

## What's Happening Navy Fire and Emergency Services Newsletter Protecting Those Who Defend America





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## The King is Dead; Long Live the King

By Ronny J. Coleman

In royal families when the king expires, there is very little hesitation about appointing his heir. The expression, the king is dead; long live the king, sort of transitions the process. What this phrase is saying is that the minute you are no longer at the top of the world, there is a process for you to be replaced by someone else. But what if we replace it with a new phrase, the fire marshal is gone; long live the fire marshal!



Are you ready for that inevitability? Just as sure as you are carrying a badge around today that says fire marshal, there is going to be some point in time when you are no longer going to be there. Have you given any consideration as to what is going to happen to your department and more importantly your programs and your legacy when that event occurs?

Some people label this as succession planning. But I am going to make it a little more personal than that. Had you given any thought whatsoever as to who may be your replacement in the fire prevention bureau if you retired today?

If you haven't, then you are probably right there among the 90 percent of fire officials in this country that don't think about succession planning until that event is on their immediate horizon. But I am suggesting that you would be a lot smarter and rest a lot easier if you started thinking about it right now. In other words, start looking to hand pick your successor. Is that even possible?

Well, I will be the first to admit that you may not have a 100 percent control over what your chief is going to do if you find yourself closer to retirement. There are all sorts of obvious political reasons why the rank of fire marshal might be held up for scrutiny. Not the least of these reasons may be your track record as an individual. What may be happening to you may be sending messages out into the fire suppression forces of either being good or bad. The working relationship that you have established with your community may be sending messages to the business community that may be either good or bad. In short, what I am about to suggest is that not only are you not responsible for picking your own successor, but you may certainly be in a position of helping to cultivate the environment in which a new fire marshal is going to be inserted.





## Clipboard (Cont.)

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The first thing we need to talk about is for you to make sure your job description remains current, accurate and is as comprehensive as possible. What is often looked at as a human resources function, the preparation of job descriptions, often languishes on the back burner until such time as the incumbent leaves and then all of a sudden a whole bunch of new requirements start showing up on the new job description that weren't there before. In fact, many of these functions were there before but they were never acknowledged nor were they ever reinforced as part of your current job. The number one need of your successor is that they need to be made aware of all of the expectations not just the generic ones.





There are several suggestions for you to share your experiences with your peers on your own department in as positive a fashion as you can. Granted, there are some days that are better than others, and there are some days that you may not wish to talk about at all. But if you want to start planning for your succession, take a look down in your organization and see if there is anybody whose temperament, intellect and personality tend to make them a good candidate for being the fire marshal and then you engage them. We are not talking brain washing here. What we are talking about is making sure that they see that you actually do have a profound impact on the community. This is the time to make the case with your peers about how important the role of the fire marshal is in actually creating the community's fire problem. Many people simply do not have the sense of respect for the fire marshals job because all they ever heard are the negative aspects. It is time to be as positive as possible.

Also, network with people outside of your organization to look for viable candidates that have an interest in both your community and your way of doing things. I am not talking about you doing recruiting, what I am talking about is you doing marketing. What you have to say about your department when you are in the confines of social settings and other professional arenas away from the office may have more of an effect on who chooses to replace you than any other single factor. This is where the term reputation sometimes comes in.

Create a learning culture in your fire prevention staff. Now this may seem obvious, but it certainly isn't too many fire marshals. Opening up the channels of communication so that learning is an ongoing instead of a singular event is an important part of succession planning. It strengthens the capacity of those working within your organization but it also makes a much firmer platform for a new fire marshal to come in and take over. The main idea regarding continuous learning is to practice it on yourself.

## Clipboard (Cont.)

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Ronny J. Coleman

Never allow yourself to believe that you know all the answers. Always be asking the questions yourself. This may seem like a strange idea for succession planning but you should compete in any open fire marshal exams that are in comparable communities like your own. Not unlike the need to sharpen the



knife that is being used every day in the kitchen, competition brings out a new edge. Don't be afraid to test yourself against the promotional process. It will tell you a lot about what your successor will face when they test for your job.

In summary, one of the best ways you can influence your successor is to raise the bar on the job to the point that whoever is going to want the job, has a sense of competition that you put into it yourself.

You may not get to sit on the oral board nor write the questions for the final exam but once you create the aura of your leadership role in the fire prevention bureau the organization in order to survive has to look for someone with those same qualities. And, imitation they say is the sincerest form of flattery.



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## Combs Cartoon



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## Behold Your Leader



## Last Alarms

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## TCoOO Update



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## Last Alarms

The USFA has reported 33 line of duty deaths to date in 2019. The following line of duty deaths were reported since we published our last issue:

Yaroslav Katkov ▼
Sacramento, CA

James Sommers
Live Oak, FL

Norman Klenow
East Tawas, MI

Walter Wagaman

Orrtanna, PA

2019 Totals

▼20 (60%) ➡ 3 (1%)

Indicates cardiac related death

Indicates vehicle accident related death



## Taking Care of Our Own

There are currently 12 DoD firefighters in the Taking Care of Own program.

**Taking Care of Our Own** invites all DoD F&ES personnel to donate ONE HOUR of annual leave to DoD F&ES members in need to enable them to focus on recovery rather than financial distress.

Name	Location	Point of Contact
Neil Hogan	Navy Region Southwest HQ, CA	Joyce.Matanane@navy.mil
Walter Taylor	NAS Patuxent River, MD	Jerry.Schenemann@navy.mil
Christopher Carneal	Fort Carson, CO	Karen.M.Connors2.civ@mail.mil
Dana Carneal	Fort Carson, CO	Karen.M.Connors2.civ@mail.mil
Thomas Maury	NAS JRB New Orleans, LA	Matthew.Spreitzer@navy.mil
Darren Lewis	Fort Stewart, GA	Carolyn.E.Colon4.civ@mail.mil
Mike Lecik	Fort Lee, VA	Demetrice.Mccain2.civ@mail.mil
Rosa Ferreira	Naval Base San Diego, CA	Joyce.Matanane@navy.mil
Timothy Ramsey	Naval District Washington, DC	Christopher.Scully@navy.mil
Jeremy Anderson	Navy F&ES Gulf Coast	Candace.Leslie1@navy.mil
Martin Flores	Fort Carson, CO	Karen.M.Connors2.civ@mail.mil
Chris Bishop	Navy F&ES Gulf Coast	Candace.Leslie1@navy.mil

We recently emailed all the service component chiefs with the proper procedures to enroll someone in the Taking Care of Our Own program. There was a recent trend of people using their own formats and forms which worked okay until the inevitable breach of personal identifying information (PII). We were very concerned about protecting PII when the program was stood up in 2003 and we designed standard procedures and forms to address those concerns.

Please contact your service component chief if you haven't seen this information recently.

## Paul Bellici

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## Retired Chief Answers Last Alarm



Paul Bellici, 70, was a Vietnam veteran with the United States Army (1969-1970). He served as an Assistant Fire Chief for the Concord Naval Weapons Station Fire Department (Port Chicago) and retired in 1997 after 30 years of service.

He was born and raised in Pittsburg, CA and moved to Antioch in 1973. He is survived by his wife of 46 years, a daughter, son, two stepchildren, two brothers, two grandchildren, six step grandchildren, one great step-grandson,

two nephews, one niece, and numerous cousins. He is preceded in death by his father, mother and brother.

Paul loved traveling the world after retirement. His favorite places to visit were Italy, Costa Rica, & Egypt. If you knew Paul, he really enjoyed his time in a casino with Las Vegas being his all-time favorite. He spent 11 magical summers at their second home in Ocean Shores, WA on Duck Lake, a stone's throw from the ocean and minutes from a casino. Getting back up to Ocean Shores each year never came fast enough for Paul.

For the past 4 years, he fought a brave battle with cancer attributed to his exposure to Agent Orange while serving in Vietnam. In October 2018, he was also diagnosed with a Glioblastoma brain tumor.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent in Paul's name to the Hospice East Bay 3470 Buskirk Ave., Pleasant Hill, CA 94523 or Stephen Siller Tunnel to Towers Foundation 2361 Hylan Blvd. Staten Island, NY 10306.

## Joseph Bean



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## NDW Captain Passes Away



Fire Captain Joseph "Joe" Bean, 39 of Great Mills, MD formerly of Valley Lee, MD, passed away on 4 August 2019 at his residence. Joe faithfully served the department since 2002. He was promoted to the rank of Fire Captain in 2009 and served until his passing. Joe's extensive impact on his family, friends, and community, ensures that he will be sorely missed. He leaves behind a legacy of faithful service and a willingness to always help those in need no matter the task.

Memorial contributions may be made to: The American Foundation for Suicide

Prevention, 120 Wall Street 29th Floor, New York, NY 10005.

## Back in the Day

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## N.W.S. EARLE

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## Naval Weapons Station Earle Fleet In 1956

By Tom Shand, Photos from the collection of Ted Heinbuch



The history of Earle can be traced back to August, 1943 when construction began on what was initially named the Naval Ammunition Depot Earle after Rear Admiral Ralph Earle who was in charge of the Bureau of Ordnance during World War I. Planning for the facility was accelerated during World War II when Naval Operations required a safe storage and loading facility away from a major population area. The depot was officially commissioned in December, 1943 and today is known as Naval Weapons Station Earle with the facility occupying some 11,000 acres in Colts Neck, NJ.

The installation is served by two fire stations; one at main side with a waterfront station some fourteen miles away near Sandy Hook Bay in Leonardo, NJ. A roadway and railroad tracks connect the two areas with the pier complex consisting of a two mile long trestle with three finger piers.

Over the years the installation fire department has operated a unique fleet of apparatus including a roster of units from around 1956. Due to the remote location and extensive wildland area the department has always operated water tanker units including tractor-trailer vehicles. While today's engine tankers are typically built on tandem axle chassis with 2500 to 3000 gallon tanks, many departments in the Pine Barren area in New Jersey operate with large capacity tractor-trailer apparatus.

During this period at the headquarters fire station the department's apparatus fleet included a pair of 1952 Autocar tractors pulling 3250 gallon equipped trailers. These units were assigned Navy property numbers 96-11932 and 96-11933. A 1954 FWD brush tanker was equipped with a 250 gpm pump and 400 gallon water tank with property number 73-00629. This smaller unit was one of several produced by FWD for use at Naval Installations and carried multiple lengths of hard rubber booster hose and bumper mounted winch.

One of the more interesting units was a circa 1940's vintage Mack Type 45 city service ladder truck. This open cab, open door model rig was equipped with a 500 gpm pump and full complement of ground ladders that were fully enclosed in the body. Engine company service was provided by a pair of 1943 CCKW-American LaFrance pumpers. During World War II GMC produced over 21,000 CCKW model two and a half ton 6X6 chassis for various body configurations.

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Tom Shand



Built with a 161 inch wheelbase these units were powered with a 92 horsepower engine and equipped with a Chrysler engine driven fire pump, twin booster reels and front bumper mounted winches. Assigned property numbers 73-00638 and 73-00639 these pumpers carried both structural and brush fire equipment including eight Indian back packs, low velocity fog applicators, foam hopper, ground ladders and supply line hose.

The fire chief was assigned a 1952 Ford pickup truck with property number 74-14927, equipped with several fire extinguishers and loud speaker system. During this period, few departments operated apparatus that were outfitted with mobile radios, which required personnel to rely upon hand signals and face to face communication to relate pertinent information. Open cabs without doors and riding on the tailboard is what firefighting was like Back in the Day.

## Firehouse Trivia



## Why is the Maltese Cross the Fire Service Symbol?



The Maltese Cross represents the ideals of saving lives and extinguishing fires. The emblem was borrowed from the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. The knights were an organization that existed in the 11th and 12th centuries that helped the poor and the sick. The Knights of St. John later assisted the Knights of the Crusades in a relief effort to the Island of Malta, the island for which the Maltese Cross was named. The Maltese Cross came

to represent the principles of charity, loyalty, chivalry, generosity to friend or foe, protection of the weak and dexterity in service.

## Marine Corps News

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# THE TALLAND COMMAND SANDING CO

## Marine Corps F&ES Meets in San Antonio



Approximately 35 Marine Corps Fire Chiefs, Senior Officers and other support personnel, otherwise known as the Marine Corps Fire & Emergency Services Working Group, held their annual meeting in San Antonio, TX in June.

The group, led by Mike Pritchard, Director of Marine Corps F&ES, spent three days discussing a number of programs including dispatch, COLS, apparatus, funding, CBRNE, EMS and training.



Each Fire Chief was afforded the opportunity to provide a presentation on their respective Department, including their issues and challenges.

The 2018 Marine Corps F&ES Annual Report was distributed at the outset of the meetings.

On the afternoon of 25 June, Mr. Pritchard presented the 2018 Marine Corps and DoD F&ES Awards. The award winners were:

Fire Department of the Year Medium Category – MCLB Barstow F&ES
Fire Department of the Year Large Category – MCB Camp Lejeune F&ES
Fire Prevention Program of the Year – MCAS Cherry Point F&ES

EMS Provider of the Year – Firefighter Paramedic Scott Cleland, MCAS Cherry Point Civilian Firefighter of the Year – Firefighter Robert Wood, MCB Camp Pendleton

Civilian Fire Officer of the Year – Assistant Chief Samuel Feltner, MCAS Iwakuni

DoD Civilian Fire Officer of the Year - Assistant Chief Samuel Feltner, MCAS Iwakuni

## CFAI News

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## The Commission on Fire

CFAI Welcomes Ford as New Commissioner



The Commission on Fire Accreditation International has appointed Chief Terry Ford, CFO, as its newest commissioner representing Department of Defense fire and emergency services. The CPSE Board unanimously approved his appointment.

Terry Ford is the Chief of the Fire and Emergency Services Division at Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma, a CFAI accredited agency. His fire service career began in 1982 and has included assignments at U.S. Air Force bases around the

globe as well as Superintendent of the DoD Fire Academy. He was named chief at Tinker Air Force Base in 2005.

Chief Ford holds a bachelor's degree in Fire Science Management and a master's degree in Human Resource Management.

Chief Ford is a graduate of the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Office Program and earned his designation as Chief Fire Officer in 2002.

The Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) has 11 members that represent a cross-section of the fire and emergency service, including fire departments, city and county management, labor, standards development organizations, and the U.S. Department of Defense. CFAI holds public hearings at the CPSE Excellence Conference each spring and at the International Association of Fire Chief's Fire Rescue International Conference each summer to review agencies applying for accredited status.



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## Staff Changes at Chinhae



Changes in

Korea





Thomas Lyszowski relieved Ray Griffith as Fire Chief for Navy Region Korea and CFA Chinhae on 22 August 2019.

A native of Philadelphia, PA, Chief Lyszkowski enlisted in the Navy in 1994 and was stationed aboard USS O'Bannon (DD 987). After active duty, he worked as a civilian firefighter at NAS Cecil Field, NAVSTA Mayport, NAS Jacksonville, NAVBASE Guantanamo Bay, and Marine Corps Installations Pacific.

Tom earned an Associate's Degree in Fire Science from Columbia Southern University, is a certified DoD Fire Officer IV and a qualified NFPA Live Fire Instructor.

Ray Griffith retired after serving as the second civilian Fire Chief at CFA Chinhae from 28 November 2016 to 22 August 2019. He is now enjoying life with his five daughters and three grandchildren in New Mexico.

## Making the Push

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## Flowing-While-Advancing Fire Attack - Part 2

By Jonathan Brumley and Joe Ficarelli

In Part 1 of this series, we looked at several key study findings from a recent three-part UL study, *The Impact of Fire Attack Utilizing Interior and Exterior* Streams on Firefighter Safety and Occupant Survival, that support a flowingwhile-advancing fire attack. Now, we examine proper hose handling, handline advancement and the importance of the backup firefighter.

## Hose handling

The foundation of a flow-and-move fire attack lies within the nozzle firefighter's ability to handle the hose. Flowing handlines should become second nature and, therefore, deeply engrained in muscle memory. It's only through flowing thousands upon thousands of gallons of water that this can take place.



There are several mainstream grip techniques being taught today, and it is of great benefit to be well-versed in more than just a single style; one may become more situationally advantageous than another based on factors that are commonly encountered, such as stairs, turns, fire-attack staffing or even overpumped lines.

Solid hose-handling technique is built around several common factors. The first is that the body's largest muscles, the core and the legs, are taking the brunt of the nozzle reaction. While biceps/triceps and forearms will be engaged while gripping the line, they should not be left unsupported. The legs should also be "athletically positioned." This means that the body is creating a wide base that is derived from strong triangles.

Next, a sufficient length of hose must be maintained in front of the firefighter. This increases the range of motion available and decreases the effort required for proper stream application. Finding the appropriate length of hose to keep out front is dependent on the hose and nozzle package selected. Every length of hose will respond differently to reaction forces, so minor adjustments must be made by the nozzle firefighter once water is flowing. What is constant is that the nozzle bail must always be within reach, and if a combination nozzle is being used, the ability to change patterns also should not be hindered. Once the line is open, the lead hand should also come underneath the hoseline so that the weight of the nozzle is supported. There should be a notable decrease in the occurrence of the hose kinking directly behind the nozzle when compared to placing the hand either on top of the hose or on leaving it on the nozzle bail.

Finally, the bail of the nozzle should be turned so that it is opened into the body. This means that if the line is on the firefighter's right side, the bail should be positioned to the left side of the hose. Doing this will create the smoothest transition of the hand from the bail to the underside of the hose.



## Making the Push (Cont.)

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Hose handling should be initially be practiced and refined while the line is static. Introducing line advancement prior to establishing sound technique will lead to confusion, premature bail closures, and possibly losing hold of the hoseline. Positive habits and confidence in technique will be enforced by taking the time to build muscle memory without the added element of advancement.

## **Advancing Handlines**

There is a distinct difference between simply flowing water and flowing water effectively. The end goal in flowing water is fire suppression, so applying water should not be done without a conscious effort to move the water where it is actually needed. In fact, failing to do so correctly can be counterproductive. Advancing past fire, dropping the thermal layering to the floor, and destroying any remaining visibility can all occur when too much focus is placed on moving with the line open and not enough thought is given to where the water is being applied. Sound technique and planned stream application, such as wall-ceiling-wall or clockwise "O's," can assist in effective water usage.

If, for whatever reason, effective water application is not being achieved, consider adjusting the game plan for moving while flowing. The first option is to stop the flow of water, quickly advance to the next point of attack, then resume fire suppression. Advancing without attempting to flow water does not require the same amount of coordination between crewmembers as moving while the bail is open, so effective water application may be reestablished quicker using this option. Fire conditions, however, will dictate whether it is even an option. Another option is to slow down the line advancement. The nozzle firefighter should be communicating to those backing him up on the line if the advancement is outpacing fire suppression. By slowing down, the nozzle firefighter should have the opportunity to regain his technique and ensure that the fire stream is reaching its intended target.



## The end goal in flowing water is fire suppression

Strong communication and coordinated movements amongst company members must take place for a moving-while-flowing advancement to take place. The nozzle firefighter is the head and controls all the movements of the advance. The backup firefighter assists in countering the nozzle reaction force and ensures that the hoseline is progressing forward. The backup firefighter is set up next to, and in most cases, touching the nozzle firefighter. Ultimately, the backup firefighter will push the nozzle firefighter forward, when the nozzle firefighter indicates.

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As the nozzle firefighter focuses on operating the line into the ceiling and walls, the backup stays low, driving forward. Staying low as a backup firefighter accomplishes several key things: It creates a stable and powerful base from which movements are built, it directs the force of the nozzle reaction into the body, and then into the ground, and, finally, it allows the nozzle to remain naturally pointed up. When turning corners, the nozzle firefighter and the backup firefighter need to turn in opposite directions, think of a tiller-truck, to help the line stay off the corner while keeping the hose straight into the nozzle fighter.

## Making the Push (Cont.)

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Often, a third, or even multiple, additional firefighters will be needed to keep the line moving. The number of additional members is directly correlated to building layout and the number of times the line must advance past a corner or other various obstacles. Within a stairwell, it is not uncommon to have up to six firefighters on a single handline. The gold standard would be to place one individual at every friction point. However, staffing limitations will often force a single firefighter to manage multiple, if not all, of the friction points. Advancement of the line will obviously be slower when this is the case. Do not hesitate to marry multiple companies together if the initial engine company is not capable of advancing the line without assistance. Backup hoselines and exposure lines should be deployed secondary to the primary attack line being advanced to the fire.

When considering companies with three-person staffing, a firefighter and an officer might be the only two individuals on a handline for a significant period of time. In these instances, the officer is the backup firefighter, and the positioning of the backup firefighter will usually change. Instead of being up with the nozzle firefighter, the backup will shift back on the line

Do not hesitate to marry multiple companies together if the initial engine company is not capable of advancing the line without assistance.

away from the nozzle to reduce drag in the working length of hose and to manage the hose around pinch points. This leaves the nozzle firefighter solely responsible for countering nozzle reaction. It is here that maintaining reasonable nozzle reaction forces in the attack package is most noticeable.

An attempt to advance the hoseline while flowing will immediately be hindered if sufficient slack hose has not been moved forward into the structure. It is the responsibility of the backup firefighter to ensure that this happens; similarly, it is the responsibility of the nozzle firefighter to communicate how much hose is going to be needed for the advance. There will likely be instances where the nozzle firefighter will need to hold their position to wait for the backup to bring hose forward. A length of hose equal to the expected distance that the nozzle firefighter will be traveling while flowing must be ready to move before advancement takes place. Aaron Fields of the Seattle Fire Department commonly preaches the practice of having the nozzle firefighter call out an estimated distance of travel prior to advancement, which will allow those firefighters tasked with bringing the line forward to know exactly how much hose will need to be managed throughout the stretch to the fire.

Excess hose can be staged in a variety of ways; this is often referred to as preloading. As open spaces in the interior are encountered, take advantage of the space and move excess hose into these areas. The line should be kept low to the ground to help avoid wrapping any objects with the hoseline. Creative use of open spaces includes using rooms opposite of the advance to stage slack, such as using an uninvolved apartment directly across from the fire occupancy. This is effective as it results in additional straight line behind the nozzle. Avoid staging hose in any space that would create additional pinch-points. In tight spaces, such as a hallway, build "S's" in the line using the full width of the space.

## Making the Push (Cont.)

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Forming loops or coils in the line is also effective, especially on small diameter hoselines; recognize that they also increase the potential for kinks, however. Pre-loading hose also works vertically. In a stairwell stretch, hose can often be taken to the half-landing above the fire-floor prior to opening the door to the fire area. This allows gravity to assist in the advancement. It is possible to move a large loop of charged 1¾-inch hose up a stairway while staging at the base of the stairs as well; though it may take a short amount of time and effort to do so, it prevents a common misstep of halting progress while remaining on a flight of stairs.

## **Summary**

Every engine company should set forth the goal of being able to advance a handline while flowing water, but intermediate steps must be taken before this type of attack can occur with any semblance of regularity. While physical ability and sheer grit go a long way in operating handlines, the truest form of efficiency is achieved by building an attack package that is advantageous to an interior fire attack. This includes determining realistic target flows and then creating an attack package that uses complimentary nozzles, hoselines, and deployment



methods. Solid techniques in hose handling and hose movement must be instilled early. There is little point in trying to move forward with a flowing handline when there would be a struggle to flow while remaining static. Instruction is commonly given to those responsible for operating a nozzle, yet little effort is given toward instructing individuals on how to most effectively assist in the advance. The success of a flowing-while-moving fire attack is far more dependent on the efforts of the backup firefighter(s) than the one operating the nozzle. The benefits of flowing water while advancing are numerous. Keep that nozzle open while making the push.



Jonathan Brumley and Joe Ficarelli

## New Navy Rigs



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## 3,000 Gallon ARFF for Guantanamo Bay



## SA Matters!

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## Understanding Stress - Part 2: Types of Stress

By Rich Gasaway, PhD

Welcome to Part 2 of my series on stress. The goal of this segment is to discuss three types of stress: Acute stress, episodic acute stress and chronic stress. Anyone on an emergency scene can, and often do, experience all three. Stress can impact situational awareness and, equally concerning, stress can have devastating long-term impacts.



As I was doing my research for

this segment, I had more than my share of flashbacks from my thirty years on the line. Responders are aware of the stresses that come from doing this job. Crawl into a burning building and you're going to feel stress. Deal with a traumatized human body (especially a child) and you're going to experience stress. Ride in a vehicle in heavy traffic during an emergency response and you're going to feel stress.

However, some people don't realize when they're feeling stress because stress doesn't always feel like, well, stress. Endorphins and adrenaline stimulate the brain (in preparation for Fight or Flight). This stimulation can cause you to feel excited, not stressed. Firefighters exit a structure after successfully extinguishing a fire. VICTORY! They high-five. They back-slap. They've slayed the dragon! They are excited. They are also stressed. Let's examine three kinds of stress.



### **Acute stress**

The most common form of stress you are likely to experience in your daily lives is acute stress. It manifests from things that have happened recently or from things that are about to happen (stress from anticipation). So long as the amount of acute stress is limited, it may cause you to feel excitement or exhilaration. However, large doses of acute stress is not exhilarating. It's exhausting.

I experienced both ends of the acute stress spectrum this past summer while on a family vacation to Cedar Point Amusement Park. There, I got to ride an amazing roller coaster called Top Thrill Dragster. 'Keep your arms down, head back, and hold on' are the last words I remember hearing before I was launched down a track to 120 miles per hour. Then I was vaulted 420 feet into the air and back down again. Start to finish it was 17 seconds of sheer terror. I was experiencing acute stress. But it sure didn't feel like stress. I LOVED IT!

While waiting in the 1½ hour long line to get on the ride I observe the faces and heard the screams of the stressed riders preceding me. This anticipation added to my level of acute stress.

## SA Matters (Cont.)

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As the day went on and I rode more and more roller coasters I started to experience the physical and psychological symptoms of my stress. I got a tension headache, an upset stomach, my muscles were aching and much to the disdain of my kids, I had become irritable. I had been overexposed – you might say I overdosed – on acute stress.

Because of its short-term nature, acute stress doesn't have enough time to do the extensive damage associated with long-term stress. Symptoms of acute stress may include:

Anger	Irritability	Rapid heartbeat
Anxiety	Depression	Heart palpitations
Tension headache	Back pain	Migraine headaches
Jaw pain	Muscle tension	Shortness of breath
Stomach aches	Heartburn	Sweaty palms
Acid stomach	Flatulence	Dizziness
Diarrhea	Constipation	Cold hands or feet
Irritable bowel syndrome	High blood pressure	Chest pain

Because the list is so extensive and the symptoms can result from many other conditions, it is common for the symptoms of acute stress to be attributed to other causes.

Anyone can experience acute stress at any time. But first responders and people who work in any dangerous profession, by the nature of their work and working conditions, are more likely to experience acute stress. The good news is, acute stress is highly treatable and manageable.

## **Episodic acute stress**

Episodic acute stress occurs in people who suffer frequent bouts of acute



stress. People in this category are often referred to as having lives filled with chaos and crisis. Always being in a rush. Always worrying about what can go wrong. Always being in an environment that is in disarray. Having high demands placed in them (by others or their own expectations) can all attribute to episodic acute stress.

While a first responders and people in other highly jobs, personal lives may not be filled with chaos and crisis, he or she can be exposed to much more than the average person's quota of stress. Chaos and crisis, being rushed, worrying about things going wrong (for their own safety and the safety of those they are serving), working in rapidly changing environments and having high demands being placed on them (by elected officials, bosses, peers, and customers) are all part and parcel to the normal environment of people in these high stress jobs. Even where these employees may have his or her personal life in order, the job itself can create episodic acute stress.

Imagine a person being in an environment that is excessively noisy, or bright, or cold, or windy. Repetitive and/or lengthy exposure to those elements is going to create stress.



## SA Matters (Cont.)

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First responders who are repetitively exposed to lights and sirens, harsh environments and psychological trauma may suffer from episodic acute stress from repetitive and/or lengthy exposures.

The symptoms and consequences of episodic acute stress can include:

Being over aroused	Short tempered	Abrupt
Irritable	Feeling (and acting) rushed	Nervous energy
Anxious	Hostile	Chest pains
Tense	Hypertension	Heart disease

Ironically, being exposed to someone exhibiting the symptoms of episodic acute stress can, in turn, increase the stress levels of those within their circle of influence. It can truly be a vicious circle.

### **Personalities**

Episodic acute stress can be compounded by 'Type A' personalities. Type A's are known for being competitive, impatient and having an ever-present sense of urgency to everything, Type A's are often aggressive and seemingly hostile – sometimes mildly, sometimes not.

Research into the cardiac impact of stress has revealed Type A's are far more likely to develop coronary artery disease as compared to the more docile, laid-back, relaxed 'Type B' personality counterparts. For better or worse, the action-oriented, fast-paced, high adrenaline rush inducing environment of public safety is a magnet for Type A's.

Episodic acute stress can be manifested from chronic worry also. People in high-stress jobs can be lulled into worrying about the unfavorable outcomes of everyday situations because they are exposed, repetitively, to people who are experiencing unfavorable outcomes in the throes of living everyday lives. For example:

A mother and her young son are walking down the sidewalk. An inattentive driver veers off course. The mother sees the car and instinctively jumps, avoiding being struck. But her seven year-old son is struck by the car and suffers major head and thoracic injuries. He may not survive. Traumatic for the family. Traumatic for the inattentive driver who caused the accident. And traumatic for the first responders – police, fire and EMS who had to manage a crisis they did not create.

The world we live in can be dangerous and bad things can happen with no forewarning. First responders see the consequence of this almost daily and it can not only have a cumulative effect, it can make the responder overly worrisome about the same consequences occurring in his or her own life or to his or her loved ones. This can contribute to stress-induced anxiety and depression.

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## Lifestyles

The first responders lifestyle, or anyone in a high-stress job or environment – always being in the fast lane of life and the middle of the action – can be addicting. It can became ingrained and habitual.



## SA Matters (Cont.)

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Rich Gasaway, PhD.

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These people may see nothing wrong with their 'pedal to the metal' lifestyle. They may never be able to see the impact stress is having on them. If they do see it, they're likely to blame it on one someone else or on external events.

Pride and ego can also be a factor. A responder, for instance, is used to being a care-giver, not a care-receiver and may be too proud to ask for help. He or she may also simply concede that the stress of their job is just part of who they are and what they do and resign themselves that nothing can be done about it.

Victims of episodic acute stress can be very resistant to admitting they have a problem and very resistant to changing anything in their lives to fix the problem. If their job-stress is compounded by (or maybe even exaggerated by) obesity, alcohol abuse, smoking, and/or a sedentary lifestyle, they may be very stubborn to change habits or seek help.

### **Chronic stress**

Chronic stress is never thrilling and never exciting. It eats away at you every day, year after year and it can be tremendously destructive. Chronic stress occurs when a person is in a repetitively stressful environment can't see any way out of their situation. They feel trapped – so hopeless and so helpless they'll actually give up on trying to find a solution.

Left undiagnosed and untreated, chronic stress can lead to depression and suicide. The occurrence of a suicide is very painful for family and co-workers. We're all taught to be care-givers, to help others and when we lose one of our own we can feel tremendous guilt and remorse that we could not see it coming. Sometimes there are signs and symptoms, often times there are not.

Sadly, a person can become so used to the feeling of chronic stress that he or she will actually feel uncomfortable when not in their stressful environment. I have seen this. Ok... I have experienced this. There have been many times when I was so stressed at work that I needed a vacation and took one. While on vacation I felt uneasy and, for reasons hard to explain, yearned to be back at work in the very pressure-cooker environment I took the vacation to get away from. I had become comfortable in my chronic stress environment.

My personal wakeup call came when I retired from active public service. It was hard to be out of the stress environment. I felt lost for weeks. But then something amazing, almost magical, started to happen to me. My migraine headaches went away. My tensed muscles relaxed. My acid reflux symptoms ceased. I slept through the night. I'd never felt this level of relaxation anytime in my 30 years of public safety service.

Looking back, I was a heart attack or stroke just looking for a place to happen. The denial of my stress, coupled with my sedentary lifestyle had led to morbid obesity, high cholesterol, hypertension, acid reflux, sleep apnea, shortness of breath, blurred vision and excessive flatulence.

I've lost 60 pounds and every symptom has resolved except one.

I blame the broccoli.

## **Data Security**

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## Personal Accounts to Conduct Official Business

Letter from Thomas B. Modly, The Undersecretary of the Navy

The Department of the Navy's (DON) data security and integrity is paramount to our mission to deliver combat ready naval forces. As officials and military and civilian employees of the DON, we are entrusted by the public to safeguard our data and ensure transparency and accountability are maintained. I, therefore, expect all DON officials and military and civilian employees to comply with existing law and policy and use only official Department of Defense (DoD) messaging accounts, including, but not limited to, official e-mail, social media, or other messaging applications to conduct official business.

In accordance with existing law, DoD policy, and DON policy, all DON officials and military and civilian employees must use their official DoD messaging accounts when conducting official DoD business with very limited exceptions. DoD policy permits the use of non-official messaging accounts to conduct official business only in a rare circumstance that meets all of these three conditions:

- 1. Emergencies and other critical mission needs;
- 2. When official communication capabilities are unavailable, impractical, or unreliable; and.
- 3. It is in the best interests of DoD or other U.S. Government missions.

Under no circumstances should non-official messaging accounts, including, but not limited to, e-mail, social media, and messaging applications be used for official business based on personal convenience or preference. Personal, non-official accounts may be used to participate in 'activities such as professional networking, development, and collaboration related to, but not directly associated with, official mission activities as a DON official or military or civilian employee.

In the extraordinary event that a DON official or employee must use a non-official or personal messaging account to conduct DON business, he or she must either (1) copy his or her official messaging account at the time of transmission, or (2) forward the communication to his or her official messaging account within 20 days from the date of transmission. The sender must mitigate against transmitting non-public or controlled unclassified information including "For Official Use Only" and Personally Identifiable Information. Intentional violations may be the basis for disciplinary measures up to and including removal from federal service.

As a reminder, classified information may never be transmitted over unclassified networks, including non-official messaging accounts. Any questions regarding this memorandum should be directed to an individual's supervisor in his or her chain of command.

I expect everyone to adhere to these requirements and to ask questions and seek guidance if there is any confusion about this policy.

## Retirement Plan

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## GOV**EXEC**.com

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## Thinking Through Your Survivor Benefit Options

By Tammy Flanagan, Retirement Counseling and Training (www.retirefederal.com)

If you're married, planning for retirement can be more complicated than if you're single. There are decisions such as whether you should retire at the same time as your spouse or stagger your retirements a few years apart. Married couples also need to consider their options for continuation of health insurance coverage to be sure they're providing lifetime coverage for both spouses. It's important to consider your financial needs, regardless of which one of you is older or your health situation today. Many of these considerations revolve around survivor benefits.

Let's look at three hypothetical married couples to see some of the factors at play in deciding what to do.

### One Breadwinner

Bob is planning to retire under the Federal Employees Retirement System. His wife, Lorraine, worked very little outside of the home, which makes it especially important that she have survivor benefits if she should outlive her husband. While both are alive, Bob will provide retirement income for them through his FERS benefit, earned Social Security benefits and withdrawals from his TSP account balance.

Bob can choose a 10% reduction in his FERS retirement benefit to provide the maximum survivor benefit of 50% of his unreduced benefit. (This also reduces the income that Bob will report to the IRS by 10%, so the cost is less than it appears.) This election will provide a lifetime stream of income for Lorraine if she becomes the surviving spouse. Her survivor benefit will be increased by cost of living adjustments before and after the death of her husband.

If Lorraine dies before Bob, his reduced retirement can be restored to the unreduced amount.

With Lorraine's notarized consent, Bob can choose a 5% reduction to his FERS retirement to provide a smaller 25% survivor annuity. This will protect Lorraine's ability to continue insurance under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program if Bob dies first.

If Lorraine has other income sources, such as an inheritance or proceeds from Bob's life insurance, then this might be a reasonable option. However, she should proceed with caution. Counting on an inheritance of someone who is still living can be risky. The person providing the inheritance might outlive his or her beneficiaries. And the amount of life insurance that will be adequate to replace a survivor's benefit will depend on how long Lorraine outlives Bob, if at all. It will also depend on the rate of inflation over both of their lifetimes.

With Lorraine's consent, Bob could also elect to have no reduction to his retirement under FERS. This option would end the payment of his retirement benefit (and his health insurance under FEHBP) if he dies before Lorraine. If Lorraine is depending on Bob's benefit for income and health coverage, they probably should not make this choice.

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When it comes to Thrift Savings Plan investments, the default election for a married participant is the joint annuity option with 50% survivor benefit, level payments and no cash refund. If Bob chooses any other withdrawal option, he is required to have Lorraine's notarized consent.

If Bob purchased a TSP annuity with some or all of his TSP investment, then it would depend on whether he elected a joint annuity for Lorraine to continue to receive payments after his death.

If Bob was receiving a series of monthly payments from his TSP balance, or if he hadn't started to withdraw from his TSP account at the time of his death, the balance of the account would be paid to his beneficiary.

Bob also is eligible for Social Security. It provides a special one-time death benefit lump sum payment of \$255. (Yes, that's right, \$255—it's been capped at this amount since 1954.) When Bob files for his Social Security retirement, Lorraine will be entitled to a spousal benefit based on his work record that may be higher than her own earned benefit. The spousal amount has a maximum value of 50% of Bob's full benefit amount.

As a surviving spouse, Lorraine would receive Bob's higher Social Security benefit. Her spousal benefit (or earned benefit, if higher) would cease. Lorraine can receive a reduced survivor benefit as early as age 60 if Bob dies young or a full survivor benefit if she becomes widowed at her full retirement age or later.

## Federal Couple

Suppose John is retiring under the Civil Service Retirement System and Carol is retiring under FERS. They both have more than 30 years of federal service and are retiring with above average salaries. A good way to figure out the need for a survivor benefit election would be to create a table where the value of their retirement benefits while both are living are shown. The table should have two columns for each spouse and three rows for the three sources of retirement income: CSRS or FERS benefit, Social Security and TSP. Fill in the monthly amount of each benefit while both spouses are alive and add up the total income for the couple. Then make another table showing the difference in those benefits for the surviving spouse.

They may soon see that the total income while they are both living will vary greatly from the income payable to the surviving spouse. If so, they may choose to provide a survivor benefit. All the choices above for annuities are available to John and Carol.

As long as John and Carol were both entitled to an immediate retirement (one that begins within 30 days of separation from federal employment) they won't have to worry about leaving a survivor benefit to each other in order to continue FEHBP coverage.

Remember that Social Security will pay the surviving spouse the higher of the two benefits payable while both spouses were alive. The result will be the loss of one Social Security benefit. In addition, if one spouse is retiring under CSRS, they may not receive a widow's benefit from the Social Security of the FERS spouse due to the government pension offset.

## Retirement Plan (Cont.)

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## Workshop in Japan



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John and Carol's TSP income will vary depending on whether they choose to take monthly payments or a life annuity. One strategy would be to only take the required minimum distribution from their TSP accounts while they are both living, allowing the surviving spouse to take larger payments that could last a lifetime.

## **Dual Income Couple**

In this example, Ryan is a federal employee who will retire under FERS and Erika works in the private sector. If she doesn't have a pension benefit, more weight will be added to their retirement savings in thinking about her financial security if Ryan dies first.

In addition, assuming Ryan will be providing the couple's health insurance, it will be imperative for him to provide a survivor benefit in order for Erika to maintain FEHBP coverage.

As you can see, there are a lot of variables and unknowns when making important choices at retirement that can impact the financial security of a surviving spouse. Be sure to carefully consider the benefits payable after one spouse dies as much as you consider benefits while you're both living to avoid the possibility of the surviving spouse not being able to meet his or her needs.

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## Sasebo Hosts CFAI Accreditation Workshop

By Jeremy Hazel, Assistant Chief of Training, CNRJ Fire & Emergency Services

Commander Fleet Activities Sasebo Fire & Emergency Services recently hosted the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) Quality Improvement Through Accreditation workshop. DoD Fire Departments from all over Japan sent representatives to



participate in a three day workshop. The workshop was also attended by many host nation Master Labor Contract employees. For the first time ever the Fire and Emergency Services Self-Assessment Manual (FESSAM) will be translated into the Japanese language. This will allow full participation from all members of the Fire Department and will play an integral role in ensuring that there is continuity in the accreditation process. The Accreditation Process is a huge team effort and requires buy in and cooperation from all members of the department. Here in Japan, this cannot be accomplished without the support of our host nation Japanese firefighters and staff. Whether a department is already accredited or is just starting out in the process, this workshop has definitely set everyone on a course for success as they strive to make their departments "better, stronger, and more powerful".

## Now What?

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## Your First Day As Chief

Editor's note: The following is an excerpt from the new IAFC publication, *You're the Fire Chief, Now What?* put out by the IAFC Volunteer and Combination Officers Section and the Executive Fire Officers Section. You can download the entire publication <a href="https://example.com/here">here</a>.

Congratulations! It's your first day on the job as the newly appointed fire chief. You've found your office, the coffee pot and the washroom, but now what do you do? There are several paths that may have brought you to this day when you are occupying the highest office of the department, but generally speaking, it happens in one of two ways. Preferably there was a predetermined opening (such as the previous chief retiring or moving on with notice) and the powers that be selected you over other candidates after an interview process and offered you the position and both sides came to an agreement as to when you would take command.

The next scenario is a rapid appointment, where the previous fire chief was in the office the day before but was fired, suspended, passed away or for whatever reason is no longer available for the job. Whatever the circumstances that brought you to this day, you are here and you must now begin to navigate the office and the responsibilities that come with it.

For those who are rapidly appointed, not only do you have to deal with the surprise factor that is being felt throughout the entire organization, but you may also be dealing with the interim tag, which means you are in charge until a permanent chief is named. Whether or not you are a candidate for the permanent position may influence your actions, and this document will spend extra time on such challenging scenarios.

This document is intended to guide you as a new department chief—even if you have previously served as a chief elsewhere—through the entry stages of your appointment. Whether you have been a member of the organization for 10 years or have been hired from the outside to take the reins of the organization, there are commonalities and things you will need to get up to speed on immediately, as 911 calls will not stop to allow you a honeymoon.

Your community demands prompt professional service regardless of the chief's familiarity with the job, and the department's external financial obligations certainly aren't going away because you're new. You do not have the luxury in leadership to have the organization slow down or stop while you figure everything out. You will face decisions on your first day; sometimes those decisions will be critical to the operations of today and the coming days. You will need to make the best-informed decision you can with the tools, resources and personnel you have. The first day on the job as fire chief will undoubtedly test you, as most problems that existed yesterday still exist today and now everyone has to adjust to your leadership and management style, which may be vastly different than that of the past occupant of your new high-back leather chair.



## Now What? (Cont.)

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them all, but the key will be how you navigate the troubled waters, learn, recover and move forward. This guidance document was assembled by an accomplished committee and is intended to point you in the proper direction and guide you toward sound decision-making. The members of the committee were all once new to their positions as you are now. Some were recently appointed while others have been serving for many years; in either case, they were interested in sharing their experiences and lessons learned to help guide you through this challenge.

You are no doubt going to feel stress through this time. Although it is hard to

Accept now that there are going to be pitfalls and you won't be able to avoid

You are no doubt going to feel stress through this time. Although it is hard to see at the moment, there is strength in stress. However, we must learn how to surround ourselves with confidants and resources to help us manage the situation and relieve the stress.

It is imperative that you take care of your mental health and physical wellbeing. Stress does a lot of strange things to the body; we know it can disrupt your sleep patterns, eating and temperament and can affect the way you treat your own family. Allow the significant people in your life to be there for you. Be sure to take some deep breaths, both literally and somewhat figuratively—and by this we mean build in some true time off to focus on your family, your rest and your own personal wellbeing.

It is our nature to push hard through difficult transitions and not take time for ourselves, which has the potential to lead to unexpected time off through sick leave or struggles at home with your spouse or children. Many of the items you are tackling can wait a day or so as long as you are properly prioritizing, which is what this guide is intended to help with.

In order to help guide you through your department personnel mental wellbeing, consult VCOS's <u>Yellow Ribbon Report: Under the Helmet and Internal Size-up</u>. It says, "As a chief or chief officer, it is incumbent on you to accept personal responsibility for facilitating and maintaining the emotional and physical health of your responders. We need you to recognize and accept emotional wellness as a legitimate obligation for every responder and department—yes, even yours."

In order to successfully lead the women and men of your organization, you must keep yourself in good health and lead by example. The Yellow Ribbon Report and many other important resources are available online at <a href="VCOS.org">VCOS.org</a>.

We also want to encourage you to keep up (or get started) with your physical wellbeing. If you are not a regular at the gym or in a physical fitness program, consult with your physician and get started. Get a pedometer and set a step goal, join a pickup basketball league, swim some laps—whatever is necessary to get some exercise. The life of a fire chief is often spent parked in a chair for meetings, paperwork and traveling to meetings and events. A lot of those meetings include food and refreshments, which unfortunately are often not particularly healthful. You will need to step up your physical wellness game to maintain a healthy lifestyle that will keep you in your position for many years to come.



## Now What? (Cont.)

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### External Hire Scenario - Advance Reconnaissance

If you're an external hire, a number of things will happen in advance of being appointed chief. Wages, hours and benefits will be discussed and negotiated. Moving expenses may be considered or at least offset. And time will likely be provided to allow appropriate notice and transition from both the agencies that you are leaving and joining. Regardless of the length of transition, do not wait to get started!

It is highly recommended that as the new chief you call and schedule some time in the fire station and at the city or town hall. Recommend a lunch meeting with the interim or acting chief; get an idea of the operational priorities and the work plan for the year. Ask about the existing command structure and where the department is heading under its leadership. If the interim chief is going to remain on staff, ask how they see themselves being most useful to the organization. Have a copy of the organizational structure and annual report available to aid in the conversation.

When stopping at city hall, request a meeting with the highest-level municipal (city, town, or village) administrator. Get an idea of their impression of the fire department. You will want to have this meeting independent of current department staff. Municipal leadership may have concerns over the operation of the fire department and in the presence of fire department staff municipal support staff may not be as open in their comments.

You will want to know the relationship that exists between the department and city hall with the intention of continuing good relationships and creating (or repairing) those that are not. If you report to an elected official, advise them that you are going to be in the area and see if they would like to meet with you. Maximize the trip and bring your notebook.

Request a current copy of the municipal budget from the finance director or equivalent. A brief meeting with the finance director can provide information about the financial status of the department. The director will most likely be happy to share their methods of controlling expenses and any past issues finance had with the fire department's budget management and purchasing trends. Get on the good side of finance early; their influence on planning and purchasing is significant.

One last stop should include a visit with the city clerk and human resources. You can ask for any information that is releasable via open-records request. Because you are not yet the department head, you will not be authorized to receive sensitive or confidential information. But the clerk can provide information about any citizen concerns and complaints that have been submitted about fire-department activities. HR can give an indication whether there are ongoing concerns or if a meeting is needed to discuss personnel issues soon after your appointment; there may be a reason an external candidate was preferred.

These are just some of the things that can be done in advance of your appointment. It allows you to report on your first day with an idea of what your priorities will be. It will also provide you the ability to structure a 100-day plan that addresses the variables of your new organization. Why wait? Hit the ground running.

## Near Miss Report

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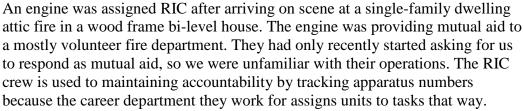
## Mutual Aid Accountability

www.firefighternearmiss.com

A Mayday was called during a structure fire. The crew assigned to RIT was unable to determine how many people were operating inside the structure due to the fact they had different ways of handling accountability in their department and the two departments had not trained together.



### **EVENT DESCRIPTION**



When the interior crew called a Mayday, the RIC crew was unsure of how many people were inside because the volunteer department didn't have the same method of assigning tasks. Also, it did not seem like the IC heard the Mayday announced on the radio so he may have been unaware of it until the apparatus on scene began sounding their air horns. The RIC crew heard the radio announcement, so they began reacting to it, but there was some confusion for a short time.

Since there was not an announcement by the IC to repeat the Mayday and make everyone on scene aware of the situation, the truck company operating a heavy stream near the interior crew (but not endangering them) did not understand why they were being told to shut down their stream, which delayed the RIC crew's entry into the area.; The Mayday was quickly cleared when the crew exited the building, so no one was hurt, and the situation was not made worse by the chain of events, but it seems like an excellent opportunity to learn.

View the report: Communication and Accountability Issues Cause Confusion



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### TAKE AWAYS

Communication, or lack thereof, is one of the top contributing factors cited in a majority of LODD and Near Miss reports. Common language and terminology are critical when members from different agencies are working together at an emergency incident.

Crews who are expected to work together must train and practice together before they can be expected to safely and effectively perform under stressful emergency conditions.

Military Firefighter Branch

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## Navy F&ES POCs

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## Navy Fire & Emergency Services (N30)

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http://www.cnic.navy.mil/om/operating forces support/fire and emergency services.html DSN 288



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## Navy F&ES Hall of Fame



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## **Distribution**



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