



- In This Issue*
- From the Navy Fire Chief
 - Last Alarms
 - Taking Care of Our Own
 - Navy Jargon
 - Back in the Day
 - CVN 69 Drill
 - VIP Visits Academy
 - Never Off Duty
 - TSP Tips
 - Brian Dean RIP
 - Cancer Factsheet
 - Fire Prevention Corner
 - RTF Drills in Hawaii
 - SA Matters!
 - New Facility Portsmouth
 - Navy Fire Panama City
 - Leadership Crucible
 - New Rigs for Naples
 - El Centro Memorial Wall
 - **Go Navy ! Beat Army !**
 - Hawaii Rock Stars
 - Sasebo News
 - Around the Firehouse
 - Federal Wildland Proposal
 - ESAMS Update
 - Lifesaving Awards
 - Awards Season Open
 - Navy F&ES Legacy
 - Navy F&ES HQ Staff

From the Navy Fire Chief

Greetings, With the holidays approaching, my mind turns to those (military, civilians, local nationals, and our contractors) who will be serving on duty ***Standing the Watch*** away from their families. I also think about Veterans who have few social connections or may not have stable housing. Cold days with less light can be difficult for many and holiday celebrations may be stressful. This year has certainly been hard, as many are still recovering from the effects of the government shutdown . For those of us who can; I encourage you to reach out to your battle buddies, shipmates, wingmen and colleagues you haven't heard from in a while. Check in and see if they are okay. Connection is a powerful tool that may help someone who is struggling. A call, a text or an invitation to meet can make a difference to someone who is feeling lonely.

This holiday season is an excellent opportunity for our F&ES teams to reach out and become fully engaged with our Installation and local community. Parades, holiday events, and community relations are all important activities and solidify the point the F&ES Dept is part of the community.



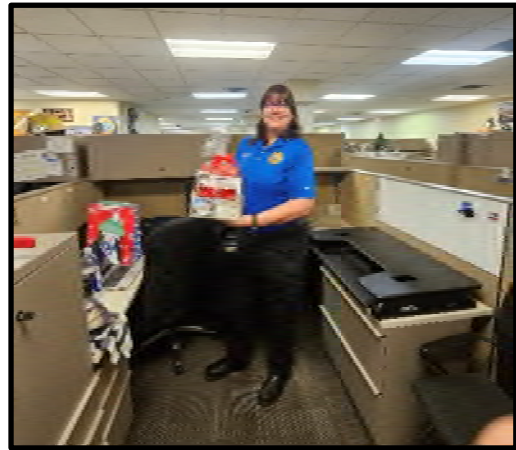
NAS Oceana F&ES getting into the Holiday Spirit; Firefighters joined families at the NAS Oceana exchange for Breakfast with Santa



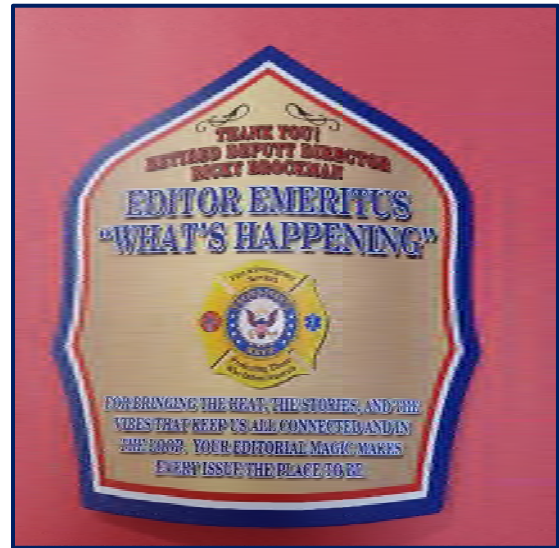


As we approach the end of the year, we believe this is a good time to kick off the **Best Mustache** Contest, within Navy F&ES. Please send your entry to carl.b.glover.civ@us.navy.mil. Request all entries include Installation, Rank, and Full Name along with your photo. All entries must be received NLT 20 Jan, and we will announce the Winner in the Jan Newsletter ... **Best Wishes to All**

Take a couple of minutes to view this short clip of the **DoW Fire Academy Rescue Course**: <https://youtu.be/etd74MApGuY?si=hH1VUxKYS7OVf-OD&sfnsn=mo>



CNIC N30 Staff Mary Anderson Winner of a Holiday Gift contest, hosted by Valerie ... Yay



A few days ago, we were excited to have Retired Deputy Director Ricky Brockman stop by our office for lunch and some mentoring; we are always eager to hear his wisdom and share stories. Ricky was presented with a Cheese Head Koozie, a Helmet Front and a CNIC Fire T-Shirt. **Nice to Stay in Touch**

To submit stories and photos to **What's Happening**, send an e-mail to Director, Navy F&ES, Carl B. Glover at carl.b.glover.civ@us.navy.mil



Last Alarms

The USFA reported 74 line of duty deaths in 2025. The following line of duty deaths were reported since our last issue:



Michael Booke
Northampton, PA

Julius Snyder
Camden, NJ

Michael Heithaus
Evansville, AR

Jim McCoy
Alderson, OK

Jimmy Townsnd
Moncks Corner, SC



Lest We Forget

Navy F&ES Line of Duty Deaths in December



Unknown Firefighters
Naval Station Pearl Harbor, HI
7 December 1941



Kenneth Jeffery
Naval Submarine Base
New London, CT
31 December 2003





Taking Care of Our Own Program

There are *three* DoD firefighter in the Taking Care of Our Own Program.

Name	Location	Point of Contact
Charles Latham	NAS Patuxent River, MD	joyce.a.aud.civ@us.navy.mil
Andrew Duran	NAVBASE Ventura County, CA	david.g.santillo@us.navy.mil
Troy Dament	NAS Fallon, NV	<u>cory.j.prough.civ@us.navy.mil</u>

The “Taking Care of Our Own” Program, a sub-set of the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program (VLTP), was developed to support Department of Defense (DoD), Fire & Emergency Services (F&ES) personnel with a medical emergency (a medical condition of an employee or a family member of a DoD F&ES employee that is likely to require an employee's absence from duty for a prolonged period of time and to result in a substantial loss of income resulting from the unavailability of paid leave). The Program invites all DoD F&ES personnel to donate ONE HOUR of annual leave to any DoD F&ES member approved to receive leave under the VLTP to enable F&ES personnel in trouble to focus on recovery rather than financial distress.



NAVY "FOOTLOOSE"

Jargon

The title of Kevin Bacon's iconic '80s dance movie was based on the term for a flapping sail. When not tied correctly (loose), the bottom of the sail (the foot) flutters in the wind. Fortunately, any sailor who knows the ropes can tie up loose ends and set everything ship-shape quickly.

(BONUS: The terms *tipsy* and *three sheets to the wind* are colloquially used to denote levels of inebriation and refer to how much sail - referred to as a sheet by those in the know - is loose.)





Back in the Day - U.S. Navy Turbine Fire Pump

By Tom Shand

During post-World War II era, structural and shipboard firefighting was dominated with the use of high-pressure fog streams along with low volume streams as developed by Lloyd Layman as a result of testing conducted at Fort McHenry, MD. This resulted in two landmark books entitled *Fire Fighting Tactics* in 1953 followed by *Attacking and Extinguishing Interior Fires* in 1955. Typical fire streams consisted of Rockwood Navy fog nozzles producing 60 gpm with heavier streams relying upon 2^{1/2}- inch playpipe nozzles with smooth bore stacked tips. During this period, Navy pumpers were typically rated at 750 gpm with some installations operating 1000 gpm apparatus where the gasoline engine was capable of producing this rated flow.

During 1976 the U.S. Coast Guard partnered with the Northern Research & Engineering Corporation under contract with NASA to develop a portable firefighting module that could be delivered via trailer or helicopter to combat shipboard fires. The fire pump was driven by an Allison gas turbine motor and was capable of producing 2000 gpm at 150 psi while supplying two custom fabricated four-inch monitors. The module weighs 2700 pounds with the fire pump taking suction through ten-inch fiberglass pipe into the two-stage pump.



This technology led the U.S. Navy to investigate this type of appliance for other operational capabilities including dewatering, supplemental water supply and reactor cooling as well as shipboard emergencies and other incidents that would require large caliber streams that were beyond the capabilities of standard structural engines. Once again, the Navy partnered with NASA to develop the firefighting module with Ochsner Pumps of Linz, Austria chosen to supply the fire pump components with the goal of developing a 5000-gpm rated module.

One of the Coast Guard modules was placed on loan to the Navy and was tested at the North Island Naval Air Station in San Diego. The pump module received property number 31-9876 and mounted on a twin axle trailer which carried six, ten-foot lengths of hard sleeve. A 2000 gpm monitor was mounted on a 1979 Dodge Power Wagon with a Reading utility body, assigned property number 71-0272 that carried various adapters, nozzles and several hundred feet of 4-inch hose. This system was dubbed Fire Fly 1 and was tested at several Navy installations where large caliber streams could rapidly be developed using the available static water supplies and drafting sites.

Another use of the turbine powered fire pump was adopted by the City of Miami Fire Rescue Department for use on former Army LARC craft for use as a fireboat. This work was done with the assistance of the Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, AL and Kinetic Technology with the system installed by Ladder Towers Incorporated in Ephrata, PA. The Fire Fly II pump was rated at 3000 gpm with the fire boat having three monitors and could function both on land and in the water depending upon the incident. During 1983, the prototype module was completed using an Allison model KB250-C30 gas turbine engine rated at five hundred horsepower mated with a model CWFY III Ochsner two stage pump rated at 5000 gpm.



The entire module weighed 3600 pounds and was mounted on a twin axle trailer and was known as Fire Fly III. This system was tested at a number of U.S. Navy installations including the Norfolk Naval base for potential use as an auxiliary fire suppression appliance. A 1984 Chevy K3500 chassis was outfitted by Steeldraulics Products Incorporated with an aluminum utility body equipped

with a fixed 5000 gpm monitor along with four portable monitors. Navy property number 319982 was assigned to this vehicle which was equipped with hydraulic outriggers to stabilize the chassis due to the nozzle reaction of the large monitor.

For several reasons, the Fire Fly system was not adopted by the Navy or other branches of the military services. As history often repeats itself, large volume fire pump systems are again being introduced for use in both military and civilian fire departments.

Note: CNIC F&ES is currently deploying new 3,000 gpm portable firefighting pumps for select Ports and Shipyards to provide large gpm capabilities to assist with shipboard firefighting. Name is TBD, perhaps "*Fire Fly 3K*"

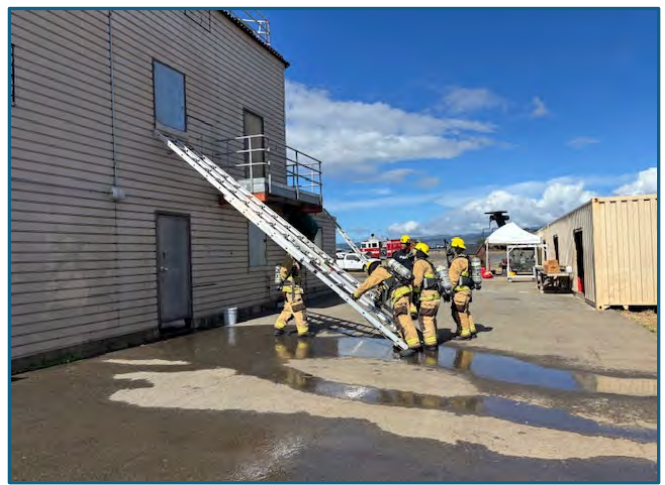
Confined Space Rescue Drill Aboard CVN 69



Naval Support Activity Portsmouth Supervisory Captain Bryan Ballard and other firefighters along with USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) and Norfolk Naval Shipyard personnel perform the 2025 Confined Space Rescue Drill.



RDML Brad Collins Visits CNRH Recruit Fire Academy





Never Really Off Duty

Story by Susanne Greene, Defense Visual Information Distribution Services

While on a flight from Washington Dulles National Airport to South Carolina, Naval Support Activity (NSA) Portsmouth Supervisory Captain Bryan Ballard assisted a passenger in need of medical assistance. The person was in cardiac arrest and, after 19 years in Fire & Emergency Services, Ballard's expertise paid off.

"It was a small plane, I think there were only about 50 people on there, and I could see that the flight attendant had a nervous expression on his face," said Ballard. "So, I turned around, looked, and I could see a younger guy trying to get this woman out of her seat and I went over and helped."



Another passenger had asked the flight attendant for an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and while waiting, Captain Ballard checked for the distressed passenger's pulse and did not detect one.

"We were provided the AED, I put the pads on her, I told the other passenger to analyze her with the AED, and the system recommended 'shock advised,' so we shocked her, and then I started doing chest compressions on her," said Ballard. "And after about two minutes, I checked for a pulse again, and I could feel a really weak pulse, but after that, we just kind of tried to maintain her airways so she could breathe."

The pilots made an emergency landing in South Carolina where first responders boarded the plane and rushed the distressed passenger to a local hospital for further medical assistance.



Captain Ballard was commended by NSA-Portsmouth Commanding Officer Captain R. Stephen Ramsey for his decisive action and response to a life-threatening medical emergency while he was off duty.

"By rendering aid without being called upon, and while off duty, he upheld and elevated the noble tradition of our profession," said Ramsey in the award citation. "His conduct is in keeping with the finest ideals of valor and reflects great credit upon himself and the United States Navy."

Ballard finds the most rewarding part of his job working with the public and helping people, even during unexpected times like on his flight.

"When you go on calls or if something happens off duty like it did, try and stay professional," said Ballard. "The individual you're assisting thinks it's the worst day of their life."

BZ Captain Ballard !



TSP Tips – Choosing the Right Tax Treatment for You

Tax now or tax later? You decide:

One of the most important decisions you'll make about your TSP investments is when to pay income tax on your money—when it goes in or when you take it out. As a reminder, here are the basic differences:

Traditional TSP (pre-tax):

- You haven't yet paid income tax on the money in your traditional TSP balance.
- When you withdraw from your traditional TSP balance, you'll pay income tax on both contributions and earnings from investment growth.
- If you're making contributions to your traditional TSP balance, and you're eligible for Agency/Service Matching Contributions, your traditional TSP contributions will be matched, and the matching contributions go into your traditional TSP balance.

Roth TSP (after-tax):

- You already paid income tax on the money in your Roth TSP balance.
- When you withdraw from your Roth TSP balance, your contributions are always tax-free.
- Earnings from investment growth in your Roth TSP balance are also tax-free if they're "qualified" by meeting BOTH these conditions:
 - it's been at least 5 years since January 1 of the year you made your first Roth contribution, and
 - you're age 59½ or older, permanently disabled,* or deceased.
- If you're making contributions to your Roth TSP balance, and you're eligible

for Agency/Service Matching Contributions, your Roth TSP contributions will be matched, and the matching contributions go into your traditional TSP balance.

(Agency/service contributions always go into your traditional balance, and this isn't something you can elect to change.)

Special rules for uniformed services contributing tax-exempt pay:

If you're a member of the uniformed services and receive tax-exempt pay for serving in a combat zone, you have more to consider about the choice between traditional and Roth TSP contributions. You can find out more about how tax-exempt contributions affect your traditional and Roth TSP balances on our website.

How to decide what's right for you:

There's no right or wrong choice between traditional and Roth tax treatments—each has its own benefits. The key is to think about your future tax rate: Will you pay more or less in taxes during retirement (or later in retirement, if you're already retired) than you do now?

- While you can't predict the future, asking yourself a few thoughtful questions can help you make a decision that fits your situation. Are you in a low tax bracket now?
- Will you have other taxable income in retirement?
- Will you keep working after you start taking TSP distributions?

If you answered "yes" to these questions, Roth TSP might be the better choice since you can pay taxes now while your tax rate is lower.



On the other hand:

- Are you in a high tax bracket now?
- Will you have fewer expenses in retirement and need less money than your current income?



If so, traditional TSP could help you save more now by putting off paying taxes until later at a lower tax rate.

There are other things to think about when deciding on tax treatments. If you're not sure what's right for you, it might help to talk to a tax advisor.

You don't have to choose just one:

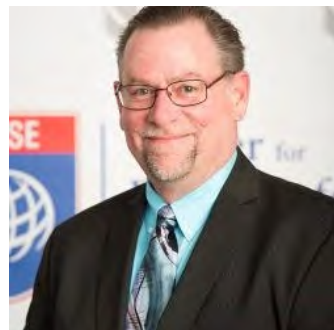
You can choose between Roth, traditional, or both—whatever fits your needs. If you're making contributions, you can also change your tax choice any time through your payroll system.

And starting in January 2026, you'll be able to move money already in your TSP account from your traditional (pre-tax) balance to your Roth (after-tax) balance. This is called a Roth in-plan conversion. If you don't already have a Roth balance, your first conversion will create one.



Brian Dean Last Alarm

Brian Dean was a strong advocate of military fire & emergency services and was instrumental in the successes of numerous Army, Marine Corps, Navy and Air Force F&ES organizations in their quest for continuous improvement. His absence will be felt across the entire Fire community.



Chief Brian Richard Dean, CFO, EFO, Assistant Fire Chief (Ret.), 61, passed away on November 20, 2025 surrounded by family and friends after an almost two-year battle with cancer. He openly shared his journey, the ups and downs, and encouraged others, especially those in the fire service, to get cancer screenings.

Brian began his career in the fire service as a volunteer with Lake Sue Fire Department while in high school. Part of his volunteer service was to photograph the scenes. After graduating from Winter Park High School, Brian joined the Winter Park Fire Department as a firefighter/EMT. He successfully moved through the ranks as an Engineer, Lieutenant, and Battalion Chief. He retired in 2010 as the Assistant Fire Chief for Administration. Brian began working with the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) in the late 1990s. He served as an accreditation manager, peer assessor, team leader, mentor, conference presenter, instructor, technical advisor, and Technical Advisor Program Manager.

Brian touched many people's lives in ways we may never know. He was always willing to give a listening ear and offer advice if asked. If he saw a need and could meet it, he did with no fanfare and expectations. He was kind and loving. He strived for excellence in himself and others, and those that achieved it were "rock stars".



Cancer Factsheet



Contaminated Gear: At a Fire Incident

Procedures to lessen firefighters' exposures from contaminated personal protective equipment (PPE)

Decon and Doff

As soon as it is safe to do so, complete preliminary exposure reduction and doff (remove) your PPE. See doffing sequence on the back.

Bag your gear

While wearing medical gloves, place your gear in a bag and seal it. Do not rehab near dirty gear as it will off-gas. If possible, place bagged gear in a non-passenger compartment of the apparatus for transport to the station.

Clean your skin

Use soap and water or cleansing wipes, to remove contaminants from your skin as soon as possible. Shower upon returning to the station.

Clean your gear

Launder your gear by itself and follow manufacturer specifications. Don't forget to clean your helmet, boots, radio, and other equipment.



Photo courtesy of the Fire Safety Research Institute, part of UL Research Institutes

Reducing Exposure to Contaminated Gear

At a fire incident, you can be exposed to harmful contaminants, which may increase your risk of cancer over time. During post-fire operations, chemical contaminants picked up by your PPE and other equipment can transfer to your skin, where they may be absorbed. You may even ingest them depending on your hand hygiene or inhale them due to off-gassing. There are several ways you can reduce your likelihood of being exposed to contaminants on PPE at a fire incident.

Preliminary Exposure Reduction

Going through preliminary exposure reduction (gross decontamination) after completing firefighting operations can help wash away large particles and other contaminants on your gear. Using detergent or soap with a scrub brush has been shown to be more effective than water alone.

Doffing PPE

Properly doffing your PPE can help reduce your chance of a secondary exposure. Hoods and gloves have been found to be highly contaminated after firefighting. Over the head doffing of your hood can help keep contaminants on the outer layer of the hood from contacting neck skin, which is more absorptive than other areas of your body. A HAZMAT-style removal of your gloves can lessen the contamination that is transferred to your hands. This is important because your hands can spread contamination to other body parts, including your mouth. After doffing, placing gear in a sealed bag can help limit your exposure to off-gassing contaminants.

Cleaning Your Skin

Immediately after doffing your gear, use soap and water or skin cleaning wipes to clean your skin. Skin cleansing wipes have been shown to effectively remove some common contaminants.

The NIOSH National Firefighter Registry for Cancer is investigating how protective practices impact firefighters' cancer risk.

Learn more at www.cdc.gov/NFR





Fire Prevention Corner

By Mark Weil, Assistant Chief of Fire Prevention (Retired), Navy F&ES Hall of Fame #51



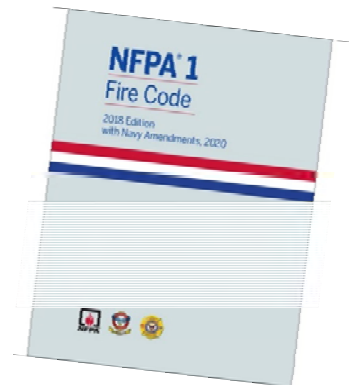
“Means of egress” is a cornerstone piece of the fire inspector’s lexicon. In fact, the terminology is so well established that means of egress needs to be revisited from time to time to ensure an adequate and accurate understanding is retained.

Buildings must be designed so that exits are always readily accessible and access to those exits is arranged so that they can be reached at all times. To do this, there are some fundamental design concepts to follow to ensure that the means of egress is arranged for an exit to be reached by occupants in a safe and efficient manner. Means of egress design must consider the distance occupants travel to an exit, how far apart exits are located from one another, and the arrangement of the paths of travel within the means of egress. *NFPA 1 with Navy Amendments 14.4 Means of Egress Reliability* is your primary reference to verify a building meets those criteria.

As a reminder, the means of egress is made up of three parts: the exit access, the exit and the exit discharge. Exit access includes all travel within occupied areas of the building leading up to an exit. Exits are those portions of the means of egress that are separated from other building spaces protecting the space from the effects of fire, such as an enclosed exit stair or a door to the outside. Exit discharge is the travel leading from the exit to the public way (designated and approved point of safety.)

By far the most common violation of the code in regard to the means of egress is the semi-permanent or permanent blocking of doors, aisles and passageways. Two other common violations are concealing exits from view and not properly marking the means of egress with internally illuminated exit signs.

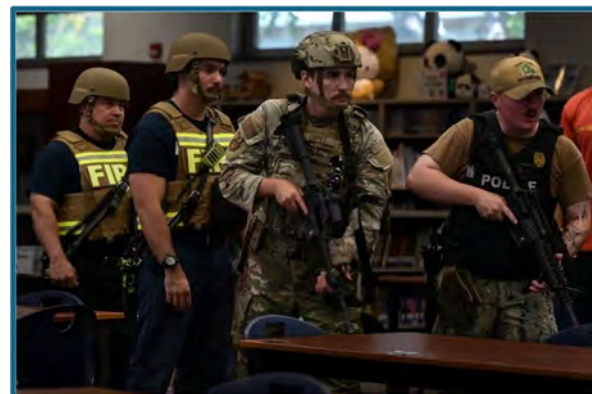
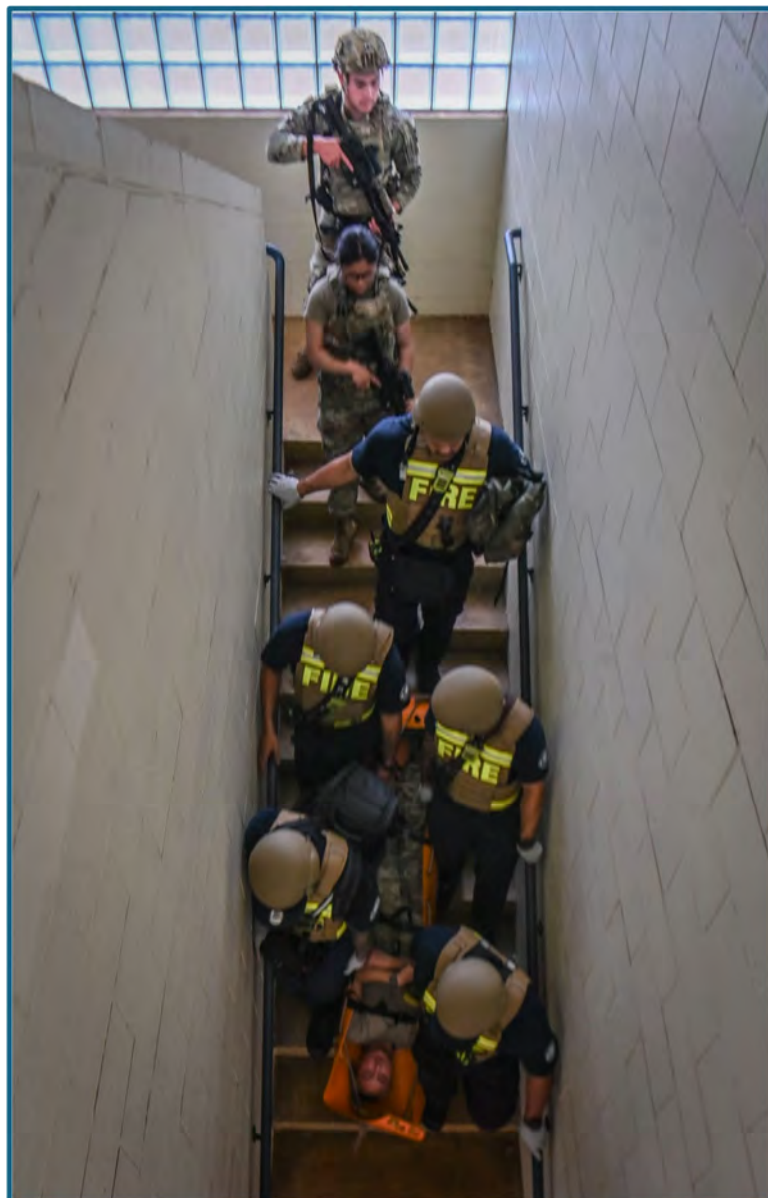
Other considerations when evaluating the means of egress include compromising the integrity of the construction components. Examples include when the integrity of the fire-resistance component is compromised by public works or a contractor who penetrates rated assemblies while performing utility work then not realizing this may not be an issue affecting the rated assemblies. Also, a tenant may innocently prop open a stairway door to make it easier to reenter. Both of these common occurrences can render some part of the means of egress less effective or perhaps completely ineffective. Adding security devices to door assemblies that don’t meet *NFPA 1 with Navy Amendments 14.5.2 Locks, Latches, and Alarm Devices* requirements as these devices can also affect the means of egress.



The exit, exit access and exit discharge must be maintained in a clear and open condition. The exit must remain completely free of any storage or materials and is dedicated solely to the movement of the building occupants in exiting. Ensuring the means of egress is maintained is the foundation of any good fire inspection.



Rescue Task Force Training Hawaii



Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam Security Department / 647 Security Forces Squadron collaborated with Navy Region Hawaii Fed Fire to initiate a new standard operating procedure to implement rescue task force (RTF) concept. Exercises and battle drills were conducted at Hickam Elementary School.

“The Rescue Task Force (RTF) program has become a national model for the triage, treatment, and rapid transport of casualties from a crisis site to higher definitive care”

NOTE: Navy F&ES utilizes Hostile Event Rescue Team (HERT) terminology to define capabilities where Navy F&ES responders are trained and authorized to provide EMS in a Warm Zone.



Frustration – A Barrier to Situational Awareness

By Rich Gasaway

Have you ever found yourself so frustrated at an individual or a situation that you become fixated on that issue? When this happens, oftentimes, we become hyper focused on the individual or the situation and can lose awareness of the bigger picture. When this occurs, critical clues and cues, essential to the formation of situational awareness, may be missed.

Frustration can hijack your attention:

Frustration is an emotional state that can evoke anger, disappointment and other responses that can capture and hold your attention. In fact, it can be difficult to let go of something that causes frustration, meaning it can be challenging to shift attention away from the frustrating situation and refocus on something else.

Thus, frustration can impact your ability to capture and comprehend the meaning of information that is essential to the formation of situational awareness because your brain is pre-occupied with frustration. Here's an example.

You find yourself in charge at an emergency scene and give an assignment to a crew to perform a critical task. Because you understand the importance of setting expectations as a component of situational awareness, you establish a time in your mind by which the crew should complete the task. Let's assume that time-to-task-completion for this example is six minutes.

Eight minutes into the incident, the task is not complete. Ten minutes into the incident... still not complete. Twelve minutes in... nada. This may cause several situational awareness impacting responses. First, you may become confused as to why the assignment is not yet complete. This may cause you to inquire to the crew about what is taking so long.

If the response makes sense and is acceptable, you may ask the crew for an estimated time for task completion and

adjust your expectations accordingly. If the response does not make sense and you find it unacceptable (perhaps because their delay in task completion is impacting your entire incident outcome expectations) this can lead to frustration. The frustration can, in turn, cause you to hyper focus on that crew or the task they have been assigned to complete.

Rich Gasaway's Advice:

It is easy to become frustrated, especially when someone is not meeting our expectations. At an incident scene, the expectation that tasks will be completed by a certain time is important to coordinating the entire incident. One crew falls short in their task completion and causes a delay, this can cause a lot of frustration.

It is relatively easy to get caught in the trap of setting unrealistic expectations for task completion, especially if you are under stress and operating in a dynamically changing, time compressed environment. Time can become distorted under stress and this can influence how much time you "think" is passing where, in reality, the crew is making reasonable progress, albeit, not to your expectations.

When gripped by frustration, it is important to realize you may become hyper focused. If this happens, pause and reassess your expectations. Give consideration to the complexity of the task and the quantity and quality of crew members assigned to complete the task. Perhaps your expectations were skewed.



If the incident is not progressing to your expectations, this can be a warning sign that you have a flawed understanding of the magnitude or complexity of tasks being assigned and it may warrant a re-assessment, on your part, about whether the personnel you have assembled are able to accomplish the task in time to change the outcome. If they are not, give strong consideration to pulling personnel back to a safe position and reassessing your strategy.

Action Items:

1. Discuss a time when you set expectations and were frustrated when they were not met.
2. Discuss how frustration can impact your ability to pay attention to other things.
3. Discuss strategies for setting realistic expectations to avoid frustration.
4. Discuss strategies for how to reassess an incident scene and adjust expectations to reduce frustration.



Dr. Gasaway is widely considered to be one of the nation's leading authorities on human error, situational awareness and high-risk decision-making processes. His work has been chronicled in more than 450 books, book chapters, journals and website articles and he has delivered over 4,000 presentations to 100,000+ first responders, business leaders, industrial workers, medical providers, utility workers and military personnel worldwide. Dr. Gasaway served 30+ years in fire, EMS, rescue and emergency management and he held

positions of firefighter, EMT-paramedic, lieutenant, captain, assistant chief and fire chief in 6 emergency service organizations in West Virginia, Ohio and Minnesota.

Reprinted by permission [Situational Awareness Matters!](http://SituationalAwarenessMatters.com)TM

Promotion at NAS Corpus Christi



NAS Corpus Christi F&ES announces our newest promotion, Captain Emilio Rodriguez. Congratulations!



BTW: Possible contestant for the Best Navy F&ES Mustache Contest



New Public Safety Facility in Portsmouth

The Portsmouth Naval Shipyard’s public safety building, which houses the installation’s fire, police and naval security team, will be renovated and receive a 22,000-square-foot addition in a modernization effort. Congressional lawmakers have set aside \$6.5 million in federal funds for the planning and design process to expand the yard’s circa-1845 station.

“Our first responders provide for the safety of our workforce, sailors, and historical facilities day in and day out”, shipyard Commander Captain Jesse Nice said in a statement to Seacoastonline.

“This project provides those first responders a modernized and expanded facility that honors our history, our first responders and the generations who came before them.”



Navy Fire Panama City





The True Measure of a Year: Leading Where It Matters Most

As this year comes to a close, I've been thinking about what really defines a successful year. Too often, in organizations, businesses, and government, we measure success by the numbers, budgets balanced, projects completed, goals achieved. We point to the roads resurfaced, the new facilities built, the contracts closed, or the calls handled. All of that matters, but when you look at where we are today as a nation, divided in too many ways, struggling to find common ground, and questioning what leadership really looks like, those numbers only tell part of the story.

The real measure of success isn't found in reports or spreadsheets; it's found in people. In how we show up for one another. In the moments of courage, compassion, and connection that remind us who we are and why we lead. Think about your own team for a moment. What moments stand out? Maybe it was the new employee who stepped forward when no one asked, or a supervisor who took time to listen instead of reacting. Maybe it was the morning a crew covered for a coworker who was struggling, or the conversation that helped someone regain confidence after a setback. Those moments don't make the annual report, but they define the culture you build every day.

Moments That Define Us:

We've seen this play out across the country. From our firefighters and first responders in California who faced another devastating wildfire season, to the floods that swept through Texas and the tornadoes that tore across parts of the Midwest, men and women stood shoulder to shoulder, leading with courage and grace, even as some were on the front lines knowing their own homes had been destroyed. We saw it in small business owners who kept their doors open when the numbers said they shouldn't, doing everything they could to support the people who depended on them. In the trades, crews worked through record heat, material shortages, and long hours, taking care of one another on the job site and refusing to cut corners just to get it done. In manufacturing, companies adapted production lines to meet new safety standards, choosing integrity over profit and setting an example of what responsible leadership looks like in action. And in every one of those moments, whether it was a firefighter in the field, a foreman on a scaffold, or a business owner at a kitchen table, leadership wasn't defined by title or position. It was defined by purpose, courage, and the willingness to do what's right when it's hard.

You see it in the classroom, in hospitals, and across the nonprofit community, teachers, nurses, and volunteers showing up day after day, leading through compassion, not authority. That's leadership. It's not about a title or position, it's about showing up, serving others, and leaving things better than you found them. We also see it in the quiet acts of kindness that happen in every community, not the ones that make headlines, but the moments that restore faith in who we are. For me, when I was chief, it showed up in the simple things, like being part of the Toys for Tots campaign, or working with the Family Justice Center during the holidays. Those efforts weren't about publicity; they were about people.



I remember the faces of parents who came through our doors unsure how they'd provide a meal or a gift, and the relief that came when they realized they weren't alone. Those moments stay with you. The boxes of food and toys were important, but what mattered most was what they represented, hope, dignity, and community. It reminded me that leadership isn't always found in boardrooms or briefings. Sometimes, it's found in the hands that pack a food box, the officer who volunteers after shift, or the neighbor who quietly shows up to help. That's the kind of leadership that sustains a community, one act of kindness at a time.

When Leadership Is Missing:

The past several years have also reminded us of the other side of leadership, the void that's created when it's missing. We've seen organizations falter not because they lacked funding or skill, but because they lacked trust. We've watched communities drift when leaders stopped listening or started blaming, when fear replaced courage and accountability gave way to excuses. We've seen what happens when communication breaks down, when people retreat into silos, and when ego overshadows purpose. We've seen it in government too, not just in politics, but in practice.

When collaboration gives way to competition, when long-term vision is sacrificed for short term gain, and when the focus shifts from solving problems to assigning blame, everyone loses. The best public servants, whether they wear a badge, run a city department, or sit behind a council desk, understand that leadership is service. It's about doing the right thing for the people you represent, even when it's not easy or popular.

After 40 years in the fire service, Chief Randy Brugeman founded the Leadership Crucible Foundation to reshape future leadership with a focus on fostering courage, empathy and humility in leadership positions.
©2025 All Rights Reserved. Reprinted by permission.

The Power of Service:

I recently interviewed Craig Culver, co-founder of Culver's restaurants, on The Leadership Crucible Podcast, and our conversation left me thinking deeply about what it really means to measure success. Craig shared that after four decades of building one of America's most beloved restaurant brands, the true reward isn't found in sales figures or store counts, it's found in people. "At the end of every year, it's not the sales numbers or store openings that matter most; it's the people who chose to stay, to grow, and to believe in what we're building together. That's the real measure of success." — Craig Culver, Co-Founder, Culver's Restaurants His words capture the heart of what leadership is all about. Success isn't defined by how much we achieve, but by how we lead, serve, and invest in others along the way. When we focus on building people, not just performance, the legacy takes care of itself. When leadership at any level forgets that principle, progress stalls. Trust erodes. And the people who depend on that leadership are the ones who pay the price.



The Legacy We Leave:

As we move into the holiday season and take time to reflect, I'd encourage every leader to look beyond what was accomplished and focus instead on how you led. Did you lead with empathy? Did you create space for others to grow? Did you help your teams find meaning in the work when the days grew long?



Those are the questions that define not just a good year, but a lasting impact. At the end of the year, the true measure of success and leadership isn't found in what we built or earned, it's measured by the people we strengthened, the trust we earned, and the example we set. It's what endures long after the year is over. When our focus stays on what truly matters, people, purpose, and integrity, the outcomes have a way of following. Whether you lead a firehouse, a business, a classroom, a construction crew, a nonprofit, a city department, or a team at the local grocery store, positive results follow naturally when you invest in the right things first. When leaders choose integrity over image and people over profit, success becomes more than something we achieve, it becomes something we leave behind. As we turn the page on another year, I find myself reflecting not just on what was accomplished, but on what truly lasts. Each December, I think back on the projects completed and the goals achieved, but more importantly, I measure the year by the people I may have helped along the way. The doors that were opened for others to grow. The conversations that offered encouragement when someone needed a steady voice. That, to me, is the true measure of a year well lived, and of a life that leaves something meaningful behind.

Leading Forward:

If the past year reminded us of anything, it's that leadership is less about what we achieve and more about how we lead through what's given to us. No matter what your profession is, the challenges keep coming. The pace doesn't slow. But in the midst of the clatter of opinions and outrage that too often replaces understanding, the best leaders keep their focus where it belongs, on people, purpose, and integrity.

As we move into 2026, the challenges before us won't be solved by louder voices or stronger egos, they'll be solved by leaders who remember why they lead. Leadership has never been about power or position; it's about service. If we're going to address the problems we face today, we need leaders who aren't self-righteous, but self-aware. Leaders who will do the right thing for the people they're there to serve. Who lead with honesty, transparency, and integrity, and who put service over self every single time. That's the kind of leadership our communities, our organizations, and our nation need now more than ever.

Five Ways to Lead Where It Matters Most

1. Lead with Presence, Not Position:

Leadership isn't about power, it's about presence. The people around you don't need another manager; they need someone who shows up with consistency, compassion, and clarity. Presence means walking the floor, not just watching the dashboard. It means checking in, not just checking boxes. "Leadership is about being there when it matters most—not for the applause, but for the people."

2. Build Trust Before You Need It:

Trust is the single most valuable currency a leader holds, and it's built long before it's tested. Be transparent, take responsibility quickly, and give credit freely. When people trust your intentions, they'll follow your direction, even through uncertainty. "When trust is strong, challenges unite us. When it's weak, even small issues divide us."



3. Protect the “Why”

Across every sector, business, nonprofit, and government, the pattern is the same. When organizations lose sight of their purpose, they grow disconnected from their purpose and the people they serve. The focus shifts from people to process, from service to self-interest, and from integrity to image. Over time, trust erodes, culture weakens, and the mission that once inspired others becomes little more than words on a wall. Staying anchored to the “why” is what keeps leadership authentic and impact lasting. “When leaders protect the ‘why,’ they give their teams a reason to keep believing in the work.”

4. Lead for Legacy, Not Applause:

Legacy isn’t built at the end of a career, it’s built in the everyday choices that define how we lead. The most respected leaders don’t chase recognition; they build people, create trust, and leave things better than they found them. “When leaders choose integrity over image and people over profit, success becomes something we leave behind.”

Final Thought:

As we move into 2026, I believe most people in our country, our communities, and our organizations are searching for something steady, something real. They’re looking for leadership that unites rather than divides, that can debate without demeaning, and that listens long enough to truly understand. We may not agree on everything, but we can agree on this: we’re stronger when we remember why we serve and who we serve. If we lead with that in mind, if we put people before politics, purpose before process, and integrity before image, then 2026 can be more than just another year. It can be the year we start to rebuild the trust, respect, and unity that hold everything else together. Leadership has

never been about titles or applause, it’s about impact. It’s about showing up with integrity when no one’s watching, about serving others when it would be easier to serve ourselves. The world doesn’t need more volume; it needs more vision, leaders who steady the course when others lose their way. If we can lead with empathy, humility, and purpose, we’ll do more than strengthen our organizations, we’ll strengthen and empower the people within them. We’ll help heal our communities, rebuild trust, and remind others what real leadership looks like. Because in the end, that’s the work that matters. That’s the legacy worth leaving. “The real measure of leadership isn’t found in what you accomplish—it’s found in what continues to grow after you’re gone.”

Chief B’s Key Leadership Takeaways:

- We don’t have to agree on everything to move forward together. Unity isn’t about thinking alike, it’s about caring enough to listen, learn, and find common ground.
- Strong leaders don’t avoid tough conversations; they engage them with respect. Debate should sharpen ideas, not divide people.
- Listening long enough to understand, not just respond, is one of the greatest acts of leadership in a noisy world.
- Trust is built quietly, in the follow-through, in Leaders Are Readers the honesty, and in the moments when no one’s watching.
- When we put people before process and character before results, the outcomes have a way of taking care of themselves.
- Protect the “why” behind your work. Purpose keeps us anchored when the pace quickens, and the noise gets loud.
- In the end, the legacy of leadership isn’t what we accomplish, it’s the lives we strengthen and the example we leave behind.



Naples Welcomes New Fire Trucks!



The Naval Support Activity (NSA) Naples Fire Department is proud to announce the arrival and official placement in service of two brand-new “European-style” fire apparatus: a state-of-the-art pumper truck and a fully equipped rescue truck. These significant additions to our fleet replace two of our oldest apparatus and represent a \$1.1 million upgrade in our capabilities to ensure the safety of the NSA Naples community.

"These new vehicles represent a considerable investment in the future of our fire department and the safety of the people we serve," stated Fire Chief Jason Kinlaw.

These new trucks will provide several key benefits to the NSA Naples community:



Improved

Firefighter Safety: These trucks are equipped with the latest safety features, helping to protect our firefighters and minimize risks during emergency operations.

Enhanced Rescue Capabilities: The new rescue truck significantly expands our capabilities to handle a wider range of rescue scenarios.

Improved Maneuverability: Designed with a compact chassis, this trucks offer increased maneuverability,

especially within the tight confines of the base.

Reduced Downtime: These European-style trucks will benefit from local and regional supply chains for significantly decreased repair times, ensuring these crucial assets remain in service and ready to respond when needed.

The NSA Naples Fire Department is committed to providing the best possible protection and service to the base and these new trucks are a significant step forward in achieving that goal.



Fire Chief Recognized for 40 Years of Service

Story by: Fire Chief David Newcomb, photos by: Heart & Hand Care

In celebration of National First Responders Day, the city of El Centro, CA held its third annual First Responders Wall Engraving Ceremony to recognize the bravery and commitment of local heroes.



First Responders Park in El Centro CA is a vibrant community space dedicated to honoring the brave men and women of the emergency services. The park features lush green areas walking paths and playgrounds making it an ideal spot for families and visitors to relax and enjoy the outdoors. With its memorials and plaques, it serves as a thoughtful reminder of the sacrifices made by first responders in service to the community.

This year, a record seventeen individuals who have served Imperial County had their names added to the First Responders Wall.

Among those recognized was Fire Chief Nicanor (Benny) Benavidez, who served 30 years from 1955 to 1985 at Naval Air Facility El Centro and retired as the Fire Chief.

He then served an additional 10 years, from 1985 to 1995, as the Fire Chief of the Imperial County Fire Department.



Chief Benavidez is a member of the Navy F&ES Hall of Fame Class of 2008. He is the eleventh member inducted for his distinguished service to Navy F&ES.

Among his many accomplishments, he received Congressional recognition for “outstanding and invaluable service to the community”, was recognized as “Imperial County Man of the Year” by the California State Assembly, coordinated the first NFPA meeting in Mexico City and was awarded a Certificate of Commendation from State of California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services for his service to the community



Go Navy! Beat Army!



Naval District Washington firefighters from NSA Annapolis participated in the “Go Navy Beat Army” Pep Rally and Bonfire ahead of the annual Army/Navy game. The event included a DJ, performance from the US Naval Academy Band, a drone show, and a 500-pallet bonfire in which the Army mascot was burned.

At the end of the event the Navy Goat Mascot assisted with extinguishment.



Navy Region Hawaii Recognizes Rock Stars!



Commander Navy Region Hawaii (CNRH) RDML Brad Collins presents Navy Lifesaving Awards to (left photo) CNRH Firefighter/Paramedics Kameron Aceret and Lane Natori, Firefighter/EMTs Carlos Taranto, Carter Lai and Keanu Rosales. In the right photo, RDML Collins also awarded Lieutenant/EMT Ronald Wong, Driver-Operator/EMT Caleb Barrett and Firefighter/EMT Alex Vaomu.

Below, RDML Collins presents Navy Lifesaving Awards to (L-R) Firefighter/Paramedic Bernardo Moreira and Firefighter/EMT Andy Toyama. Driver-Operator/EMT Joshua Niles-Darcy receives a Certificate of Significant Achievement.



CNRH Driver/Operator/EMT Keahiowenaikalani Leith-Bowden receives his 15-year service pin (left) and Firefighter/Paramedic Channing Morita (right) is recognized for 20 years of service.





Commander Fleet Activities Sasebo News

Submitted by Kenneth Wampler, Fire Chief CFAS

CFAS Firefighters Master Technical Rope Rescue



The rugged terrain surrounding Commander Fleet Activities Sasebo (CFAS) Navy installations presents unique challenges, demanding a highly specialized skill set from our dedicated firefighters. Whether navigating rappel walls on our own training tower or conquering the steep slopes of Akasaki, Maebata and Harioshima, firefighters are constantly honing their technical rope rescue skills.

Each grueling drill is more than just practice; it's an investment in readiness. Our firefighters meticulously train to perfect the complex techniques necessary to reach those in need, no matter how precarious the situation. From mastering complex mechanical advantage systems to executing precise rappelling maneuvers, every repetition refines their expertise and reinforces their ability to react swiftly and effectively in a real-world emergency.

CNRJ F&ES & Nagasaki City Unite for Live-Fire Training



The spirit of collaboration and the pursuit of excellence were ablaze recently as Commander, Naval Region Japan (CNRJ) F&ES welcomed firefighters from Nagasaki City and Omura City Fire Departments to Commander, Fleet Activities Sasebo (CFAS) for a dynamic bi-lateral live-fire training exercise.

This vital training, held at CFAS, focused on honing critical firefighting skills and reinforcing best practices for firefighter safety. Joint teams from all three departments worked side-by-side, tackling realistic scenarios that demanded precision and teamwork. Key areas of focus included advanced hose techniques designed for efficient and effective fire suppression, and crucial man-down Rapid Intervention Team(RIT) tactics. A new concept to city departments, RIT prepares firefighters to quickly and safely rescue fellow responders who may become trapped or injured in a hazardous environment.



This training is a testament to the strong alliance between Japan and the United States. By sharing knowledge and experiences in a challenging, real-world setting, they are enhancing capabilities and strengthening partnerships among Navy and city firefighters. Congratulations to all participants on a job well done!



Around the Firehouse



CNRSE Fire & Emergency Services wrapped up the NCBC Gulfport F&ES evaluation this week, and two leaders rose to the top.

Fire Inspector Jack Healy delivered a flawless fire prevention program, earning a 100% score.

Captain David Barringer demonstrated strong command presence and control in his role as SFO during the ASHE drill, setting the standard for operational excellence.

Outstanding work from both professionals. Their performance reflects the capability and dedication of the NCBC Gulfport team.



Chief Massey visited Sioux Falls, ND represented CNRSE F&ES conducting final inspections on new apparatus at Rosenbauer Manufacturing. Despite the 7-degree weather, he pushed through to ensure these units meet the standard.

The team inspected two new rapid intervention vehicles headed to NAS Whiting Field, FL, and one new medium rescue truck bound for NS Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (if you look closely, you might even

spot Santa putting the finishing touches on the new truck.)



From the collection of Navy F&ES Hall of Famer John Wentzel



Naval Air Station Jacksonville F&ES entertaining and educating children.



Naval District Washington Engine 461 assisted Anne Arundel County on a structural fire, establishing a draft water supply



Federal Wildland Fire Shake-Up



There's major movement on a proposal that could reshape the entire federal wildfire system. For months, the Senate has been debating a plan to unify federal firefighting operations under a new U.S. Wildland Fire Service. Right now, federal fire is split between the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Forest Service. The new plan aims to simplify the system, strengthen response, and modernize how the federal government fights wildfires.

But the plan hit a roadblock when lawmakers added language that would have prevented any consolidation from moving forward. That triggered a hold from Sen. Tim Sheehy (R-MT), a former firefighting pilot and strong supporter of the reorganization.

What the Plan Would Do:

The proposal would:

- Create a new Wildland Fire Service within the Department of the Interior
- Unify Interior's existing fire operations under one structure
- Begin aligning — and eventually integrating — firefighting operations with the U.S. Forest Service
- Explore a joint federal aerial firefighting service, which could benefit U.S. contractors and strengthen nationwide aviation capability

Supporters say this could cut red tape, reduce duplicated efforts, and get boots and aircraft where they're needed faster during major incidents.

Not Everyone Agrees:

Some former USFS officials, conservation groups, and lawmakers worry the shift could disrupt operations during a dangerous fire era. Earlier drafts of the budget bills even tried to force a pause to study potential impacts. That's the language Sheehy successfully pushed to remove.

Why This Matters:

If the plan moves forward, it could reshape:

- How federal wildfire programs are staffed and funded
- How aircraft are shared and deployed
- How Interior and the Forest Service coordinate large-scale incidents
- How future budgets support the nation's fire workforce

This is one of the biggest structural debates in federal wildfire management in decades — and now, the roadblock slowing it down may be gone.

Congress is still working through other disputes, but this is a significant step toward finalizing the fiscal 2026 budget and potentially advancing the new Wildland Fire Service.



Navy Fire at Key West Christmas Parade



We had a great time at the City of Key West Holiday Parade! 🎄 It was amazing seeing so many members of our community line the streets. Happy Holidays, Key West, and thank you for your ongoing support of our military!



Shipboard Drills at NAVBASE Coronado



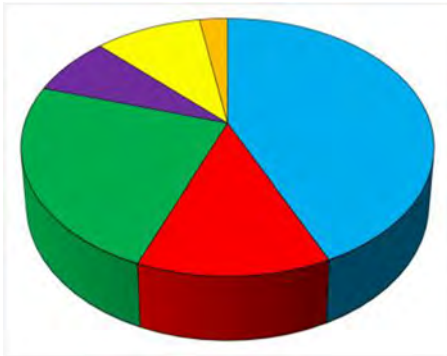


ESAMS Corner Update



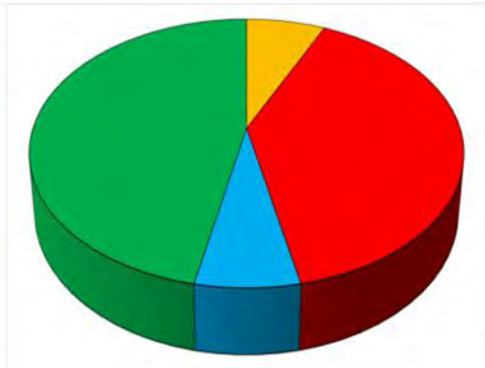
CY 2025 Statistics (01 January – 30 November)

Operations:



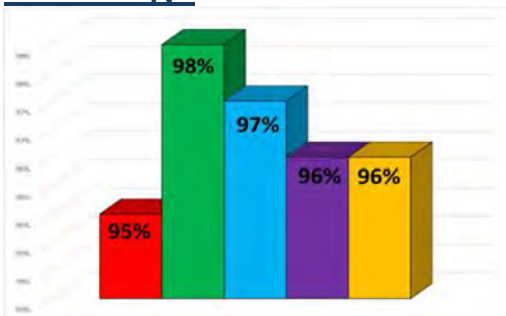
Rescue & EMS	22,953
Hazardous	6,803
False Alarm	12,653
Service Calls	4,053
Good Intent	5,296
Fires	1,402
Total	53,160

Prevention:



Fire Public Ed Classes	3,904
Hot Work Permits	23,548
Inspections	27,762
Building Evacuation Drills	4,150
Total	59,364

Training:



EMS	97%
Proficiency	95%
Emergency Management	98%
Safety	96%
DoD Certification	96%

Mishaps Reported: 33 and Total Lost Work Days: 5





Life Saving Awards



To date in calendar year 2025, 164 individual Life Saving Award certificates have been awarded for **29 Lives Saved** by Navy F&ES Crews.

Provider	Region	Award #	Incident Type
Driver/Operator Nathan Lynch	CNRNW	3	Cardiac Arrest
Firefighter/EMT	CNRNW	1	Cardiac Arrest
Firefighter/Paramedic Gabriel Sasaki	CNRH	5	Cardiac Arrest
Firefighter/Paramedic Arlene Koh	CNRH	4	Cardiac Arrest
Acting Battalion Chief John Scanlan	CNRH	5	Cardiac Arrest
Lieutenant/EMT Jason Tollefson-Oili	CNRH	1	Cardiac Arrest
Firefighter/EMT Lenny Au	CNRH	1	Cardiac Arrest
Firefighter/EMT Andrew Uyehara	CNRH	1	Cardiac Arrest
Firefighter/EMT Joshua Peru	CNRH	1	Cardiac Arrest
Firefighter/Paramedic Gabriel Sasaki	CNRH	6	Cardiac Arrest
Firefighter/Paramedic Samantha Blanchard	CNRH	1	Cardiac Arrest
Acting Battalion Chief Charles Volhein	CNRH	1	Cardiac Arrest
Lieutenant/EMT Jason Tollefson-O'ili	CNRH	2	Cardiac Arrest
Firefighter/EMT Jarrett Takahashi	CNRH	1	Cardiac Arrest
Firefighter/EMT Matthew Ebel	CNRH	1	Cardiac Arrest
Firefighter/EMT Ethan Lawson	CNRH	2	Cardiac Arrest



Annual Awards Season Open



Attention The 2025 Navy Fire & Emergency Services Annual Awards season is upon us. Please continue to work on the award packages for your firefighters, EMTs, paramedics, chiefs, and fire stations. Also, please take the time to consider your nominations for the next class of Hall of Fame inductees and Lifetime Achievement Award candidates. Award packages are due *no later than* Feb. 1, 2026.

Please contact Gary by email: gary.m.easley.civ@us.navy.mil for details.





Navy F&ES Legacy

NAVY FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS IN THE LINE OF DUTY

Date	Location	Name	Date	Location	Name
27 May 2024	Portsmouth Naval Hospital, VA	Anthony "Tony" McVey	9 August 1982	NS Adak, AK	Perry Wallace
21 August 2023	NAS JRB New Orleans, LA	Thomas "TJ" Maury	12 July 1981	NAS Whidbey Island, WA	John Schmidt
27 June 2023	NAS Patuxent River, MD	Brice Trossbach	4 March 1981	NAS Norfolk, VA	William Travis
21 August 2021	NAWS China Lake, CA	Mikel Lowe	19 October 1973	NAS San Diego, CA	Brian Lindsey
09 August 2021	NAVSTA Great Lakes, IL	Jeffery Peters	19 October 1973	NAS San Diego, CA	Stanley Hertel
1 January 2021	NSF Indian Head, MD	Bryan "Hammy" Hamilton	1 October 1973	NALF San Clemente Island, CA	Stephen Stiftner
6 November 2019	NAS Pensacola, FL	Dwain Bradshaw	24 January 1964	NSY Puget Sound, WA	Vernon Fletcher
5 February 2018	NS Norfolk, VA	Stephen Bement	20 March 1962	NS Annapolis, MD	Herbert Wells
30 May 2014	JB Anacostia-Bolling, DC	John "Mac" McDonald	22 January 1961	NAS Midway Island, Atoll	AM3 Ronald Blakeman
13 January 2012	NSA Naples, Italy	Lugi Rullo	22 January 1961	NAS Midway Island, Atoll	AB3 Gordon Blatchley
13 August 2011	NSA Naples, Italy	Roberto Nocera	22 January 1961	NAS Midway Island, Atoll	AN Robert Razy
25 November 2005	NSY Philadelphia, PA	Robert Staepel	15 April 1954	NSF Dahlgren, VA	Warrand Marsh Sr.
31 December 2003	NSB New London, CT	Kenneth Jeffrey	17 September 1943	NAS/NOB Norfolk, VA	Gurney Edwards
27 September 1988	NAB Little Creek, VA	Robert "Bobby" Hoeflein	07 December 1941	NAVSTA Pearl Harbor/Hickam Field, HI	Names Unknown



In Memoriam



UNITED STATES NAVY FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES Lifetime Achievement Award

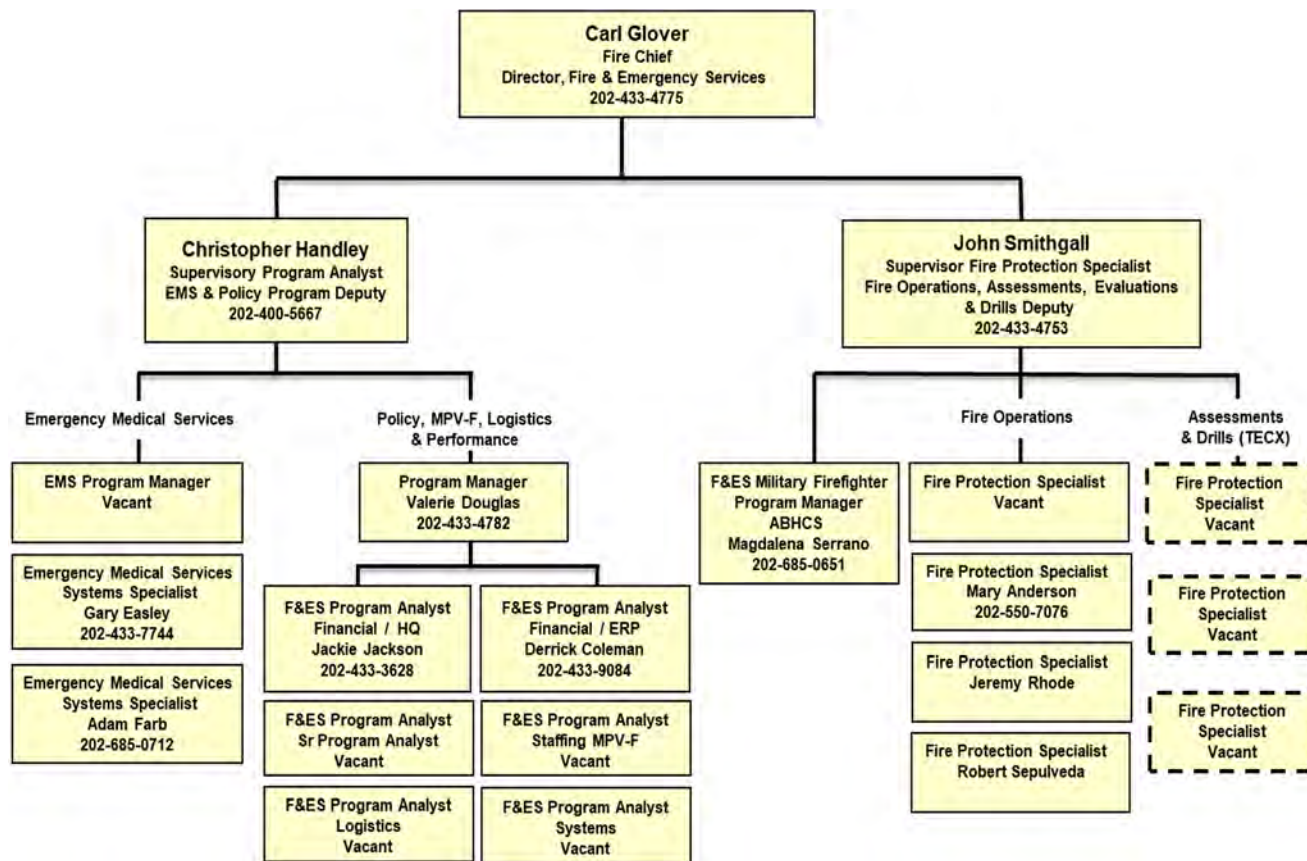
2010	Kim, Tae Tang	2020	Daniel Vogel
2014	John Robinson	2021	ABHCS Anthony Tranum
2017	Thomas McCaffrey	2022	CDR Matthew Matthias
2017	Cort Jamison	2023	Thomas "TJ" Maury
2019	Ricky Brockman*	2023	Gene Rausch
2019	Paul Murray	2023	John Lyon
2019	John Rodgers	2023	Mark Persutti
2019	Michael Murray	2024	Shane Rayfield
2020	Janice Lozoya*	2024	Frank Montone*

* Denotes Hall of Fame member



Navy Fire & Emergency Services

Commander Navy Installations Command
716 Sicard Street, SE, Ste 100
Suite 305
Washington, DC 20374-5140



To read past issues of **What's Happening**, the Navy Fire & Emergency Services newsletter, visit <https://www.cnic.navy.mil/FES-Newsletter>

