

WINGSPREAD V

**STATEMENTS OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE
TO THE FIRE SERVICE AND TO THOSE SERVED**



**A WINGSPREAD CONFERENCE REPORT
THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
FIRE CHIEFS FOUNDATION**

WINGSPREAD V

STATEMENTS OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE
TO THE FIRE SERVICE AND TO THOSE SERVED



Hosted by Atlanta Fire Department
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April 2006

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Introduction: Wingspread, the Name

Like many successful conferences that have had a lasting importance to the nation's fire service such as the Williamsburg '70 Conference, the Stonebridge Conference, the Rockville Report, etc., the name often associated with such meetings and their post-conference reports refer to the location where a given conference was held, be it a city or the name of the conference center itself. Such was the case with the original Wingspread Conference.

Named for the Wingspread Conference Center, the original conference was held in February, 1966. Located in Racine, Wisconsin, the Center was designed in 1938 by Frank Lloyd Wright and owned by the Johnson Foundation. Originally a house for the Johnson Wax family, the house was converted into a conference center in 1960, and it has been host to thousands of conferences of national and international significance. The original Wingspread Conference Reports on Fire in America are among the most valued and respected products of the Wingspread facility.

Wingspread II was held at the Wingspread Conference Center in March of 1976. This conference occurred after the publication of *America Burning* in 1973 and the creation of the National Fire Prevention and Control Administration (NFPCA) in 1975. The NFPCA transitioned into the current United States Fire Administration (USFA) and the National Fire Academy.

Wingspread III was held in October of 1986 and was sponsored by The Fire Service Institute at Iowa State University. The conference was co-sponsored by the Johnson Foundation.

Wingspread IV was held in Dothan, Alabama in October of 1996. The report was divided into statements of emerging issues of national importance to the fire service and statements of ongoing significance to the fire service.

Wingspread V was held in Atlanta, Georgia in late March and early April of 2006.

The statements of each Wingspread are summarized at the end of this report.

Statements of National Significance to the Fire Service and to Those Served

- 1. The Fire Problem in the United States** – The fire problem in the United States is a political problem, not a technological problem. It will not be solved without participation in the political process. Fire chiefs and fire service organizations need to more fully participate in the political process on a local, state, regional, and national level.
- 2. Home Fire Safety** – Incidents in residential occupancies account for the majority of lives lost due to fire – both for firefighters and the citizens they serve. These issues require a comprehensive approach in prevention and built-in systems such as home fire sprinklers and smoke detectors. The fire service and elected officials at the local, state, and federal level must embrace the effort to make home fire safety systems the norm.
- 3. Firefighter Safety** – The continuing high levels of duty-related firefighter injuries and deaths are unacceptable. This problem needs to be addressed through a multi-faceted approach. Risks from traumatic and non-traumatic deaths require equal attention. Local, state, and national resources must be brought to bear on this continuing and significant problem.
- 4. Emergency Medical Services** – In many places, the emergency medical system is becoming overwhelmed. The growth in the demand for EMS services is fueled by the impact of changes in the availability of medical insurance, the availability of medical care for the elderly and for children, the deinstitutionalization of those who suffer from mental illnesses, the proliferation of chronic diseases such as asthma, the use of the EMS system as the care system of first and last choice, and other difficulties in accessing the medical system.
- 5. The Volunteer Fire Service** – Fire Departments staffed with volunteers and those that utilize combination staffing (volunteer and career) are facing ever increasing challenges in member recruitment, member retention, and financial resources. The evolving role of the fire service in the community, the makeup of the community, and the needs and concerns of volunteer firefighters all have an impact on the future of the volunteer staffing system. Leaders of departments staffed with volunteers must engage the public and elected officials on the future role of volunteers in delivering emergency services.
- 6. Federal Fire Programs** – The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has been hobbled by its integration into the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The United States Fire Administration and its National Fire Academy face marginalization unless the required financial resources to enhance their effectiveness and assure their survival are provided. The resident and

outreach programs need to be revitalized, the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) needs a major overhaul to improve participation, and funding for fire-related research programs needs to be provided in order for these programs to remain an important resource for the fire service. Without this support, we will never realize the goals set in the original *America Burning* document.

- 7. The Customer** – The needs of the customer continue to evolve. The fire service must be proactive in providing services that meet increasing customer demands and package those services so that they are understandable and accessible to the customer. The changing demographics of America, including the aging of the baby boomers and changes in immigration, are already placing an extraordinary demand on the delivery of fire department services.
- 8. Professional Development** – Significant strides have been made in fire service professional development, but improvement is still needed. The fire service needs to continue to evolve as a profession as have other governmental entities that operate in the environments where we work as well as other governmental organizations and the private sector. These skills are as important in the volunteer and combination fire services as they are in the career fire service.
- 9. Collective Bargaining** – Wingspread participants and their organizations unanimously support the right of every firefighter and emergency medical response employee to be under a collective bargaining agreement that addresses their salaries, benefits, and working conditions.
- 10. The Fire Chief** – It is the responsibility of the Fire Chief to be the community's chief advocate for fire safety. The waning availability of civil service protections for career fire chiefs makes this advocacy role more difficult. The executive skill set of the fire chief will to a large part define the success of the organization.
- 11. Interoperability** – The ability of the emergency response system to react to a major disaster, whether man-made or natural, depends on the day-to-day working relationships between responders that are established before the disaster. Systems such as communications, command, and equipment compatibility that make day-to-day responses more efficient will make responses to disasters more effective. Homeland security efforts and funding priorities must recognize this reality.
- 12. Fire Service Unity** – The effectiveness of the nation's fire service on the national level depends on cooperation between and among the major fire organizations. Fire service organizational leaders must commit to working together for the common good, rather than competing for individual interests. Our lack of a unified voice has been a major stumbling block to political support and funding on the Federal level.

- 13. Regionalization** – Trends toward interagency cooperation, automatic mutual aid, and regionalization have been observed in the volunteer, combination, and career fire service and have served as a model for other interagency coordination work. These efforts tend to bring better service to the customer, more effective fire service operations, and the opportunity to reduce overall costs.
- 14. Fire Prevention and Public Fire Education** – All aspects of fire prevention have become core components of effective fire service delivery. All fire departments, regardless of size, should value and strive to provide the full range of fire prevention and life safety education services. Increasingly, fire departments are being expected to take on all-hazard / all-risk messaging in addition to traditional fire safety efforts.
- 15. Labor and Management** – Fire service labor and management leaders must work together on the local, state, and national level to advance fire safety causes. The past decade has shown many examples of the positive impacts that can be achieved through cooperative efforts. This trend needs to continue and be improved and expanded.
- 16. Deployment Standards** – The adoption and promulgation of minimum fire service deployment standards has provided a basis to evaluate fire protection and emergency medical services. The application of these standards assists in the evaluation of fire protection services. The enhancement of these standards and the development of additional standards for fire service programs will enhance the professional standing of the fire services and improve the services they provide to their communities.
- 17. Firefighter Credentials** – A standardized and simple system for providing credentials for qualified firefighters and fire officers is needed to ensure that qualified people are enlisted to support major emergency operations and regional emergencies.
- 18. Sustainable Revenue** – Traditional government sources of revenue are being strained. Due to increasing demands on public finances on the local level, the percentage of revenue devoted to public safety services is declining. Model dependable revenue streams for the provision of fire services need to be developed.
- 19. Fire Fighting Communities** – The wildland and structural fire fighting communities need to continue their cross exchange of experiences, training, resources and capabilities.
- 20. The Impact of Technology** – Technological advances in society often bring unintended consequences to the fire service. Changes in the way that energy is generated and utilized in the future will surely bring increased challenges and potential opportunities to the fire service.

The Fire Problem in the United States

The fire problem in the United States is a political problem, not a technological problem. It will not be solved without participation in the political process. Fire chiefs and fire service organizations need to more fully participate in the political process on a local, state, regional, and national level.

Although the number of fires to which the American fire service has responded has been cut in half since 1977, the United States still has one of the highest fire rates in the world. Along with the high rate of fires come high numbers of civilian fire deaths and injuries and firefighter deaths and injuries. The numbers – more than 3,600 civilian deaths and 17,000 injuries and more than 100 firefighter deaths and 80,000 injuries annually – are both alarming and unacceptable.

Fire chiefs and fire service leaders must join together to determine the course of action to deal effectively with the problem, and then make the case nationally and locally to provide the legislation to make buildings safe from fire. Local fire protection needs may vary widely, but one thing is consistent across the entire country. That is the need to use available technology to prevent fires in homes. Not until the fire service speaks together will political leaders listen to the case being made to solve the fire problem.

Home Fire Safety

Incidents in residential occupancies account for the majority of lives lost due to fire – both for firefighters and the citizens they serve. These issues require a comprehensive approach in prevention and built-in systems such as home fire sprinklers and smoke detectors. The fire service and elected officials at the local, state, and federal level must embrace the effort to make home fire safety systems the norm.

Fire and burn injuries are the third leading cause of home injury and death in the U.S. At greatest risk are young children, older adults, and people with disabilities. Prevention and protection education should remain a priority, but education is only one component of comprehensive home fire safety. More needs to be done to protect these high-risk populations, including greater emphasis on the role of parents and caregivers.

A total system of safety should be the goal for every home in every community. While smoke alarms have been shown to be critical as a first line of defense against home fires, these powerful tools have important limitations. Research indicates many children and older adults are not awakened by the sound of a conventional smoke alarm. In fact, statistics show that nearly one in every three fire fatalities occurs in a home with a WORKING smoke alarm. There also remains a significant percentage of homes that have no smoke alarms at all. It is imperative that people understand the need for smoke detection and employ its use in their homes. The technology to interconnect smoke alarms – whether through wireless or hardwiring power – is an important advancement with great potential to reduce fire deaths by providing extra time to escape.

The ultimate protection from a home fire is an automatic fire sprinkler system. This technology has been proven for well over a century, yet it remains underutilized in homes. Fire sprinklers are the best hope for any marked reduction in the residential fire problem. Fire safety advocates must unite in support of increased use of modern, life-saving technologies. Combined with prevention education and home escape drills, these can work together to dramatically increase the safety of homes for generations to come.



Firefighter Safety

The continuing high levels of duty-related firefighter injuries and deaths are unacceptable. This problem needs to be addressed through a multi-faceted approach. Risks from traumatic and non-traumatic deaths require equal attention. Local, state, and national resources must be brought to bear on this continuing and significant problem.

The number of firefighter line of duty deaths (averaging 105 annually) has remained constant for over a decade. Cardiac problems remain the number one killer. One trend of note is that firefighters are almost as likely to be killed responding to incidents as they are to be killed at an incident.

Risk management principles need to be applied to every aspect of firefighter safety. Every fire department should embrace The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation's sixteen life safety initiatives to reduce firefighter injuries and fatalities. Governing bodies and the general public must be educated about the realistic service delivery capabilities of each fire department and its correlation to firefighter safety.

Accountability for firefighter safety is practically non-existent. There are no rewards for good safety practices and records. The lack of penalties for poor safety practices and records appear to be acceptable.

NIOSH has been investigating firefighter fatalities since 1998. Their recommendations to prevent future similar occurrences are repeated over and over. The fire service knows all the causes. There are no new ways being discovered that kill firefighters. The problems and solutions have been identified. Enacting the solutions remains problematic.

The resources for annual firefighter medical examinations must be made available.



Emergency Medical Services

In many places, the emergency medical system is becoming overwhelmed. The growth in the demand for EMS services is fueled by the impact of changes in the availability of medical insurance, the availability of medical care for the elderly and for children, the deinstitutionalization of those who suffer from mental illnesses, the proliferation of chronic diseases such as asthma, the use of the EMS system as the care system of first and last choice, and other difficulties in accessing the medical system.

Prehospital care is essential and lifesaving, when used as intended. In many places, however, it is the only reliable and timely care available to large numbers of people. Abuse is inevitable, unless and until fire service managers closely monitor the system and divert users to the appropriate resources for proper care. Locally, fire service managers must work with hospitals and medical service providers to ensure that customer needs are met by the most effective and efficient provider. Use of paramedics to provide all care is fraught with difficulty and unfair to both providers and those with health needs.

On the national level, the American fire service must participate fully in the national conversation on health care, to ensure that prehospital care is properly addressed. Until the national crisis in health care provision is solved, local emergency medical systems will be used inappropriately and too often by those who do not know or have access to care that is right for their conditions.



The Volunteer Fire Service

Fire Departments staffed with volunteers and those that utilize combination staffing (volunteer and career) are facing ever increasing challenges in member recruitment, member retention, and financial resources. The evolving role of the fire service in the community, the makeup of the community, and the needs and

concerns of volunteer firefighters all have an impact on the future of the volunteer staffing system. Leaders of departments staffed with volunteers must engage the public and elected officials on the future role of volunteers in delivering emergency services.

In many places, there is a shrinking pool of eligible and qualified candidates for volunteer fire departments. Local public policy officials must understand the value of volunteer services and the issues surrounding recruitment and retention of volunteers. To provide effective services at reasonable cost, public officials must be willing to pay for benefits that will attract qualified candidates. Officials must be willing to support fire service managers in developing effective marketing, recruitment, and retention strategies and in developing service delivery roles for volunteer personnel that meet appropriate standards.



Federal Fire Programs

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has been hobbled by its integration into the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The United States Fire Administration and its National Fire Academy face marginalization unless the required financial resources to enhance their effectiveness and assure their survival are provided. The resident and outreach programs need to be revitalized, the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) needs a major overhaul to improve participation, and funding for fire-related research programs needs to be provided in order for these programs to remain an important resource for the fire service. Without this support, we will never realize the goals set in the original *America Burning* document.

The American fire service must push the Department of Homeland Security to recognize that prevention of and response to terrorism events is only a small part of true security. Effective security must include response to day-to-day emergencies as well as natural and accidental events of large magnitude. In fact, it is only through providing effective response on a daily basis that fire and EMS personnel will have the experience and knowledge to respond to a large-scale terrorism event. Since local providers are always the first on any emergency scene, the programs of the United States Fire Administration and the National Fire Academy are essential to national security and must be adequately funded and supported.



The Customer

The needs of the customer continue to evolve. The fire service must be proactive in providing services that meet increasing customer demands and package those services so that they are understandable and accessible to the customer. The changing demographics of America, including the aging of the baby boomers and changes in immigration, are already placing an extraordinary demand on the delivery of fire department services.

Being proactive in providing services includes recruitment of firefighters with diverse backgrounds who can give insight into the needs of their communities. The fire service must realize that it cannot be all things to all people; fire executives must reach out to other agencies and create relationships so that firefighters on the street know when and how to refer people to appropriate services to meet the needs they find as they respond to calls. In addition to medical services, these will include social service agencies, homeless shelters, law enforcement, school services, and others. Firefighters also need flexibility to alter response protocols as necessary to provide emergency services effectively and in a timely manner.



Professional Development

Significant strides have been made in fire service professional development, but improvement is still needed. The fire service needs to continue to evolve as a profession as have other governmental entities that operate in the environments where we work as well as other governmental organizations and the private sector. These skills are as important in the volunteer and combination fire services as they are in the career fire service.

Universal acceptance and use of a credentialing system will help in professional development, but the availability of degree programs in fire science and fire department management are necessary to reach the level of competence needed for firefighters and fire executives. Each state should have at least one two-year degree program available in the community college system, to provide basic knowledge and skills. Bachelor degree programs should also be available to firefighters who wish to pursue them, at reasonable cost.

Collective Bargaining

Wingspread participants and their organizations unanimously support the right of every firefighter and emergency medical response employee to be under a collective bargaining agreement that addresses their salaries, benefits, and working conditions.

Firefighters are in a unique position as employees in the communities that they serve. In many cases, they are prohibited from striking. In return for this concession to the vital work they perform, firefighters need to have a means to negotiate their working conditions. Collective bargaining, where both labor and management have voices in the process provides a fair vehicle for such negotiations.

The Fire Chief

It is the responsibility of the fire chief to be the community's chief advocate for fire safety, life safety, and related issues. This responsibility sometimes places the chief at odds with special interest groups or elected officials, who may hold opposing points of view on certain issues. Examples of these conflicts include building code changes, life safety code interpretations, and residential sprinkler requirements. Such conflicts can place the fire chief in a precarious position politically, thus threatening his or her employment.

The waning availability of civil service protections for career fire chiefs makes this advocacy role more difficult. Because of the critical role of advocacy, the fire chief's employment should be accompanied by appropriate safeguards and job security protections. Without such safeguards, the ethics of the position could be compromised by unscrupulous parties for personal gain. To guard against this possibility, chief fire executives should be afforded either civil service protection or personal services contracts. In either case, language should be included to ensure that the chief can only be terminated for cause and that the position shall not be leveraged for political gain by any person, special interest group, or elected official.

The executive skill set of the fire chief will to a large part define the success of the organization.

Interoperability

The ability of the emergency response system to react to a major disaster, whether man-made or natural, depends on the day-to-day working relationships between responders that are established before the disaster. Systems such as communications, command, and equipment compatibility that make day-to-day responses more efficient will make responses to disasters more effective. Homeland security efforts and funding priorities must recognize this reality.

To this end, chief fire executives are responsible for creating networking opportunities, starting at their level, to establish effective working relationships. Operational personnel at all levels must learn how to interact and interface efficiently with their peers throughout an area. It is vitally important to have compatible radio systems, so that all departments can talk to each other without delays or impediments. State-level fire and emergency management officials have an important role to ensure that multi-agency response protocols are established and communicated to all departments.

Fire Service Unity

The effectiveness of the nation's fire service on the national level depends on cooperation between and among the major fire organizations. Fire service organizational leaders must commit to working together for the common good, rather than competing for individual interests. Our lack of a unified voice has been a major stumbling block to political support and funding on the Federal level.

Fire chiefs and fire service organizations must come to agreement on the proper response to solve the American fire problem; only then can they speak with one voice that political leaders can hear and act upon.

Regionalization

Trends toward interagency cooperation, automatic mutual aid, and regionalization have been observed in the volunteer, combination, and career fire service and have served as a model for other interagency coordination work. These efforts tend to bring better service to the customer, more effective fire service operations, and the opportunity to reduce overall costs.

From the very early days of the fire service, fire departments experienced a unique situation in which there was fierce competition over territory and simultaneously cooperation when large fires occurred. Fire agencies have often been in conflict over boundaries and borders and yet simultaneously have participated in mutual aid and exercise cooperative effort when they were under stress.

The economics of providing a fire agency today has significantly increased the level of cooperation. Funding sources are often not adequate to support small organizations. Concurrently, this has created an environment in which fire agencies have given consideration to working together to overcome both operational and financial limitations by engaging a range of behaviors from simple cooperation up to and including consolidation.

The regionalization of fire and emergency services is not coming about because of a mandate but rather because of a reality that there is an economy of scale to be achieved that improves a department's sustainability. By working together there must be a stable and sustainable infrastructure to provide a modern firefighting agency. The regionalization of the American fire service has its limitations also. Not unlike the British fire service after World War II there is a growing recognition that fire organizations can be too large to be sensitive to local conditions. The challenge facing the fire officer of the future is how to balance the two factors of economy and effectiveness.

Fire Prevention and Public Fire Education

All aspects of fire prevention have become core components of effective fire service delivery. All fire departments, regardless of size, should value and strive to provide the full range of fire prevention and life safety education services. Increasingly, fire departments are being expected to take on all-hazard / all-risk messaging in addition to traditional fire safety efforts.

Fire prevention and public education should be a required task for all personnel, not just inspectors and educators. Educators should provide program materials for all members to use; firefighters must also be able to address fire prevention issues in any situation and identify and refer fire code violations. For example, if firefighters on an emergency medical call notice that a home does not have a working smoke detector, they should have a detector and the tools to install it, once the medical emergency has been dealt with.

Firefighters should welcome opportunities to engage with the people they serve in non-emergency situations, and use such opportunities to communicate fire prevention and safety messages.



Labor and Management

Fire service labor and management leaders must work together on the local, state, and national level to advance fire safety causes. The past decade has shown many examples of the positive impacts that can be achieved through cooperative efforts. This trend needs to continue and be improved and expanded.

Rather than being at odds in every situation, progressive fire service labor and management leaders realize that they can accomplish a lot more for their customers and organizational members cooperatively. Labor representatives are permitted to do things, such as supporting candidates for public office, that are forbidden for most fire service managers. Fire service managers have organizational capabilities, in most cases, that exceed the local capabilities of labor organizations. Working together, both sides of the table can utilize their strengths.



Deployment Standards

The adoption and promulgation of minimum fire service deployment standards has provided a basis to evaluate fire protection and emergency medical services. The application of these standards assists in the evaluation of fire protection services. The enhancement of these standards and the development of additional standards for fire service programs will enhance the professional standing of the fire services and improve the services they provide to their communities.

For many decades, fire chiefs and elected officials depended on reports from the Insurance Services Office to evaluate fire protection services. ISO reports did not evaluate actual services provided; they only looked at capabilities, and then from the very narrow viewpoint of insurance risk management. Minimum deployment standards are the first attempt to define what competent fire service delivery looks like, so that anyone may hold a local fire department accountable for its operations.

Deployment standards provide a useful start in determining the effectiveness of fire service response. They provide a useful light on fire service operations, by which fire chiefs, elected officials, and customers can judge how well or poorly local fire departments provide services. Properly organized, deployment statistics allow chiefs and elected officials to identify problems and suggest solutions.

As they now stand, the current deployment standards should be regarded as the first step in the process of establishing evaluations for all facets of fire department service delivery. New technologies will enable fire agencies to collect relevant data on operations and thus create new criteria for evaluation. By sharing their experiences, fire departments can assist in the establishment of better deployment standards and thus in enhancing professionalism in the fire service as a whole.



Firefighter Credentials

A standardized and simple system for providing credentials for qualified firefighters and fire officers is needed to ensure that qualified people are enlisted to support major emergency operations and regional emergencies.

Each year, fire departments and emergency response agencies throughout the country are overwhelmed by the demands of natural or man-made disasters. While it is understood that all emergencies start as local events, many will escalate beyond the capabilities of a local response agency, thus requiring the response of outside agencies (state, federal, etc.) and/or individuals with specific expertise. To ensure these resources (individual or otherwise) are properly managed (and accounted for), it is recommended that a nationally accepted credentialing system be established for first responders. Such a system would provide local level managers (incident commanders) with vital information detailing the qualifications and capabilities of individual responders, regardless of the state or agency represented.

Sustainable Revenue

Traditional government sources of revenue are being strained. Due to increasing demands on public finances on the local level, the percentage of revenue devoted to public safety services is declining. Model dependable revenue streams for the provision of fire services need to be developed.

The fire service must use its deployment statistics to show governing bodies the impact of the services being provided. For emergency services to be consistent and competent, fire departments must not have to expend their resources looking for revenues to continue operations. Nor should fire departments have to compete with other municipal services for operational funds. Dedicated taxes for fire protection and emergency services need to be established.

Fire Fighting Communities

The wildland and structural fire fighting communities need to continue their cross exchange of experiences, training, resources and capabilities.

The two communities have more in common than they have differences. Furthermore, each community has much to gain by the creation of synergy when working together. Fire suppression operations on both sides will be more effective when wildland and structural firefighters know and understand how and why the others work. To ensure that the two communities work harmoniously during large emergencies, their chiefs should create opportunities for working together on a daily basis.

The Impact of Technology

Technological advances in society often bring unintended consequences to the fire service. Changes in the way that energy is generated and utilized in the future will surely bring increased challenges and potential opportunities to the fire service.

The increased use of technology by the fire service over the past ten years is astounding; mobile data computers, global positioning systems, digital mapping, thermal imaging cameras, heads-up displays, electronic sensors, instrumentation and smart buildings are just some of the examples of the expanded use of technology by the fire service. An unlimited source of power for these devices thus far continues to be elusive, but there is interesting work continuing in that area. What will the next five to ten years bring as opportunities for the fire service? Simply close your eyes and keep your mind wide open.

Along with these opportunities, there will be new challenges and demands placed upon the fire service. Electronics, automation, and safety systems will bring new hazards to the emergency environment. Green buildings and vehicles will necessitate additional training and understanding of potential hazards. One only has to look at the complexities and idiosyncrasies in alternative fuel and energy vehicles to begin to see the complex challenges we will face. Knowledge, training and operational safety will be a key to keeping our people safe and utilizing technology to our benefit.

Wingspread I, 1966

Statements of National Significance

1. Unprecedented demands are being imposed in the fire service by rapid social and technological change.
2. The public is complacent toward the rising trend of life and property loss by the fire service.
3. There is a serious lack of communication between the public and the fire service.
4. Behavior patterns of the public have a direct influence on the fire problem.
5. The insurance interest has exerted a strong influence on the organization of the fire service. This dominance seems to be waning. The fire service must provide the leadership in establishing realistic criteria for determining proper levels of fire protection.
6. Professional status begins with education.
7. The scope, degree, and depth of the educational requirements for the efficient functioning of the fire service must be examined.
8. Increased mobility at the executive level of the fire service will be important to the achievement of professional status.
9. The career development of the fire executive must be systematic and deliberate.
10. Governing bodies and municipal administrators generally do not recognize the need for executive development of the fire officer.
11. Fire service labor and management, municipal officers and administrators must join together if professionalism is to become a reality.
12. The traditional concept that fire protection is strictly a responsibility of the local governments must be reexamined.

Wingspread II, 1976

Statements of National Significance

1. New criteria is needed to measure the impact of fire on the national economy and public welfare.
2. Productivity in the fire service is difficult to measure reliably.
3. The state levels of government may have to make a renewed commitment in dealing with the fire problem.
4. The fire service should approach the concept of regionalization without bias.
5. There is a need for a better liaison between the fire service and those who build or design buildings.
6. A means of deliberate and systematic development of all fire service personnel through the executive level is still needed.
7. The firefighter has been suppressed by narrow education and confirming experiences on the job.
8. The problem of arson in the United States has increased to the point where it should be considered a matter of major importance.
9. Fire departments should thoroughly analyze new demands being placed upon them before accepting new responsibilities.
10. It appears that residential smoke detectors hold the most practical potential at this time for savings. The fire service should take leadership in encouraging their widespread use and proper maintenance.
11. Traditional fire services should assume more responsibility and leadership in fire loss management.

Wingspread III, 1986

Statements of National Significance

1. Society in general appears unwilling to take full advantage of the knowledge and technology which has proven effective in mitigating the fire problem.
2. Public fire safety education will not achieve its potential until it is organized in a systematic manner based on human behavior.
3. Professional development in the fire service has made significant strides, but improvement is still needed.
4. Decision makers in local government need better criteria to determine an adequate level of cost-effective fire protection.
5. The fire service should review the effectiveness of the federal fire programs of the U.S. Fire Administration and National Fire Academy to determine if they are of continued benefit in reducing the fire problem.
6. The traditional role of fire departments is changing.
7. Analyzing America's fire problem requires a more effective system of data collection.
8. The misuse of alcohol and controlled substances is a serious fire service problem.
9. There is a need for increased emphasis on firefighter health and safety.
10. Personnel management in the fire service is becoming increasingly more complex.

Wingspread IV, 1996

Emerging Issues of National Importance

1. **Customer service:** The fire service must broaden its focus from the traditional emphasis on suppression to a focus on discovering and meeting the needs of its customers.
2. **Managed care:** Managed care may have the potential to reduce or control health care costs. It also will have a profound impact on the delivery and quality of emergency medical services.
3. **Competition and marketing:** In order to survive, the fire service must market itself and the services it provides, demonstrating to its customers the necessity and value of what it does.
4. **Service delivery:** The fire service must have a universally applicable standard which defines the functional organization, resources in terms of service objectives (types and level of service), operation, deployment, and evaluation of public fire protection and emergency medical services.
5. **Wellness:** The fire service must develop holistic wellness programs to ensure that firefighters are physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy and that they receive the support they need to remain healthy.
6. **Political realities:** Fire service organizations operate in local political arenas. Good labor/management and customer relations are crucial to ensuring that fire departments have maximum impact on decisions that affect their future.

Ongoing Issues of National Importance

7. Leadership: To move more successfully into the future, the fire service needs leaders capable of developing and managing their organizations in dramatically changed environments.
8. Prevention and public education: The fire service must continue to expand the resources allocated to prevention and health and safety education activities.
9. Training and education: Fire service managers must increase their professional standing in order to remain credible to community policy makers and the public. This professionalism should be grounded firmly in an integrated system of nationally recognized and/or certified education and training.
10. Fire and life safety systems: The fire service must support adoption of codes and standards that mandate the use of detection, alarm, and automatic fire sprinklers, with a special focus on residential properties.
11. Strategic partnerships: The fire service must reach out to others to expand the circle of support to assure reaching the goals of public fire protection and other support activities.
12. Data: To successfully measure service delivery and achievement of goals, the fire service must have relevant data and should support and participate in the revised National Fire Incident Reporting System. Likewise, NFIRS should provide the local fire service relevant analysis of data collected.
13. Environmental issues: The fire service must comply with the same federal, state, and local ordinances that apply to general industry and which regulate response to and mitigation of incidents, plus personnel safety, and training activities relating to the environment.

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