

**VIRGINIA FIRE SERVICES BOARD**  
**Training and Education Committee**  
**Thursday, February 21, 2019**  
**12PM**

A meeting of the Virginia Fire Services Board Training and Education Committee was held in Virginia Beach in conjunction with the annual Fire and Rescue Conference hosted by the Virginia Fire Chiefs' Association at 12pm. Dr. James Calvert, chaired the meeting.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

James Calvert, Chair - Industry (SARA Title III & OSHA)  
Jeff Bailey, Virginia Chapter of the International Society of Fire Service Instructors  
Walter Bailey –Virginia State Firefighter’s Association  
James Stokely –Virginia Municipal League  
James Poindexter, VA Professional Firefighters Association

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT**

H. Lee Day – Virginia Fire Services Council

**AGENCY MEMBERS PRESENT**

|                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Brook Pittinger | Mohamed Abbamin |
| Jeff Liebold    | Garrett Dyer    |
| Brook Pittinger | Briant Atkins   |
|                 | John Caussin    |

**GUESTS PRESENT**

|                  |                |                    |
|------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Jim Forgo        | Greg Hunter    | Jerome I. Williams |
| Daniel Gray      | Joe Bailey     | Patrick Meeks      |
| Matthew Duckwitz | Larry Gwaltney | Marc Davidson      |
| Aron Corwin      |                |                    |

**CHANGES IN THE AGENDA**

N/A

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments made.

**COMMENTS FROM THE COMMITTEE CHAIR**

James Calvert thanked everyone for their attendance.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

N/A

**NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Train-the-Trainer Pre-Test

- b. VDFP Instructor Class Graduates
- c. NFA Attendance
- d. Computer Program Update
- e. Live Fire Training Certification Class Update/transition from the 1403 Compliance Officer curriculum
- f. Firefighter I Curriculum Update
- g. Fire Officer Exams Update
- h. Fire Department Rosters
- i. Spreadsheet

### **Topic: Train-the-Trainer Pre-Test**

**Motions:** Accept the VDFP Train-the-Trainer Pre-test policy inclusive of all requirements with the addition of the textbook that is required by the textbook (manual) that will be used for the class/program that the person is going to be instructing.

**Topic Discussion:** Training and Education Committee Chair, Dr. Jimmy Calvert proposed the following;

- **Train-the-Trainer Pre-Test** – There seems to still be some confusion from stakeholders in regards to the train-the-trainer passing score (scores between instructor vs. regular student). The current language the stakeholders are aware of is as follows; pass with a minimum score of 75%, student will be eligible for a re-test after waiting a minimum of ten (10) calendar days from the date of re-test notification. If a student does not successfully score a minimum of 75% on the second attempt, the student will have to wait for another Train-the-Trainer for Re-testing. Dr. Calvert expressed that there seems to be a focus on the ability of a Trainer to **take a test** and not so much on their ability to **deliver** the content.
  - Dr. Calvert indicated that he has researched different programs. The National Fire Academy (NFA)-specific Standard Operating Procedures Series 500 - Instructor Recruitment/Training/Evaluation/Retention was the most relevant program to our discussion. NFA seems to focus more on the instructor observation process to assess and maintain the quality of instruction and delivery (NFA SOP 500.3, September 2018).

**Background:** The issue was discussed at length during the summer of 2018. The intent was to ensure an instructor's competency is beyond satisfactory so students are getting the best return on investment. At that time, there was a consensus that sought the following; "VDFP to effectively communicate to stakeholders that programs for non-instructors require 70% passing while Instructor Train-the-Trainer – Pre-Tests

require 75%.” In regards to VDFP ensuring the public was aware of this, it added the wording above to relevant administrative guidelines.

**Caussin:** Chief John Caussin, Training and Operations Chief indicated that the Agency could fix some of the anxiety by ensuring the public is aware of the expectation. More importantly, the Agency will be integrating a Learning Management System (LMS). The LMS will enable VDFP to access performance matrix which will exhibit both an instructor’s ability to teach and the passing rate for students.

**Vote:** Unanimous

**Motion Action:** Motion Carries

### **Topic: VDFP Instructor Class Graduates**

**Motions:** N/A

**Topic Discussion:** VDFP Instructor Class Graduates Dr. Calvert inquired about the following; if there was a method to produce the number of VDFP Instructor Class graduates for the same period (2017 & 2018). Additionally, he inquired about the pass/fail rate of the Instructor Students related to their inability to successfully pass the presentation part of the class requirement.

**Caussin:** Caussin indicated that Dave Jolly, Quality Assurance Chief, Briant Atkins, Chief Safety Officer and himself collaborated to find the pass/fail rate. However, based on their assessment - the data is not where it needs to be.

**Pittinger:** Deputy Brook Pittinger cited that Agency would soon have a Learning Management System (LMS), which will help resolve all obstacles currently faced by DFP. Deputy Pittinger added that the LMS has user access, which enables everyone relevant to access data, including a board member. Director Mike Reilly further indicated that this is the first cloud-based system in the Commonwealth. The amount of data that will be stored and is accessible will be instrumental.

**Vote:** N/A

**Motion Action:** N/A

### **Topic: NFA Attendance**

**Motion:** N/A

**Topic Discussion:** Dr. Calvert inquired about the amount of Virginia residents that attended the most recent National Fire Academy (NFA) State Weekend. According to Dr. Calvert, during the opening session of the last NFA State Weekend - Tennessee Department of Fire Programs announced that they would not be participating in the future. This decision was a surprise to the Tennessee Attendees and some of the NFA

staff present. Dr. Calvert asked what the DFP and VFSB can do to ensure NFA attendance grows. Participation from Virginia is valuable.

**Caussin:** Caussin indicated that based on DFP records; there were about 60 attendees from Virginia. He added that there is value to collaborating with states close to Virginia.

**Calvert:** Dr. Calvert recommended for fire programs to take an active role in NFA.

**Reilly:** Chief Reilly added that he believes the Agency's participation is beneficial.

**Lastly, Dr.** Calvert brought up NDPC, a Department of Homeland Security/FEMA training that VDFP should pursue. NDPC is sponsored through the DHS/FEMA National Preparedness Directorate. Calvert advised that NDPC is the principle means through which the Directorate identifies, develops, tests, and delivers training to state and local emergency responders.

**Vote:** N/A

**Motion Action:** N/A

#### **Topic: Computer Program Update**

**Motion:** N/A

**Topic Discussion:** Dr. Calvert inquired about the status of the computer program. Deputy Pittinger advised committee members that VDFP just hired a new IT Manager who is already working to ensure the records management and learning management system are effectively implemented.

**Vote:** N/A

**Motion Action:** N/A

#### **Topic: Live Fire Training Certification Class Update/transition from the 1403 Compliance Officer curriculum**

**Motion:** N/A

**Topic Discussion:** According to Dr. Calvert, based on his collective observations – he hypothesized that there was a causal relationship between the live fire facility heat related damages and the lack of NFPA 1403 Compliance Oversight. The lack of NFPA 1403 compliance results in increased damages. Dr. Calver further indicated that he is unclear if the lack of oversight is due to incompetence, or absence of the required NFPA 1403 Compliance by VDFP. He believes there should be a negative correlation between strict compliance with the NFPA 1403 requirements and heat damage to the live fire facilities. Dr. Calvert indicated that the issue is important due to the increased cost of live burn facility heat related damage/repairs that could be related to noncompliance with a training issue.

**Atkins:** Chief Safety Officer, Briant Atkins advised that the previous version of NFPA 1403 was 8 hours while the new version is 16 hours. Atkins indicated that the new version's biggest change is the use of gross soap and water, decontamination, with the use of wipes, at the completion of live fire training evolutions (NFPA 1403) to meet the cancer reduction initiative. In addition, changes in the standard year will be reflected in this program as well as information on the use of acquired structures or use of those by Virginia fire departments even though VDFP does not sanction the use of acquired structures for its training programs.

**Reilly:** Director Reilly cited that the board has been gracious and flexible in providing repair funding – even though the damage is obviously something that could have been prevented if there was an NFPA 1403 compliance in place.

**Vote:** N/A

**Motion Action:** N/A

### **Topic: Firefighter I Curriculum**

**Motion:** N/A

**Topic Discussion:** Dr. Calvert inquired about the pass rates for the modular Firefighter I program and Fire Officer Exams. He would like to get passing rate broken down between volunteer and career departments along with the pass rates for HazMat Ops. Agency staff indicated that similar to the instructor class graduate data, the data is not where it needs to be.

**Vote:** N/A

**Motion Action:** N/A

### **Topic: Fire Officer Exams Update**

**Motion:** N/A

**Topic Discussion:** Dr. Calvert inquired about the Fire Officer Exams – he was advised that DFP has already completed the work.

**Vote:** N/A

**Motion Action:** N/A

### **Topic: Fire Department Rosters**

**Motion:** N/A

**Topic Discussion:** Dr. Calvert inquired about the status of the Commonwealth's Fire Department submissions of current rosters. This information could shed a light on the number of trained firefighters in the commonwealth. The agency advised, the work is complete.

VDFP advised that the new LMS/RMS will allow an ability to isolate demographics. It will prevent from "double dipping" as in an individual being reported as a career in one locality while the other locality reports same individual as volunteer.

Committee Member, Mr. Poindexter inquired about if there is a way to divide registered career relative to volunteers etc. DFP advised such pursuit is feasible and would only require a unique query.

**Vote:** N/A

**Motion Action:** N/A

**Topic: Spreadsheet**

**Motion:** N/A

**Topic Discussion:** Updates pending.

**Vote:** N/A

**Motion Action:** N/A

**ADJOURNMENT**

The Committee adjourned at 2:05pm.

Clerk of the Committee  
Mohamed G. Abbamin

**REVIEWED BY:**

**APPROVED**

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Brook Pittinger  
Deputy Executive Director

Thursday, February 21, 2019

Date