

**Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency
United States Fire Administration
National Fire Academy Board of Visitors
October 2-3, 2009
Building H, Room 300**

Attendees:

The following National Fire Academy Board of Visitors (NFA BOV) members were present for the meeting:

Ms. Helen L. Johnson (Chairperson)
Executive Director (Retired)
State Firemen's and Fire Marshals'
Association of Texas
5810 Charles Schreiner Trail
Austin, Texas 78749

Dr. Sandy Bogucki
Associate Professor
Section of Emergency Medicine
Yale University School of Medicine
464 Congress Avenue
New Haven, Connecticut 06519-1315

Mr. Robert Cumberland
Director for Maryland
Cumberland Valley Volunteer Firemen's
Association
222 Shipley Avenue
Westminster, Maryland 21157

Mr. Randal Novak
Bureau Chief
Iowa Fire Service Training
3100 Fire Service Road
Ames, Iowa 50011-3100

Captain Jack Reall
President, Columbus Firefighters Union,
IAFF 67
379 West Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Chief Adam Thiel
Alexandria Fire Department
900 Second Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

The following member was not present:

Mr. Chris Neal
13801 South Western
Edmond, Oklahoma 73025

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)/United States Fire Administration (USFA)/National Fire Academy (NFA) staff in attendance:

Chief Kelvin Cochran, Assistant Administrator, USFA
Chief Glenn Gaines, Deputy Assistant Administrator, USFA
Dr. Denis Onieal, Superintendent, NFA
Ms. Teresa Kaas, Secretary, NFA
Mr. Ron Face, Director, Management Operations and Support Services
Ms. Alex Furr, Director, National Fire Programs
Dr. Kirby Kiefer, Deputy Superintendent, NFA
Mr. Michael Stern, Training Specialist, Response Section, Curriculum & Instruction, NFA

Friday, October 2

Convene BOV Meeting/Opening Remarks

Ms. Helen Johnson, Chair, Board of Visitors

Dr. Denis Onieal, Superintendent, NFA

Dr. Denis Onieal stated that he is the Designated Federal Official for the meeting.

Ms. Helen Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:20 a.m. She thanked the Board for attending the graduation ceremony this morning and expressed how important it is when the Board is on campus and they have the opportunity to attend the graduation ceremony, they should. She stated that the Board had a quorum and that there was one member absent, Mr. Chris Neal, due to the flu. She briefly reviewed the agenda with the Board.

Dr. Onieal informed the Board that Secretary Napolitano is reviewing all Federal Advisory Committees. All reappointments are on hold until the review happens; according to the NFA BOV Charter, current Board members will remain on the Board until officially replaced.

Election of Board of Visitors Officers

Ms. Johnson moved that an election of Board officers be held. She opened nominations for Chairperson. Mr. Bob Cumberland motioned to retain the current Chair. The motion was seconded by Mr. Adam Thiel. All members were in favor. Dr. Sandy Bogucki asked Ms. Johnson if she felt there was a need for a Vice Chair. Presently, there is not one. Ms. Johnson expressed the need to maintain a Vice Chair position in the event the Chairperson would not be available. The Board agreed and opened nominations for a Vice Chair. Prior to the meeting, Mr. Neal called Ms. Johnson to inform her that he would be unable to make the meeting because of illness and expressed interest in the Vice Chair position. Mr. Jack Reall nominated Mr. Neal for Vice Chair. Mr. Thiel seconded the motion. All members were in favor.

Approval of April Meeting Minutes

Ms. Johnson asked for a motion to approve the August meeting minutes. Mr. Cumberland moved to approve the minutes as presented. It was seconded by Mr. Thiel. All members were in favor.

Annual Ethics Briefing**Ms. Vicki O'Keefe, Ethics Counsel, FEMA**

Ms. Vicki O'Keefe stated that her presentation was a review of what had been previously presented. The Board is an advisory committee under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). The FACA was enacted to enhance public responsibility and to reduce wasteful expenditures. The Board was established as a FACA group to provide response to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The FACA is not evoked when it is a public meeting or not initiated by Federal appointment. Committees are established by the DHS Secretary. The Secretary has the authority to appoint. The FACA committees are online at www.dhs.gov/faca. There is a FACA Database and a training course on advisory committees. The contact for the database and training is Ms. Tabitha Dove. Her information is on the Web site.

The FACA members are subject to Federal ethics laws. Members of a FACA committee must sign an Annual Financial Disclosure Statement and must comply with Federal ethics laws; Ms. O'Keefe briefly reviewed the laws. There are post-employment restrictions that apply to committee members. They are not likely to affect members but they need to be aware of these restrictions. Conflict of interest statutes state that you cannot participate in certain activities and committees that will affect membership on the Board. This includes teaching, speaking, or writing that is in conjunction with Board responsibilities. You can not accept money for doing these as well. There are limitations on accepting gifts from outside sources as a Special Government Employee. You may not lobby while serving on a FACA Committee. You need to avoid appearance of impropriety (making sure you would not be presented in a negative way with Board responsibilities). You may not misuse your title, position, or authority. You may not endorse any nongovernmental entity using your Board member status. There will be no fundraising in your official capacity and no running as a candidate in a partisan election.

You can reach Ms. O'Keefe with any questions at (202) 646-3076 or Vicki.O'keefe@dhs.gov.

Status of USFA**Chief Kelvin Cochran, Assistant Administrator, USFA****Chief Glenn Gaines, Deputy Assistant Administrator, USFA**

Chief Kelvin Cochran informed the Board how proud he was to give back to the United States Fire Administration. He owed a lot to the courses he took and the people he worked with over the years.

Chief Cochran has a "new" theme that he is using which is Reshaping the Future. The USFA is celebrating successes in the past and looking at new and better ways to enhance credibility to make a greater difference to the American fire service and the people.

Chief Cochran has developed seven Strategic Initiatives. Combine those with Chief Cade's initiatives; there are a total of 12. He is pushing to finish these initiatives to have them in final print by the first week of December. The initiatives are not ranked in any priority order. Chief Cochran stated we have to be nimble enough as an organization to address these initiatives simultaneously. They are:

- Strategic Initiative #1: Fire Prevention and Life Safety: the reason USFA was established. Reduce life loss, property loss, line-of-duty deaths; enhance America's knowledge of life safety and education. Specifically target high risk areas and provide noncompetitive grants to provide assistance.
- Strategic Initiative #2: Line-of-Duty Deaths and Injuries: Come up with self assessment instruments to determine what risks are for death and injuries specific to their jurisdiction. Create this assessment using NFPA 1500, 1250, and ISO model. Some of these will be low cost things like training, policies and procedures. Every community will have an assessment and a plan on how to lessen these deaths and injuries. Looking to have these procedures and policies implemented within the next 3 years and 3 months. Once completed it will be a mandatory part of accreditation. Tie it into incentive programs like grants.
- Strategic Initiative #3: Emergency Preparedness: develop National department strategy for mobilizing fire service when there is a disaster. Process of how are we going to integrate it into department strategies aligned with NRF and NIMS. Assert ourselves more to have appropriate leadership role in ESF 4 level which is now under Department of Forestry.
- Strategic Initiative #4: Federal Grants: more challenges from critics that say the fire grant programs are not an efficient use of tax payer dollars. Initiate a process to access the Assistance to Firefighter Grants so that we have quality data and success stories that will attribute directly to Federal grants given at the local level. Biggest concern is fire departments that have fundamental needs that have not been met. Will identify those departments with these needs for fundamental equipment and get them what they need.
- Strategic Initiative #5: National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS): want to have the capability to meet the needs of America's fire service at the local level that need quality data to justify programs and services and future programs and services. Enhance the current system.
- Strategic Initiative #6: Professional Development: impact of retiring baby boomers on the fire service and USFA personnel. In 5 years based upon retirement programs offered, we could lose 50 percent of staff and personnel of USFA. Forecast future professional development and recruitment needs to help fill vacancies as they occur. The NFA is going to be a valuable piece.
- Strategic Initiative #7: Emergency Medical Services (EMS): an asset to communities who are in need of fire-based EMS community service. Make a larger part of the picture.

Chief Cochran stated that this information is free to share. He will make sure that as soon as it is published in final, the Board will receive a copy.

There was a discussion on grants. Mr. Randy Novak had been working on the grants issues. He is trying to explain the electronic scoring and other issues to departments in regard to the grants process. He is also trying to help departments in need of grant money to write better narratives. There is guidance available. The Maryland Fire Rescue Institute is teaching training on the grants process as well.

Dr. Bogucki moved that the Board support the Reshaping the Future Strategic Initiatives presented by Chief Cochran. Mr. Novak seconded the motion. All members were in favor.

National Fire Programs Update **Ms. Alex Furr, Director, National Fire Programs**

Dr. Kirby Kiefer was the Designated Federal Official until Dr. Onieal returned to the meeting.

Ms. Alex Furr discussed the Realignment, which was the topic of last year's meeting for her report-out. The Prevention Branch is currently working on three projects. Ms. Furr distributed a handout that had these listed in expansion. They include a revised updated version of the "Tribute to Heroes Campaign" entitled "Install, Inspect, Protect" which will be launched on October 28, 2009; the Prevention and Public Education Exchange which contains programs, websites, materials collected for fire prevention practices for national, State, and local companies; and the Executive Fire Officer Program Applied Research Papers online accessibility through WorldCat.

Ms. Furr stated that any information that is put out to the public is available for anyone to copy and distribute. If there is anything that someone wants, and it cannot be ordered in bulk, a CD can be sent that can be duplicated for their own use.

Budget and Campus Improvements Update **Mr. Ron Face, Director, Management, Operations and Support Services**

Mr. Ron Face provided a handout to the group for their reference. The 2010 Appropriations Bill is still pending with a request for \$45,588,000. This is \$609,000 over the 2009 level for pay increases and inflation. In the handout, a circle chart was provided to show the areas where the money will be used. He stated that we are on a Continuing Resolution which means no new projects can be started.

Mr. Face provided in his handout a listing of all capital repairs and improvements taking place from FY 2007 through FY 2009. He stated that some of the items from FY 2008 had just been started. From the FY 2009 improvements, these contracts had just been awarded in September.

There is over \$7 million from the FY 2009 Budget that has been set aside in an energy saving effort to upgrade the HVAC systems in Buildings A, B, C-East, D, and F. Currently, no decision has been made as to what source will be used to power the systems. Currently, steam is being used but has been looking into the possibility of Geothermal which is much more economical and effective. The FEMA funded \$6 million of the money set aside after the new admissions system contract did not work out.

Mr. Face discussed the National Emergency Training Center (NETC) Classroom and Facility Education Technology Working Group. This group is currently conducting an assessment of the classroom and educational technology for each organization on campus. They are also working on identifying functional requirements for resident training.

Also mentioned was the OneNet transition plan that was presented at the last Board meeting. This will incorporate all FEMA computers and link all DHS agencies under one system. All computers and systems are expected to operate on the OneNet system within the next 3 to 5 years.

Mr. Face discussed the NETC Master Facilities Plan. The plan was mandated in reauthorization language on January 30, 2009. The report was then modified at the request of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and then delivered to Congress on August 27, 2009. The information that was stripped by OMB was strictly related to numbers and costs which were requested by DHS appropriations language. The OMB stated that Congress does not need to see the figures.

FACA Committee Activity Reports Outreach Subcommittee Chief Adam Thiel, Member, Board of Visitors

Chief Thiel stated that the third conference call for the Outreach Subcommittee was completed. The first couple of calls were getting everyone base-lined on the issue, obtaining information on the data and statistics, and how things work. The third call was moving back to the core issue and what things could be done to increase numbers for admissions overall, particularly in areas where firefighters are underrepresented. Chief Cochran participated in the third call. Chief Thiel stated that the committees' work needed to be extended and hopefully by the April Board meeting we will have a better understanding. Dr. Onieal has been asked to go to the Office of Chief Counsel to see if there is any way that the sequence of the admissions application process can be altered. He is to present his findings at the next conference call. Another issue was whether stakeholders should be involved in the application process. Dr. Onieal stated that he had been on the road and had not been able to gather information to take to the Office of Chief Counsel. He also stated that he expressed his concern to the committee on the changing of a 35-year application process; that changing the application process may be out of the scope of the committee charge. He suggested Chief Thiel, as the newly appointed Chair of the subcommittee, go back and review the committee's purpose. Chief Thiel said that at the next conference call he will revisit the things that they know they can do and are not out of reach.

Mr. Reall asked if it would be necessary to extend the timeframe for the subcommittee. Chief Thiel stated he thought that would be helpful. He felt that it should be extended until the April Board meeting. Mr. Reall motioned to extend the deadline for the report to the April Board meeting and restate the subcommittee's charge to review NFA's outreach applicants with Chief Thiel as the new Chair. There was a second by Mr. Cumberland. All members were in favor.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Subcommittee**Dr. Sandy Bogucki, Member, Board of Visitors****Mr. Michael Stern, Training Specialist, Response Section, Curriculum & Instruction, NFA**

Dr. Bogucki and Mr. Michael Stern were tasked in the 2008 Reauthorization to look at the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and consider it part of USFA by convening a group that provided guidance on what would be the highest priorities in the EMS arena that should be addressed by USFA. In April, a stakeholder meeting was convened. After the meeting, the plan was to hold a second meeting to host Federal groups that held FACA status to discuss the findings and retrieve the opinions of others. To date, the second meeting has not been held.

They are currently looking at the second or third week of January 2010 for the next meeting. The meeting will be more of a sign-off on the information that was obtained in the first meeting. There was much brainstorming information from the first meeting. Mr. Stern stated that he would expect to have a report for the April Board meeting.

Academy Update**Dr. Denis Onieal, Superintendent, NFA****Dr. Kirby Kiefer, Deputy Superintendent, NFA**

Dr. Onieal asked the Board to appoint another subcommittee. This committee would be focused on TRADE to review requirements, regulations, admissions, etc. to see if these still remain relevant to the fire and emergency services. Ms. Johnson asked Mr. Novak to be the Chair of this subcommittee and asked that he pick two other Board members to assist him. He requested Chief Thiel and Mr. Cumberland. Dr. Onieal asked Mr. Novak to establish a mission statement or goal for the committee. Dr. Bogucki motioned to approve this subcommittee. There was a second by Mr. Reall. All members were in favor.

Dr. Onieal reviewed the current conferences/meetings he had attended and the issues that he had been addressing including EMS, grants, and State Fire Chiefs. Dr. Onieal continued to be concerned about the course entitled "Fire Ground Safety." When the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) offers this course, it will undoubtedly be safely taught; but once the course is handed off to others, there is some concern that there might not be the stringent safety precautions. There have been serious injuries and deaths during training. The IAFF continues to seek issuance of an NFA certificate for this course. Mr. Reall stated that IAFF trainings are federally funded so he would assume that this program would also be federally funded by grants. When the IAFF delivers a course it is very tightly controlled. Once it is "endorsed" for use by States, anyone can take it and do whatever they want with it. Mr. Reall expressed concern as well that once this program would be endorsed what would happen after it was released.

Dr. Onieal stated that the NFA Alumni membership is over 22,000.

Dr. Kiefer discussed grants. The FEMA wants grants to go through one central center and then be handled by the Regions individually. He has been working with Mr. Mike Forgy who is talking to the grants personnel. Sometime in October, Ms. Diane Close and a few others are going to get what is needed for a tutorial to be done by January. He wants everyone to be aware of the process and exactly what will be the changes.

Dr. Kiefer also reported that because of concerns about security and our critical IT infrastructure, private USB memory devices will soon be prohibited from connection to government computer equipment. We know that students and instructors bring materials to classes on the devices, and we will have a work-around in place to accommodate the needs of our students.

Dr. Kiefer distributed a handout to the Board for additional updates. The updates included the Course Status Report, Central City Remake, Hazardous Materials Training, National Simulation Pipeline, Learning Management System (LMS), Degrees at a Distance Program (DDP), Annual Course Call, Admissions, Contract Instructors, and Vacancies. The handout contained in-depth information on each update.

Ms. Johnson reviewed the agenda for tomorrow. She recessed the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 3

Resume BOV Meeting/Opening Remarks Ms. Helen Johnson, Chair, Board of Visitors Dr. Denis Onieal, Superintendent, NFA

Dr. Onieal stated that he is the Designated Federal Official for the meeting.

Ms. Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. She stated that the Board had a quorum and that there was one member absent, Mr. Chris Neal, due to the flu.

FACA Committee Activity Reports Professional Development Subcommittee Chief Adam Thiel, Member, Board of Visitors

Chief Thiel provided an overview of the National Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE) Professional Development Committee meeting that was held May 30-June 1. Chief Thiel advised the conference was a success. During the meeting, NFA launched the StarFESHE concept designed to foster and establish “circles” at the local level comprised of local active fire and emergency services players in the professional development arena, including FESHE Directors, faculty and students; Chief Officers and Training Academy Chiefs; local FES associations; and other interested parties.

Chief Thiel advised that FESHE has launched a Facebook page with 800 current members. This is a very active page with a lot of dialogue.

The Center for Public Safety Excellence has adopted the competencies from NFA’s National Professional Development Matrix as the requirements for its new Chief Fire Officer Designation. The new program was developed to bring more candidates in the pipeline for the Chief Fire Officer Designation. It represents the first official adaptation of the Matrix at the national level and is a major step towards the third objective under Goal #4 in USFA’s Strategic Plan: “Advocate a competency-based approach to professional development that includes training, certification, and higher education.”

Chief Thiel advised that the next FESHE Committees meeting is scheduled for January 7-9, 2010, at NETC. Dr. Bogucki asked if FESHE has concerted effort to reach out to high school students/explorers? Chief Thiel replied that the group is actively working on that issue and creating pathways for pre-college into higher education. Chief Thiel advised there are a lot of variations on how pathways would look and additional discussions will be held at the January meeting. Chief Thiel will have an update and report at the January Board meeting.

Training, Resources and Data Exchange (TRADE)

Mr. Randy Novak, Member, Board of Visitors

Mr. Novak prepared a mission/goal statement for the newly formed TRADE subcommittee to “review purposes and goals of TRADE to see if they are still relevant to the fire and emergency services.” Dr. Onieal will compose a letter to TRADE organization and membership, on Ms. Johnson’s behalf, requesting 6-8 nominees to serve on the subcommittee. Mr. Novak will prepare an agenda and send to Dr. Onieal for distribution to the committee members once the committee members have been identified.

Dr. Bogucki asked if Wildland was on the radar screen based on Chief Cochran’s conversation yesterday. The FEMA has a regional structure but should USFA/NFA have a presence in the Regions to assist States? Dr. Onieal replied that would require FTE’s and mission-specific things; may want to look at this issue through the TRADE subcommittee.

Meeting Summary

Ms. Helen Johnson, Chair, Board of Visitors

Ms. Johnson summarized the meeting with a brief description on what the Board accomplished the past two days including:

The Board voted to prepare a Resolution to Chief Cochran acknowledging his many accomplishments in the fire service to serving on the Board and now being appointed to the United States Fire Administrator position.

The Board voted on officer positions for the upcoming year. Ms. Johnson will continue to serve as the Chair and Mr. Neal will serve as Vice Chair.

The Board voted to establish a new subcommittee to review purposes and goals of TRADE to see if they are still relevant to the fire and emergency services with Mr. Novak serving as Committee Chair.

The Board prepared the FY 2009 Annual Report.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.