Chief Officer Development: Portsmouth Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services

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Certification Statement

I hereby certify that this paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and the appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expression, or writings of another.

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Abstract

The problem is that the Portsmouth Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services (PFRES) administration has identified leadership and management deficiencies with their chief officers. This impacts the organization with developing innovative ways of providing service delivery to the community. The purpose of this research is to create a plan, which when fully implemented, will assist chief officers in developing essential leadership and management skills that will enable innovation in providing services to the community. Action research was utilized to assess existing and new data leading to the development of a chief officer development program for the PFRES. A thorough literature review, questionnaires, and interviews were conducted to determine management and leadership deficiencies within the PFRES and why those deficiencies exist. Findings of the study indicate that there are adaptive management and leadership deficiencies with PFRES Chief Officers, also that those deficiencies were related to the organizations inaction in providing guidance for its officers. Recommendations were made to improve the promotional system and provide a professional development program to support officer candidates and newly promoted officers.

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Introduction

The problem is that the Portsmouth Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services (PFRES) administration has identified leadership and management deficiencies with their chief officers. This impacts the organization with developing innovative ways of providing service delivery to the community.

The purpose of this research is to create a plan, which when fully implemented, will assist chief officers in developing essential leadership and management skills that will enable innovation in providing services to the community. Action research is utilized to assess existing and new data leading to the development of a chief officer development program for the PFRES. The research questions are (a) What are the leadership and management deficiencies with current Deputy Chief and Battalion Chief positions within the PFRES?, (b) What are the nationally recognized standards and qualifications for chief officer?, (c) What developmental management opportunities are required and available to chief officers of the PFRES?, (d) What plans are in place for initial or continuing professional development that contributes to consistent management practices in chief officers with other fire service organizations?, and (e) What areas do current PFRES chief officers feel that they need to develop better leadership and management practices?

Background and Significance

The City of Portsmouth, Virginia was incorporated by the Virginia General Assembly in 1858. Portsmouth is located in Southeastern Virginia. It is situated on the James and Elizabeth Rivers and borders Chesapeake and Suffolk to the west and south, and Norfolk to the east (“Portsmouth Profile,” n.d.). Portsmouth has a population of 95,535 citizens and is a relatively small urban city of 33 square miles (“U.S. Census,” 2011). Portsmouth is home to the Norfolk

Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth Marine Terminal, APM Marine Terminal, Maryview Hospital, Portsmouth Naval Hospital, Naval Fuel Depot, and other various commercial and business enterprises. Portsmouth is a harbor city that relies on bridges and tunnels to move north and east. Portsmouth is also part of the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Statistical Area (HRMSA). The HRMSA has a population of 1.6 million citizens and has various key infrastructures and resources, and high profile targets.

The City of Portsmouth organized its first fire company in 1830 and was independently operated by volunteers. In 1854, all the independent companies were placed under the direction of one chief and the Portsmouth Fire Department was created (*Portsmouth Fire*, 1993, p. 15). In 2003, The Portsmouth Fire Department changed its name to the Portsmouth Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services (PFRES) to reflect the growing number of services provided by the department. The PFRES is an all career department with 259 men and women, five of which are civilian administrative support staff.

The PFRES provides many services: fire suppression; advanced life support (ALS) emergency medical services (EMS) and transport; fire prevention and inspection; fire investigation; hazardous materials response; rescue services including extrication, high angle rescue, trench rescue, and urban rescue; maritime firefighting and rescue; and emergency management. The PFRES mission is to protect the lives and property of the citizens and visitors of the City of Portsmouth against fire, sudden medical emergencies, hazardous materials incidents, and natural or man-made disasters (Portsmouth SOP, 2009). The PFRES embraces the values of service excellence, diversity, integrity and honesty, teamwork, innovation, honor and respect, and communication (Portsmouth SOP, 2009).

The PFRES hiring and promotional process is regulated by the Portsmouth Civil Service Commission. Civil Service requirements are based on merit, a written examination, and fitness. Candidates are also awarded one seniority point after their second year of service and one point each year after for a total of eight seniority points. The Civil Service Board compiles the written examination score and the seniority points earned to establish the promotional list of officer candidates (Portsmouth Civil Service, 1991). Civil Service rules allow the fire chief to choose anyone for promotion in the top five scores. However, over the past 12 years, the fire chief has chosen to make promotions going straight down the list of candidates to eliminate suspicions of favoritism. Promotional tests are given every two years, and promotions are made only after a position becomes available.

The PFRES has created additional requirements and a point system that was designed to encourage professional development. These additional factors are added to the candidates score only after they have entered into the top five Civil Service scores, which combine the written examination score with seniority points. The additional requirements and point system are the same regardless of the rank the candidate is aspiring. The additional requirements for any position are the completion of Virginia State Fire Instructor I and Virginia State Fire Officer I (Portsmouth SOP 103, 2009). One to six additional points are awarded for education, one point for at least 30 semester hours of formal education to six points for a Master's Degree. Also, candidates in the top five scores can earn up to an additional seven points for selected certifications. These are selected certifications from the Virginia Department of Fire Programs, Virginia Department of Emergency Management, National Fire Academy, and Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services. Each candidate that passes the written examination also participates in an assessment center with six questions and the potential of earning an additional

30 points to their score (Portsmouth SOP 103, 2009). The promotional process is conducted to advance candidates through the Lieutenant, Captain, and Battalion Chief's ranks. Deputy Chief is an appointed position in the PFRES. Position control for the PFRES identifies eight battalion chief positions and two deputy chief positions.

The PFRES began an officer development program in 2010. This is a 40 hour program that each newly promoted officer, regardless of rank, is required to attend. The officer development program is sponsored by the PFRES Training Division and instructors are recruited from the department. The PFRES officer development program teaches the following subjects: Buddy to Boss, communications, writing skills, responsibilities and expectations, equal employment opportunity and affirmative action, diversity, emergency management, safety, introduction to the Fire Marshal's Offices, company training, leadership, field training officer, and probationary officer development. There is currently no coaching or mentoring program for newly promoted officers.

PFRES chief officers have no additional requirements beyond those earned when they were promoted to the rank of lieutenant. There is no special professional development criterion for Captains aspiring to the rank of Battalion Chief or for chief officers once they have attained the rank of Battalion Chief or Deputy Chief. Since the PFRES requirements are directed at the lowest level of fire officer, it is likely that officers will be slow to develop higher level leadership and management skills. As a result, there is the possibility of chief officers being ill prepared to lead and manage from their new positions. If chief officers are deficient in leadership and management skills, the question must be asked whether the PFRES are preparing their officers adequately.

Executive Development is the first course of the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP). The Executive Development course introduces the student to the difference in adaptive challenges and technical solutions. It is essential for chief officers to recognize adaptive challenges, think beyond the technical solutions, and manage from the balcony (Heifetz & Linski, 2002, p. 31). This project is directly linked to the United States Fire Administration's goal of improving the fire and emergency services' professional status by researching the problem that leadership and management deficiencies exist with chief officers of the PFRES and how chief officers can improve in these areas.

Literature Review

This researcher intends to present a sufficiently comprehensive review of existing material to establish current expectations of PFRES chief officers and to find current guidance as to the level chief officers should function. Since this research is regarding leadership and management deficiencies, this researcher will not attempt to bring technical or operational work into this project unless it is considered applicable. A thorough review of material consisting of departmental documentation, publications, standards, journal articles and other various media will be used to answer research questions.

Manage is defined as "to control the movement or behavior of; handle" (Agnes, 1999, p. 871). As a fire organization expands its capabilities to provide a broader spectrum of services, it is vital that fire officers develop and enhance their management skills. "They [fire officers] should be aware of productivity issues, research and planning, the administration responsibilities of higher-level officers, and public and community relations activities. Such awareness can help them perform their duties more effectively and participate in decisions as informed members of the department" (Carter & Rausch, 1999, p. 31). "All modern management theories, although

they take different approaches, have several important components in common: focusing on the customer, continuing to improve the organization, measuring performance, managing change, and centering on principle" (International City/County Management Association [ICMA], 2002, p. 234).

Leadership is vital to the success of an organization. To lead is defined as "to show the way to, or direct the course of, by going before or along with; conduct; guide" (Agnes, 1999, p. 814). John Maxwell states, "Any endeavor you undertake that involves other people will live or die depending on leadership. As you work to build your organization, remember this: personnel determine the potential of the organization; relationships determine the morale of the organization; structure determines the size of the organization; vision determines the direction of the organization; leadership determines the success of the organization" (Maxwell, 1998, p. 225). When asked what leadership meant to him, Fire Chief Don Horton, PFRES, said, "Leadership is a diverse group moving with the same vision in the same direction" (D. J. Horton, personal communication, July, 2011). Leadership does not come easy though. Too often, leaders can become targets when others are resistant to their message. "When exercising leadership, you risk getting marginalized, diverted, attacked, or seduced. When people resist adaptive work, their goal is to shut down those who exercise leadership in order to preserve what they have" (Heifetz & Linski, 2002, p. 31). Understanding that groups are generally more comfortable with the status quo and are resistant to change helps leaders validate the importance of developing their craft and recognizing the pitfalls of resistance.

First, it is necessary to establish the current expectations of PFRES chief officers. The Battalion Chief and Deputy Chief positions include similar performance indicators relating to leadership and management. According to the PFRES Job Description Manual, chief officers

must be dependable and accountable, show initiative and enthusiasm, use good judgment; embrace cooperation, develop relationships with others, utilize and develop plans, be organized, be a good leader, make good decisions, be creative, build human relations, and be able to implement and formulate policy. Of these, particular attention should be brought to leadership. According to the PFRES Job Description, chief officers are expected to lead by "Providing a work environment which encourages clear and open communication, having a clear and comprehensive understanding of the principles of effective leadership and how such principles are to be applied, providing adequate feedback to staff so that they know whether their performance levels are satisfactory, commending and rewarding employees for outstanding performance, yet does not hesitate to take disciplinary action when necessary, and exercising enthusiasm in influencing and guiding others toward the achievement of City goals and objectives" (PFRES Job Description, 1999).

A review of Jeffrey Terwilliger's research of PFRES promotional system identified flaws in the PFRES Job Descriptions that could allow the appointment of Deputy Chief Officers with minimal education and certifications (Terwilliger, 2009, p. 33). This researcher then examined the minimum requirements for both the Battalion Chief and Deputy Chief positions. The minimum training and experience requirements for the rank of Battalion Chief are an Associate's degree in Fire Science, Emergency Medical Services, Emergency Management or related field as determined is preferred (PFRES Job Description, 1999). In addition to preferred formal education, a minimum of six years' experience and specialized training in firefighting, emergency medical response, emergency management, administration, training and/or any fire prevention, or equivalent combination of training and experience which provides the required skills, knowledge, and abilities (PFRES Job Description, 1999). Special requirements include

valid certifications by the Commonwealth of Virginia as a Fire Instructor I, Fire Officer I, and EMT. Also required is a valid Virginia driver's license (PFRES Job Description, 1999). Minimum training and experience requirements for the Deputy Chief position includes a "Bachelor's degree in Fire Science, or a related field, and minimum of nine years of experience in firefighting and emergency response; with at least three years as a battalion chief; or any equivalent combination of training and experience which provides the required skills, knowledge, and abilities" (PFRES Job Description, 1999). Special requirements for Deputy Chief are a valid certification from the Commonwealth of Virginia as a Fire Instructor, and EMT-Basic; possess a valid Virginia driver's license; and prefers graduate or participant of the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officers Program (PFRES Job Description, 1999). This researcher determined that the phrase "or any equivalent combination of training and experience which provides the required skills, knowledge, and abilities" (PFRES Job Description, 1999) can allow the appointment of a Deputy Chief with lower education and certifications that is initially stated.

An examination of the PFRES promotional process is needed to evaluate whether it produces the desired candidates based on the job description requirements. Of the chief officers' positions, only the Battalion Chief's position is a promotable position; the Deputy Chief's position is appointed. The Portsmouth Civil Service Commission controls the minimum requirements for promotion. Civil Service requirements are based on merit, a written examination, and fitness (Portsmouth Civil Service, 1991). The PFRES has implemented additional requirements that are valid only after a candidate enters the top five scores. The Civil Service score is based on a written examination and seniority points. The perfect score on the written test is 100 percent. Additional points are added to the candidates written score based on

time in service. After the second year of service, an employee will earn one seniority point per year to a maximum of eight points on his or her tenth year anniversary. The combined written and seniority score places the candidate on the Civil Service eligibility list (Portsmouth Civil Service, 1991).

The PFRES has established additional requirements for promotion. For the purposes of this research, the position of Battalion Chief will be the focus. These additional points only are added to a candidates score once they have entered the top five on the Civil Service eligibility list. The PFRES requires all candidates possess a minimum level of certification of Emergency Medical Technician-Enhanced (EMT-E), Fire Instructor I, and Fire Officer I (Portsmouth SOP 103, 2009). There are no additional requirements for the rank of Battalion Chief. All candidates have the potential to earn points in two areas: education and certification. One to six additional points are awarded for education, one point for at least 30 semester hours of formal education to six points for a Master's degree. Also, candidates can earn up to an additional seven points for selected certifications. These are selected certifications from the Virginia Department of Fire Programs, Virginia Department of Emergency Management, National Fire Academy, and Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services (Portsmouth SOP 103, 2009). Assessment interviews are given to all candidates that pass the promotional examination. The assessment interview is comprised of a series of six tasks or questions selected by the Fire Chief. These tasks or questions will be job specific, so candidates for Battalion Chief will receive tasks or questions relative to the job of Battalion Chief. Panel members for Battalion Chief will be filled by the Deputy Chief of Operations and one external fire department representative at the rank of battalion chief or higher, and a City of Portsmouth civilian employee who is at the director,

assistant director or management level (Portsmouth SOP 103, 2009). The maximum score attainable for the assessment interview is 30 points.

A review of Salvatore Scarpa's work in components of a Battalion Chief Officer development program demonstrated the importance of National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1021 Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualification as a nationally excepted standard to measure Chief Officer Qualifications (Scarpa, 2009, p. 12). This researcher then reviewed NFPA 1021 to attain the appropriate level of qualifications for chief officers. The purpose of this standard is to identify minimum job performance requirements for fire officers in a progressive manner through four fire officer levels (National Fire Protection Association [NFPA], 2009, p. 1021-6). Since the PFRES does not distinguish between Battalion Chiefs assigned to operations and those assigned to administration, this researcher chose to review both the Fire Officer II, or Managing Fire Officer and the Fire Officer III, or Administrative Fire Officer. The managing fire officer examines the organization of local government, legislative processes and functions related to divisions, agencies, and organizations. They require an understanding of current intergovernmental and interagency cooperative concepts. Fire Officer II personnel should be able to evaluate employee's performance, maximize performance, correct unacceptable behavior, and complete formal personnel performance appraisals. They must be able to convey public fire and life safety messages to the public. Managing officers must be able to prepare budget requests, news releases, policy changes, and basic analytical reports. They must be proficient in conducting fire inspections, documentation of violations, and be able to investigate fires to determine fire origin and preliminary cause. The Fire Officer II supervises multiple company incident operations and hazardous materials incidents. They must also be able

to review injury, accident, and exposure reports, identify unsafe work environments, and initiate action to correct problems (NFPA, 2009, p. 1021-10).

General prerequisite knowledge for the Fire Officer III includes the following: “knowledge of current national and international trends and developments related to fire service organization, management, and administrative principles; public and private organizations that support the fire and emergency services and the functions of each” (NFPA, 2009, p. 1021-11). Fire officer III requires the practice of evaluative methods, analytical methods, verbal and written communications. The Administrative Fire Officer will establish procedures for hiring, training, assigning, and promoting members and encourage professional development of others. Also they develop programs to improve and expand services and build partnerships with the public to provide increased safety and quality of life. They prepare and manage a budget, acquire resources through a competitive bidding process, direct a records management system, analyze and interpret records and data, and develop a resource deployment plan. Administrative officers evaluate inspection programs and code requirements as to their effectiveness in assuring the protection of life and property. They manage multi-agency planning, response, deployment, and operations. They also develop, manage, and evaluate a departmental health and safety program and develop a measurable accident and injury prevention program (International Association of Fire Chiefs [IAFC], 2010, p. 37).

Referring to the National Professional Development Model, from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, an Associate’s degree would be required for Fire Officer II, or Managing Fire Officer, and a Bachelor’s degree for Fire Officer III, or Administrative Fire Officer (IAFC, 2010, p. 13). The Virginia Department of Fire Programs identifies the NFPA 1021 Fire Officer II, Managing Fire Officer, as equivalent to a Fire Captain or Battalion Chief position and the

NFPA 1021 Fire Officer III, Administrative Officer, as equivalent to a Division Chief, Assistant Chief, or Deputy Chief position (Virginia Fire Service Occupational Development Consortium, 2006, p. 4). Since the PFRES operational Battalion Chief level is more closely related to the Fire Officer II job functions, this researcher would interpret this as requiring an Associate's degree for the position of Battalion Chief with a Bachelor's degree preferred, and a Bachelor's degree required for the position of Deputy Chief.

"Professional development takes place in three general ways: through experience, mentoring, and education" (IAFC, 2010, p. 4). Most people might suspect that education plays the most important role in the development of fire officers, especially as they progress to the chief officer's level. However, education is only 10% of effective development; mentoring is 20% and experience is 70% (IAFC, 2010, p. 5). Certainly a person needs to gain the information, critical thinking skills, and exposure to various studies that a formal education affords. The Officer Development Handbook suggests that experience plays the larger role in development (IAFC, 2010, p. 5). People generally learn better through personal involvement. Effective professional development requires fire organizations to provide members with experiential opportunities so they can develop capabilities they will need as they progress through their career (IAFC, 2010, p. 5). Some suggestions for experiential learning from the Officer Development Handbook include the following: move personnel between divisions, departments, and lateral job functions; involve employees in meaningful projects or task forces; challenge personnel with projects that require heavy strategic thinking or planning; line to staff which to a demanding staff position; assign personnel to complex projects with increasing responsibility and/or activity; and challenge personnel to change management projects that will have a significant change in a

process or result in something new (IAFC, 2010, p. 6). Experiences that test fire officers will assist in their overall development and help them to adapt to new challenges.

A mentor is defined as “a wise, loyal advisor; a teacher or a coach” (Agnes, 1999, p. 900). Mentoring is also valuable in professional development. “A successful mentoring relationship can have far-reaching benefits for both the mentor and the protégé. For the protégé, mentoring expands professional expertise, increases the likelihood of achieving personal success and contributing to the department’s success, helps avoid pitfalls through exposure to real-life examples and lessons learned, enhances feelings of worth and value to the department, builds confidence through achievements and their recognition by the mentor, and provides counsel and support in navigating professional challenges” (Center for Public Safety Excellence, n.d, p. 1). For the mentor, it provides personal satisfaction in seeing his or her protégé prosper, and assisting with the development of new leaders, improves knowledge, skills, and abilities through experience and training, and provides an essential service to the organization that is respected by his or her peers (Center for Public Safety Excellence, n.d, p. 1).

Being a competent manager and an effective leader requires continuing education, experience, and perseverance. Chief Officers should not expect to be effective managers and leaders if they have not prepared themselves throughout their career. “Earned leadership occurs when individuals have prepared themselves over the course of their careers to become officers or chiefs. These individuals have sought opportunities to learn — through training, formal education and experience — how to lead. They garner deeper respect by their actions, primarily by leading by example. They keep themselves refreshed, current and constantly aware of issues and new trends in the fire service” (Rielage, 2010, p. 14). Fire service personnel seeking to be chief officers must have prepared themselves throughout their career or risk being ineffective as

managers and leaders. Chief Officers must have a wider view of fire department functions than operational line officers. They are responsible for planning, organizing, directing, and controlling organizational functions and systems. “Becoming a successful chief officer requires thorough preparation, including education and experience. As fire departments we need chief officers who have demonstrated their commitment to continuous education and who, by their nature, will engage in furthering their knowledge and skills throughout their fire service careers. We need chief officers prepared to empower others within their departments to likewise engage in a continual pursuit of knowledge” (Fleming, 2011, p. 3).

The United States Fire Administration’s National Fire Academy (NFA) Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP) is the premier professional development program for the fire officer. There are “four graduate and upper-division-baccalaureate equivalent courses” in the EFOP, each of which last two-weeks, over a four year period with an applied research project due six months after each course (United States Fire Administration National Fire Academy, n.d, p. 1).

The United States Fire Administration’s National Fire Academy has developed the Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE) Program. Their mission is to “establish an organization of post-secondary institutions to promote higher education and to enhance the recognition of the fire and emergency services as profession to reduce loss of life and property” (United States Fire Administration’s National Fire Academy, n.d, p. 1). FESHE has established the National Professional Development Model and Matrix, models course outlines for fire and EMS related programs, supports academic research and scholarships, and promotes the development of students’ research skills (United States Fire Administration’s National Fire Academy, n.d, p. 1). FESHE provides guidance in recommending educational institutions that are regionally accredited and those that provide distance learning opportunities. They are leading

the way in standardizing fire and EMS curriculum across the country and identifying crosswalks between industry certifications and institutional courses. The advances in standardizing fire and EMS educational programs and the development of the National Professional Development Model are of great assistance to fire service personnel when planning their professional roadmap.

Fire Officers can measure their development with the Center for Public Safety's Chief Fire Officer (CFO) and the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) program. "The CFO and CMO programs specify minimum eligibility requirements, in the form of academic achievements and practical experience. The programs also look at what contributions you have made to the fire service in the way of professional articles, providing instruction, and public speaking" (Aurhammer, Burton, Mason, & Sobotka, 2009, p. 16). Designations, such as these, help chief officers identify areas where they may need extra exposure (i.e. budgeting, strategic planning, education, etc.). Once completed, the CFO or CMO designations provide a sense of accomplishment for the designee and their organization; this can assist with motivating others to continue and/or pursue professional development.

Another option for professional development for chief officers of the PFRES is the Vann H. Lefcoe Leadership Program. The mission of this program is to identify, educate, and encourage future leaders within the community. The Vann Lefcoe Leadership Program teaches leadership, introduces the fundamentals local government, civic responsibility, and Portsmouth history (The Vann H. Lefcoe Leadership Program, n.d, p. 1). There are many other programs available to chief officers to develop management and leadership abilities.

Procedures

This researcher decided to use an action research method to determine if management and leadership deficiencies exist with chief officers of the PFRES and to develop a plan to help

alleviate any discovered deficiencies in these positions. The author started the literature review with visits to the Learning Resources Center at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. It was here that a search for chief officer related material was compiled. Among material of interest were established standards for chief officers, management and leadership skills for fire service leaders, and promotional and professional development policies.

It was important to determine whether management and leadership deficiencies existed within the chief officers' positions of the PFRES and what those deficiencies were. An interview was conducted with the PFRES Fire Chief, Don J. Horton. Also questionnaires were presented to two PFRES Deputy Chiefs, eight Battalion Chiefs, and thirty-three Captains to establish management and leadership competency.

Next, it was important to establish the requirements, responsibilities, and expectations of chief officers of the PFRES. An extensive review of the Portsmouth Job Description manual for the positions of Battalion Chief and Deputy Chief was conducted. Of particular interest was establishing the minimum requirements for each position to determine if they were consistent with current NFPA standards and if the requirements were being enforced during the promotional or appointment process. Since jobs within the PFRES are governed by the Portsmouth Civil Service Commission, it was necessary to examine all rules concerning the promotional and appointment processes. The PFRES promotional process was also reviewed to determine requirements and qualifications needed to be eligible for promotion to the Battalion Chief level. A further literature review was conducted to establish the importance of effective management and leadership skills to a fire service organization. The National Fire Academy's EFOP 1st year course, Executive Development, focused on leading from an adaptive level rather than a technical level. It was essential to this project that the literature reviews and subjects

selected for analytical research were clear that the focus of this project was on middle-upper level management and leadership, not technically skilled focused.

The NFPA 1021 Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications was examined to determine qualifications for the positions of Battalion Chief and Deputy Chief. This researcher utilized information from this standard in the development of interview questions and for subsequent questionnaires. Questions were posed to establish subjects' perception of management and leadership abilities of PFRES chief officers and how their [the research subjects] perceptions matched qualifications from NFPA 1021. Is the PFRES selection process consistent with qualifications set by NFPA 1021? Is the PFRES doing enough to develop their personnel to succeed at the chief officer level?

An interview with Deputy Chief Troy Tilley (Support Services Division Head) and Captain Clark Ryder (Training Captain) was conducted to determine developmental management and leadership opportunities available to chief officers. The purpose of this interview was to establish what programs were in place to support chief officers of the PFRES in professional development and continued development. Specifically, interviewees were asked what role, if any, the PFRES Training Division plays in the professional development and adaptive development of current and prospective chief officers of the PFRES. A literature review was also conducted to identify a small compilation of models, programs and courses to establish management and leadership assistance, should one seek development guidance.

A questionnaire was sent, by email, to 75 similar fire departments throughout the country (Appendix E). For the purposes of this study, similar fire departments are career departments, with 100 to 500 members, and serve a community of between 50,000 and 200,000 citizens. Included in the 75 fire departments were six of the core city fire departments of Hampton Roads.

Portsmouth was excluded as information requested in the questionnaire was readily available through city documents. The questionnaire focused on professional development programs in place for chief officers in each department. The focus was on how other fire departments with professional development programs compare with fire departments that have limited or no professional development programs when examining management and leadership competencies of their chief officers.

My last step in examining chief officers' management and leadership competencies was to determine how the chief officers themselves related to the professional development direction of the department. Chief Officers were questioned whether they felt they were properly prepared for the job that they were promoted to or appointed to. This researcher's intention was to establish where chief officers thought they excelled and where they lacked management and leadership skills. It was also to determine the level of preparation each chief officer had obtained and how they viewed professional development.

Questions asked of the PFRES chief officers are located in Appendix C and questions asked of PFRES Captains are in Appendix D.

Definitions:

Battalion Chief: a middle –upper level manager that manages a fire district or manages administrative and/or emergency management duties.

Deputy Chief: an upper level manager that manages either the operations division or support services division.

Chief Officers: for the purposes of this survey, include both Battalion Chiefs and Deputy Chiefs but excludes the Fire Chief.

Promotional Policy: a written procedure that describes minimum requirements, and steps to take in order to be eligible and proceed through a promotional process.

Professional Development: refers to knowledge and/or skills attained to improve personal and professional improvement.

Limitations and Assumptions

A questionnaire was sent to 75 similar fire departments around the country, including six of the core cities in the Hampton Roads region of Virginia. Only 29 fire department Chief Executive Officers, or their representative, responded to the questionnaire. This accounts for a 39% response rate and much lower than this researcher anticipated. An assumption was made that the remaining 61% of the fire departments that did not respond would have made similar progress and level of success as those that did respond. A request for professional development plans focusing on Chief Officers resulted in only two official policies. Many departments had plans to implement a professional development plan but few admitted to having one. In the end, there were only two professional development plans shared with this researcher.

This researcher received 100% response from the PFRES Chief Officers questionnaire. However, only 60% of the PFRES Captains poled returned their questionnaires. It is unclear why the remaining 40% did not respond to the data call. Although the Captains questionnaire expressly stated that chief officers included all Battalion and Deputy Chiefs, and excluded the Fire Chief, comments made to this researcher suggested all chief officers were included in some of the answers. A questionnaire was presented to all Fire Captains of the PFRES to understand how they viewed the management and leadership skills of all chief officers. There were many concerns respondents had in regard to answering this questionnaire. The biggest concern was that many felt like there was a wide variety of management and leadership skills and abilities among

all chief officers. This researcher asked that questions be answered based on the perceived abilities of all chief officers combined. There is also an assumption that all respondents answered the questionnaires and interview questions truthfully.

Results

A comprehensive examination was conducted allowing the research questions applicable to this applied research project to be answered with a high level of confidence.

1. What are the leadership and management deficiencies with current Deputy Chief and Battalion Chief Positions within the PFRES?

An interview with Fire Chief Don Horton confirmed that there were management and leadership deficiencies with the chief officers of the PFRES. Chief Horton did agree that PFRES chief officers are effective managers. However, he disagreed that PFRES chief officers were effective leaders. When asked to rank management and leadership traits/attributes of his chief officers from a list of 28 characteristics, Chief Horton ranked the first five in order: competent, courageous, personable, broad-minded, and professional. When asked to rank 28 management and leadership deficiencies in applicable order for his chief officers, he answered: poor communicators, does not collaborate, lack initiative, lack vision, and not accountable.

Chief Horton reiterated that his chief officers are good managers, in they manage processes well. Chief Officers especially excelled at management on the incident scene. They do not do as well ensuring essential documentation is properly completed, enforcing workplace rules, or communicating a consistent message. When asked to name the top three areas PFRES Chief Officers excel, he answered “operations, incident command, and customer service.” He followed up by saying; “initiative, communication, and mentorship” were the top three management and leadership skills PFRES Chief Officers lacked. Chief Horton also said that the

"organization was culturally stunted in education and development" (D. J. Horton, personal communication, July, 2011).

The PFRES Captains were asked to respond to the following statement: I feel PFRES chief officers are effective managers. Of the 20 Captains that responded, 25% agreed, 40% mostly agreed, and 35% disagreed that chief officers are effective managers. Then they were asked to respond to the statement, "PFRES chief officers are effective leaders." The Captains' response to PFRES chief officers being effective leaders was 5% strongly agreed, 30% agreed, 35% mostly agreed, and 30% mostly disagreed. Next, Captains were asked to list the management and leadership traits/attributes of PFRES chief officers. The top five management and leadership traits/attributes listed by PFRES Captains indicated they are professional, intelligent, competent, responsible, honest, and trustworthy. The questionnaire then asked Captains to list the management and leadership deficiencies of the PFRES chief officers. The top five management and leadership deficiencies listed by PFRES Captains were the following: use threats/ fear, failure to develop others, lack interpersonal skills, does not collaborate, and poor communicators.

2. What are the nationally recognized standards and qualifications for chief officer?

The nationally recognized standards and qualifications for chief officers are found in NFPA 1021 Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications. NFPA 1021 divides Officer Qualifications into four categories: Fire Officer I Supervising Officer, Fire Officer II Managing Officer, Fire Officer III Administrative Officer, and Fire Officer IV Administrative Officer (NFPA, 2009, p. 1021-6). Each level offers knowledge and skills for general knowledge and skills, human resource management, community and government relations, administration,

inspection and investigation, emergency service delivery, and health and safety (IAFC, 2010, p. 29).

The PFRES does not distinguish between Battalion Chiefs assigned to operations and Battalion Chiefs assigned to administration. PFRES operational Battalion Chiefs have responsibilities more closely related to Fire Officer II, or Managing Officer while the administrative Battalion Chiefs responsibilities are similar to the Fire Officer III, or Administrative Officer. It was this researcher's decision to apply Fire Officer II qualifications as minimum qualifications for the rank of Battalion Chief. The Fire Officer III or Administrative Officer clearly reflects PFRES Deputy Chief position.

This researcher also used the National Professional Development Model created by the National Fire Academy's Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education Program. This model was instrumental in choosing higher educational requirements for PFRES Chief Officers. The National Professional Development Model also helped to visualize the total development picture relating to the fire service. It demonstrates a progressive model of education, training, certifications, and designations and incorporates experience and self-development for operations level to risk management level Fire Officer Qualifications.

3. What developmental management opportunities are required and available to chief officers of the PFRES?

The PFRES only require chief officers to have attained Virginia Fire Instructor I and Fire Officer I certifications. PFRES chief officer's survey indicated that 30% have completed Fire Officer II, 60% had completed Fire Officer III, and 10% had completed Fire Officer IV. The PFRES Battalion Chief Job Description states that an Associate's degree in Fire Science, Emergency Medical Services, Emergency Management, or related field is preferred. However,

the PFRES promotional policy does not require any level of education beyond a High School diploma. The PFRES Job Description for Deputy Chief does require a Bachelor's degree in fire science administration, or related field. This requirement has not been followed and is excused by the following statement in the document, "or any equivalent combination of training and experience which provides the required skills, knowledge, and abilities" (PFRES Job Description, 1999). The survey indicated that 30% of chief officers had accumulated some college credit, 20% had achieved an Associate's degree, 30% have received a Bachelor's degree, and 20% have earned a Master's degree.

For new chief officers, they will have the opportunity to attend the Portsmouth Professional Development Program. This program groups all newly promoted Lieutenants, Captains, and Battalion Chiefs into a singular development course that lasts one week and covers the following subjects: Buddy to Boss, communications, writing skills, responsibilities and expectations, equal employment opportunity and affirmative action, diversity, emergency management, safety, introduction to the Fire Marshal's Offices, company training, leadership, field training officer, and probationary officer development.

Captain Clark Ryder, PFRES Training Captain, was asked if there were specific developmental management opportunities for chief officers of the PFRES. He stated that the Training Division monitored all training opportunities and forwards them to department personnel on a regular basis. Some of the opportunities he mentioned were Virginia Fire Officer I, II, III, and IV, management and leadership courses through the National Fire Academy, Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Association's Annual Professional Seminar, and Fire-Rescue International. Captain Ryder also stated that opportunities were available to instruct management

and leadership courses for the Southside Regional Fire Academy and the Portsmouth Professional Development Program (C. Ryder, personal communication, July 5, 2011).

Another leadership opportunity for PFRES chief officers is the Vann Lefcoe Leadership Development Program. “The Vann Lefcoe Leadership Development Program exists to identify, educate, and encourage future leaders within the City of Portsmouth. By inspiring civic awareness, responsibility and pride within the emerging leadership corps, this program will provide the City of Portsmouth a succession of leaders to ensure a bright and prosperous future for both the city and the region” (The Vann H. Lefcoe Leadership Program, n.d, p. 1). This program introduces the student to Portsmouth local government, local history, and pertinent businesses and leaders within the Portsmouth community. Each class chooses a civic project that benefits the community as a whole. The PFRES currently have two chief officer graduates of this three month program.

The Officer Development Handbook suggests that experience plays the larger role in development (IAFC, 2010, p. 5). People generally learn better through personal involvement. Opportunities are available for chief officers to participate in a variety of areas that would help personal and professional development. Deputy Chief Troy Tilley, Support Services Division Head, suggests that officers experience new opportunities and to work outside their comfort zone. He speaks of his own experiences in working varying positions in the PFRES and how much those experiences as helped him grow (T. Tilley, personal communication, July 7, 2011). The PFRES offer many opportunities to work on varying projects and across divisions.

The National Fire Academy’s Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP) and fire industry designations are other extraordinary programs that provide management and leadership opportunities for PFRES chief officers. The PFRES currently has one EFOP graduate and one

attending. A third chief officer is expected to begin the EFOP in the autumn of 2011. The PFRES has two chief officers with Chief Fire Officer Designations (CFOD) from the Center for Public Safety Excellence and one chief officer with the Member Institution of Fire Engineers (MiFireE) designation through the Institution of Fire Engineers United States Branch.

4. What plans are in place for initial or continuing professional development that contributes to consistent management practices in chief officers with other fire service organizations?

This researcher sent survey's to 75 fire departments that had similar characteristics to the PFRES. These characteristics included being a career department with 100-500 members and serving a community of 50,000-200,000 people. Unfortunately, there was only a response from 39% of the departments poled. Of the 75 Executive Chief Officers poled, only 6 or 21.4% stated that they had a professional development plan in place for chief officers. The six departments that responded affirmatively to having a professional development program were: Aurora (CO) Fire Department, East Providence (RI) Fire Department, Eugene (OR) Fire & Rescue, Laredo (TX) Fire Department, Newport News (VA) Fire Department, and Salem (OR) Fire Department. Out of the six that confirmed having a professional development program for chief officers, only two sent copies of the actual program to review. When asked what models, curriculum, and/or standards were used to design their professional development plan for chief officers, they answered the following: Aurora Fire Department used College/University Professional Development Curriculum and Executive Fire Officer National Fire Academy; East Providence Fire Department used NFPA 1021 and Local Fire requirements/recommendations; Eugene Fire & Rescue used NFPA 1021, State & Local Fire requirements/recommendations; Laredo Fire Department used Local Fire requirements/recommendations; Newport News Fire Department used the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Professional Development

Model, State Fire requirements/recommendations, and College/University Professional Development Curriculum; and the Salem Fire Department used Local Fire requirements/recommendations.

Eight of the twenty-nine responding fire service organizations stated that they had minimum educational requirements from a regionally accredited college or university for chief officers ranging from an Associate's to Bachelor's degree for chief officers, one requiring a Master's degree for Assistant Chief. As a reminder, for the purposes of this applied research project, the Executive Chief Officer or Fire Chief's position was excluded. Three additional departments replied that they were in the process of developing plans that would include a minimum level of post-secondary education and three others indicated that it was encouraged but not required at this time.

In identifying the single most effective element in preparing chief officers as better managers and leaders, respondents of the survey rated the following as the top four reasons: utilization of a chief officer's task book/ working out of position, formal education/ National Fire Academy (NFA) residence courses, coaching/ mentoring/ role models by senior chief officers, and management/leadership-style instruction.

In reviewing the Newport News Fire Department Promotional Directive: 1.536, candidates for Battalion Chief must complete an application in a timely manner to be considered for an existing opening. The Battalion Chief Candidate selection process consists of an interview, written submission, and an oral presentation (Newport News Fire Department [NNFD], p. 8). Interview topics for the Battalion Chief's selection process include the following: incident scene coordination skills, leadership skills, communications skills, directive interpretation and application skills, management philosophy, and contributions to the Newport

News Fire Department. Minimum certification requirements for the Battalion Chief position are include the following: Fire Officer II, NFA Incident Command System, NFA Strategies and Tactics for Initial Company Officer, and NFA Leadership I: Strategies for Company Officer Success. In addition, beginning July 1, 2011, candidates must have attained an Associate's degree or 61 semester hours that include the following subjects: Fire Prevention, College Composition II, Fire Protection Hydraulics and Water Supply, Fire Protection Systems, Fire Risk & Analysis, Fire Administration, Principles of Public Speaking, Legal Aspects of Fire Service, Lab Science Elective, Social Science Elective (2 classes), and Humanities/ Fine Arts Elective (NNFD, p. 12).

Next this researcher reviewed the minimum requirements and professional development plan from the Salem Fire Department. The minimum requirements for the position of Battalion Chief is an "Associate's degree from an accredited college or university in Fire Science, Fire Management and Administration or related field; and seven to ten years of experience in a related field; or any combination of education, experience and training which provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the essential functions of the class" (City of Salem Class Specifications, Battalion Chief, p. 2). As worded above, it would appear that the requirement of an Associate's degree cannot be substituted by "any combination of education, experience, and training"; only the seven to ten years of experience can. Salem Fire Department uses a Working out of Class (WOC) Battalion Chief Program that provides valuable experience for the Battalion Chief Candidate. To be selected into the WOC Battalion Chief Program, the candidate must have practical field experience and complete a testing process that includes a tactical exercise, a take-home written assignment, and an oral question exercise. Once a candidate is selected to be on the WOC Battalion Chief list, the candidate is assigned a mentor

(Battalion Chief) who observes the candidates performance, coaches, and records the candidate's progress (Salem Fire Department [SFD], n.d., p. 1). A WOC Battalion Chief's evaluation form is utilized to record skills assessed by the mentor in the areas of command, administration, and emergency management. The evaluation form is also used to record and/or verify corresponding Battalion Chief Career Development program requirements consisting of 27 classes dealing with subjects in firefighting, building construction, incident command, safety and survival, budgeting, tactics and strategies, state and local government, science, research and technical writing, and organizational management and leadership (SFD, n.d., p. 2). Salem Fire Department responded highly of mentorship from senior officers in providing improved effectiveness from their chief officers in management and leadership skills.

5. What areas do current PFRES chief officers feel that they need to develop better leadership and management practices?

This researcher supplied a questionnaire to all PFRES chief officers, excluding the Fire Chief. There was 100% completion rate for this questionnaire. First, the question was posed if they felt they were properly prepared for the position they held when promoted or appointed to their current rank. Thirty-percent responded that they felt they were prepared based on personal development and career experience. Next, chief officers were asked if an officer development program would have helped them better prepare for their current position. Ninety-percent of the chief officers answered yes that an officer development program would have assisted them in their preparation for their current jobs. When asked about a mentoring/coaching program, again 90% agreed that such a program that incorporated well-trained, well-experienced mentors would have had a positive impact on their transition to becoming a chief officer.

The question was then posed, what areas of management and leadership they felt they excelled. The top three areas where chief officers felt they excelled were incident command, customer service, and interpersonal skills. Next, they were asked in what areas of management and leadership they felt they were lacking. The top three areas chief officers felt they lacked were sharing a vision and planning, administrative and budgeting skills, and leadership/team building skills.

Discussion

The problem that drove this research was that the PFRES administration has identified leadership and management deficiencies with their chief officers. This impacts the organization with developing innovative ways of providing service delivery to the community. First, this researcher had to qualify the fact that there was a leadership and management deficiency with the PFRES chief officers. The interview with Chief Horton affirmed that he viewed the chief officers' management and leadership skills to be lacking in areas of an adaptive nature. Chief Horton had stated that his chief officers are good managers, in they manage processes well. Chief Officers especially excelled at management on the incident scene. They do not do as well ensuring essential documentation is properly completed, enforcing workplace rules, or communicating a consistent message (D. J. Horton, personal communication, July, 2011). He had also listed initiative, communication, and mentorship as the top three management and leadership skills PFRES Chief Officers lacked. This confirmed that the Fire Chief of the PFRES saw management and leadership deficiencies with the PFRES chief officers.

Next, this researcher confirmed adaptive management and leadership deficiencies through questions posed to the PFRES Captains and Chief Officers themselves. PFRES Captains identified uses threats/ fear, fails to develop others, lacks interpersonal skills, doesn't collaborate,

and poor communicator as the top five management and leadership deficiencies of Chief Officers. PFRES Chief Officers listed sharing a vision and planning, administrative and budgeting skills, and leadership/team building skills as their top three areas of management and leadership deficiency.

This researcher discovered that all research subjects questioned felt PFRES Chief Officers' strengths were in operations, incident command, customer service, and professionalism. However technically sound, it would follow that if your upper-level management personnel were adaptively challenged, it would impact the organizations ability to develop innovative ways of providing service delivery to the community.

The question then becomes why PFRES Chief Officers are deficient in adaptive management and leadership skills. In reviewing the promotional process of the PFRES, it appears that the lack of progressive requirements may have contributed to a lack of understanding of adaptive skills. First, there are no minimum educational requirements for any rank except a high school diploma or general education diploma (GED) required when hired (Portsmouth Civil Service, 1991). Although points are awarded for education and certifications above the minimum requirements of Fire Instructor I and Fire Officer I, there is no clear correlation to a specific position (Portsmouth SOP 103, 2009). Also, should a candidate maximize his or her points in the first five years of service, there is no gain in pursuing further education or certification unless the individual is motivated by personal growth.

The Job Description for Battalion Chief and Deputy Chief has not been updated since 1999. When examining the PFRES Job Descriptions for Battalion Chief and Deputy Chief, several issues stand out that may contribute to management and leadership deficiencies of Chief Officers. First, under minimum training and experience for Fire Battalion Chief, an Associate's

degree in Fire Science, Emergency Medical Services, Emergency Management or related field is preferred (PFRES Job Description, 1999). This is not consistent with the National Professional Development Model that shows that a Fire Officer II should have an Associate's degree (IAFC, 2010, p. 13).

For the appointed position of Deputy Chief, the minimum requirements and experience include a Bachelor's degree in Fire Science, Emergency Medical Services, Emergency Management or related field, and a minimum of nine years of experience in firefighting and response with at least three years at the Battalion Chief level (PFRES Job Description, 1999). However, it continues with "or any equivalent combination of training and experience which provides the required skills, knowledge, and abilities" (PFRES Job Description, 1999). This one portion of the requirements can allow the appointment of someone who is unprepared to serve and lead as a Deputy Chief. It also could undermine a comprehensive professional development plan by placing someone in the position that has not successfully progressed through a development process required by the personnel he/she would then be obligated to lead. A special requirements section for Deputy Chief lists only Fire Instructor I and EMT-B as required certifications, which is less that all other ranks. Also under special requirements it identifies that being a "graduate or participant in the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program is preferred" (PFRES Job Description, 1999). Through this researcher's experience, this requirement has never been a priority at the Deputy Chief level. In essence, the candidate for Deputy Chief can have less education and certifications than is required by the candidate for Lieutenant.

Based on this study's results and the finding of others, it is this researcher's conclusion that the PFRES' lack of a comprehensive professional development plan is not that uncommon

with departments of similar size. However, it appears that the lack of a comprehensive professional development plan has a direct correlation to the management and leadership deficiencies experienced at the chief officer level. Chief Officers' responses to this researcher's questionnaire show the professional development most of the chief officers have exhibited during their careers. It does not appear to be the lack of willingness on the part of the Chief Officers to engage in professional development, more so the lack of direction from organizational leadership of the past to implement professional development benchmarks and measurements. As Chief Horton stated, "this [PFRES] organization was culturally stunted in education and development" (D. J. Horton, personal communication, July, 2011). Professional development has been left up to the individual with little guidance from the organization. It would appear to this researcher that most PFRES personnel focused more attention on operational, or technical, development than adaptive management and leadership.

Although the PFRES has adopted a 40-hour Officer Development Program for all newly promoted officers, a sampling of attendees indicate that the program does not go far enough to address the needs of newly promoted officers. The program has only been offered twice since its inception and is a definite improvement over the lack of any program in the past.

Of the 29 Fire Chiefs, or their designee, that responded to this researcher's questionnaire, the utilization of a chief officer's task book/ working out of position, formal education/ National Fire Academy (NFA) residence courses, coaching/ mentoring/ role models by senior chief officers, and management/leadership-style instruction ranked as the highest elements in producing effective management and leadership skills with their chief officers. In reviewing this list, none of these elements are covered either in the preparation of chief officer candidates, newly promoted or appointed chief officers, or offered as continued professional development

for current chief officers of the PFRES. Chief Horton said that mentorship was one of his top three areas that chief officers were deficient (D. J. Horton, personal communication, July, 2011). PFRES chief officers admitted that they were lacking in the management and leadership skills of sharing a vision and planning, and leadership/team building skills. Questionnaires completed by PFRES Captains identified fails to develop others, lacks interpersonal skills, doesn't collaborate, and poor communicator as PFRES Chief Officers deficiencies in management and leadership.

It would appear that PFRES has failed its personnel in directing and encouraging their adaptive professional development. It would also be reasonable to conclude that since all of the current Chief Officers were developed through the PFRES system, future leadership will be lacking in adaptive management and leadership skills also unless the system is changed.

Recommendations

Based on the study findings, this researcher recommends a change to the current promotional system, job description requirements, and the implementation of a comprehensive professional development program for the PFRES. It is clear that if the PFRES desires to develop its personnel to hold upper-level management positions, a more comprehensive professional development program must be created and institutionalized. The main resource for this new program will be developed using the IAFC Officer Development Handbook, 2nd edition, which follows the recommendations set forth in the NFPA 1021 Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications, 2009 edition. "The intention of this revised handbook is to identify learning, educational, and experiential components that will support the development of competencies enabling fire officers to serve effectively in positions of authority and to exercise leadership" (IAFC, 2010, p. 11). It is this researcher's recommendation that a professional development

program be designed based on a nationally-recognized model and not simply conforms to or copies from a neighboring jurisdiction. Although, improvements in the overall plan may include proven elements from other fire service organizations.

There are four distinctive elements listed in the IAFC Officer Development Handbook for professional development: education, learning, experience, and self-development (IAFC, 2010, p. 13). Although this research project concentrates on the Chief Officers of the PFRES, recommendations must be broader to properly expose all personnel to professional development. Therefore, recommendation for changes in the PFRES promotional system will be for the ranks of Lieutenant, Captain, and Battalion Chief. Since the Deputy Chief's position is an appointed position and not affected by changes in the promotional system, changes in the PFRES Job Description will be recommended to better ensure that persons appointed to this position will have achieved similar development as recommended in the IAFC Officer Development Handbook.

All prerequisites and requirements established by the Civil Service Commission will remain in place. These are basic requirements establishing years in service, probationary periods and maintaining a valid Virginia driver's license. The testing of officer candidates is covered under Portsmouth Civil Service Commission rules along with the accumulation of earned service points (Portsmouth Civil Service, 1991). The written test is composed of 100 multiple choice questions. The written test for all ranks is given at least once every two years. Candidates are awarded one seniority point after their second year of service and one point each year after for a total of eight seniority points. The Civil Service Board compiles the written examination score and the seniority points earned to establish the promotional list (Portsmouth Civil Service, 1991). Civil Service rules also require that positions be made from the top five scores, the total of

written and seniority points. Recommendations made by this researcher only apply once a candidate reaches the top five scores on the Civil Service eligibility list.

It is recommended that the point system currently in place with the PFRES promotional system be dissolved. The requirements for promotion should by clearly stated and based on a progressive scale according to the nationally-recognized recommendations of IAFC Officer Development Handbook and other nationally-recognized requirements.

For the position of Lieutenant, this position is a Supervising Fire Officer or NFPA Fire Officer I. Although the Fire Officer I level does not require a degree, the IAFC Officer Development Handbook suggests a series of studies be taken from an accredited institution of higher education (IAFC, 2010, p. 23). The recommendation is for the candidate to have 45 hours of higher education toward an Associate's or Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university or be a practicing Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) - Intermediate (I) or Paramedic (P) acting as an Attendant in Charge (AIC) on an ambulance. This exception is made since the PFRES is in need of AICs on medic units, and personnel achieving the certification of EMT-I or P will have engaged in college level training that will transfer to an Associate's degree in Emergency Medical Services. Certifications required for Lieutenant candidates will be Fire Instructor I, Fire Officer I, Hazardous Materials Operations, and National Incident Management System (NIMS) certifications ICS 100, ICS 200, IS 700, and IS 800. Inspector I and Incident Safety Officer are recommended by the IAFC Officer Development Handbook. Incident Safety Officer will be addressed through a recommended position specific officer development course. Since the Inspector I course is held infrequently and priority is given to those assigned to the Fire Marshal's Office, it is this researcher's recommendation that the PFRES training department be

engaged in sponsoring Inspector I courses periodically and rotate personnel through until all officers have the certification.

Candidates for Captain, referred to a Fire Officer II or Managing Fire Officer, will be required to attain an Associate's degree before they are eligible for promotion to Fire Captain. These candidates will be required to possess Instructor I, II, Fire Officer I, II, and NIMS certifications ICS 100, ICS 200, ICS 300, IS 700, and IS 800. Other recommendations including the Public Information Officer and Leadership Development Series will be handled through a position specific officer development course. As with Inspector I, it will be recommended that the training department periodically sponsor Fire Investigator I and Public Educator I and rotate personnel through until all officers have the certification.

The PFRES does not distinguish between Battalion Chiefs assigned to operation, emergency management, or administration, therefore, requirements for the position of Battalion Chief will be that of a Fire Officer II or Managing Officer, with special requirements and preferences given for certain Fire Officer III, or Administrative Officer elements. The Battalion Chief candidate must possess an Associate's degree with preference given to those candidates possessing a Bachelor's degree. Required certifications will consist of Fire Instructor I, II, Fire Officer I, II, III, and NIMS certifications of ICS 100, ICS 200, ICS 300, ICS 400, IS 700, and IS 800. All job descriptions should be changed to reflect the recommended requirements.

Completion of a position specific officer development course will be required before a candidate will be promoted. It is recommended that initial courses be scheduled well in advance and taught on a flip-flop basis. The classes will be voluntary and classroom time will be 40-hours. The course subjects will be similar to the ones currently offered: Buddy to Boss, communications, writing skills, responsibilities and expectations, equal employment opportunity

and affirmative action, diversity, emergency management, safety, introduction to the Fire Marshal's Offices, company training, leadership, field training officer, and probationary officer development. The difference is that each subject will be tailored to that specific position. The officer development course for Lieutenant Candidates will focus on 50% technical, 25% management, and 25% leadership skills. The officer development course for Captain Candidates will focus on 30% technical, 40% management, and 30% leadership skills. The officer development course for Battalion Chief Candidates will focus on 20% technical, 40% management, and 40% leadership skills.

It is also in these officer development courses that the candidate will be introduced to career mapping and experiential learning. The candidate will be exposed to the following elements: agency operations, coaching, directing resources, incident management, planning, instruction, human resource management, financial resource management, interagency, emergency management, community involvement, and professional associations (IAFC, 2010, p. 25). These are the elements that will guide the officer candidate and/or new officer through experiential learning. The officer development course will also expose the candidate to self-development in the following areas: health/fitness, physical ability, career mapping, communication, interpersonal dynamics/skills, legal issues, technology, and local and/or contemporary hazards/issues (IAFC, 2010, p. 27).

The final phase of the promotional process will be an assessment center. The assessment center will be facilitated by a professional company that specializes in fire service assessment centers. It will be recommended that there be three stations for the assessment center process. One station will allow the candidate to present a résumé that allows the candidate to discuss the following areas: education, certifications, or designations beyond the minimum requirements,

contributions to the organization, volunteer/civic involvement, or any other pertinent information the candidate would want to share. The other two stations would be randomly selected prior to the assessment center, but the same for all participating in the assessment center. The total attainable score from the assessment center would be 45 points.

Summing up the recommendations for the promotional process, candidates would take a written examination, have seniority points added, and be placed on the Civil Service eligibility list. Candidates would have to have met the new educational, certification, and officer development course requirements to remain eligible for promotion. Candidates would then participate in an assessment center. Points earned on the assessment center would be added to the candidates score once the candidate entered the top five on the Civil Service eligibility list. The maximum score attainable would be 100 points for the written examination, 8 points for seniority, and 45 points on the assessment center, for a total of 153 points.

Since the Deputy Chief's position is appointed, it is recommended that the PFRES Job Description be changed to reflect the requirements of a Fire Officer III or Administrative Fire Officer. The minimum training and experience should read "Bachelor's degree and nine years of experience in firefighting and emergency response; with at least three years at the Battalion Chief level." The statement currently in the Job description, "or any equivalent combination of training and experience which provides the required skills, knowledge, and abilities" (PFRES Job Description, 1999) should be removed. Under the section titled special requirements, it is recommended to be changed to "Certified by the Commonwealth of Virginia as a Fire Instructor I, II, Fire Officer I, II, II, EMT-E, and NIMS certified ICS 100, ICS 200, ICS 300, ICS 400, IS 700, and IS 800." Also, the Deputy Chief should either be a graduate, participant, or required to attend once appointed, the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program. These

changes would ensure that the Deputy Chief's position had the same comprehensive development as the personnel they are to lead. This would add management and leadership stability to upper-management and reinforce the importance of a comprehensive professional development program.

An important recommendation is to have the current Chief Officers conduct a self-assessment and participate in a peer review so that each Chief Officer will know where they need improvement. Chief Officers should work to improve areas of weakness and work toward meeting the recommended requirements for their specific position. It is also recommended that Chief Officers participate in a mentoring workshop that will help them to effectively mentor and coach others in the department. The research shows that PFRES Chief Officers are deficient in management and leadership skills. However, their inabilities appear to be the direct result of an organizations complacency and failure to properly direct, encourage, and develop their most valuable assets, their people. If changes are not made to support and develop personnel of the PFRES, it would be illogical to expect a different outcome in the future.

Once these recommended changes are approved and implemented, PFRES personnel will have a better understanding of what is expected of them, how to properly prepare for the next level of responsibility, and gain exposure to the benefits of life-long learning. If successful, future Chief Officers will be better prepared to positively affect the organization through adaptive management and leadership skills. They will also have the experience to mentor and coach promising subordinates, providing the PFRES with stability and exceptional leadership for the future.

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Appendix A

Recommended PFRES Promotional Process

Lieutenant
Education: 45 hours of college toward an Associate's degree with an accredited college or university

Or

Be a Practicing EMT-I or P (acting as AIC on medics unit)

Certifications: Fire Instructor I; Fire Officer I; ICS 100; ICS 200; IS 700; IS 800

Captain
Education: An Associate's degree with an accredited college or university
Certifications: Fire Instructor I, II; Fire Officer I, II; ICS 100; ICS 200; ICS 300; IS 700; IS 800

Battalion Chief
Education: An Associate's degree with an accredited college or university (required)
A Bachelor's degree with an accredited college or university (given preference)
Certifications: Fire Instructor I, II; Fire Officer I, II, III; ICS 100; ICS 200; ICS 300; ICS 400; IS 700; IS 800

Complete Position Specific Professional Development Course (40-hour course)

Assessment Center (3 stations/ total score attainable is 45 points)

Note: Civil Service Rules will remain the same. PFRES promotional requirements and Assessment Center scores are relevant only after the candidate enters the top five scores. Top five scores are derived by the written examination score and seniority points.

Appendix B

Position Specific Professional Development Course

Position specific professional development courses will be validated through collaboration with the Training Division and approval by the PFRES Fire Chief. The subjects for each course will be: Buddy to Boss, communications, writing skills, responsibilities and expectations, equal employment opportunity and affirmative action, diversity, emergency management, safety, introduction to the Fire Marshal's Offices, company training, leadership, field training officer, and probationary officer development.

However, courses will be tailored to the specific position the candidate is seeking. Example: The officer development course for Lieutenant Candidates will focus on 50% technical, 25% management, and 25% leadership skills. The officer development course for Captain Candidates will focus on 30% technical, 40% management, and 30% leadership skills. The officer development course for Battalion Chief Candidates will focus on 20% technical, 40% management, and 40% leadership skills.

The purpose of position specific professional development is to focus on the skills that the candidate will need when they are promoted to the next level of responsibility. While the minimum requirements set in the promotional process addresses learning and education, the professional development course will focus the candidate on the importance of experience and self-development.

The candidate will be exposed to experiential learning in the elements of: agency operations, coaching, directing resources, incident management, planning, instruction, human resource management, financial resource management, interagency, emergency management, community involvement, and professional associations (IAFC, 2010, p. 25). Self-assessment and career mapping will be introduced. The officer development course will also expose the candidate to self-development in the areas of: health/fitness, physical ability, career mapping, communication, interpersonal dynamics/skills, legal issues, technology, and local and/or contemporary hazards/issues (IAFC, 2010, p. 27).

It is essential that these courses are relevant and enriches the candidate's experience. Courses will be assessed for relevance of content and delivery. This program will be the most important training course to the success of the PFRES. Every effort must be made to deliver the most current information, with proven adult learning techniques, to institutionalize a culture of life-long learning in the PFRES.

Appendix C
Questions for PFRES Chief Officers

1. What is your highest level of formal education? _____
   a) What level do you believe is appropriate for Deputy Chief? _____
   b) What level do you believe is appropriate for Battalion Chief? _____

2. Please identify which of the following Virginia State Certifications you possess:
   VA Fire Officer I, VA Fire Officer II, VA Fire Officer III, VA Fire Officer IV, other State Certifications that relate to Officer Leadership and Management: _____

   _____

3. Outside of operational training, have you taken any courses that have enhanced your management and/or leadership ability? ☐ YES ☐ NO
   If yes, please list: _____

   _____

4. Upon promotion (or appointment) to your current position, did you feel that you were properly prepared to lead and manage in that capacity? ☐ YES ☐NO
   Please explain: _____

   _____

   _____

5. Do you feel that an Officer Development Program (tailored to Chief Officers) would have better helped you manage and lead from your current position? ☐ YES ☐ NO
   Comments: _____

   _____

6. Do you believe that you would have benefited from a Coaching or Mentoring Program?
   ☐ YES ☐ NO Comments: _____

   _____

7. What Fire Officer Certifications or Designations have you achieved (i.e. Chief Officer Designation, Member International Institute of Fire Engineers, Executive Fire Officer)? Do you feel they aid in Chief Officer Development?
   _____
   _____
   _____

8. In considering the position(s) of Chief Officer, please rate the following subjects as to their importance to the PFRES. (1 being less important, 5 being most important)

	Less Important				Most Important
Record Keeping	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Leadership	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Incident Command	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Communication	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Culture & Diversity Issues	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Team Building	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Time Management	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Customer Service	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Report Writing	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Health & Wellness	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Standard Operating Procedures	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Developing Vision & Goals	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Employee Assistance Programs	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Strategic Planning	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Local Government Organization	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Fire Investigation	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Response Districts	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Budget Process	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Labor/Management Relations	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Legal & Ethical Issues	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Interpersonal Relationships	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Other: _____	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

9. In the PFRES, list the top three areas current Chief Officers excel?

_____, _____, _____

List the top three areas current Chief Officers lack?

_____, _____, _____

10. Is the current promotional policy and Officer Development program sufficient for preparing candidates to be effective Chief Officers of the PFRES? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Please provide comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix D
Captain's Questionnaire

Questionnaire for Chief Officer Development (Chief Officers include Battalion and Deputy Chiefs)

1. I feel PFRES Chief Officers are effective managers.

Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

2. I feel PFRES Chief Officers are effective leaders.

Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

3. In considering the position(s) of Chief Officer, please rate the following subjects as to their importance to the PFRES. (1 being less important, 5 being most important)

	Less Important				Most Important
Record Keeping	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Leadership	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Incident Command	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Communication	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Culture & Diversity Issues	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Team Building	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Time Management	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Customer Service	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Report Writing	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Health & Wellness	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Standard Operating Procedures	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Developing Vision & Goals	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Employee Assistance Programs	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Strategic Planning	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Local Government Organization	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Fire Investigation	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Knowledge of Response Districts	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Budget Process	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Labor/Management Relations	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Legal & Ethical Issues	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Interpersonal Relationships	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Other: _____	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

4. Please rate the following leadership and management traits/attributes by PFRES Chief Officers. (If none, choose none; please rate from 1 to 10, 1 being the highest rating)

__ Intelligent __ Educated __ Supportive __ Responsible

__ Understanding
__ Planner
__ Visionary
__ Imaginative
__ Seeks Knowledge
__ Enthusiastic
__ Team Oriented
__ Self Control
__ Decisive
__ Broad-minded
__ Honest
__ Trustworthy
__ Mentor
__ Competent
__ Empathic
__ Forward-looking
__ Good Judgment
__ Professional
__ Committed
__ Personable
__ Courageous
__ Inspiring
__ Fair-minded
__ Good Communicator
__ Other _____
__ None

5. Please rate the following leadership and management deficiencies of PFRES Chief Officers. (If none, choose none; please rate from 1 to 10, 1 being the highest deficiency)

__ Unorganized
__ No Follow-through
__ Resists new ideas
__ Lacks Enthusiasm
__ Poor time-manager
__ Selfish
__ Poor Communicator
__ Undependable
__ Poor Judgment
__ Lacks vision
__ Doesn't walk the talk
__ Untrustworthy
__ Not accountable
__ Uses threats/fear
__ Mediocre Performer
__ Doesn't Collaborate
__ Creates factions
__ Lacks Interpersonal skills
__ Fails to develop others
__ Lacks Initiative
__ Lacks Knowledge
__ Other _____
__ None

6. From your vantage point, what can PFRES do to improve the leadership and management abilities of current and future Chief Officers? Please provide any comments below.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix E
Questionnaire sent to 75 Fire Departments Nationwide

Chief Officer Development

1. Please provide the following basic information about your department
   a. Department Name:
   b. City:
   c. State:

2. Type of department:
   a. Career
   b. Combination
   c. Volunteer

3. Size of department (please include operations, support services, and administrative staff):
   a. 1-100
   b. 101-500
   c. 501-1000
   d. 1001-above

4. Indicate the population your department serves:
   a. 1-5,000
   b. 5,001-10,000
   c. 10,001-50,000
   d. 50,001-100,000
   e. 100,001-200,000
   f. 200,000-above

5. Does your department have an initial and/or continuing professional development plan for future or current chief officers? Yes/No
   If yes, please submit a copy via email to campbells@portsmouthva.gov

6. What models, curriculums, and/or standards were used to design your professional development plan for chief officers? Please explain.

7. Does your department have higher education requirements from regionally accredited collegiate-level institutions for chief officers? Yes/No. Please explain.

8. Briefly describe your professional development plan for chief officers.

9. Do you feel that your current professional development plan contributes to consistent and effective management practices in your chief officers? Yes/ No. Please explain.