2026

U.S. Fire Administrator's Summit on Fire Prevention and Control

Summit Proceedings | September 15, 2026







FEMA

U.S. Fire Administration
Fire is Everyone's Fight®

National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

U.S. FIRE ADMINISTRATOR'S SUMMIT

ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL

SEPTEMBER 15, 2026

PROCEEDINGS REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 **Executive Summary**

2 **Opening Remarks by U.S. Fire Administrator Paul Matheis**

3 **National Fire Academy Overview by Superintendent Eriks Gabliks, United States Fire Administration**

4 **250 Years of America's Fire Service: A Commemorative Address to America's Fire Services — Allan Rice, Alabama Fire College**

5 **Presentations**

- Technology Overview — Dr. Mike Macey, Laguna Beach Fire Department (retired)
- NERIS: Applications for Training and Professional Development — John Morrison, Fairfax County Fire and Rescue
- Emerging Technologies and Impacts on Training — Scott Roseberry, Garland Fire Department
- Wildfire Overview — Chief Danny Kistner, National Fallen Firefighters Foundation
- Training for an Evolving Environment — Joseph Ten Eyck, International Association of Fire Fighters
- Evolving Training and Mitigation Through Lessons Learned — Erin McGrudder, Boone County Fire Protection District
- Health and Safety Overview — Chief Frank Leeb, First Responder Center for Excellence
- Firefighting Intelligence — Joe Flick, Milwaukee Fire Department
- Simulation Training to Enhance Health and Safety — Jonathan Boyd, Allen Fire Department

6 **Breakout Group Recommendations**

7 **Keynote Address by Chief Kris Blume, Meridian Fire Department**

Executive Summary

The 2026 U.S. Fire Administrator's Summit on Fire Prevention and Control convened fire service leaders, researchers, trainers, and practitioners at the National Emergency Training Center on September 15, 2026. Against the backdrop of America's 250th anniversary and the 25th anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks, the Summit recognized the fire service's long record of service while examining the complex, evolving demands facing today's departments.

A changing operational environment

Presentations explored emerging technologies and data systems, including the National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS); new approaches to training and simulation; wildfire and wildland-urban interface (WUI) risks; lessons learned from incidents; and firefighter health, wellness, and operational safety. Across these topics, speakers emphasized that departments need to adapt training, decision-making, and mitigation practices as hazards and operational demands change. Technology and data offer important opportunities, but they must strengthen—not replace—professional judgment, leadership, practical skills, and human performance.

Priorities identified by participants

Breakout groups examined Technology, Wildfire, and Health & Safety, identifying challenges and opportunities for U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) leadership. Their discussions revealed a common gap between the growing availability of research, data, guidance, and tools and departments' and communities' ability to put them into practice. Participants stressed that national solutions must account for differences in department size, staffing, funding, geography, training capacity, and administrative resources.

Recommendations included strengthening National Fire Academy capabilities in technology and data literacy; improving NERIS as a practical decision-support resource; providing technical assistance to help departments evaluate and implement technology; translating research into usable training and operational guidance; coordinating wildfire/WUI education and training; improving public communication about risk, mitigation, and evacuation; and reinforcing firefighter health and safety through leadership, accountability, and organizational culture.

Moving from knowledge to action

A central message of the Summit was the need to close the gap between knowing and doing. Participants identified an opportunity for USFA to connect existing resources, make data more understandable and actionable, support responsible, human-centered technology adoption, and help departments implement and sustain effective practices. Particular attention should be given to smaller and resource-constrained departments so that useful tools and guidance are accessible across the fire service.

The Proceedings Report captures the presentations and breakout recommendations as a foundation for continued collaboration. The opportunity ahead is not simply to develop more resources, but to connect the right resources with the people who need them—and turn knowledge into sustained action and measurable improvements in fire and life safety.

Opening Remarks by U.S. Fire Administrator Paul Matheis

Introduction & Welcome

Good morning, everyone. First, I want to welcome you to the National Emergency Training Center, the proud home of the U.S. Fire Administration. I also want to extend my sincere gratitude to each of you for attending this year's U.S. Fire Administrator's Summit on Fire Prevention and Control.

For those who joined us early this morning for the wreath-laying at the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial, thank you. That solemn moment grounds us in our purpose today. It is a profound honor to look out and see the nation's fire service leadership, dedicated researchers, and frontline first responders gathered together in one room.

Honoring Our Milestones

This year, we mark two profound milestones in the history of our country: our 250th anniversary as an independent nation, and the 25th anniversary of the tragic events of September 11th. Both anniversaries serve as powerful reminders of how our nation has persevered through the most difficult adversities.

They also underscore the historic, long-held role that the fire service plays in assuring the safety, security, and resilience of the American people. For two and a half centuries, through every national crisis, our firefighters have stood as the shield protecting our communities. Later this morning, we will hear more on this incredible legacy from Allan Rice as he presents on the 250 years of America's Fire Service.

A Rapidly Changing Operational Landscape

While we honor our past, we must also confront our present. Today, the fire service faces a rapidly changing and increasingly complex environment. New technologies, such as lithium-ion batteries and advanced energy storage systems, have introduced highly volatile fire risks that we could not have imagined ten years ago.

Simultaneously, the continuous expansion of our urban areas has heightened the demand for structural firefighters, and the growth of the wildland-urban interface has fundamentally expanded the role of urban departments to include complex wildfire response. These evolving demands mean that more intensive time and rigorous training are required to ensure our firefighters can do their jobs safely and correctly. This increased pressure has placed a heavy burden on firefighter recruitment and retention, particularly within our critical volunteer departments.

Protecting Those Who Protect Us

As operational demands multiply, we continue to see the severe impacts of these stressors on the physical health and mental well-being of our first responders. Illnesses related to prolonged work in high-stress environments, fire-related cancers, and firefighter suicide remain top-tier concerns for the fire service and the communities we protect.

We must emphasize to our workforce that seeking help for mental health, personal wellness, and recovery is a sign of immense strength, not weakness. We must remain relentless in our search for new ways to mitigate occupational risks, treat those affected, and educate the public on the extraordinary challenges our first responders face every single day.

Fortunately, we are not without tools. Modern advancements bring technologies that allow us to fight fires more safely. Today, the timeliness and availability of high-quality data and analytical tools empower us to clarify our tactical needs and manage finite resources with unprecedented efficiency.

Our Congressional Mandate & Today's Agenda

This ongoing effort to address America's fire threat through public education, specialized training, and the

application of rigorous data and research is the mandate that the U.S. Congress originally entrusted to the U.S. Fire Administration in the historic Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974.

It is under this very authority that I convene this summit, bringing together the finest minds in our field to chart the path forward.

Today, you will hear from experts who will outline exactly where we stand on these key issues and project where things are headed. This afternoon, you will have the opportunity to engage with these experts and your peers directly during our breakout sessions focusing on Technology, Wildfire, and Health & Safety. We want you to highlight the gaps in our understanding, our operational processes, and our resources. Every gap identified today will be captured and shared so that we can collectively develop and implement lasting solutions.

Finally, as we close the summit this afternoon, we will hear a keynote address from Chief Kris Blume on a topic vital to our future: leading the next generation of firefighters. We set the stage for those who will follow us; it is our responsibility to build a foundation that supports them.

So once again, welcome to Emmitsburg, and thank you for your presence. Thank you for listening, and most importantly, thank you for contributing your expertise to this vital effort. Together, we will continue to ensure that fire is everyone's fight.

National Fire Academy Update



FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration

Campus History

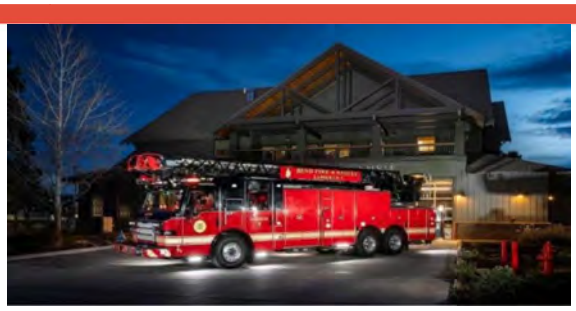


- 1809 – 1902 St. Joseph Academy
- 1902 – 1973 St. Joseph College
- 1973 – 1979 Campus was dormant
- 1979 Purchased by federal government for $3.5 million
- 1980 Opened as the National Fire Academy (NFA)
- 1981 Name changed to National Emergency Training Center (NETC), home of the United States Fire Administration (USFA) and its NFA and the Emergency Management Institute (EMI), which was later named the National Disaster and Emergency Management University (NDEMU)

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

Who We Serve

- **1,200,000** fire, EMS and allied professionals (career and volunteer)
- **30,000** local fire and EMS departments
- **50** state fire training agencies
- **50** state fire marshal offices
- National fire & EMS organizations
- Federal partners







NFA 2025 Impact & Curriculum

NFA 2025 Impact – By the Numbers

85,740 - Overall NFA students in FY25

Attended on-campus NFA offerings	4,129
Attended NFA off-campus courses	4,826
Attended NFA off-campus classes delivered by state fire training agency with the $20K per state USFA/NFA annual grant	18,001
Attended NFA off-campus classes through Fire and Emergency Services in Higher Education partners	4,503
Attended NFA online classes	54,281

Curriculum Topic Areas

- Community Risk Reduction
- EMS
- Supervision and Management
- Leadership and Executive Development
- Safety and Health
- Hazardous Materials
- Incident Management
- Fire Prevention
- Fire Investigation
- Planning and Information Management
- Wildland Urban Interface

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration

NFA Projects in Motion

- Executive Fire Officer
- Managing Officer
- Additional Distance Learning Opportunities
- 65 NFA Classes Being Updated or Developed
- USFA You Tube Series: Lessons Learned from CDC NIOSH Firefighter Fatality Reports
- Fire & Emergency Services in Higher Education
- Building and Maintaining Partnerships
- Maintenance and Management of Campus
- Access to Behavioral Health Resources for NFA Students

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

National Fire Academy Library



FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

250 Years of America's Fire and Emergency Services: *A Commemorative Address to America's Firefighters*

Alan Rice, Alabama Fire College

Brothers and sisters of the fire service—thank you for being here. Today, we gather as a family. A family forged in heat, strengthened by service, and united by a mission that has endured for 250 years. This is our story—one written in courage, sacrifice, innovation, and resilience.

I. Our Beginnings: Colonial America to Independence (1736–1776)

Our roots trace back to 1736, when Benjamin Franklin helped organize the Union Fire Company in Philadelphia. It was built on volunteerism, civic duty, and neighbors protecting neighbors—values that still define us today.

By 1776, volunteer fire companies were already essential to colonial towns. We were part of America before America was a nation.

II. The 19th Century: Growth, Innovation, and Professionalization

As America expanded, so did fire risk. Wooden cities, factories, and railroads created new dangers.

Steam Engines and Horses

By the early 1800s, firefighters operated steam-powered engines and raced through crowded streets behind teams of horses.

The Great Chicago Fire of 1871

The Great Chicago Fire reshaped national fire policy, driving improvements in building codes, water systems, and fire prevention.

The First Paid Fire Department

In 1853, Cincinnati established the first fully paid fire department, marking the beginning of modern municipal fire protection.

III. The Early 20th Century: Modern Tools, Modern Hazards

By the 1920s, gasoline-powered engines replaced steam. Aerial ladders reached new heights. Training academies and prevention bureaus emerged. Firefighters faced new hazards—high-rise fires, industrial accidents, and hazardous materials.

IV. Mid-Century Transformation: EMS, Hazmat, and All-Hazards Response

The second half of the 20th century transformed our mission.

The Rise of EMS

Firefighters became America's emergency medical responders. Today, EMS is the majority of our call volume.

Hazmat and Disaster Response

Chemical hazards and natural disasters pushed us into new specialties. We became all-hazards responders—trained for anything, anytime, anywhere.

V. America Burning and the Birth of Federal Fire Leadership

In 1973, the landmark report *America Burning* exposed the scale of America's fire problem and called for national leadership, better training, stronger codes, and improved prevention.

Its recommendations led to the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974, creating:

- The United States Fire Administration (USFA)
- The National Fire Academy (NFA)
- The National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS)
- The Center for Fire Research

These institutions professionalized our service and gave firefighters a national voice.

VI. Major Incidents That Reshaped Our Profession

Our progress has often been written in tragedy.

Urban Conflagrations

Chicago, Boston, Baltimore, San Francisco—each disaster forced America to adopt better codes and safer construction.

Nightclub and Industrial Fires

Cocoanut Grove (1942) and the Station nightclub fire (2003) changed egress rules, sprinkler requirements, and inspection protocols.

Wildland Fire Disasters

Western wildfires drove the creation of ICS, interagency cooperation, and national mobilization systems.

September 11, 2001

The loss of 343 FDNY firefighters reshaped national preparedness, leading to NIMS, interoperable communications, and expanded US&R capabilities.

VII. National Fire Service Organizations

Our national fire service is strengthened by organizations that fight for us, train us, and honor us:

- **IAFF** – Advocates for firefighter safety, staffing, and labor rights.
- **IAFC** – Provides leadership and best practices for chiefs and senior officers.
- **NFPA** – Develops the codes and standards that shape our equipment, training, and operations.
- **NVFC** – Supports the volunteer fire service.
- **NFFF** – Honors our fallen and leads national safety initiatives.

VIII. Firefighter Cancer: The Modern Fire Service's Greatest Threat

Today, the greatest danger many firefighters face isn't flames—it's cancer.

Cancer Risk in the Fire Service

- Firefighters have a 9% higher risk of developing cancer and a 14% higher risk of dying from cancer compared to the general population.
- Approximately 70% of firefighter line-of-duty deaths honored by IAFF in recent years were cancer-related.
- In 2022, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) classified occupational exposure as a firefighter as "carcinogenic to humans" (Group 1)—the highest level of evidence.
- IARC found sufficient evidence linking firefighting to mesothelioma and bladder cancer, with limited evidence for colon, prostate, testicular, melanoma, and non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

Why Cancer Risk Is So High

Firefighters are exposed to:

- PAHs, VOCs, benzene, and other carcinogens during fire attack and overhaul
- Diesel exhaust in stations
- PFAS ("forever chemicals") in turnout gear and some foams—now recognized as a major concern
- Controlled burn studies show firefighters absorb carcinogens through both inhalation and skin contact—even with PPE.

Long-Term Mortality Findings

A 2025 American Cancer Society study found firefighters have significantly higher mortality rates from skin and kidney cancers, with elevated risks for prostate, colorectal, and lung cancer after decades of service.

IX. The History of Fire Service Research and National Initiatives

NIOSH Firefighter Cancer Study

In 2010, NIOSH launched a multi-year study confirming excess cancer risk among firefighters, including testicular, brain, prostate, colon, mesothelioma, multiple myeloma, and leukemia.

Fire Fighter Cancer Cohort Study (FFCCS)

Launched in 2016, FFCCS is a 30-year national study following 10,000 firefighters to understand cancer risk and exposure pathways.

National Firefighter Registry (NFR)

Created by federal legislation in 2018, the NFR is the largest effort ever undertaken to study cancer among U.S. firefighters. All firefighters—career, volunteer, wildland, industrial, military—can enroll.

Volunteer-Specific Research

Recent systematic reviews highlight unique cancer risks among volunteer firefighters and propose specialized decontamination models to reduce exposure.

X. Health, Wellness, and the Future of Firefighter Safety

Cancer, cardiac disease, behavioral health challenges, sleep disruption, and cumulative trauma are now among the most serious threats facing firefighters. The modern fire service has responded with a nationwide movement toward health, wellness, and evidence-based prevention—a movement driven not just by departments and national organizations, but by a growing network of researchers, clinicians, and firefighter-led initiatives.

We are living in a new era where science is finally catching up to the job, and one of the most important developments in that evolution is the rise of national firefighter health and wellness conferences and research collaboratives.

Science to the Station (S2S): Bringing Research Directly to the Firehouse

One of the most influential efforts is the Science to the Station Conference, a national event dedicated to translating peer-reviewed research into practical, actionable steps firefighters can use on the rig and in the station. The conference brings together leading researchers, fire service health experts, and firefighters from across the country to focus on cancer prevention, mental health, sleep, fitness, and operational safety. It exists for one reason: to make sure the science that can save firefighters' lives doesn't stay trapped in academic journals—it gets into the hands of the people who need it most.

This movement—science meeting the street—represents one of the most important cultural shifts in our profession in decades.

A National Push for Evidence-Based Wellness

Across the country, firefighters are embracing:

- Clean cab and clean gear policies
- On-scene gross decontamination
- Diesel exhaust capture systems
- PFAS-free PPE development
- Annual cancer and cardiac screenings
- Behavioral health programs and peer support teams
- Sleep hygiene and shift schedule research

Major conferences, including Science to the Station and other firefighter wellness gatherings, are helping departments adopt these practices by connecting firefighters directly with the latest research, tools, and experts.

A Future Built on Research, Prevention, and Care

The fire service is now supported by national research initiatives such as:

- The NIOSH Firefighter Cancer Study
- The Fire Fighter Cancer Cohort Study (FFCCS)
- The National Firefighter Registry (NFR)
- University-based firefighter health research centers
- USFA's expanding health and safety research programs

Together, these efforts are building a future where firefighters have the knowledge, resources, and support to live long, healthy lives—during their careers and long after retirement.

XI. The Modern American Fire Service

Today, we are more capable, more trained, and more essential than ever:

- Over 1.2 million firefighters serve nationwide
- More than 27,000 fire departments protect American communities
- Fire departments respond to an incident every 23 seconds
- EMS represents the majority of our calls

We are career, volunteer, paid-on-call, and part-time—but we are one family.

Closing: Our Legacy and Our Future

For 250 years, firefighters have stood between danger and safety, chaos and order, fear and hope. From Franklin's bucket brigades to today's highly trained, technologically advanced responders, our mission has never changed:

To protect life. To protect property. To protect each other.

We honor those who came before us.
We stand ready for those who need us today.
And we commit ourselves to those who will rely on us tomorrow.

Brothers and sisters—thank you for your service.
May God bless you, your families, and America's fire and emergency services.

U.S. FIRE ADMINISTRATOR'S SUMMIT ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL - PRESENTATIONS

September 15, 2026

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration
Working for a fire-safe America

NERIS – Applications for Training and Professional Development

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

More than just a reporting change

NFIRS documented
What happened to the community.

NERIS documents
What the fire service did about it.

That is a training conversation.

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration

What actually changed

	NFIRS 1975 to 2026	NERIS
Incident typing	One type per incident	Up to three types per incident
What is recorded	Loss and outcome	Actions, tactics, suppression, tactical timestamps
Outcomes	Casualties	Rescues, maydays, assists and self-evacuations
Location	A street address	Points, intersections, polygons, GIS accuracy
Data flow	Batch submission, upward only	Near real time, in the hands of your department

For the first time, the national reporting system and the training program are asking the same question.

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration |

The transition started new trend lines

The real cost

Fifty years of local history sits in an archive, not in the new system

Departments are roughly nine months into a fresh baseline

Early dashboards reflect documentation quality more than performance

The opportunity

Every department in the country started its NERIS dataset at the same time.

The quality of that dataset in the future will be decided by how well crews are trained to document it today.

Treat it as a data project and you get years of mediocre data. Treat it as a training project and you get years of evidence.

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

Report writing is now a competency

If your officers and firefighters document tactics poorly, your own training programs go blind.

Under NFIRS, a poorly written report degraded national statistics. Under NERIS, it degrades the data your training officer depends on.

Garbage in, garbage out stopped being someone else's problem

1. **Recruit school**
   Put NERIS documentation into probationary sign-offs, not just orientation
2. **Company officer development**
   Make report review a supervisory competency, not a QA function
3. **Curriculum**
   Build training around your data entry platform.

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

Training built from your own incidents

Tactical timestamps let you measure a training intervention instead of assuming it worked.

1

Report

Crew documents actions, tactics, and timestamps

2

Reveal

Dashboard exposes a pattern in your own calls

3

Drill

Pattern becomes a training objective, not a guess

4

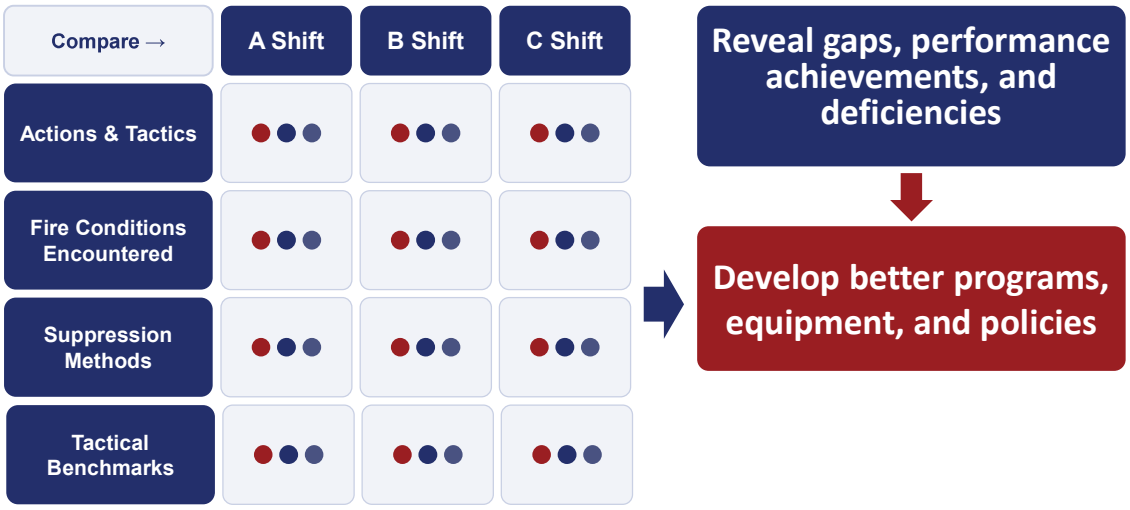
Measure

Next quarter's data shows whether it worked

Fairfax County has been measuring size up complete and water on fire times and incorporating them into testing and training.

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration

Finding gaps across shifts



FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration

Officer and executive development

1

Promotional and capstone work

Officer candidates build projects on real local data instead of hypotheticals

2

Credentialing and accreditation

CPSE and CFO work with an evidence base that already exists in your system

3

National Fire Academy and degree programs

A national incident dataset, refreshed multiple times per week

27,000 departments nationwide get NERIS and its analytics at no cost. It's no longer if you can afford analytics, it's how can you use it.

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration

Emerging Technologies and Impacts on Training

Battalion Chief Scott Roseberry, Garland Fire Department

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration

Steele Creek (NC) Fire Department
Radio Traffic via OpenMHz

House Fire + Interior Collapse + Mayday
16218 Fieldstone Trace

February 25, 2026
~9:07 p.m. | 00:33:28



WCNC

Fewer Fires, More Complexity, Less Experience



FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration

What if every fire could train the next firefighter?



A Model for Situational Awareness at Scale



FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration

What if SCOUT + NERIS became a live national learning system?



FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration

The Fireground Is Becoming a Data Environment



FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation



FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation



FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation



FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation



FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

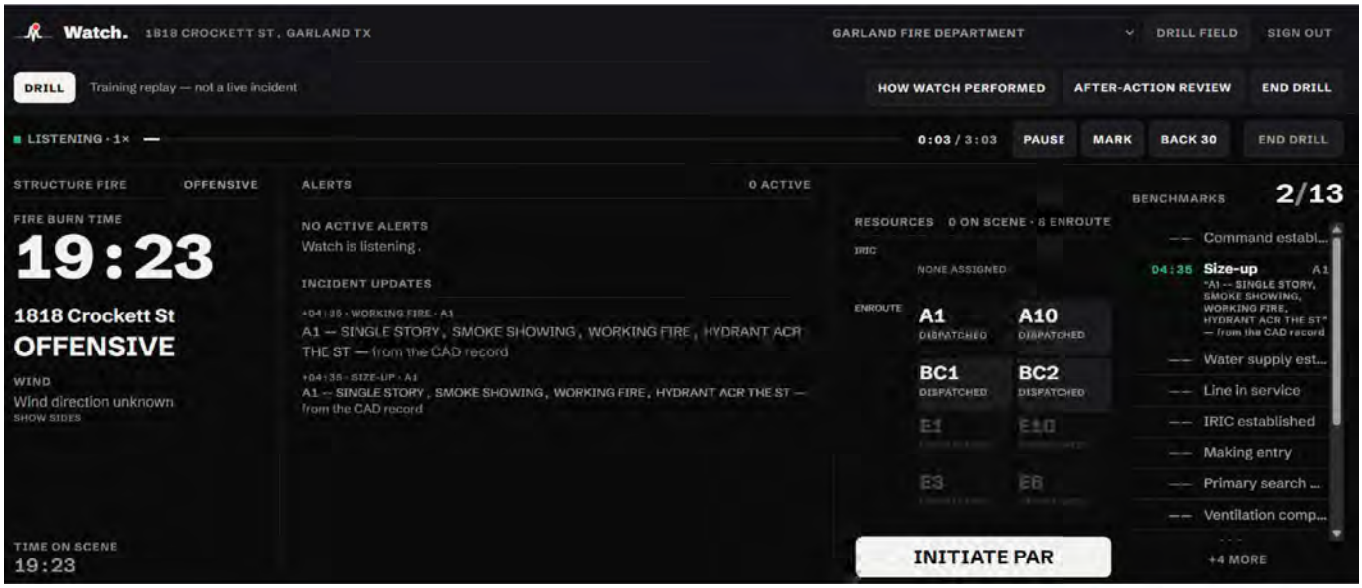


FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation



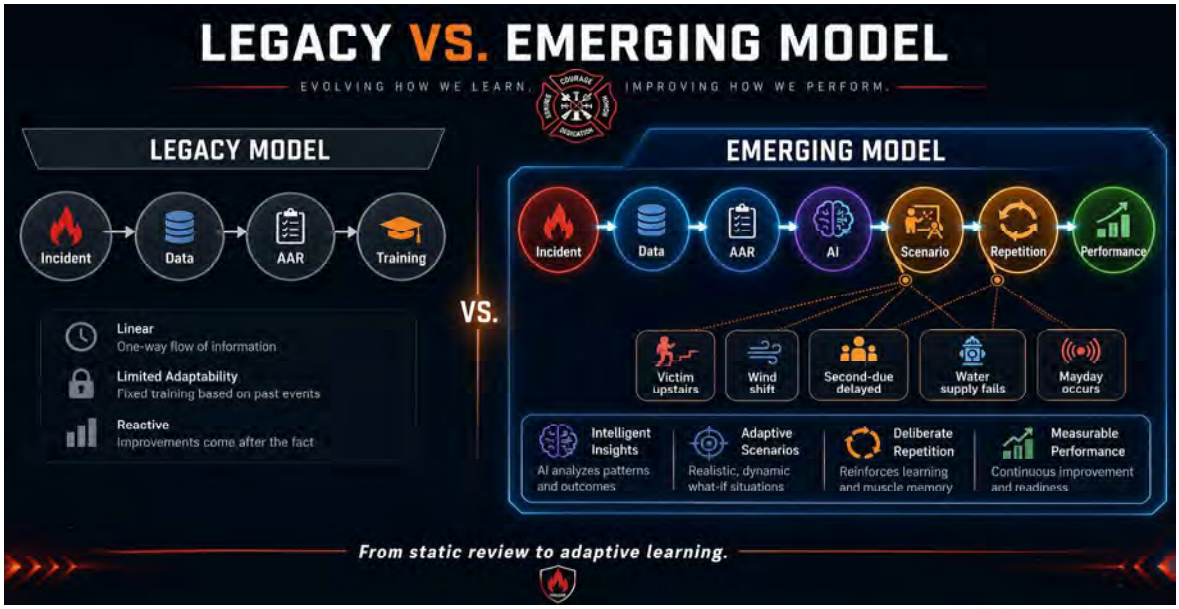
FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

WATCH: An AI Assistant for the Incident Commander



FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration

From Legacy Training to Adaptive Learning



FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration

Safer Incidents. Better Equipped Incident Commanders.



FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

Wildfire/WUI Training: Closing the Gap

CURRENT ROLE

Joseph Q. Ten Eyck, Director of Wildfire/Interface Fire Programs for the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF)

CAL FIRE LEADERSHIP

Retired Division Chief, Operations with CAL FIRE, the largest fire agency in the United States and the premiere wildfire/urban-interface fire agency in the world.

INCIDENT COMMAND EXPERIENCE

Has served as an Incident Commander, Type 1 Operations Section Chief, Type 1 Planning Section Chief, and Type 1 Safety Officer, Fire Behavior Specialist, on many major incidents, with staff assignments as Command Center Chief and Training Bureau Chief in a career that spanned over 40 years.

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration

The Wildfire Landscape Has Fundamentally Changed

70M+ acres

At-risk Wildfire/WUI land in the U.S.

Source: USDA Forest Service / NIFC

21 fatalities

Wildfire/WUI-related firefighter deaths in 2023

Source: NFPA Firefighter Fatality Report 2023

2,700+ structures

Lost to Wildfire/WUI fires in 2023

Source: USFA / NFIRS Incident Data 2023

5× increase

In large fires (>100k acres) since the 1970s

Source: NIFC Historical Fire Statistics

The threat has scaled faster than the training system has adapted.

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

Four Structural Gaps in Current Wildfire/WUI Training

Persistent deficiencies across ICS coordination, WUI tactics, credentialing, and behavioral health preparedness

GAP 1 — COORDINATION RISK

ICS Interoperability

Inconsistent application of ICS across local, state, federal, and mutual-aid deployments creates coordination breakdowns on complex incidents.

GAP 2 — TACTICAL READINESS

Wildfire/WUI Tactics Training

Structure triage, structure protection, and community-level decision-making during WUI events are undertrained at the local department level.

GAP 3 — STANDARDS GAP

Credentialing & Qualification Standards

No unified national credentialing framework for Wildfire/WUI firefighters results in deployment mismatches and safety risk.

GAP 4 — RESILIENCE DEFICIT

Behavioral Health Preparedness

Operational stress, exposure to mass casualty and community loss events, and long deployments lack integrated pre/post-deployment resilience training.

Note: Professional association training initiatives (e.g., IAFF, NVFC) represent examples of gap-filling efforts — not a comprehensive national solution.

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

Priority Training Investments: Near-Term Impact

Unified ICS Refresher Curriculum

A nationally consistent, scenario-based ICS refresher targeting mutual-aid coordinators and company officers. Delivery: NFAS online + regional in-person cadres.

IMPACT: IMMEDIATE

WUI Tactics Certification Track

A modular certification pathway for structure triage, defensible space evaluation, and community notification decisions. Builds on existing S-courses.

IMPACT: 12–18 MONTHS

National WUI Credentialing Framework

Interagency working group (USFA, USFS, DHS) to define baseline qualifications for WUI deployment eligibility. Addresses deployment mismatches and safety risk.

IMPACT: POLICY-LEVEL, 24 MONTHS

Operational Resilience Training Module

Pre-deployment behavioral health preparation integrated into existing wildfire mobilization protocols. Not clinical — operational. Addresses cumulative stress exposure.

IMPACT: IMMEDIATE UPON ADOPTION

Solutions leverage existing NFAS, NFA, and FEMA infrastructure — no new agency creation required.

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration

Harmonization: Three Coordinated Actions

1

Align Standards

Convene USFA, USFS, and state fire training directors to audit existing Wildfire/WUI curriculum against current NWCG and other qualifications systems. Identify overlaps and contradictions.

TIMELINE 120 Days

2

Pilot & Validate

Select 3–5 high-risk WUI states to pilot the unified ICS refresher and Wildfire/WUI tactics module. Collect data on competency outcomes and deployment readiness.

TIMELINE 9 Months

3

Scale & Institutionalize

Integrate validated curricula into NFA resident and off-campus programs and the Independent Study catalog. Embed credentialing milestones in mutual-aid agreements.

TIMELINE 18–24 Months

Harmonization is not coordination for its own sake — it directly reduces incident risk.

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration

KEY TAKEAWAYS · WILDFIRE/WUI TRAINING BRIEFING

The Opportunity

The threat environment demands a trained, credentialed, interoperable workforce.

Wildfire/WUI complexity and scale will not decrease — our training system must grow to meet it.

The infrastructure exists — alignment and investment are what is missing.

USFA/NFA, NWCG, and IAFF platforms can deliver at scale with targeted coordination.

Near-term actions can produce near-term outcomes.

A standards audit and a pilot are achievable within current authorities.

The time to close the gap is now — before the next complex incident demands it.

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

Evolving Training & Mitigation Through Lessons Learned

Stop. Start. Keep. Turning Wildfire Lessons into Action.

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration

	Largest	Deadliest	Costliest
#1	Smokehouse Creek (TX/OK, 2024)	Peshtigo (WI, 1871)	Palisades (CA, 2025)
#2	August Complex (CA, 2020)	Cloquet–Moose Lake (MN, 1918)	Eaton (CA, 2025)
#3	Dixie (CA, 2021)	Hinckley (MN, 1894)	Camp (CA, 2018)
#4	Mendocino Complex (CA, 2018)	Thumb (MI, 1881)	Tubbs (CA, 2017)
#5	Park (CA, 2024)	Lahaina/Maui (HI, 2023)	Woolsey (CA, 2018)

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration |

The fires that cost America the most aren't necessarily the fires that **burn the most acres**.

They're the fires that **intersect** with communities, infrastructure, and accumulated exposure.

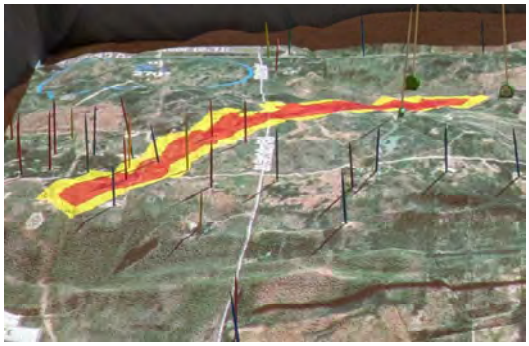
FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation













FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

Fire Behavior vs. Human Behavior

"Hotshot Mentality"

HAZARDOUS ATTITUDE	ANTIDOTE
Antiauthority: Don't tell me.	Follow the rules. They are usually right.
Impulsivity: Do something quickly.	Not so fast. Think first.
Invulnerability: It won't happen to me.	It could happen to me.
Macho: I can do it.	Taking chances is foolish.
Resignation: What's the use?	I'm not helpless. I can make a difference.

FIGURE 4. THE FIVE ANTIDOTES

To know better,
but to not do better,
is to **not know better**.

U.S. Department of Transportation on Federal Aviation Administration. FAA Advisory Circular. (n.d.). https://www.faa.gov/sites/faa.gov/files/2022-11/AC60-22_Chap%201-3.pdf

We have to be better at **disengaging** & **resetting**.

Be prepared for the people you're pulling out to fight you.

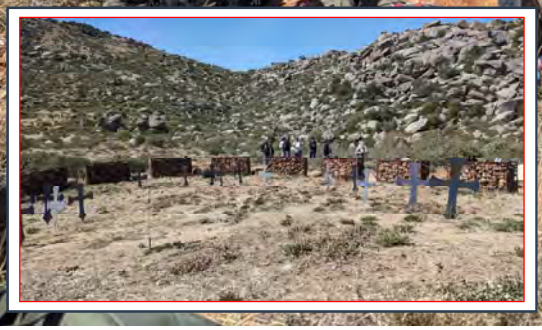
Fight back because you're **making the right call**.

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

It wasn't one decision that caused this.

There was a number of decisions that played into this.

Some even before the event started





Lessons-learned infrastructure is not a retrospective exercise.



It must be a **forward-looking** system

A lesson learned
without a policy verified
or a behavior changed
is just **a problem identified.**

- Marc Bashoor

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation


Don't ask if we've documented the lesson...
Ask if we've changed the behavior.





What if…

A lesson learned told someone exactly what to do differently **within 60-seconds**?

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

Stop doing.
Start doing.
Keep doing.



Fire Intelligence: Leveraging Technology to Improve Safety & Health

Joe Flick
Fire Captain, Milwaukee Fire Department
Fellow, Cohort #5, National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration

“Fire Intelligence”

- **“… solutions** that can help agencies and partners better detect, predict, and mitigate….” –Lockheed Martin
- the **purposeful** use of technology, data, and information to **better understand the operational environment, support decision-making, and protect firefighters before, during, and after an incident.**



FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration



FEMA

U.S. Fire Administration





Existing Technology



FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

Green Bay, WI





FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

San Bernadino County (CA) FD



FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation



FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration

Simulation Training to Enhance Health and Safety

Chief Jonathan Boyd, Allen Fire Department

FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration

ARIES Simulation

Realistic Repetitive Interdependent Virtual Training







FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

2026 U.S. FIRE ADMINISTRATOR'S SUMMIT ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL

Breakout Group Recommendations

Technology • Wildfire • Health & Safety

Summary

During the 2026 U.S. Fire Administrator's Summit on Fire Prevention and Control, attendees participated in three breakout discussions focused on **Technology, Wildfire, and Health & Safety**. Each group examined opportunities and challenges within its topic area and conducted a gap analysis to identify areas where the United States Fire Administration (USFA) could provide additional leadership, resources, coordination, and solutions.

Although the discussions focused on different subject areas, several common themes emerged. Participants consistently identified a gap between the availability of information, research, technology, and guidance and fire departments' and communities' ability to **translate those resources into effective action**. The discussions also reinforced the importance of developing solutions that recognize differences in department size, staffing, funding, geography, organizational culture, and operational environment.

Across all three breakout groups, participants identified opportunities for USFA to strengthen its role in four interconnected areas:

- **Training** – ensuring firefighters, officers, leaders, and community partners have the knowledge and skills necessary to apply available resources.
- **Public Education** – translating technical information and risk data into understandable, actionable information for communities.
- **Technology and Research** – helping the fire service evaluate, adopt, implement, and appropriately use emerging technologies and research.
- **Data Analysis** – improving the ability to collect, understand, interpret, communicate, and apply data to operational and strategic decisions.

The recommendations that follow are organized by the three breakout topics and reflect the principal opportunities and challenges identified during the discussions.

I. TECHNOLOGY

Overview

The Technology breakout group examined the rapidly changing technological environment facing the fire service, including artificial intelligence, data systems, sensors, simulations, digital training tools, connected systems, and emerging technologies.

Participants recognized that technology can improve firefighter safety, operational effectiveness, efficiency, and decision-making. However, they also emphasized that the principal challenge is not simply the availability of technology. Departments must be able to **evaluate, acquire, implement, integrate, fund, train personnel to use, and sustain technology**.

A recurring theme was that technology should enhance—not replace—firefighter experience, judgment, leadership, basic skills, and training. Participants also emphasized that technology has limited value when personnel are not adequately trained to use it or when organizations have not addressed the cultural and operational changes required for implementation.

Key Opportunities and Challenges

1. Closing the Technology Implementation Gap

Participants identified a significant gap between the technologies available to the fire service and the ability of departments to successfully implement them.

Challenges include:

- Limited funding and competing departmental priorities.
- Difficulty evaluating whether a technology actually addresses an operational need.
- Lack of expertise to assess and implement new technologies.
- Interoperability and cybersecurity concerns.
- Accessibility and standards.
- Uncertainty about how emerging technologies will perform in the operational environment.
- Resistance to moving away from familiar or legacy technologies.
- Limited training associated with new technology.

The discussion suggested that USFA is uniquely positioned to accelerate technology readiness and implementation across departments by assisting with targeted funding and technical training.

2. Human-Centered Technology

Participants emphasized that the fire service should remain a human-centered profession. Technology should support decision-making and performance rather than create additional complexity or replace professional judgment.

Particular concerns included:

- Information overload.
- Task saturation.
- Stress and cognitive limitations.
- Determining how much information an incident commander can effectively process.
- Ensuring the right information is available at the right time.
- Maintaining redundancy when technology fails.
- Avoiding overreliance on automated systems.

The principle expressed throughout the discussion was that technology should **enhance the human capability of the fire service rather than attempt to replace it**.

3. Training for Technology

Technology is increasingly integrated into training through tablets, applications, simulations, and other digital platforms. Participants supported these tools while emphasizing that technology should augment rather than replace practical experience and hands-on training. Additionally, The National Fire Academy (NFA) has a role in preparing for operational concerns specific to technology.

Training should:

- Meet firefighters where they are technologically.
- Use technology to reinforce learning and accessibility.
- Remain competency-based.
- Incorporate practical and hands-on experience.
- Teach personnel how to evaluate and interpret information produced by technology.
- Prepare officers and incident commanders to manage technology-related information during stressful operations.

Participants also emphasized the importance of distinguishing between training that is attractive or engaging and training that actually produces improved performance.

4. Data as a National Fire Service Asset

The Technology discussion repeatedly intersected with data. Participants emphasized that data is more than analysis; users need to understand **what the data represents, its limitations, and how it should influence decisions**.

The National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS) was identified as an important opportunity to develop a national fire service data ecosystem. Participants emphasized that NERIS should ultimately provide practical value to departments by allowing them to better understand their own operations, identify trends, and compare their communities with similar departments. USFA should work to increase the number of departments that contribute to NERIS.

Recommendations for USFA – Technology

USFA could:

1. Develop a **National Fire Service Technology Strategy and Implementation Framework** addressing technology evaluation, procurement, implementation, interoperability, cybersecurity, training, lifecycle management, and retirement.
2. Expand National Fire Academy capabilities in **technology and data literacy**.
3. Establish a national technical assistance capability to help departments evaluate and implement technology.
4. Provide particular assistance to small and volunteer departments that may lack internal technology expertise.
5. Develop guidance for **human-centered technology adoption**, including redundancy, human factors, and operational limitations.
6. Strengthen NERIS as a tool that provides actionable information back to fire departments.

7. Promote research and evaluation that identifies which technologies demonstrate meaningful operational value.
8. Use prevention, community risk reduction, and firefighter safety as important measures of technology value.

II. WILDFIRE

Overview

The Wildfire breakout group examined the increasing complexity of wildfire risk, particularly in the wildland-urban interface (WUI), and the need for a more coordinated approach to prevention, mitigation, preparedness, evacuation, response, and recovery.

Participants emphasized that wildfire is not solely a fire suppression problem. Effective wildfire risk reduction requires coordinated action involving the fire service, emergency management, law enforcement, government agencies, community organizations, homeowners, insurers, planners, and other partners.

The group also identified a significant challenge in connecting the substantial amount of wildfire information, mapping, guidance, and research that already exists with the people who need to use it.

Key Opportunities and Challenges

1. Public Understanding of Wildfire Risk

Participants identified a need to improve how the public is informed about wildfire risk.

Existing tools can identify wildfire exposure, structure vulnerability, ember zones, and other risk factors, but technical information does not automatically translate into public understanding or action.

Participants identified opportunities to:

- Use data and storytelling together.
- Provide concise and actionable mitigation guidance.
- Improve public understanding of evacuation risk.
- Address misinformation and conflicting information.
- Communicate the benefits of mitigation.
- Reach vulnerable populations.
- Clarify the roles of individuals, communities, and government.
- Engage schools and younger generations.

2. Connecting Existing Resources

The discussion identified a number of existing wildfire resources and guidance products, including evacuation planning guidance, Temporary Fire Refuge Area resources, mapping tools, mitigation resources, and Fire Adapted Communities information.

The challenge is often not the absence of information but **connecting information to the people and organizations that need it**.

Participants suggested that USFA could serve as a national connector by organizing, promoting, and translating existing resources rather than creating duplicative products.

3. Workforce Development and Firefighter Health

Extended wildfire deployments create challenges for firefighter physical and mental health. Participants identified workforce development, recruitment, retention, training, and wellness as important components of wildfire preparedness.

The discussion also highlighted the need to engage younger leaders and volunteers and to consider the changing workforce when developing national training and outreach efforts.

4. Mutual Aid and Coordination

Federal, state, and local coordination was identified as essential to effective wildfire response. Participants identified challenges related to:

- Mutual aid agreements.
- Reimbursement processes.
- Delays in reimbursement.
- Communication and coordination.
- Qualifications and training.
- The administrative burden placed on smaller departments.

Participants emphasized the importance of making federal resources and processes more accessible to departments that may have limited administrative capacity.

5. Mitigation, Codes, Insurance, and Land Use

Participants discussed the relationship among wildfire mitigation, building codes, land-use planning, hazard mapping, insurance, and community development.

Existing tools and standards may provide opportunities to reduce risk, but implementation can be affected by political, economic, and community considerations. Participants emphasized the need for better communication about the economic and life-safety benefits of mitigation.

Recommendations for USFA – Wildfire

USFA could:

1. Develop a **National Wildfire/WUI Training and Education Strategy** that connects existing resources into a coherent framework.
2. Improve dissemination and public awareness of existing USFA wildfire resources.
3. Develop concise, practical wildfire mitigation and evacuation guidance for communities.
4. Improve communication of wildfire risk using data, mapping, and storytelling.

5. Connect wildfire risk information to practical mitigation actions at the household and neighborhood level.
6. Promote Fire Adapted Communities approaches and existing community wildfire planning resources.
7. Improve coordination among federal, state, and local partners.
8. Identify opportunities to simplify or clarify mutual aid and reimbursement information.
9. Incorporate firefighter mental and physical health considerations into wildfire deployment planning and training.
10. Develop outreach strategies that engage younger generations, emerging leaders, volunteers, and non-fire organizations.

III. HEALTH & SAFETY

Overview

The Health & Safety breakout group addressed both firefighter health and operational safety. Discussions focused on physical and mental performance, emergency driving, training, organizational culture, firefighter health practices, technology, and the application of research and data to everyday fire service operations.

Participants emphasized that health and safety are influenced not only by individual behavior but also by **leadership, organizational culture, training, policy, equipment, station design, and the systems in which firefighters operate**.

Key Opportunities and Challenges

1. Training for Performance Under Stress

Participants discussed the importance of preparing firefighters and officers to perform under realistic stressors.

Topics included:

- Compressed scenario timelines.
- Mental and physical performance.
- Auditory exclusion.
- Information processing.
- Situational awareness.
- Decision-making under stress.
- Tactical maturity.
- Task saturation.

Participants reinforced the continuing importance of realistic, hands-on training, including live-fire training where appropriate, while recognizing the value of technology and simulation as training enhancements.

2. Emergency Vehicle Operations and Leadership

Emergency vehicle operations were identified as an important health and safety issue.

The discussion included:

- Seatbelt use.
- Compliance with traffic laws.
- Situational awareness.
- Normalization of deviance.
- Officer credibility.
- Leadership enforcement of safety policies.

Participants emphasized that safety expectations must be reinforced by leadership. Policies are less effective when leaders do not consistently model and enforce them.

3. Generational Change and the Training Environment

Participants discussed changing expectations among newer firefighters, including an increased tendency to ask **"why?"**

Rather than viewing this solely as a generational challenge, participants identified an opportunity to strengthen organizational communication by explaining the rationale behind policies and practices.

Potential approaches include:

- Mentoring.
- Explaining the "why" behind policies.
- Avoiding broad generational labels.
- Adapting training delivery to different learning preferences.
- Using technology where it improves accessibility and engagement.

4. Fire Station Health and Safety

Participants identified opportunities to use research and data to improve the firefighter work environment.

Areas discussed included:

- Contamination reduction.
- Hot, warm, and cold zones.
- Ventilated gear storage.
- Station design.
- Firefighter exposure reduction.
- Health and safety practices in volunteer and career departments.

Participants suggested that stronger research and data could help departments demonstrate the need for investments in these areas.

5. Research and Data as Safety Tools

NIOSH reports and other research were identified as valuable resources for improving communication and training.

The challenge is translating research findings into information that firefighters and officers can readily understand and apply.

The discussion reinforced the principle that **knowing better does not automatically result in doing better**. Implementation requires training, leadership, accountability, organizational culture, and continuous reinforcement.

6. Organizational Culture

Participants emphasized that culture is foundational to safety.

A strong safety culture requires:

- Credible leadership.
- Consistent enforcement.
- Accountability.
- Mentoring.
- Continuous improvement.
- Clear communication.
- Policies that explain not only what firefighters should do, but why it matters.

Recommendations for USFA – Health & Safety

USFA could:

1. Develop training focused on **decision-making and information processing under stress**.
2. Translate NIOSH and other research findings into concise, operationally relevant training products.
3. Strengthen national resources addressing emergency vehicle operations and seatbelt use.
4. Develop leadership resources focused on safety culture, accountability, and policy implementation.
5. Promote mentoring and leadership development for newer firefighters and officers.
6. Develop resources addressing firefighter station health and safety, including contamination control and gear storage.
7. Identify opportunities to use data to demonstrate the value of health and safety investments.
8. Incorporate technology into health and safety training while maintaining hands-on competency development.
9. Develop resources that help departments evaluate whether safety policies are actually being implemented.
10. Promote continuous improvement as an organizational practice rather than a one-time initiative.

IV. CROSS-CUTTING OPPORTUNITIES FOR USFA

Although the breakout groups addressed different subjects, their discussions produced several common recommendations.

1. Move From Information to Implementation

Across Technology, Wildfire, and Health & Safety, participants repeatedly identified an implementation gap.

The fire service often has access to:

- Research.
- Data.
- Training.
- Technology.
- Guidance.
- Standards.
- Best practices.

The challenge is translating those resources into consistent action.

USFA has an opportunity to focus not only on **developing resources**, but also on helping departments understand, implement, evaluate, and sustain them.

2. Make Data Understandable and Actionable

Data should help departments answer practical questions:

- What is happening?
- Why is it happening?
- What does it mean for my community or organization?
- What should we do differently?
- Did the intervention work?

This requires more than data collection. It requires data literacy, analysis, communication, and mechanisms for returning useful information to the field.

3. Connect Existing Resources

The discussions identified a significant opportunity for USFA to serve as a national **connector and translator of existing resources**.

Rather than creating separate products for every issue, USFA could improve the accessibility and usability of existing research, guidance, training, tools, and data.

4. Focus on Implementation at the Department Level

National solutions must ultimately work at the local level.

USFA should consider the differing circumstances of:

- Large metropolitan departments.
- Suburban departments.
- Rural departments.
- Volunteer departments.
- Combination departments.
- State, tribal, and territorial fire organizations.

Solutions should account for differences in staffing, funding, technology, training capacity, and administrative resources.

5. Keep the Human Element at the Center

A consistent message across the breakout groups was that technology, data, research, and policy are tools to improve human performance and community safety.

The effectiveness of these tools ultimately depends on:

People → Training → Leadership → Culture → Implementation → Results

---

V. ACTION OPPORTUNITIES FOR USFA

Based on the themes common to all three breakout groups, the following actions represent opportunities for USFA to build upon the recommendations generated during the Summit:

1. **Develop a national implementation framework** to help departments move from knowledge and available resources to action.
2. **Strengthen NFA capabilities in technology and data literacy**, including NERIS and emerging technology.
3. **Establish a national technology assistance capability** for departments that lack the expertise or resources to evaluate and implement technology.
4. **Strengthen NERIS as a decision-support resource** that provides meaningful value back to fire departments.
5. **Improve research-to-practice translation** by converting research into practical training and operational resources.
6. **Develop a coordinated wildfire/WUI education and training strategy** that connects existing resources.
7. **Improve public communication of risk**, particularly wildfire risk, mitigation, evacuation, and community resilience.
8. **Strengthen firefighter health and safety training**, incorporating research, data, leadership, organizational culture, and practical application.
9. **Promote human-centered technology adoption**, recognizing the limitations of technology and the continuing importance of judgment, experience, leadership, and basic skills.
10. **Prioritize implementation support for smaller and resource-constrained departments**, recognizing that national solutions must be accessible across the full spectrum of the fire service.

Conclusion

The 2026 U.S. Fire Administrator's Summit breakout discussions demonstrated that the fire service is confronting increasingly complex challenges in technology, wildfire, and health and safety. At the same time, participants identified significant opportunities to leverage existing knowledge, research, technology, and data more effectively.

A central theme across all three discussions was the need to **close the gap between knowing and doing**.

USFA is uniquely positioned to help address that gap through its roles in training, public education, technology and research, and data analysis. By connecting existing resources, translating research into practice, improving access to actionable data, supporting responsible technology adoption, and strengthening the capacity of fire departments and communities to implement proven practices, USFA can help turn national knowledge into local action.

The breakout discussions also reinforced that successful implementation will depend on keeping the **human element at the center**. Technology, research, data, and training are most effective when they strengthen the capabilities of firefighters, officers, leaders, and communities.

The opportunity identified by the Summit is therefore not simply to develop more resources. It is to **connect the right resources with the right people, provide the knowledge and tools necessary to use them effectively, and establish mechanisms that turn information into sustained action and measurable improvements in fire and life safety.**

Keynote Address by Chief Kris Blume, Meridian Fire Department

Speech Outline

Opening — The Room and the Moment

- Directs the audience to look at each other; the people in this room will decide what the American fire service becomes
- Frames the summit's close against America's 250th anniversary
- Franklin's Union Fire Company (1736) predated the Declaration by forty years — *"We're older"* than the nation itself
- States the two aims: look back honestly at 250 years, then look forward 250 more

Part One — The Inheritance: Three Lessons from 250 Years

- **Lesson 1: Tragedy wrote our codes**
  - Chicago 1871; Triangle Shirtwaist 1911; Our Lady of the Angels; Coconut Grove; Beverly Hills Supper Club; Station Nightclub
  - The turn: Truman's 1947 Conference on Fire Prevention and Control — fire loss is not fate, it is a national problem
  - *America Burning* (1973) → U.S. Fire Administration, National Fire Academy, prevention elevated to the mission
  - Insists the work succeeded: deaths down, smoke alarms near-universal — *"the fire that didn't happen is our greatest achievement"*
- **Lesson 2: We changed constantly without changing who we are**
  - Bucket brigades → hand pumpers → motors → SCBA; fire suppression → EMS, hazmat, technical rescue, disasters
  - Every generation made the same choice: *adapt the tools, keep the oath*
- **Lesson 3: We protected everyone but ourselves**
  - Occupational cancer, cardiac death, PTSD, suicide, contaminated gear — long treated as the cost of doing business
  - The last decade has begun to change that — *begun* is the operative word

Part Two — Five Commitments for the Next 250 Years

- **First: Prevention as identity**
  - A prevention service that also responds, not a response service that also prevents
  - Community risk reduction as the organizing principle — not a program, division, or grant-funded pilot
  - Prevention deserves the same urgency, pride, and funding as the fireground — *"make heroism less necessary"*

- **Second: Master the technology — and it will never master us**
  - Adopt AI, sensors, drones, robotics, and smarter detection; test it and demand evidence
  - Hold the line: no algorithm holds a frightened child's hand; no drone sits with a widow
  - The departments that thrive will be bilingual — fluent in data and fluent in compassion
- **Third: A changing service for a changing planet**
  - Wildland-urban interface, fire years rather than fire seasons, smoke and mutual aid crossing state lines
  - Design communities that can live with fire: hardened homes, defensible space, land-use decisions
  - Claim a permanent seat in every conversation about how and where America builds
- **Fourth: Protect our own with the ferocity we protect the public**
  - Occupational cancer must go the way of the locked factory door
  - Clean gear, clean cabs, decon as doctrine, presumptive coverage without asterisks
  - Behavioral health made normal — seeing a counselor as routine as washing gear
  - The standard: *a career should add meaning to a life without subtracting years from it*
- **Fifth: Make this calling belong to everyone it protects**
  - Recruitment is not a marketing problem; it is a mirror problem
  - Sustaining the volunteer service is not nostalgia — it is national infrastructure
  - The oath doesn't care who takes it; it only asks to be kept

Close — The Unbroken Thread

- In 1776 neighbors ran toward the bell with no gear, training, or protection; everything has changed except that impulse
- The thread runs from Franklin's bucket brigade → Truman's conference → *America Burning* → this summit → the newest probie: **"when you call, we come"**
- The night watch: the town never saw the watchman — the town slept because of him
- **Charge to the audience: make one decision your successors will thank you for**
  - Fund the prevention program; maintain clean gear; start the peer support team; open the recruiting door wider
  - *"Plant the tree whose shade you will never sit in"*
- Benediction: *let them say we saw the future coming, protected our own, and kept the promise*

The Proceedings Report for the 2026 U.S. Fire Administrator's Summit on Fire Prevention and Control was prepared by the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation on behalf of the United States Fire Administration.

Paul Matheis; United States Fire Administrator

Eriks Gabliks; Superintendent of the National Fire Academy

Victor Stagnaro; Chief Executive Officer

Sean Carroll; Incident Commander

Chief Matthew Tobia; Deputy Incident Commander

Samantha Lonnquest; Event Coordinator

Jeanne Tobia; Executive Assistant to the CEO

David Blenman; Operations Manager

Allan Rice; Master of Ceremonies

Dr. Mike Macey; Facilitator

Dr. Danny T. Kistner; Facilitator

Chief Frank Leeb; Facilitator

Chief Kris Blume; Speaker

Chief Jonathan Boyd; Speaker

Captain Joe Flick; Speaker

Erin McGrudder; Speaker

John Morrison; Speaker

Battalion Chief Scott Roseberry; Speaker

Joseph Ten Eyck; Speaker

Jeremy Federer; Scribe

Maria Hernandez; Scribe

Kevin Moran; Scribe

Tim Romaine; Scribe

Clint Smith; Scribe

John Storey; Scribe

Jenni McClelland; Graphic Design

Daryl Levine; Photographer