Running head: BATTALION CHIEF DEVELOPMENT

Considerations for a Battalion Chief Development Program in Kernersville

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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 indicate so, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another.

Signed: _____

Abstract

Like other agencies, Kernersville Fire Rescue Department (KFRD) faces changes in departmental leadership in the future. Recent promotional processes at the battalion chief level revealed that candidates were well prepared for the fireground duties of the job but lacked preparation in the administrative functions. The problem is that KFRD does not have a program to develop the wide range of knowledge, skills and abilities needed by future battalion chiefs and therefore may not be properly preparing its personnel to perform the duties of that position.

The purpose of this descriptive research paper was intended to identify considerations that could be used in creating a knowledge, skills and abilities development program for the department's future battalion chiefs. In an effort to identify the needs and available resources for such a program, this project sought to answer the following questions: (1) What knowledge, skills and abilities are needed to perform the duties of a KFR battalion chief? (2) How do current and past KFR battalion chiefs rate their level of preparedness for those knowledge, skills and abilities? (3) What training tools or programs are available to assist personnel to prepare for the battalion chief position? (4) How do other fire departments prepare their personnel to become battalion chiefs?

To answer these questions, officer development literature was reviewed, and then surveys and interviews were conducted to determine what aspects of the battalion chief's duties needed additional training and preparation. Training resources were then sought to address those needs. In addition, other departments were consulted for details on their officer development programs.

This project confirmed that there was a need for such a program at the KFRD; for both personnel development and as a future succession planning tool. Recommendations included

program development, expansion of training opportunities and creation of a battalion chief development task book.

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Introduction

When a person makes the decision to enter the fire service, they begin a journey that is steeped in tradition. Throughout its history, the fire service has offered opportunities for advancement to individuals willing to work hard to become the best firefighters. In earlier times, being the best, most experienced firefighter was often used as a measure for whom would make the best officer. Unfortunately, expertise on the fireground did not always adequately gauge leadership ability. Why did some firefighters, who were excellent tacticians on the fireground, have difficulty making the transition to the duties and responsibilities of command officers? The answer may well be that all of their training up to the point they were promoted had been focused on performance of the core services provided by their departments; fire suppression and medical response among others. Often newly promoted officers are not prepared for the extra responsibilities involve in their new rank; their training never having addressed the administrative aspects of the position. "The fire service once relied on experience alone to train our upcoming leaders; they were developed under fire so to speak. Some departments provided training after a promotion, but few provided training before the advancement of the officer" (Paul, 2012, ¶ 10).

On the KFRD, this gap in preparation has become most evident at the battalion chief rank. As KFRD is a relatively small department, the agency's battalion chiefs are assigned many duties and responsibilities that their colleagues on larger departments would not have. The department's battalion chiefs serve as shift commanders and are expected to perform a wide variety of functions from incident command to duties that are considered administrative in nature. They oversee special assignments and projects and are assigned responsibility for specified segments of the department's operating budget. Once promoted to the position, KFR battalion chiefs no longer have the luxury of being only concerned with the operational aspects of the department;

firefighting, medical response, rescue, etc. They must also expand their responsibilities to include the administrative functions of the department; including disciplinary procedures, purchasing and seemingly endless report writing.

Matt Reece, a human resources analyst with the Piedmont Triad Regional Council of Governments, who studies public employees' positions for governmental entities in North Carolina, sees a trend toward battalion chiefs having an increasing amount of administrative responsibilities on the fire departments for which he has worked. "On smaller departments, more administrative functions reside with their battalion chiefs. They are taking on organizational responsibilities instead of just operational responsibilities and in most cases; the battalion chief's rank is the first time this occurs" (M. Reece, personal communication, February 1, 2012).

In a sense, the department's battalion chiefs are straddling the line between the *fire service* and the *fire business*. Since the vast majority of their previous training has been operationally based; with little or no training on the administrative side of the job, battalion chiefs may not be prepared for many of their new duties and may experience difficulty making the transition from company officer to shift commander.

The Executive Fire Officer Program's fourth year class, *Executive Leadership*, is concerned with leadership styles and methods. However, one of the underlying themes of the class is preparing departments for the future; ensuring that an unbroken string of leaders are developed to guide departments long after the EFO is gone. "Fire and rescue organizations are known for preparing their members for the tasks encountered during emergencies. However, they are less prepared for the process involved with replacing people who occupy key positions" (Culp, 2008, ¶

1). Culp further states that "leaving employee development to chance places the organization in the reactionary mode when looking for candidates to fill key positions."

This ARP is intended to examine the battalion chief's position within the KFRD and to look for ways to develop future candidates seeking promotion to the job. This project will address elements of career development and succession planning. The descriptive method will be utilized for this project. The goal of this research is to identify training tools and methods that could eventually be used to create a battalion chief development plan specifically designed to meet the needs of Kernersville's fire department. With that task in mind, the research for this ARP will seek to answer the following questions:

1. What knowledge, skills and abilities are needed to perform the duties of a KFR battalion chief?
2. How do current and past KFR battalion chiefs rate their level of preparedness for those knowledge, skills and abilities?
3. What training tools or programs are available to assist personnel to prepare for the battalion chief position?
4. How do other fire departments prepare their personnel to become battalion chiefs?

Background and Significance

Situated in the mid-section of North Carolina is a triangular shaped cluster of cities; Greensboro, Winston-Salem and High Point. In the past, each of the three cities had a thriving economy based on a specific industry. Greensboro was primarily a textile town; Winston-Salem's economy was based mainly on its tobacco and cigarette industry and High Point's furniture plants produced fine home furnishings. Unfortunately, each of these industries has seen significant

decline over the past three decades. As these industries changed, so did the cities that depended on them. Civic and business leaders began to look for ways to keep the area productive and prosperous. To promote the area on a global scale and to attract the new forms of industries and economic growth opportunities needed to offset the loss of the tobacco, textile and furniture industries, business leaders in those cities as well as the surrounding towns and counties, formed a regional association that has become known and marketed as the Piedmont Triad. In the center of the Triad, is the Town of Kernersville and its 23,123 residents (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011).

Kernersville is less than 10 miles from any of its three larger neighboring cities and covers an area of just under 18 square miles. Because it lies in the heart of the Triad, Kernersville's location has proved to be most beneficial and the town has experienced enormous growth over the past 30 years. A textile based mill-town until the late 1970's, Kernersville's location began to appeal to people who wanted to work and shop in the larger cities but live in a community with a small town feel. By the mid-1980's, Kernersville had become largely a bedroom community and as the Piedmont Triad grew, so did the population and area of the town. While other communities in the United States have seen their growth rates fall in recent years, Kernersville has experienced an average population growth rate of 53 % per decade since 1970 (Town of Kernersville, 2007, p. 7). Despite, this country's recessionary climate, new commercial and industrial opportunities have come to Kernersville that have helped provide a more economically healthy business and residential balance within the community; making the town even more attractive to potential growth.

The growth of Kernersville brought challenges to the town's leaders. The influx of people moving to the town from the neighboring cities had become accustom to the quality and convenience of big city services; particularly those of public works and public safety. The new

residents expected similar services from their new home town. As Kernersville grew, so did the demand for services on its fire department.

The department was formed in 1923 and like most small town fire departments at that time; it was made up of a handful of dedicated volunteers. The organization remained a group of volunteers until, in 1965, the department hired its first full time employee and thus began its steady transformation into a combination fire department. In 1981, one of the town's largest hosiery mills was destroyed by a fire. The loss of a major source of the town's tax base raised concerns that the small fire department was not adequate for the growing community and added to the department's paid staff. By the mid-1980's, the department had grown to include a paid fire chief and three shifts each consisting of two apparatus drivers and one firefighter. Incident manpower was heavily dependent on volunteer/on-call members. However, with the majority of the volunteer/on-call members working in one of the local factories or at jobs in one of the nearby cities, the number of firefighters available to respond to emergency calls during daytime hours declined steadily. Concern for the public's safety and fear that another major fire in one of the town's few remaining industries would cripple the local economy led community leaders to make the decision to further increase the department's full time staffing; a move that ultimately resulted in Kernersville's fire department becoming a career organization.

When the additional staffing was hired in early 1987, the department's organizational chart included a fire chief, an assistant chief and three seven-person shifts. Each shift was under the direction of a shift captain who oversaw the daily activities of two three-person engine companies. At that time, the captain's position involved relatively few administrative job functions; its primary responsibility was to serve as incident commander at all fire calls. Accordingly, fireground knowledge and experience was the main criteria used to select individuals for the position.

Over the next ten years, the town's growth resulted in additional personnel, stations and services. KFRD grew from two stations to four; began responding to medical emergencies and added a Fire Prevention Division. Because of an increase of mutual aid responses, rank titles were changed in 1997 to more closely align the department's structure to that of the surrounding cities. As a result, the shift captain's title was officially changed to battalion chief. For the duration of this ARP, the term battalion chief, when used in a KFRD context, will refer to the individuals who command one of the shifts within the department's Operations Division.

Today, the KFRD has a total of 69 employees who provide fire, emergency medical, rescue, fire prevention and life safety education services to the community. KFRD is divided into three divisions, Operations, Prevention and Administration. The Operations Division still has three shifts; now made up of 21 fire suppression personnel that work rotating 24-hour shifts. These people operate the department's five companies (four engines and one truck/squad combination) and respond out of four stations to provide the department's core services. Each of KFRD's companies is under the command of a captain. All companies are assigned crews of four personnel; though on the majority of days, because of scheduled vacation and holiday leave time, the engine companies operate with a crew of three.

According to the department's annual report, in 2011, KFRD personnel responded to 2,729 calls for service; 90 of which were fires while 1,897 were emergency medical or rescue responses, (Kernersville Fire Rescue Department, 2012, p. 6). The department's medical service does not include patient transport which is a function provided by Forsyth County's EMS. Kernersville's Fire Prevention Division consists of three staff members who are charged with fire code enforcement, building plans review and fire cause investigations. The fire chief, assistant chief and an administrative support assistant make up the Administrative Division that is responsible for

functions that include budget preparation, long and short-term planning and establishment of organizational policy.

Around the middle 1990s, as both the town and the fire department experienced a period of significant growth, the battalion chief's position began to change dramatically. Initially, the position had been created to provide incident command and general shift supervision. Battalion chiefs prior to that point had few administrative duties. However, as the department grew, so did the responsibilities and workload of KFRD's chief officers. To help manage the increase, battalion chiefs were given some of the assignments that had been previously considered the responsibility of the department's chief officers. Where in past years their main administrative functions had been scheduling monthly staffing assignments and filing end-of-the-month activity reports, battalion chiefs began to see their position responsible for an ever increasing amount of reports, personnel matters and special projects. The knowledge, skills and abilities needed to perform the battalion chief's position expanded radically from the time when fireground strategy was the principal basis for promotion and now include use of a variety of computer applications, budget preparation assistance and public relations activities.

To be eligible for promotion to battalion chief on Kernersville's fire department, a candidate must meet a number of requirements that include having served as a captain for a period of time not less than five years. Presently, captains function as company officers and are responsible for the operation of their apparatus, crew and station. Captains work under the supervision of their assigned battalion chief. As part of their job functions, captains are expected to act as the shift commander when the battalion chief is on leave. However, many of the battalion chief's administrative duties and special projects are on-going and not easily handed off to a junior officer who is covering assignments for only a few shifts. Therefore, while not immune to having

administrative tasks assigned to them during these periods, fill-in duty for the captain revolves primarily around the potential need for an incident commander. Accordingly, some of the department's captains still subscribe to the misconception that the person with the best fireground skill makes for the best battalion chief candidate at promotion time.

From 1987 until 2005, a total of six people held the rank of battalion chief in the KFRD. To earn the position, each participated in a promotional assessment process that was heavily based on candidates' fireground management abilities. With the exception of a role-played personnel problem, no other administrative aspects of the battalion chief's position were factored into the promotional assessments. This too re-enforced the *best at tactics; best candidate* attitude among some of the department's captains.

In 2008, a battalion chief's position became open as the result of series of promotions caused by the retirement of the department's long-term fire chief. The department's new chief, having previously served as a battalion chief for 15 years and experiencing firsthand the expanding expectations of that position, included several of the administrative job elements into the promotional process. In addition to the requisite fireground scenario, candidates in this process were required to write a position paper and create a presentation based on that paper. These injects were intended to evaluate the candidates' written communication skills and public speaking ability. The resulting promotional process was a significant departure from past assessments. Due to retirements at the battalion chief level, the process was tweaked and repeated on two subsequent occasions. In both instances, after the assessments were concluded, candidates were asked for their opinions of the promotional processes. Each time there were comments received from some of the candidates regarding difficulties they experienced when being assessed on non-fireground

job skills and abilities. It has become apparent that in order to better prepare future battalion chiefs, some changes may need to be implemented in the department's training philosophy.

Thus, the problem that confronts the department and consequently forms the basis of this research project is that KFRD does not have a program to develop the wide range of knowledge, skills and abilities needed by future battalion chiefs and therefore may not be properly preparing its personnel to perform the duties of that position.

This descriptive ARP is intended to examine the battalion chief position as it exists within the KFRD and to develop a comprehensive list of the major knowledge, skills and abilities needed to effectively perform its duties. By comparing that list to the existing training and experience requirements of the position, this research project should begin to expose those areas where current training and experience may not adequately prepare potential candidates for the actual job duties. Ultimately, it is the goal of this ARP to identify training tools and methods that may overcome these gaps and strengthen the knowledge, skills and abilities base of the department's future battalion chiefs. By doing so, the department can take steps towards developing better prepared, and therefore, better functioning battalion chiefs. It is the opinion of the researcher that if this project's goal is met, the transition from company officer to battalion chief will be shorter in duration and more efficient; minimizing the effect of personnel change on the department's continuity of operations. In addition, this project serves to support the United States Fire Administration's (USFA) operational objective of responding appropriately in a timely manner to emerging issues (U.S. Fire Administration, 2008, pp. II-2).

Literature Review

The research for this ARP began in November 2011 at the National Fire Academy's Learning Resource Center (LRC) with a search for literature related to officer development; specifically regarding development programs targeting the battalion chief position. In the course of gathering background material for this project, information was found in other sources which included journals and trade magazines as well as a number of internet websites.

Since this project involved investigating ways in which to develop the knowledge, skills and abilities of a specific position within a fire department's organization, it seemed appropriate to begin the literature review by gathering information that helps define and understand what the terms knowledge, skills and abilities actually mean.

According to the *Explanation of Terms* section of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's *Training and Development Policy*, knowledge, skills and abilities are defined as the "attributes required to perform a job and are generally demonstrated through qualifying experience, education, or training (U.S. Office of Personnel Management, n.d.). The document continues by defining the individual terms. It states that:

> "Knowledge is a body of information applied directly to the performance of a function. Skill is an observable competence to perform a learned psychomotor act. Ability is competence to perform an observable behavior or a behavior that results in an observable product" (U.S. Office of Personnel Management, n.d.).

From a human resources perspective; knowledge, skills and abilities set the stage for determining a person's suitability to be hired or promoted. "The primary purpose of KSAs is to measure those qualities that will set one candidate apart from the others" (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, n.d., ¶ 1). The vast majority of job descriptions contain listings of

desirable qualities that candidates for a position should possess. Through the selection process, the person who possesses the greatest number of the desired work related factors normally gets the position. Often, one or more of the listed knowledge, skills and abilities will be deemed particularly important to the performance of the job and it will be required of the candidate before being considered for hiring. How well an applicant can demonstrate their ability to match a position's defined attributes – as spelled out in the job description - usually determines whether or not the person will be considered for the job. Therefore, knowledge, skills and abilities become a tool which an employer will use to find suitable persons to fill vacancies in their organization. After the person is hired or promoted, those indicators will be used to gauge their ability to adequately perform the job duties through the use of the evaluation process.

Literature regarding the subject of knowledge, skills and abilities emphasize that they must be job-related. "An agency cannot ask for anything in a KSA that is not in the job's position description" (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, n.d. ¶ 7). Accordingly, most job descriptions contain a large and detailed listing of desired knowledge, skills and abilities. Often, in careers in which skill in one position may lead to promotion to another – classically illustrated by the fire service - knowledge, skills and abilities from one job description are repeated and then expanded as the position's responsibilities increase. Specifically, nearly all of the knowledge, skills and abilities found on an entry level firefighter's job description will also be found within the job description of a captain. However, the captain's job description will contain additional knowledge, skills and abilities that reflect the position's additional duties and responsibilities.

Several previously submitted EFO research papers on the subject of chief officer development were read during this literature review. Many of the papers, including *Analysis of Fire Service Suppression Division Battalion Chief Officer Development* by David L. Bullins and

Components of a Battalion Chief Officer Program for the North Kansas City Fire Department by Salvatore J. Scarpa report the National Fire Protection Association's *Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications* (NFPA 1021) to be an excellent reference to provide descriptions of the knowledge, skills and abilities needed by a fire department battalion chief.

NFPA 1021, originally adopted in July 1976, was intended "to develop clear and concise job performance requirements that can be used to determine that an individual, when measured to the standard, possesses the skills and knowledge to perform as a fire officer" (National Fire Protection Association, 2009, pp. 1021-1). The standard creates four levels of progression for fire officers and establishes minimum job performance requirements for each. Fire Officer I is defined in the standard as the supervisory level; Fire Officer II the supervisory/managerial level; Fire Officer III the managerial/administrative level and Fire Officer IV is listed as the administrative level (National Fire Protection Association, 2009, pp. 1021-7). The authors of the two previously mentioned ARPs differ slightly on their assessment of which level of the NFPA's Fire Officer Standard apply to the battalion chief position, their differing observations – Bullins stating that battalion chiefs should be Fire Officer III while Scarpa suggest Fire Officer II – may be explained by the needs of their respective departments. As noted earlier in this paper, the degree of management verses administrative responsibilities placed on a battalion chief can vary radically depending on the size and organizational structure of individual fire departments. While it appears that Fire Officer I level is intended for the company officer, the distinction between Fire Officer II and Fire Officer III may well rest with an individual fire department's expectations and job descriptions for officers beyond that of the company level.

It is important for fire service agencies to thoroughly evaluate their officer positions in order to properly choose the knowledge, skills and abilities that best reflect the job duties and

expectations and that they are clearly expressed on job descriptions. This process should include periodic re-evaluation to determine if changes in job expectations result in the need for changes in an agency's published job descriptions. Fleming writes:

> "Since the specific roles and responsibilities of the chief officer will be determined by the position he or she holds, a good starting point in assessing and developing the necessary knowledge and skills is to develop a realistic understanding of duties and responsibilities of that position and the necessary qualifications to successfully fill the position. This information should be supplemented with information resulting from networking and review of job descriptions, specifications and postings" (Fleming, 2002, ¶ 22).

When positions, such as a fire department's battalion chief, are complex in nature, it is to an agency's benefit to utilize recognized standards, like those found in NFPA 1021, when determining required knowledge, skills and abilities. "The lack of creditable and measurable knowledge, skills and abilities that align with nationally recognized processes and standards in this day and age is questionable at best, and may border on the edge of negligence" (Naum, 2010, ¶ 11).

One fact that was made clear during the *Executive Leadership* class is that a fire department's leadership will change. Author and fire service advocate, Dennis Compton states, "The long-term success of an organization is directly related to the on-going investment in those who will lead it in the future. Succession planning and career development are key program elements of this effort" (Paul, 2012, ¶ 9). Therefore, nearly all of the literature reviewed for this project places emphasis on the obligation current fire department leaders bear in providing avenues to develop the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities of the personnel who may someday assume their agency's positions of leadership. "Organizations without a professional development

program often allow a newly promoted individual to succeed or fail through trial and error, to the detriment of the organization in transition" (Waite, 2006, ¶ 6).

Once realistic job expectations have been determined, the next phase in the creation of a development program for any position is to identify how the organization can help employees gain the skills required to meet the needs of the position. Articles reviewed for this ARP identified several ways to accomplish this objective. Among ways organizations can assist employees to develop the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities for a particular position include; formal training programs, reading assignments, job shadowing and mentoring. A number of previously published EFO papers read as part of this literature review seem to re-enforce that conclusion. The most common fire officer development tools suggested in other ARPs and in published articles seem to be formal officer training academies, officer certification classes, college degrees and working directly with other officers; either as an observer/participant or through some form of mentoring program. Company officers who have demonstrated the desire to progress through the ranks must be exposed to the battalion chief's responsibilities and duties in order to gain a realistic vision of the job and to begin to build an experience base from which to carry out those duties. Many of the articles read as part of this project strongly recommend supplementing the traditional fire service training of aspiring officers with instruction in management and leadership.

At the end of the review of literature relating to knowledge, skills and abilities as well as programs and methods to develop those attributes, it became obvious that employee development is a universal concern and not unique to the fire service. Nor is it something to be taken lightly. The authors of the ARPs, magazine and internet articles and fire officer career development documents that were studied as background information for this project helped establish the direction that the researcher of this paper would follow. The research and findings of others who

have previously examined this subject have all reached similar conclusions; identifying and preparing future fire officers is vital to the operation of both individual departments and the fire service as a whole. Through retirement and movement from one department to another, fire departments often experience changes in leadership. In order for the loss of a high ranking or key officer not to cripple an organization, proper development of knowledge, skills and ability must be undertaken. In the case of battalion chief, the transition from company officer to a position involving management and administration can be difficult; even more so if training for the duties required by the position aren't begun until after the promotion. Since many departments use the battalion chief position as a precursor to their deputy, assistant or fire chief positions, efforts made toward development of the people who aspire to become battalion chiefs are, according to all reviewed sources, a true investment in the future of the organization.

Procedures

The research for this project began in the LRC on the campus of the National Fire Academy with a search for ARPs on the subjects of battalion chief development, fire officer development and succession planning. Fortunately, as this is an on-going issue in the fire service, there were numerous papers on the subject to be found and reviewed for background material and research method planning.

In the modern electronic age, the internet plays a large role in accessing information. Such was the case with this research project. An in-depth search of the internet was conducted using a variety of search engines and key words associated with this paper's subject matter. Those key words included battalion chief; fire department career development; fire officer development; knowledge, skills and abilities, among others. Websites including those of the International

Association of Fire Chiefs and Fire Chief magazine proved especially apt to have writings on officer development and the NFPA's site yielded their standard for fire officer qualifications.

The first of this ARP's research questions was formulated to gather information on the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to be a battalion chief on Kernersville's fire department. To begin to answer this question, a detailed review of the current battalion chief's job description (Appendix A) was conducted.

After the review of that document, it seemed logical that a comparison of other similar sized North Carolina fire departments' battalion chief job descriptions would be helpful to this project. A list of all career fire departments was obtained from the North Carolina Office of the State Fire Marshal. Among the information contained on the list was the number of stations operated by the individual departments. As KFRD currently operates four stations, the list was reduced to include only career departments that operated 3 to 6 stations. A letter was emailed to the chiefs of the 15 departments that met those criteria with a request for copies of their battalion chief job description. The email was also sent to several of the researcher's EFOP classmates who work with departments outside of North Carolina that fit the aforementioned criteria. In addition, in anticipation of this paper's fourth research question, information was requested regarding programs these departments had adopted for battalion chief development purposes. Unfortunately, response to this request did not produce a satisfactory yield of data as only three replies were received. The three job descriptions received as a result of the information request were compared to Kernersville's and no significant variations were discovered among the four documents.

To gain a broader perspective of the knowledge, skills and abilities needed of a fire department battalion chief, the NFPA 1021 standard was also reviewed. This nationally recognized standard contained numerous examples of attributes determined necessary for fire

officers. As noted in the Literature Review section of this paper, many of the knowledge, skills and abilities listed in both the Fire Officer II and Fire Officer III seem to apply to KRFD's battalion chief job duties which include both managerial and administrative roles.

Once the job descriptions and the NFPA 1021 standard were reviewed, further information about the knowledge, skills and abilities needed of KFRD's battalion chiefs was obtained directly from a source with unique insight into the job – the department's current and former battalion chiefs. On January 17, 2012, seven of the nine people who had been or currently serve as a KFRD battalion chief assembled at the department's headquarters station. At that time, they were asked to name all of the functions and duties associated with the battalion chief's job. The participants were informed that the list generated at that gathering would be used to create a questionnaire which would be sent to them for the purpose of determining their preparedness for the battalion chief's job responsibility; the second of this ARP's research questions. At the conclusion of the session, a sizable list of job responsibilities had been generated. There were a number of responses that were similar in nature and, therefore, combined in order to shorten the list slightly. The list of KFRD battalion chief s needed knowledge, skills and abilities, as determined by people who have been in the position is shown in the *Results* section of this paper.

The second research question was to determine how prepared KFRD's former and current battalion chiefs felt they were for the knowledge, skills and abilities required by that job. The list created from the January meeting was used to create an online survey whereby each person would be able to rate their level of preparedness on the individual aspects of the battalion chief's position. The survey, distributed utilizing *SurveyMonkey.com*, was sent to the participants via email. Though the researcher had served as a battalion chief on the department for 15 years, he excluded himself from the sampling. Another of the former battalion chiefs is no longer in contact

with the department and therefore did not participate. A total of seven of the nine position holders completed the survey. The SurveyMonkey.com system analyzes and tabulates collected responses and allows the surveyor to quickly determine the data results. The findings relating to the preparedness of the surveyed battalion chief's for the listed knowledge, skills and abilities will be discussed in the upcoming *Results* section of this paper.

To find what training tools or programs are available to assist potential battalion chiefs to prepare for the position (research question 3), the preparedness survey described previously was reviewed to determine which of the knowledge, skills and abilities the department's battalion chiefs indicated that they were least prepared for when they were first promoted to the position. When the list was reduced to just the knowledge, skills and abilities that rated low in regards to employees' preparation, a search was undertake to identify possible classes or programs that were available and could be incorporated into the department's officer training efforts. Contact was made with the fire training program coordinators at Forsyth Technical Community College to solicit suggestions regarding available class offerings that could address these areas of concern. Additionally, a fire/rescue training specialist from the Research and Program Development Division of the NC Office of the State Fire Marshal was consulted for recommendations concerning individual classes or established training programs offered through this organization. The two agencies were contacted to determine if there were training resources, offered locally or statewide, to assist potential battalion chiefs to better prepare themselves for those aspects of the job that had been listed as problematic by the people who had held the position in the past.

To obtain information about how other fire departments address the development of their battalion chiefs, a second survey was created and distributed on SurveyMonkey.com. The survey contained questions about battalion chiefs' roles on other departments and how those departments

developed employees to fill that position. After creating the survey, an internet link to the questionnaire was emailed to the chiefs of the North Carolina fire departments that are similar in size and organizational structure to KFRD. The link was also sent to the researcher's EFOP classmates and other professional colleagues. The survey was accessible on the SurveyMonkey.com website for the two weeks between February 26 and March 11, 2012. The survey was sent to a total of 50 fire service agencies and at its closing, there were 29 responses. These data are also examined in this paper's upcoming *Results* section

Even though great care was taken to obtain and present accurate data for this ARP, there are some limitations to the information and collection process that should be noted. First, in developing the list of knowledge, skills and abilities with the help of KFRD's battalion chiefs, the number of people who have actually held the position is small and their level of experience and education vary significantly. In addition, as the department is still a comparatively young agency; the battalion chief's position has been through a steady state of evolution; from primarily a fireground officer into its more recent version – administrative managing officer. Therefore, the earlier battalion chiefs may have had no preparation for the job's more administrative job functions. Accordingly, when completing the survey used to determine their level of knowledge, skills and abilities preparation, their responses may have provided less insight than the more recent holders of the position. Another limitation that should be noted is that the size of the group of fire departments surveyed to answer the fourth research question was relatively small. There are literally thousands of fire departments in the United States but the survey used to determine how other agencies develop their future battalion chiefs was distributed to only 50. While that number constitutes only a fraction of the number of similar departments that exist in this country, the sample that was returned did provide the researcher with sufficient information to develop

informed recommendations on creating training enhancements for future KFRD battalion chiefs. Finally, the battalion chief position varies from department to department. The information and recommendations provided by another department; even though they may work well for that respective agency; may not adequately meet the needs of other departments. It does not appear feasible to create a career development program that will meet the universal needs of all fire departments. For any department that determines that battalion chief development constitutes an issue that they must address, a thorough analysis of the position's function and expectations – specific to their organization – should be made prior to implementing recommendations made by another individual or agency.

Results

Research Question 1: What knowledge, skills and abilities are needed to perform the duties of a KFR battalion chief?

NFPA 1021 provides a tremendous resource for fire service leaders by publishing a nationally recognized set of knowledge, skills and abilities; to which all fire officers should work to gain proficiency. While NFPA was helpful in providing background information, the research question specifically targets the knowledge, skills and abilities of a KFR battalion chief. Therefore to answer the question, two sources were used. The first was the Town of Kernersville's job description for battalion chief and the second was the list of job functions and duties compiled by the department's battalion chiefs; described previously in the *Procedures* segment of this paper. In reviewing these two documents, which officially represent the expectations of such a fire officer in Kernersville, the researcher was pleased to discover that many of the knowledge, skills and abilities listed locally were also reflected in NFPA 1021.

According to the Kernersville's published job description for battalion chief, candidates for the position need the following knowledge, skills and abilities:

- Comprehensive knowledge of the principles and practices of fire service management, and skill in their application.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the National Incident Management System used by the Kernersville Fire Rescue Department.
- Thorough knowledge of the types of industrial and commercial operations in the Town and their potential hazards.
- Ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing.
- Ability to effectively supervise and evaluate the work of personnel, and to plan, assign, and coordinate activities performed by personnel.
- Ability to produce accurate reports and written documentation.
- Ability to support the values and goals of the department.
- Ability to read and understand technical materials.
- Ability to understand and follow oral and written instructions.
- Ability to operate as a member of the team and establish and maintain effective relationships with persons encountered in the course of work.
- Ability to remain in control and make sound decisions during high stress situations.

Aside from those found on the town's job description, past and present holders of the battalion chief's rank in Kernersville offered their assessment of the knowledge, skills and abilities that are needed in order to adequately perform the position's responsibilities and duties. They include:

- Incident Operations/Management
    - Knowledge of tactics and strategy
    - Ability to manage resources
    - Knowledge of incident related legal responsibilities
    - Knowledge of fire cause determination techniques
- Personnel Management
    - Knowledge of personnel policies and laws
    - Ability to supervise subordinates
    - Knowledge of disciplinary process and procedures
    - Ability to conduct training and assist personnel's career development
    - Ability to form and maintain interpersonal relationships
    - Ability to handle complaints
    - Knowledge of accident review process and documentation procedures
- Administrative
    - Ability to maintain records
    - Ability to create and maintain adequate file keeping systems
    - Knowledge of authority limitations
    - Ability to manage time – both personal and employees'
    - Ability to expand vision of the fire service
    - Knowledge of budgetary process and procedures
    - Knowledge of governmental purchasing regulations
    - Ability to work with other departments/agencies/vendors/etc.
    - Knowledge of policy development process and procedures

  - Ability to assist with creation and implementation of long/short range plans
  - Ability to conduct and manage special assignments and responsibilities
  - Knowledge of computer software applications – Word/Excel/PowerPoint/Firehouse/etc.
- Communications
  - Ability to communicate in writing
  - Ability to communicate orally – public speaking
  - Ability to communicate with the media

The knowledge, skills and abilities on the two lists are an attempt to catalog the job duties and responsibilities of a KFR battalion chief. However, it would be impossible to completely list them all. As discovered through the research for this ARP, a battalion chief on the KFRD must have a wide range of knowledge and skills and the ability to use them as needed.

Research Question 2: How do current and past KFR Battalion Chiefs rate their level of preparedness for those knowledge, skills and abilities?

Becoming prepared for the duties and responsibilities associated with a job is important in its efficient performance. In the fire service, training is a way of life and preparation for the performance of emergency duties – hose maneuvering, pump operation, tactical considerations among others – occurs almost daily in the nation's fire stations. However, most departments don't spend much time preparing their potential battalion chief for the knowledge, skills and abilities they may need to perform their job.

To determine how Kernersville's past and present battalion chiefs rated their preparedness for aspects of their position, each was invited to complete a survey that was built around the list of

knowledge, skills and abilities they helped to develop. Participants were asked to rate 33 aspects of the knowledge or skills that KFR battalion chiefs routinely may have to utilize. The participants were instructed to assigned a rating of *Prepared*, *Somewhat prepared (but would have benefited from additional training)* or *Not prepared (additional training needed)*, to each of the survey items which were grouped into three broad categories; Community/Government Responsibilities; Personnel Management and Incident Management. A total of seven participants completed the survey.

The survey's first grouping of job duties was titled Community/Government Responsibilities and consisted of 15 knowledge, skills and abilities commonly used by KFR battalion chiefs. Four of the job functions received a *Prepared* rating by a majority of the participants while six received an overall rating of *Somewhat prepared (but would have benefited from additional training).* None of the job functions listed in the Community/Government Responsibilities received an overall rating of *Not prepared (additional training needed).* The remaining five job duties tied between two of the ratings categories. Detailed results of the Community/Government Responsibilities potion of the survey can be found in Appendix B - 1.

The second job duty grouping in the survey was titled Personnel Management. This grouping was made up of 12 knowledge, skills and abilities that KFR battalion chiefs use in dealing with and managing shift personnel. When determining overall ratings in this group, participants chose *Somewhat prepared (but would have benefited from additional training)* for eight job functions. No job duty received an overall rating of *Prepared* or *Not Prepared*; the remaining four job knowledge, skills and abilities split between ratings categories. Detailed results of the Personnel Management portion of the survey are found in Appendix B - 2.

The third and final grouping of job related functions included on the survey were categorized as Incident Management. This group consisted of six fireground related functions that KFR battalion chiefs must perform. Two functions received an overall rating of *Prepared* and three were rated as *Somewhat Prepared* by a majority of participants. The remaining function was split between rating categories. None of the incident related job skills received an overall rating of *Not Prepared*. Incident Management category ratings are detailed in Appendix B - 3.

While no factor included on the survey was given an overall rating of *Not Prepared*, several were selected by enough of the participants that they warrant a degree of higher concern. Those job functions were; knowledge of purchasing procedures; ability to effectively relay information to media representatives; knowledge of accident/injury reporting and review process and knowledge of policy development and implementation procedures. Not surprisingly, the job skill that received the highest selection percentage (85.7%) was knowledge of fireground tactics and strategy which received the *Prepared* designation by six of the seven participants. In general, it appears that KFR battalion chiefs feel that they have a better level of preparedness than the researcher originally theorized. However, given that many job functions were listed as *Somewhat Prepared*, there are clearly areas for battalion chief development that should be addressed.

Research Question 3: What training tools or programs are available to assist personnel to prepare for the Battalion Chief position?

Through the use of several research methods, including extensive reading, interviews and surveys, a number of training tools and programs were identified to help prepare future battalion chiefs for their position. They can be categorized as education, certification and participation.

Many of the knowledge, skills and abilities that KFR's battalion chiefs said they would like to have had additional training are addressed in the Fire Protection Technology (FIP) curriculum. Completion of the FIP course of study results in the awarding of an Associate's in Applied Science degree. The FIP program is offered at two community colleges that are within a short commute from Kernersville. The program offers individuals the opportunity to gain both technical and professional knowledge about the fire service with core classes that include municipal finance/budgeting, fire prevention and investigations, managing the fire service and instructor methodology as well as other non-fire service related classes offered to improve writing, math and computer skills (Forsyth Technical Community College, n.d.). Each of the classes address specific concerns identified by KFR battalion chiefs as discussed previously. Program participants gain a broad knowledge of the fire service as well as the operations of local government and in doing so improve their ability to perform the administrative duties that become the more prevalent job duties of chief officers.

There are also a number of colleges that offer fire service/fire administration related Bachelor's Degrees. Most of these colleges offer classes on-line to allow students access to higher educational opportunities that may not exist locally. Often these programs are directed at those individuals who desire to progress from the operational to the administrative side of their respective departments.

Some community colleges and even some individual fire departments offer fire officer academies for individuals that want to become leaders in their organizations. While these programs do not lead to the awarding of degrees, participants receive training in areas that will help them function in their specific job position. While most of these academies seem to have been established for developing company officers, occasionally there are programs offered for

officers of higher ranks. Currently, there are no such academies being offered in the Kernersville area that could be used for battalion chief development.

Two other educational opportunities that appear to have promise as a tool for development of potential battalion chiefs are offered through the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNCC). The first of these programs is UNCC's *Fire & Rescue Management Institute* (FRMI). Touted as a professional development program for current and future fire service leaders, FRMI addresses four areas of development; leadership, ethics and team building; management skills and personnel management; strategic planning and communication skills and media relations (University of North Carolina at Charlotte, n.d.). Instructors include the university's faculty; state, regional and local content authorities as well as nationally recognized fire service leaders. FRMI offers 75 hours of classroom instruction which is supplemented by individual and group assignments and projects.

Another educational offering, co-sponsored by UNCC and the North Carolina Association of Fire Chiefs (NCAFC), is the *Executive Development Program*. This is a two-week course taught by state fire service leaders, municipal government professionals, university faculty and NCAFC staff. As with the FRMI, the Executive Development Program targets as its audience, current and future fire department leaders. Class offerings include sessions on leadership, career development, effective communications, management, budget and finance, employment law and emergency management/disaster response (NC Association of Fire Chiefs, 2011).

Both the Executive Development Program and the FRMI offer classes that directly address many of the areas where KFRD's battalion chiefs indicated additional training would prove beneficial. These two programs offer career development opportunities for all fire service officers;

from company officer to chief. Their major disadvantage is their cost. After adding tuition, travel expense and lodging, these programs can be somewhat cost prohibitive to some agencies; particularly with the current economic conditions affecting most fire departments.

The second category of battalion chief development tools to be discussed in this ARP is certification. The North Carolina Fire and Rescue Commission is the agency that manages the certification programs in the state. The commission began offering Fire Officer I certification over ten years ago. Initially, the certification process consisted of a workbook that had to be completed and followed by taking a state exam. More recently, the commission has begun to phase out the workbook concept in favor of more structured classes. Currently, classes are being offered for Fire Officer I and II with course outlines being developed for Fire Officer III. Pilot programs for Fire Officer III are projected to begin in the late spring of 2012. These certifications are designed around the NFPA 1021 standard and would address a number of the battalion chief elements discussed previously. When these classes become more readily available, they should provide a good training tool for developing a department's battalion chiefs.

Another certification that could be used as a development tool for battalion chiefs is the Chief Fire Officer Designation offered by the Center for Public Safety Excellence. The process involves potential designees demonstrating proficiency in categories that include departmental and community assessment and planning; creating goals and objectives; organizational structure; financial practices; administrative functions; external agency relations; administrative policies; hiring and promotions; employee relations; health and risk management; life safety; investigations; public education and community relations; training; special operations; emergency medical service; communications; physical resource management; emergency management and fire suppression (Center for Public Safety Excellence, n.d.). As with the other development resources

that have been discussed, the training needed for Chief Fire Officer Designation addresses many of the areas of need in KFR's battalion chief development.

Finally, this project identified two methods by which future battalion chiefs could use participation as the primary process for their development as both gave personnel exposure to and, more importantly, experience in performing the job functions for which they could someday be responsible. These two practices are mentoring and job shadowing. They are used by many departments across the country – KFR included – as a way for developing the talents of potential battalion chiefs. Both of these methods allow the potential battalion chief to work directly with a current battalion chief with the intention of the more experienced officer *tutoring* the other. In the course of researching this paper, one suggestion received from other departments that help give mentoring and job shadowing the ability to be tracked and evaluated was the creation of task books. These books are essentially a listing of job-related knowledge, skills and abilities that must be performed by a potential battalion chief under the supervision of a current battalion chief. Task books allow for the observation and evaluation of job skills plus give the added benefit of a method of documentation and training consistency.

Research Question 4: How do other fire departments prepare their personnel to become Battalion Chiefs?

Using a survey sent to mid-sized career fire departments in North Carolina as well as to other fire departments across the county, information was obtained regarding battalion chief development. The survey was sent to 50 departments and at its close 29 had been completed. As expected, there was a wide range in the way other departments prepared their future battalion chiefs.

Of the agencies that participated in the survey, 23 were career departments and 5 were combination. In regards to the size of the departments that took part in the survey, 3 listed their number of stations as *1-2*, 13 stated they had *3-6*, 5 had *7-10* and 8 reported they had more than 10.

All of the departments reported that their battalion chiefs served as fire ground commanders as well as having some degree of administrative duties; 46% said those duties were mainly related to the officer's assigned shift or district and 54% said their battalion chiefs' administrative duties included shift/district concerns but also addressed assignments that contributed to their department's overall operation. Interestingly, the size of the department did not seem to dictate whether the battalion chief's administrative duties were limited to their shift/district or expanded to include a broader base of responsibilities. While no department reported that their battalion chief's responsibilities revolved strictly around incident command, 29% of the participating departments stated that they still selected their battalion chiefs based primarily on the candidate's fireground ability and incident management skills.

When addressing specific information on other departments' methods for developing future battalion chiefs, 61% of the responding departments stated they had no plan or program in place. Of the 11 departments that did have such a plan or program, all reported that incident management and emergency operations was a component of the development of future battalion chiefs. The second most common element of the departments' development plans was training on personnel management, policies and regulations (90%); followed by training on budget preparation (60%), media relations (60%) and interpersonal skills (50%).

Most of the departments (43%) reported that their department's future battalion chiefs had to learn their skills on their own. Another 29% of the departments had a mentoring system where

potential battalion chiefs worked under current battalion chiefs to gain the experience they might need in the future. Only 3 of the 27 departments that answered the question stated that they had a department sponsored officer academy to meet the development needs of future fire officers.

Educational requirements for the battalion chief's position ranged from no degree mandate (44%) to requiring an Associate's Degree (44%) or a Bachelor's Degree (12%). Surprisingly, all three of the departments that required their battalion chiefs to have a Bachelor's Degree were agencies made up of 3-6 stations. Only half of the departments had adopted requirements that directed battalion chiefs to obtain Fire Officer Certification; the majority of which only required Fire Officer I. However, some of the departments that reported they had no requirements for college degrees or Fire Officer Certification stated that they were in the process of phasing such requirements into their organizational plans. The survey and its results are listed in Appendix C.

While all of the departments that took part in the survey stated that fire ground operations were part of their battalion chief development process, only a small number had made provisions to address development of the administrative functions; particularly those that were deemed somewhat lacking by KFR's battalion chiefs. Not unlike what is being done in Kernersville, mentoring or job shadowing appears to be the most common method used by other fire departments to prepare potential battalion chiefs.

Discussion

Having well trained and capable fire officers is a necessity for a fire department to successfully carry out its mission. Adequately preparing personnel to assume the duties and responsibilities of fire officers cannot be left to chance. "Organizations without a professional

development program often allow a newly promoted individual to succeed or fail through trial and error; to the detriment of the organization in transition" (Waite, 2006, ¶ 6).

There was a time where the duties of battalion chiefs leaned heavily toward the fire suppression side of their department's mission. However, as time progressed and departments became larger and/or expanded their roles within their communities, the job of the battalion chief changed. No longer was the battalion chief simply the officer that was in place to serve as the fireground commander. The job duties began to become more and more administrative in nature. Unfortunately for these officers, while their roles and responsibilities were evolving, their training remained focused mainly on fire and rescue operations; not the administrative tasks that would occupy the bulk of their on-duty time.

The transition from company officer to battalion chief involves many difficult changes. The new battalion chief must quickly accept and adjust to an expanded role; one that encompasses increased responsibilities and a vastly different view of the fire service. Company officers often have a distorted vision of the battalion chief's job; one usually formed while serving in the limited capacity of a fill-in or acting battalion chief. Therefore, when promotion time comes around, many enthusiastic company officers enter the process even though they may not be sufficiently prepared for the reality that the promotion may bring. The ensuing transition phase, however, can be difficult for the newly promoted officer and creates a period of reduced efficiency for the department. Expanding the scope of training for company officers to include some of these administrative areas should result in better prepared battalion chiefs in the future; ready to step into the position with a greatly reduced period of transition.

Through the course of this ARP, it became obvious that insufficient battalion chief development was not an issue unique to Kernersville. Over 60% of the departments that assisted

with the research into this project did not have a plan to develop the skills of their future battalion chiefs. Most of these departments report leaving the process of preparing to become a battalion chief to the individual seeking promotion. "Many organizations fail to provide even the most basic officer training to new officers – evaluations, discipline, leadership principles, management tools (paperwork, computer use, departmental flow), violence in the workplace, sexual harassment – the list goes on and on" (Sargent, 2002, ¶ 20). Too often departments begin training their new battalion chief officers after their promotion instead of the more practical option of preparing them in advance of the promotion. "This practice of on-the-job training rather than systematic skills building and preparation, is in direct contrast to the methodologies employed by virtually any other profession" (International Association of Fire Chiefs, 2003, p. 2).

When conducting this project's literature review, it became apparent that many departments have a plan for developing their company officer candidate pool. Great effort is expended by departments to prepare their personnel to manage a fire company and handle emergency incidents; as well they should. Experienced and effective company officers are critical to the efficient delivery of emergency services. Unfortunately, even the best company officers won't be adequately prepared to become good battalion chiefs if their training is limited strictly to the fireground. To better prepare future battalion chiefs, traditional fire service training must be supplemented with training in administrative duties; personnel management, government process and leadership.

As documented in the *Results* section of this paper, a combination of education, training and experience are the tools that will best prepare a department's future staff officers. However, many departments struggle with how to tie those components together into a working officer development system. To assist with this dilemma, the US Fire Administration has adopted the

National Professional Development Matrix (NPDM). The NPDM combines education and training and clearly shows that as an individual climbs the fire service career ladder, the focus of their education and training must shift away from *doing work* toward *managing the work* (U.S. Fire Administration, 2007).

Education features prominently in the NPDM. The model outlines educational recommendations for the fire service positions involving increased organizational responsibility. Currently, KFR does not require its battalion chiefs to have earned college degrees before promotion. However, beginning in January, 2016, an Associate's Degree in Fire Protection Technology will become a prerequisite for the position. Educational requirements for chief officer positions vary widely among departments. Of the departments surveyed for this ARP, only a small percentage required their battalion chiefs to have earned a bachelor's degree. The remaining departments were evenly split between having no educational requirement and mandating associate's degrees to be eligible for the battalion chief's job.

Adding college education to the list of requirements needed for promotion carries a level of controversy within the fire service. Opponents voice concerns that diplomas are overshadowing experience at promotion time and that college degrees are no indication of future job proficiency. Their arguments may carry some validity when applied to the fire service's more hands on positions. However, as job functions evolve and become more managerial or administrative, college training often translates into an easier transition into new job responsibilities. Human resources professional, Matt Reece states that "a person with a bachelor's degree may not know more but knows how to learn better which makes mastering required knowledge, skills and abilities less difficult" (M. Reece, personal communication, February 1, 2012).

In addressing training, the NPDM makes no specific recommendations, choosing instead to leave that responsibility to individual states and fire departments. The information obtained from the two surveys conducted as part of the research into this project suggests that the fire service does well in training fire officers for the incident related aspects of their jobs. KFR's battalion chiefs' ratings indicate they considered themselves well prepared for the fire and rescue incident portion of their job. All of the departments that participated in the external survey reported that operational training was included in their officer development programs. It was in the more administrative areas that training and experience was considered somewhat lacking. More structured training in these areas should be provided to meet the future needs of the employees and the organizations they serve. As with any training program or initiative, evaluation of the programs should be an ongoing process and changes or modifications be made as identified to ensure the programs' maximum effect.

Part of the battalion chief development training should include Fire Officer Certification. The four levels of certification are designed around a nationally recognized set of knowledge, skills and abilities that directly apply to the job functions of the various officer ranks associated with fire departments. Matt Thorpe is a fire and rescue training specialist with the NC Office of the State Fire Marshal and is responsible for implementing the Fire Officer Certification in the state. When asked to describe the benefits of the certification he replied,

> "I believe that the skills taught in the Fire Officer program are invaluable. When formulating the plan for the fire officer delivery programs I tried to assure that the areas that were never taught to me were covered. For example, I had to teach myself how to conduct a performance evaluation; I had to learn, for myself, how to handle progressive discipline issues. Nobody taught those things. It was always assumed that if you could

> pass the promotional test that you were 'ready'. The Fire Officer I, II, and III programs prepare officers to handle these situations."

When the KFR battalion chief job was described, Thorpe was asked which level of certification he thought would best apply. He stated,

> "My opinion would be Fire Officer III. According to the National Professional Development Model the Fire Officer I certification teaches supervisory skills while the Fire Officer II certification deals more with management and leadership. The Fire Officer III certification takes those past experiences and lessons and tries to mold the student into an administrator" (M. Thorpe, personal communication, March 9, 2012).

Thorp also predicts that once the delivery of Fire Officer III courses is implemented, developing and implementing Fire Officer IV certification could be a 3 – 4 year process.

Education and training are the NPDM's key components. However, experience is the piece that completes the picture. Most people learn best by doing; more importantly skills are retained longer after having performed them. Therefore, identifying ways to include company officers in performing some of the more administrative elements of the fire department would greatly assist in preparing them for future promotions. Mayers writes,

> "Even if a formal program is difficult to manage immediately, a great first step is to entrust certain projects to your charges, giving them the authority and responsibility to handle a portion of management. This may not be sufficient for an individual to ascend to the next level, but they begin to get their feet wet and understand the processes at work. And when they succeed, they're not only rewarded for doing a great job; they're also rewarded with experience and education" (Mayers, 2012, ¶ 13).

During the research into this ARP, other departments were asked to recommend methods that they used to develop their future battalion chiefs which could be implemented in Kernersville. One of the more promising suggestions was to create a task book; an example of which was included in the *Battalion Chief Development Program* obtained from the Tamarac (FL) Fire Rescue Department (Appendix D – reproduced by permission). The book is essentially a listing of the knowledge, skills and abilities specific to the individual department and the expected functions of the position; battalion chief in this example. Under the supervision of an experienced battalion chief, company officers complete specific aspects of the battalion chief's job and are evaluated on their performance. The system combines elements of self-development and mentoring to provide potential battalion chiefs with a method of job duty familiarization prior to promotions. Task books rate the individual on both the operational (incident management) and managerial/administrative aspects of the job. This instrument seems to be an excellent way to provide training and experience for potential battalion chiefs while providing the department with a method to evaluate performance and measure developing skills and abilities; all in a uniform and consistent manner. Creation of such a resource should not be difficult and can be accomplished at little cost to the department. The most involved step in developing the book would be the in-depth analysis of the job functions that are to be evaluated.

To create a battalion chief development plan in Kernersville, all of the considerations found throughout this ARP should be considered. The most difficult aspect of creating such a program is identifying overall needs and areas of deficiency. Once that has been accomplished, a search for available tools to address those needs should be undertaken. Creating the two lists should constitute the majority of the efforts needed to develop the program.

For this plan to succeed all officers must realize that they have to be involved in the development of the individuals that may someday follow in their footsteps. Mentoring is an important component of officer development. Each officer – from company officer to the chief of the department – has a responsibility to their organization to assist others in preparing for future leadership roles. "Institutional knowledge is exiting the fire service at a rate unheard of even a few years ago" (Sager, 2005, ¶ 2). Therefore, all personnel must embrace the concept of mentoring by working with others to pass on institutional knowledge. Officers must look for projects and job responsibilities that they can share with their subordinates in an effort to increase that individual's knowledge and skills base. As with all good teachers, mentors must be able to provide honest feedback when assessing the results of these assignments. Praise and constructive criticism should be part of the mentoring process and will help personnel gain the valuable experience that they may need in the future. To use a sports metaphor, each officer should take responsibility for doing their part in creating a strong bench.

Applied specifically to KFR, many of the development tools discussed in this paper are easily attainable. Higher educational opportunities that lead to an Associate's Degrees in Fire Protection Technology are offered by two community colleges within the Piedmont Triad Region and a number of colleges offer *at-a-distance* or on-line classes for earning bachelor's degrees. To facilitate personnel in obtaining college educations, the Town of Kernersville offers tuition assistance to its employees. As mentioned previously, a degree requirement will be implemented for battalion chief candidates in January 2016.

Other educational opportunities, including the FRMI and the Executive Development Program are also available within North Carolina. However, as they are somewhat expensive, funding for these programs is subject to the department's budgetary process. North Carolina's Fire

Officer Certification classes have begun to be phased in and when that process is completed the certification process should greatly assist in developing KFR's future battalion chiefs needed knowledge, skills and abilities. In addition, there are other officer training courses offered on the local, regional and state level as well as officer development and leadership training offered through the National Fire Academy. All of these are offered at little or no expense.

With all of the tools available that can be used to create a development program for battalion chiefs – or any department position – it seems logical to proceed. However, there are two points that bear comment. First, all of the training and development tools can be assembled into an organized plan for career development. However, the employee must display initiative and avail themselves to these development opportunities. College degrees, Fire Officer Certifications and specialized training classes are not for all employees. KFRD, like other departments, has company officers that have no desire to advance further in rank. While these people should not be excluded from career development programs, they may not be the obvious choice when selecting personnel to attend specialized or expensive training classes designed for battalion chief level advancement. Preference may need to be given to those employees who may offer the greatest potential for long-range organizational benefit – particularly in difficult economic times.

Second, experience will never be replaced. The combination of experience and education create a synergistic effect that lead to successful development programs. Individually, education and experience do not ensure success. Likewise, performing a skill or demonstrating ability one time does not constitute experience. Implementing classes and other training methods to increase knowledge, skills and abilities to prepare someone for advancement to another level – including the use of task books – does not translate into a level of experience. Experience can only be

claimed if the knowledge, skill or ability is repeated routinely enough to create familiarity and proficiency. On-going training must be built into any development plan for it to be effective.

The benefits of creating a battalion chief development plan are twofold. The most immediate benefit to the department will be better prepared personnel to fill future battalion chief positions. They will be able to transition into the position quicker and with less difficulty; getting up to speed more rapidly and decreasing the time period the department will operate at a lower level of efficiency.

As important as preparing personnel for becoming good battalion chiefs may be, the other benefit will have longer reaching implications. Today, more than ever, having a succession plan is crucial to the long term success of an organization. By properly preparing personnel to handle the roles of battalion chief, departments are establishing a foundation to handle the inevitable change in leadership that all organizations will someday face. Developing staff officers with a proven ability to perform administrative functions is a necessary component of a department's succession plan. Battalion chiefs that have been given responsibilities for duties such as preparing segments of the department's budget, participating in organization's goal setting, handling personnel matters and coordinating important projects will be better qualified to ascend to higher positions within their department's administration.

Today's battalion chief may ultimately become tomorrow's fire chief. By creating a plan to develop future battalion chiefs, departments are working toward ensuring that the day-to-day management of the organization is carried out by people well prepared to meet the challenges of their job. The effort used to create such a plan is also an investment in the agency's future. Not making such an investment places a question mark over a department's future. By failing to

prepare for the future, we are preparing for future failure. EFOs have a duty to their organizations and to their communities not to let that happen.

This ARP will serve as the foundation for a battalion chief development program that will be created by the KFRD. When drafting the plan, there may be unforeseen obstacles that may require further research. Once implemented, it will need to be periodically evaluated for effectiveness and modified accordingly.

Operationally, this plan will benefit those people who aspire to become battalion chiefs that are well prepared to fulfill the responsibilities of their position. It also will benefit the personnel who serve under them by developing the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to safely and efficiently manage the fire department's resources – particularly the most valuable resource – its people. Organizationally, this plan will help KFR create a level of stability for its future by developing a collection of staff officers with a broad range of experience and skills; capable of someday assuming the department's top leadership roles. We are ultimately creating a plan for the department's future.

Recommendations

As the result of research into creating a development program for Kernersville's future battalion chiefs, the following recommendations should be considered:

- The creation of a formal battalion chief development plan is warranted; as not to do so will result in future battalion chiefs being promoted without adequate preparation for the administrative aspects of their new job. The program should incorporate a balance of training, education and experience and should comply with the guidelines established in the NFPA 1021 standard.

- A process for evaluating the development plan should be established. This evaluation should be done at a frequency that ensures the plan does not become institutionalized with defects. The plan should also be continually monitored so as to remain current.
- Using the example obtained from the Tamarac Fire Rescue Department, create a task book to be used to prepare and evaluate the company officers who will serve as fill-in or acting battalion chiefs. As many of the department's current captains have served as fill-in battalion chiefs, a recommendation for a *grandfathering* period may be appropriate. Going forward, all newly promoted captains should be required to successfully complete the task book before being allowed to serve in the fill-in capacity. Monitoring progress in the task books may give insight into any additional knowledge, skills and abilities that will need provisions for additional training.
- Work with instructors from the NC Office of the State Fire Marshal to establish regular offerings of Fire Officer Certification classes in the Piedmont Triad Region. Once the programs are fully operational, the Fire Officer Certification courses will be a valuable resource in training the department's officers – regardless of rank.
- In developing and adopting this plan, the department must exhibit commitment to developing personnel for future leadership. As part of this commitment, recommendations for budgetary considerations should be made annually to make funding possible to send department personnel to specialized training programs such as Executive Development and FRMI. Other training opportunities that would meet the scope and objectives of the plan should be identified and used if feasible.

The department should also increase the use of the NFA as a training resource for department personnel by determining which of the academy's offerings would best work within the goals of the plan.

The EFOP, through its ARP requirement, provides a source for a wide variety of fire service related information. For departments wishing to use this ARP as a guide for creating their own officer development plan, the most important step will be to thoroughly analyze all aspects of the position for which the program is being made. Specifically seek to identify the areas of the position presenting current personnel the greatest level of difficulty. Once targeted, correcting these areas should form the foundation of the program.

The research into the problem of developing KFR battalion chiefs' job knowledge, skills and abilities uncovered that there is indeed a need for such a program. Therefore, the program should be developed and implemented as soon as possible. The benefits of the program extend directly to the personnel who will someday assume the battalion chief's duties by giving them a method of becoming better prepared for all aspects of the job; not solely those aspects related to fireground operations. Equally as important, such a development program will benefit the department by allowing for smoother changes in leadership by creating employees that are suited for administrative positions; thus building long-term continuity and therefore, a more efficiently operating organization. This in turn allows KFRD to continue with the goal of providing a level of service which results in a safer community for all of the citizens that we serve.

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Appendix A: Town of Kernersville Job Description – Fire Battalion Chief

FIRE BATTALION CHIEF

General Statement of Duties

Performs complex work as the supervisor of a Fire Service Shift and is responsible and accountable for performing administrative and technical work to direct the activities of all personnel at all locations on the duty. The Battalion Chief responds to fires, medical emergencies, hazardous materials incidents, rescues, traffic accidents, and other emergency and non-emergency incidents that pose a threat or hazard to life and/or property for the purpose of mitigating these threats.

Distinguishing Features of the Class

An employee in this class supervises shift operations at over multiple stations by directing and setting the assigned priorities for shift personnel. Employee supervises the work of extinguishing fires, emergency medical calls, hazardous materials scenes, and the performance of related life and property protection. Coordination of staffing coverage to assure appropriate staff is present over all location for the shift to effectively respond to emergency situations wherever the occurrence. Schedules and coordinates station and apparatus maintenance including working with vendors and managing contracts. The employee interprets policies, procedures, and standards and ensures their appropriate application at the assigned station. Work requires that the employee to possess a comprehensive understanding of fire, rescue, and emergency medical procedures, techniques, and equipment. Judgment and independence are required in all aspects of work, particularly in setting work priorities and directing staff in fire and other emergency calls. The employee is subject to hazards associated with firefighting including working in both inside and outside environments, in extreme cold weather, and exposure to various hazards such as high heat and chemicals, and in the proximity to moving mechanical parts, electrical current, and working in high places. Work is performed under the general supervision of the Assistant Fire Chief and is evaluated through observation, conferences, and written reports concerning the quality and effectiveness of program endeavors.

Essential Duties and Illustrative Examples of Work

Resolves daily operational problems such as apparatus out of service for maintenance and unplanned changes in staffing and attendance.

Serves as Incident Commander of emergency and non emergency response operations.

Provides recommendation and collects research and analysis to assist with determining the general direction, goal-setting, and focus of the KFRD with regards to operations, training philosophy, policy, budgeting, personnel matters, and recruitment, as well as other areas to serve as a member of the Command Staff.

Conveys and communicates information from Administration to the Fire Companies and from the Fire Companies to Administration.

Manages resources to ensure that minimum staffing requirements are maintained.

Manages resources to provide maximum coverage and protection for the service area.

Reports any violations of TOK and KFRD policies, procedures, rules, and regulations and routing all official matters up through the chain of command.

Prepares reports, documenting information, and maintaining records as required.

Manages special projects and technical areas of responsibility as well as oversight and participation in work groups and committees as required.

Purchases parts and materials to repair and maintain apparatus, equipment and the stations.

Supervises training and schedules classes and instructors.

Coordinates operations with other emergency public service agencies.

Approves and coordinates schedules of personnel needing time off.

Tests and checks aerials and tensions on equipment.

Completes fire reports for incidents involving significant fire loss.

Performs other such duties as assigned.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

Ability to remain in control and make sound decisions during high stress situations.

Ability to effectively prioritize tasks, delegate, and multi-task.

Comprehensive knowledge of the principles and practices of fire service management, and skill in their application.

Comprehensive knowledge of modern firefighting practices and methods and of the equipment use.

Comprehensive knowledge of the Incident Command System used by the Kernersville Fire Department.

Comprehensive knowledge of the operation and maintenance of fire apparatus and equipment.

Comprehensive knowledge of the laws and ordinances which pertain to fire prevention and control.

Thorough knowledge of the types of industrial and commercial operations in the Town and the potential fire hazards typical of each; knowledge of the hazards common to the various types of construction and the storage of inflammables and explosives.

Ability to prepare clear and concise reports.

Ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing.

Ability to effectively supervise and evaluate the work of staff, and to plan, assign, and coordinate activities performed by personnel.

Ability to exercise sound judgment and react effectively in emergency situations, and to maintain good physical condition.

Ability to deal tactfully and firmly with the public, and to establish and maintain effective working relationships.

Ability to effectively prioritize tasks, delegate, and effectively coordinate many tasks seemingly simultaneously.

Working Conditions and Physical Requirements

Worker is exposed to the hazards of public safety and emergency services with significant risk of injury or loss of life being present in the work. Risks can be partially controlled by the use of significant safety precautions. In addition, actions can result in significant risk to others.

Worker may have contact with potentially infectious bodily fluids.

Must be able to physically perform the basic life operational support functions of climbing, balancing, stooping, kneeling, crouching, crawling, reaching, walking, pushing, pulling, fingering, grasping, feeling, talking and hearing, and repetitive motions.

Must be able to perform heavy work exerting up to 100 pounds of force occasionally, and 50 pounds of force frequently, and up to 20 pounds of force constantly.

Must possess the visual acuity to operate apparatus and other equipment.

Desirable Education and Experience

High school diploma or equivalent degree supplemented with formal Fire Service training including specific Associate's degree curriculum or equivalent courses in Fire Protection Technology or Related Fire Science.

1. Computer: CIS 110 or CIS 111
2. English: ENG 111 or ENG 112 or ENG 114
3. Math: MAT 115 or MAT 140 or MAT 161
4. Building Construction: FIP 132
5. Managing Fire Services: FIP 276
6. Emergency Management or Fire Protection Project: FIP 236 or FIP 244
7. Fire Protection Law: FIP 152
8. Firefighting Strategies: FIP 220

(Note on administration of the class -
Two of the above curriculum classes are will be required for promotions made after January 1, 2010,
Four of the above curriculum classes are will be required for promotions made after January 1, 2011,
Six of the above curriculum classes are will be required for promotions made after January 1, 2012,
All of the above curriculum classes are will be required for promotions made after January 1, 2013.)

Fire Battalion must have completed a minimum of five years of service as a Fire Captain with KFRD and two of those years must by consecutive years of service immediately prior to the promotion.

Special Requirements

North Carolina Class B Commercial Driver License
North Carolina Firefighter II
North Carolina Emergency Medical Technician
Hazardous Materials Operations
Rescue Technician
Fire Prevention I
General Level II Fire Instructor
KFRD Relief Driver (internal certification)

Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Status

Exempt

Appendix B-1: KFR BC Preparation - Community/Government Responsibilities

	Prepared	**Somewhat prepared** but would have benefited from additional training	**Not prepared** additional training needed	**Response Count**
Ability to prepare reports and records	**71.4% (5)**	28.6% (2)	0.0% (0)	7
Knowledge of the department's mission, values and goals	42.9% (3)	**57.1% (4)**	0.0% (0)	7
Knowledge of budgetary process and procedures	14.3% (1)	**71.4% (5)**	14.3% (1)	7
Knowledge of purchasing procedures	14.3% (1)	**42.9% (3)**	**42.9% (3)**	7
Ability to communicate verbally - public speaking	28.6% (2)	**71.4% (5)**	0.0% (0)	7
Ability to effectively communicate in writing	**57.1% (4)**	42.9% (3)	0.0% (0)	7
Ability to effectively relay information to media representatives	28.6% (2)	28.6% (2)	**42.9% (3)**	7
Ability to use electronic technology (Word, Excel, Outlook, etc.)	28.6% (2)	**42.9% (3)**	28.6% (2)	7
Ability to develop and maintain external interpersonal relationships (networking)	**42.9% (3)**	**42.9% (3)**	14.3% (1)	7
Ability to resolve complaints from the public	**42.9% (3)**	**42.9% (3)**	14.3% (1)	7
Ability to comprehend fire department's role in overall town functions	**57.1% (4)**	28.6% (2)	14.3% (1)	7
Ability to maintain relationship with other public safety agencies (mutual aid, EMS, Police, etc.)	**71.4% (5)**	28.6% (2)	0.0% (0)	7
Ability to project long-range needs (planning)	28.6% (2)	**57.1% (4)**	14.3% (1)	7
Ability to manage special assignments (sub-responsibilities)	14.3% (1)	**71.4% (5)**	14.3% (1)	7
Ability to expand vision of department (operations to administration)	28.6% (2)	**71.4% (5)**	0.0% (0)	7

Appendix B-2: KFR BC Preparation - Personnel Management

	Prepared	**Somewhat prepared** but would have benefited from additional training	**Not prepared** additional training needed	**Response Count**
Knowledge of personnel policies and procedures	42.9% (3)	**57.1% (4)**	0.0% (0)	7
Knowledge of TOK disciplinary procedures	28.6% (2)	**57.1% (4)**	14.3% (1)	7
Knowledge of TOK accident/injury reporting/review procedures	0.0% (0)	**57.1% (4)**	42.9% (3)	7
Ability to assist subordinates with career development planning	14.3% (1)	**85.7% (6)**	0.0% (0)	7
Knowledge of BC's authority limitations	28.6% (2)	**42.9% (3)**	28.6% (2)	7
Ability to supervise subordinates (Boss vs. Buddy)	28.6% (2)	**57.1% (4)**	14.3% (1)	7
Ability to direct and analyze training programs	42.9% (3)	**57.1% (4)**	0.0% (0)	7
Ability to efficiently manage time	28.6% (2)	**71.4% (5)**	0.0% (0)	7
Ability to efficiently manage subordinates' time	**42.9% (3)**	28.6% (2)	28.6% (2)	7
Ability to develop and maintain interpersonal relationships with subordinates	28.6% (2)	**71.4% (5)**	0.0% (0)	7
Ability to develop and maintain interpersonal relationships with supervisors	**42.9% (3)**	28.6% (2)	28.6% (2)	7
Knowledge of policy development and implementation procedures	14.3% (1)	**42.9% (3)**	**42.9% (3)**	7

Appendix B-3: KFR BC Preparation - Incident Management

	Prepared	**Somewhat prepared** but would have benefited from additional training	**Not prepared** additional training needed	**Response Count**
Knowledge of fireground tactics and strategy	**85.7% (6)**	14.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	7
Knowledge of incident related legal responsibilities	14.3% (1)	**85.7% (6)**	0.0% (0)	7
Ability to efficiently manage fireground resources	**71.4% (5)**	28.6% (2)	0.0% (0)	7
Knowledge of fire cause and origin determination techniques	14.3% (1)	**71.4% (5)**	14.3% (1)	7
Ability to effectively conduct a post-incident analysis	42.9% (3)	**57.1% (4)**	0.0% (0)	7
Ability to accurately document incident using reporting software (FireHouse Software)	**42.9% (3)**	**42.9% (3)**	14.3% (1)	7

Appendix C: Battalion Chief Development Survey with Results

Survey Page One

This survey is being conducted as part of an applied research project for the Executive Fire Officer Program. Thank you in advance for your assistance and participation in this project.

1. Department type		
	Response Count	Response Percent
Career	24	82.8%
Combination	5	17.2%
Volunteer	0	0
	Answered Question	29
	Skipped Question	0

2. Number of stations		
	Response Count	Response Percent
1-2	3	10.3%
3-6	13	44.8%
7-10	5	17.2%
10+	8	27.6%
	Answered Question	29
	Skipped Question	0

Survey Page Two

This survey is intended to gather information on development programs for the officer position that is above that of company officer. Many departments refer to this position as Battalion Chief but there are a number of alternative titles. Please answer the following questions based on the position on your department that best fits that description. If your department does not have such a position, please skip to the bottom of the survey and click DONE.

3. Choose the statement that best describes the Battalion Chief's position on your department:		
	Response Count	Response Percent
The Battalion Chief's main role is to function as an Incident Commander.	0	0%
The Battalion Chief performs Incident Command functions plus does administrative work that is mainly shift or district related.	13	46.42%
The Battalion Chief performs Incident Command functions plus does administrative work that is mainly shift or district related plus does administrative work that addresses aspects of the overall operation of the department.	15	53.6%
	Answered Question	28
	Skipped Question	1

4. Does your department select potential Battalion Chiefs based primarily on their fireground ability and incident management skill?		
	Response Count	Response Percent
Yes	8	28.6%
No	20	71.4%
	Answered Question	28
	Skipped Question	1

5. Does your department have a program in place to develop potential candidates for the Battalion Chief position?		
	Response Count	Response Percent
Yes	11	39.3%
No	17	60.7%
Not sure	0	0.0%
	Answered Question	28
	Skipped Question	1

6. If you answered YES above, what areas of training are included? (Choose all that apply)

	Response Count	Response Percent
Incident management/operations	10	100%
Personnel management/policies/regulations	9	90.0%
Budget preparation	6	60.0%
Public relations	4	40.0%
Media relations	5	50.0%
Computer software applications	4	40.0%
Governmental purchasing requirements	3	30.0%
Time management	3	30.0%
Interpersonal skills	5	50.0%
Oral/written communications	4	40.0%

List other areas in your department's program

1. Program is very informal and relies substantially on the Deputy Chief of Operations to train potential battalion chiefs. Captains wishing to serve in the role of B/C are required to complete areas designated similar to the list above. All chief officers are required to have Fire Officer I and attend the Executive Officer Program through the NCFCA.

2. Associates degree in Fire Science or Bus Mgmt, or Pub Admin... OR Bachelors in any field, Fire Officer 2 cert, at least 3 years in the rank of Captain.

	Answered Question	10
	Skipped Question	19

7. Choose the answer that best describes your department's Battalion Chief development:		
	Response Count	Response Percent
Potential Battalion Chiefs learn their skills by their own experiences	12	42.9%
Potential Battalion Chiefs must attend a department sponsored "officer academy"	3	10.7%
Potential Battalion Chiefs must attend a college or state sponsored "officer academy"	5	17.9%
Potential Battalion Chiefs learn their skills by working with a current Battalion Chief (mentoring program)	8	28.6%
Other (please describe) 1. Acting Officer program. Candidates accumulate several hours of on the job training 2. In sorts, all of the above fit as there are varied educational requirements, however there is not a specific officers' academy except for the Fire Officer courses offered at the department. 3. We do require completion of 5 of California's 10 Level II Command/Management courses before appointment to BC.		
	Answered Question	28
	Skipped Question	1

8. What are your department's educational requirements for Battalion Chief candidates?		
	Response Count	Response Percent
No educational requirements	12	44.4%
Associate's Degree	12	44.4%
Bachelor's Degree	3	11.1%
Other (please specify) 1. Battalion Chiefs are required to attend the NC Fire Executive Officer Program. 2. Suggested but not mandated. 3. Plus they must start their Bachelor Degree once promoted. 4. Associate's degree preferred 5. California Chief Fire Officer certification within 2 years 6. 5 of 10 California Level II Command/Management courses.		
	Answered Question	27
	Skipped Question	2

9. Does your department require Battalion Chief candidates to be certified Fire Officers?

(If YES, select the highest level required.)

	Response Count	Response Percent
NO	13	46.4%
Yes – Fire Officer I	8	28.6%
Yes – Fire Officer II	6	21.4%
Yes – Fire Officer III	1	3.6%
	Answered Question	28
	Skipped Question	1

10. Please describe other components of your department's Battalion Chief development program that have not been addressed in the previous questions.

1. We encourage our Officer's to attend outside training classes that will develop their administrative and leadership skills. We require our BC's to attend training classes that are determined by the Fire Chief, but do not have an organized program at this time.

2. We have 4 fire stations. Three substations and central station. The captains at the central station are exposed to more of the planning and administrative side of the Battalion Chief position. They are also the captain that fills the Battalion Commanders position when necessary. Due to this we rotate captains every 2 years to give each one the opportunity to work at the central station and gain the additional experience that comes with it

3. Londonderry does not have BC, the Captain is the shift commander and responsible for a division as well; such as EMS, Operations, Training, and Stations Maintenance. The Captains operate out of an SUV. There is no rank between Captain and Fire Chief. Good luck.

4. Battalion Chiefs are only promoted through a pool of acting battalion chiefs. Actors must meet minimum requirements, pass an assessment center, and after successful completion of the assessment, they are then mentored for approximately 6-10 shifts with their own Battalion Chief. After mentoring, they are turned loose to act in the full capacity of Battalion Chief

Question 10 – Continued:

5. Fire Officer II and III are suggested and being phased in currently. A Fire Science degree is also being phased in.

6. The organization's promotional process is "progressive" in nature as the rank of Captain requires minimal educational requirements that consequently supplement the preparation for Battalion Chief. As a degree of fairness is desired by the current department leadership, no additional promotional credit is given for supplemental higher education in the process (MPA, EFO, etc.); nor does the process consider additional or extracurricular activities and involvement. All candidates are treated equal if they meet the minimal requirements to participate. The aforementioned aspects could certainly be tweaked (in our process) to achieve a better qualified candidate. Good luck and congrats to you.

7. Senior Lieutenants (no Captain rank) - get mentored into battalion program so they can "fill-in" when regular shift BC is off. County staffing calls for two BC's but do to economics on one position is filled by 24-7 career personnel. If an extra LT is available he can ride up as BC2 if staffing permits. Volunteers Battalion Chiefs also staff this BC2 slot when available. Volunteer BC's meet all of the same standards for Battalion Chief including written and practical testing. When a promotional opportunity arises, Volunteer BC's can compete, with other career personnel for the position. A Volunteer BC holds the same authority both fire ground and administrative as full time BC's, including investigative powers and discipline to career or volunteer personnel as needed.

8. Task book consisting of various job functions.

	Answered Question	8
	Skipped Question	21

Appendix D Tamarac Battalion Chief Development Program

CITY OF TAMARAC

FIRE RESCUE DEPARTMENT

Battalion Chief Development Program

CITY OF TAMARAC FIRE RESCUE DEPARTMENT

SUPERVISOR GUIDED TRAINING PROGRAM

DESCRIPTION

Tamarac Fire Rescue requires all Acting Battalion Chief candidates to successfully complete the in house sign-off program in order to work in that capacity within our system. The training sign-off program is divided into four phases and will instruct and assess the candidate in the areas of cognitive knowledge, psychomotor skills, and affective learning.

All Acting Battalion Chief candidates shall be given an introduction and explanation of how the training will work. It shall be the candidate's responsibility to make sure that all training, sign-off, and other procedures are completed properly with the assistance from their Battalion Chiefs.

The Battalion Chief will be responsible for all Officer Development Training on their shift and its completion in a uniform and consistent manner. The Battalion Chief shall check with the candidate on a regular basis to ensure all training is proceeding as scheduled.

Phase 1 Candidate Instruction

The intent of Phase 1 is to prepare the candidate to work in the field as an Tamarac Fire Rescue Acting Battalion Chief. In order to accomplish this goal, certain cognitive and psychomotor skills shall be reviewed and assessed to ensure the candidate has the proper knowledge and skill base prior to operating in the field. Phase 1 consists of instruction, taught by the Battalion Chief.

Phase 2 Acting Battalion Chief Candidate Field Training (Ride Time)

Phase 2 is intended to assess the candidate's ability to perform in the field under actual situations and demonstrate their competency in Battalion Chief knowledge, skills, and abilities. The ultimate goal is to assess the candidate's ability to perform competently in the field. Candidates shall be assessed in their ability to perform the daily work required of a Chief Officer.

In Phase 2 the candidate will ride with the Battalion Chief for a minimum of five 9- hour shifts. Each shift the Battalion Chief shall meet with the candidate and review all aspects of the candidate's performance and complete an Acting Battalion Chief daily performance evaluation report. Also, the daily activity sheet will be used to document the day's activities and the skills assessed.

Upon completion of the 5 shifts, a review of the candidate's Phase 2 performance shall be conducted. The review will involve the Battalion Chief and it will then be determined if the candidate is to proceed to phase 3. Unsuccessful completion of Phase 2 will be reviewed by the Operations Chief and the evaluating Battalion Chief.

Phase 3 Final Evaluation

This Phase will provide for the final testing of the candidate. The candidate will be given a final evaluation including but not limited to all of the information completed during the previous 2 phases of training. The candidate will receive several manipulative scenario-based drills designed to assess their performance during a mock incident and/or problem management issue. After successful completion of the testing process and the completion of five National Fire Academy's interactive on-line fire scenarios (web site: http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/nfa/nfaonline/browse/) , the candidate will then be signed off by the Battalion Chief with a recommendation given to the Operations Chief and the Training Division for approval.

Phase 4 Continued Learning

Phase 4 is intended to provide an avenue for continued learning and education once the candidate has achieved Acting Battalion Chief status. The candidate will have six months from the time of successful completion of this packet to complete a reading selection, such as Fire Officer, Principles and Practice and the accompanying workbook of the same name.

Phase 1 Cognitive and Psychomotor Skills	**Date/ Officer**
I. Review of the TFR Standard Operating Procedures, Manuals, and Contracts (go to **U: drive, File, "Officer Development Policies"** for policies related to the following subjects:	
a. Tactical (all emergency mitigation related, including commercial & residential fires, MCI's, etc.)	
b. Administrative	
c. Policies and Procedures	
d. Tamarac Fire Rescue Resource Manuel	
e. Hurricane Readiness (understand RIA, callback procedures,)	
f. Union contract	
g. Accident/Injury Reporting and Workers Compensation forms	
h. NFPA 1500(familiarity with Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health)	
i. Exposure Documentation and Reporting	
j. Mentoring and Counseling and Documentation	
k. Fire fighter Bill of Rights	
l. PMEDS employee evaluations	
II. National Incident Management System NIMS	
a. IS 100	
b. IS 200	
c. IS 300	
d. IS 400	
e. IS 700 (complete series)	

f. IS 800
IV. Department Employee Training Programs
a. Fire RMS Training Documentation and ISO Requirements
b. Employee Development
1. Probationary Employee
2. Lieutenant Development
3. Captain Development
4. International Association of Fire Chiefs Officer Development handbook
V. Emergency Medical
a. Common Protocols
b. Controlled Substance Log Book and Usage
c. TFR controlled substance procedures
d. Unit Inventory and Refill Procedures
e. MCI's and S.T.A.R.T
1. Command Bag Contents
2. Five Levels of MCI Incidents
3. Triage, Treatment, Transport sections
4. Resources Required for the Five Levels of MCI Incidents
5. START System
6. Command and Control of an MCI (must demonstrate proficiency of a Level 1 and 2)

7. NIMS Organizational Structure at a MCI
8. Review of Department's Infection Control & Exposure Policy
VI. Fire
a. Emergency Scene Checklist Components (attached below)
b. Pre Fire Planning Program
c. Extrication
d. Hydrant Program
e. Equipment Repair and Reporting
f. Apparatus Repair and Reporting
g. Documed Incident Documentation
i. HazMat/ERG
j. Various Department Multi-Company Drills as ICS
1. Mayday with a Rapid Intervention Team
2. Emergency Evacuation
3. Changing Modes of Operation from Offensive to Defensive
4. Defensive Attack Modes
5. Residential Offensive Attack Mode
6. Commercial Offensive Attack Mode
7. Garden Style Apartment Offensive Attack Mode
8. High Rise Offensive Attack Mode
k. National Fire Academy Interactive Online Courses
1. Command and Control Decision Making at Multiple alarm Incidents

2. Ranch House Fire
3. Mansion Fire
4. Nursing Home Fire
5. Townhouse Fire
VII. Battalion Chief Office
a. Work Order Repair Forms and Reporting
b. Station duties
c. Vehicle Maintenance, Checkout, and Repair Reporting
d. Station Safety
e. Departmental Boards (Union, Official Dept, and Training)
f. Computer System, Drives, and Files
g. Complete Staffing Board and Input Data into Fire RMS.
h. Fire Alarm Reporting
i. Missing or Broken Equipment
j. Assigning Overtime
k. Processing Time Exchanges
l. Processing Leave Authorizations
m. Processing Daily Payroll (Telestaff familiarization)
n. Reporting of High Profile Incidents
o. Department Daily Calendar
p. Reporting of the Daily Events/Runs to Operations Chief
q. Morning Information Exchange with other Battalion Chief
r. Departmental or Intradepartmental Meetings responsibilities

Phase 2 Acting Battalion Chief Field Training (Ride Time)

Phase 2 – Suppression Ride Time

1. Minimum of 5 ride times (9 hours each to equal 45 hours)

2. Utilize Daily Activity Log, Emergency Scene Checklist, and the Daily Evaluation Sheets

3. Complete the Post Evaluation packet

Prior to starting Phase 2, the Acting Battalion Chief Candidate shall meet with the Battalion Chief in preparation for Phase 2.

During Phase 2 the Acting Battalion Chief candidate shall consistently be able to perform the following activities:

Jurisdictional and Administrative Management

- Check the fire Operations calendar for current day activities, and plan and organize the resources accordingly.
- Review e-mail messages.
- Review Tamarac Summary and Sun Pro entries for previous shift Complete payroll and roster changes on Telestaff. Sign off on all leave authorizations; ensure that all leave authorizations and shift exchanges are attached.
- Review all leave or shift exchanges submitted to BC's office. Ensure that they have a station officer's signature and BC signature. Process with payroll or file them in the appropriate file. Complete a leave authorization for any sick employee and process.
- Pick up out-going mail at all three stations and fire administration.
- Review the out-going mail and process accordingly.
- Review and Q and A Sunpro Training entries and Documed daily run incidents. If any calls were not able to be reviewed, review them the following shift.
- Update the staffing assignments, and schedule new assignments for the next shift.
- Fill OT assignments for the following shift.
- Update the apparatus board
- Complete the Chief's fire daily report.
- Process all broken equipment repair forms and ensure follow-up with equipment.
- Complete apparatus work orders for Public Works as soon as possible
- Complete work orders on THE program for station repairs and notify Logistics and Station Captains

- Process all controlled narcotic exchanges, disposals, usage according to the policy.
- Process all boot replacements, educational reimbursements, injuries, exposures, sick leaves, accidents, lost, stolen, vandalized equipment, student rider, etc. documentation
- Manage the support and facilities activities according to the station manager program.
- Coordinate the pre-fire plans, hose testing, fire hydrant testing, and fire and EMS training accordingly. The BC will contact the shift's Captain, if present, or the shift's station officer to determine priority and progress of mentioned shift activities.
- Coordinate with Public Works on all fleet and equipment issues. This includes any follow-ups.
- Coordinate with Fire Prevention on all public educational activities. Report all false and nuisance fire alarms and defective detection systems.
- Follow-up progress of the shift's objectives.
- Provide the off-duty battalion commander, via e-mail, an updated briefing of relevant daily information pertaining to their shift personnel and objectives for operational accuracy and to avoid duplication.
- Ensure Fire-Rescue attendance at all scheduled homeowner meetings
- Ensure Fire-Rescue attendance at all scheduled public education
- Schedule and conduct EMS/Fire company training activities consistent with the posted EMS/Fire training on the Operations Calendar. Coordinate with the Training Division
- Follow-up with new recruits probationary training manuals to assure completeness and accuracy
- Require company officer to provide proper documentation and justification in the Documed Program narrative for response times greater than 8 minutes
- Pass on all relevant information to on-coming Battalion Chief.
- Properly Process any Citizen or Personnel Complaints
- Properly Process any Grievances submitted

Incident Management:

- Show proficiency in proper and safe command of the emergency vehicles during response to calls, working on scene, and during non-emergency driving.
- Demonstrate the ability to assess scene safety prior to entering any scene.
- Demonstrate a working knowledge of the Incident Command system
- Oversee the determined treatment protocol for each patient and be able to interact with the Company Officer without difficulty.
- Delegate tasks to other crew members as needed to facilitate efficient use of personnel and on-scene.
- Perform all incident skills required of an Acting Battalion Chief including , but not limited to:
    - Use of pre fire plan and area map book
    - Knowledge of radio channels including mutual aid
    - Perform proper size up.
    - Request additional resources

    - Establish, assume incident command
    - Apparatus placement
    - Function as the Incident Commander at a fire and MCI
    - Utilization of incident accountability
    - Understanding of fire, rescue, and specialized incident objectives
- Demonstrate the proper use of radio procedures, etiquette and terminology

General Requirements:

- The Acting Battalion Chief Candidate shall consistently show enthusiasm and interest in all department training activities.
- The Acting Battalion Chief Candidate shall work as a team member and communicate with both the public and team members
- The Acting Battalion Chief Candidate shall be courteous and respectful to all members of the department and public and treat them in a professional manner.
- The Acting Battalion Chief Candidate should use free time at the station to review all manuals pertinent to the operation of the Department to increase their competency in their duties.
- The Acting Battalion Chief Candidate shall possess an Associate's Degree in a job-related field.

CITY OF TAMARAC FIRE RESCUE DEPARTMENT

ACTING BATTALION CHIEF DAILY PERFORMANCE EVALUATION – Phase 2

NAME:_____ (O) Outstanding

RATED BY:_____ (S) Satisfactory

DATE: _____ (B) Below Satisfactory

SHIFT: _____

Station Performance	**Comments**	**O**	**S**	**B**
Check the Operations calendar for current day activities, and plan and organize the resources accordingly.				
Contact Operations/Administrative Chiefs for an operational update as need				
Review e-mail messages.				
Complete review of Documed emergency calls data systems. Sign off on all leave authorizations; ensure that all leave authorizations and shift exchanges are attached.				
Review all leave requests and shift exchanges submitted to BC's office. Ensure that they have a station officer's signature and BC signature. Process with payroll or file them in the appropriate file.				
Pick up out-going mail at all three stations and fire administration.				
Review the out-going mail and process accordingly.				
Review Sunpro daily training activity.				
Update the staffing assignments, and schedule new assignments for the next shift.				

Fill OT assignments for the following shift.				
Update the apparatus board.				
Station Performance	**Comments**	**O**	**S**	**B**
Complete the Chief's fire daily report.				
Process all broken equipment repair forms and ensure follow-up with equipment.				
Process all controlled narcotic exchanges, disposals, usage according to the policy.				
Process all boot replacements, educational reimbursements, injuries, exposures, sick leaves, accidents, lost, stolen, vandalized equipment, student rider, etc. documentation.				
Manage the support and facilities activities according to the station manager program.				
Coordinate the pre-fire plans, hose testing, fire hydrant testing, and fire and EMS training accordingly. The BC will contact the shift's Captain, if present, or the shift's station officer to determine priority and progress of mentioned shift activities.				
Coordinate with Logistics on equipment, uniform and other various needs. This includes any follow-ups.				
Coordinate with Public Works on all fleet and equipment issues. This includes any follow-ups.				
Coordinate with Fire Prevention on all public educational activities. Report all false and nuisance fire alarms and defective detection systems. Document all training.				
Complete a leave authorization for any sick employee and process.				
Follow-up progress of the shift's objectives.				
Provide the off-duty battalion commander, via e-mail, an updated briefing of relevant daily				

information pertaining to their shift personnel and objectives for operational accuracy and to avoid duplication.				
Ensure Fire-Rescue attendance at all scheduled homeowner				
Ensure Fire-Rescue attendance at all scheduled public education				
Schedule and conduct EMS/Fire company training activities consistent with the posted training matrix. Coordinate with the Training Division.				
Follow-up with probationary training manuals to assure completeness and accuracy.				
Station Performance	**Comments**	**O**	**S**	**B**
Require company officer to provide proper documentation and justification in the fire narrative for response times greater than 8 minutes.				
Pass on all relevant information to on-coming Battalion Chief				

Tamarac Fire Rescue

Emergency Scene Checklist

During the role-playing scenario, the Acting Battalion Chief will participate in managing a fire incident to be conducted in concert with the Training Division. These benchmarks will be used to assess the Acting Battalion Chief's s command and control of the department's ICS multi-company dills and to provide feedback. As the Acting Battalion Chief progresses through the incident, the evaluator will check-off the benchmarks. Notes may be made in areas that need improvement.

1. Establishes Command ___
2. Size-up Report ___
3. Completes or Assigns a Walk-Around ___
4. Chooses a Strategy ___
5. Secures Utilities ___
6. Assigns Units ___

    - Rescue Group
    - Extension/Exposure Group
    - Attack Group
    - Ventilation Group
    - Overhaul Group
    - Salvage Group

6. Coordinates Units with Tactics ___
7. Assigns a RIT team ___
8. Assigns a Safety Officer ___
9. Obtains a Water Supply ___
10. Deploys a Back-Up Line ___
11. Maintains Accountability ___

12. Transmits Communication Benchmarks ___

13. Establishes Staging Zone ___

14. Establishes a Rehab Group ___

15. Establishes a Medical Group ___

Notes:

Please be specific in your comments and document any witnessed performance areas that are not listed above. All below satisfactory ratings must be corrected by the end of the last ride time. If the rating officer feels that all areas are not satisfactory, or above, by the end of the candidate's last ride time he/she should consult the Operations Chief for a ride time extension.

Overall Daily Comments

_____
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_____

_____ _____

Candidate signature Officer Signature

Phase 3 – Final Written Evaluation

1. Overall Exam Covering policies referred to on U: drive, Files, "Officer Development Policies" (The Candidate must receive a minimum of 80% on the written exam).

2. Emergency and Administrative Scenarios (Scenarios may be given in a written scenario or manipulative drill style format).

a) Fire
b) EMS
c) MCI
d) HazMat
e) Extrication
f) Unified Command
g) Personnel Issue

Phase 3 Final Evaluation Comments:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPROVAL SIGNATURES: **DATE**

CANDIDATE	(PRINT)	
	(SIGN)	

BATTALION CHIEF	(PRINT)	
	(SIGN)	
TRAINING CHIEF (PRINT)		

	(SIGN)	

OPERATIONS CHIEF	(PRINT)	
	(SIGN)	