are dependent on the communications agencies of each jurisdiction. Development of standard alert and dispatch procedures for fire police agencies in an attempt to eliminate self dispatch and freelance response should be considered. Coordination between fire, police, EMS agencies, and fire police is required in developing standards of this type. A dispatch template could be developed by the CVVFA in an attempt to standardize these procedures for both initial dispatch and mutual aid responses. Alert tone pagers were suggested as the preferred method of alert, with radio communications procedures left to individual jurisdictions.

A definitive policy / procedure draft committee should be considered by the CVVFA in order to address a number of issues involving standards of operation. With standard procedures published and training provided, a validation of the roles and responsibilities of fire police agencies and personnel will be obtained within the emergency services. Development of an accredited training program formulated and sponsored by the CVVFA and administered by the respective training agencies of the fire participating states would work to maintain a professional standard which each agency can operate. These ideas presented are done so with that goal in mind.

XI. Human Resources Breakout Group

The following bullets encompass the key points that a group of professionals in the Fire Police field developed as key elements of the Human Resource issues of Fire Police Operations.

Under the issue of human resources the following issues were addressed:

- C recruitment and retention;
- C substance abuse;
- C physical condition;
- C professionalism; and
- C age.

Following are excerpts of key areas of concern to the Human Resources panel.

Topic 1: Recruitment and Retention

- C in order to recruit and retain quality individuals to operate as fire police officers, we must be able to offer some type of reward or merit system for service;
- C the provision of proper safety gear and training are imperative to the universally safe operations on the incident scene;
- C in order to recruit an appropriate number of individuals to the role of fire police officer, it may become necessary to specifically seek out and

recruit for the job of fire police officer;

- C appropriating the proper financial resources for training and equipment;
- C giving heed to the requirements prior to the appointment of an officer;
- C giving heed to the personal characteristics / overall attitude of an officer;
- C the placement of prescreening interviews for admission to training;
- C the implementation of a psychological evaluation tool for admission to the training;
- C minimum age for service of 18;
- C fire police recruitment needs to become more proactive in seeking appropriate personnel to fill the roles of the job;
- C look within as well as outside the fire service for appropriate personnel;
- C address the question of whether or not an individual has to be a firefighter to be a fire police candidate;
- C address the question of whether or not an individual has to be a member of a fire company, and qualify the term "member"; and
- C the implementation of waivers for insurance purposes;

Topic 2: Substance Abuse

- C zero tolerance for recreational drug and alcohol abuse;
- C the implementation of a referral program for those with issues that may affect job performance of a fire police officer. Proper involvement in policy for drug and alcohol abuse on a federal level; and
- C the authority of the jurisdiction over such a program as was previously stated.

Topic 3: Physical Condition

- C the placement of a medical practitioner (i.e., sports medicine versus

general practitioner) as primary input based upon the existing job description / duties required by fire police officers. This input is to be utilized in the evaluation of personnel;

- C performance oriented evaluations, based upon hearing, vision, and past medical history;
- C incident command and constant monitoring of the personnel on scene operating as fire police officers;
- C address the appropriate areas of the Americans with Disabilities Act;
- C annual evaluation and motivation to maintain a minimum fitness standard and current fitness level; and
- C implementation of a minimum fitness criteria, narrowly defined to the fire police personnel;

Topic 4: Professionalism

- C in order to maintain an air of professionalism for the role of the fire police officer, the following must be upheld as minimum standards of personal and professional behaviors:
 1. appropriate uniform as mandated by the jurisdictional directives;
 2. achieving and maintaining a level of training appropriate to that of fire police;
 3. the utilization of courtesy, empathy, and sympathy where appropriate in on-scene operations;
 4. a mission, vision, values statement that can be referred to as a guide for proper behavior;
 5. the enactment of proper public relations decorum; and
 6. maintenance and utilization of a yearly evaluation of job performance for personnel.

Topic 5: Age

- C if the other previous criteria and aspects of the human resources model are accomplished and concrete, then age is not an issue for continued performance as a fire police officer;
- C minimum age of 18.

XII. Training Breakout Group

The Training Breakout Group identified two key problem statements:

- C There exists a lack of understanding of the role of fire police, and their value to the fire, rescue, EMS, and other emergency service agencies.
- C There is lack of consistency, agreement, and understanding of the minimum competencies (knowledge, skills, and abilities) for fire police personnel.

The following are the group's recommendations for fire police training:

- C There should be a minimum level of training that must be completed by fire police personnel before assuming duties.
- C In addition to this *minimum* level of training, fire police personnel should meet:
 - C company level requirements (e.g., CPR, emergency vehicle operations, first response, Standard Operating Procedures / Guidelines)
 - C state requirements (identification, authority)
 - C federal requirements (e.g., hazardous materials identification and recognition, incident command system)
- C Encourage sharing of existing training programs (a number of states and/or counties/municipalities have good training programs already in place, and we should not have to reinvent the wheel)

It was recommended that a basic curriculum for fire police should include, at a minimum, the following major categories:

- C Education and training in:

- C roles of fire police
- C laws and regulations
- C working with the public
- C media relations

- C An introduction to:
 - C first aid and CPR
 - C hazardous materials
 - C helicopter operations
 - C incident command system

- C Operational training in:
 - C scene control
 - C crowd control
 - C site control
 - C *SAFETY*

- C The following elements:
 - C appearance
 - C attitude
 - C communications
 - C conduct
 - C equipment
 - C media relations
 - C observation skills
 - C preplanning
 - C professionalism
 - C record keeping
 - C security
 - C traffic control

The basic course, it was recommended, should be conducted with a methodology to include:

- C classroom and hands-on instruction
- C written / oral and practical evaluation
- C recognition of *successful completion* by course certificate

The group recommended that fire police pursue continuing education and training. This education and training could include:

- C new and more advanced training
- C refresher training as necessary;
- C advanced technical and management courses should be available
- C additional *jurisdiction-specific* training should be available relating to any special authority that fire police may have in certain jurisdictions, such as arrest powers
- C supervised field training should be available

Finally, the group recommended that national fire police “certification” based on some sort of national standard **not** be pursued at this time, though it was suggested that it would not be surprising to see national standards or certification evolve over time if the training recommendations saw widespread implementation.

Conclusion

This Summit offered the first known effort to bring together experts representing the fire police education and training communities with the fire service, law enforcement, and elected officials to begin to address a number of fire police issues. The suggestions and recommendations presented in this report represent preliminary conclusions which need to be validated by public comment and continued study. The Summit clearly evidenced the need to focus on a number of areas including:

- C the need for improved, and more standardized, fire police training;
- C the need for fire police -- and probably for the fire service in general -- health and physical standards;
- C the development of “best practice” guides to share successes;
- C continued research to identify other jurisdictions throughout the nation that presently utilize fire police, or auxiliary or special police to perform fire police-like functions; and
- C exploration of the implementation of fire police units where they do not now exist, and the use of auxiliary or special police to perform fire police functions where they do not now do so.

Public input is necessary to continue driving this process forward, to help ensure that we do all we can to see to it that fire police are utilized to the fullest, but first and foremost to protect them and avoid future avoidable tragedies.