



# 2016 Annual Report



## FIRE & EMS MEMORIAL SERVICE

The 2016 Fire & Emergency Medical Services Memorial Service was held on Saturday, June 4 in Richmond, VA. Six individuals who were recognized by the Virginia Line of Duty Act in 2015 were honored for their bravery and dedicated public service. The 2017 service will be held on Saturday, June 3.



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## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE AND DEPUTY DIRECTORS



Melvin Carter, Executive Director



Brook Pittinger, Deputy Director

As we enter our third year as the Executive & Deputy Directors for the Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP), we would like to begin by thanking you, the fire services and our customers, for the successes we have achieved over the past three years. Our sincerest gratitude and thanks are extended to those that have been dedicated to helping us develop the new VDFP and making our training and education system for Virginia's fire services one of which we can all be proud.

Since its inception, the agency has diligently served the needs of Virginia's fire services, but in order to remain relevant we must ensure the services we offer support the needs of today's fire service while preparing for those emerging trends that will impact the core mission of Virginia's fire service community. As such, we are proud of the changes and progress the agency has made thus far. And, we are equally excited about our strategic direction and look forward to greater collaboration with our customers as we move forward as one fire service.

Through collaboration and listening to stakeholder input from students, instructors and fire service organizations throughout the Commonwealth, we have addressed legacy concerns while incorporating stakeholder recommendations for improvement. Our main focus has and always will be student success and professional development. We believe this is demonstrated in our current and future initiatives. Some of our key initiatives are listed below.

- Created a New Records Management System to replace our outdated existing records management system.
- Reorganized the agency to provide more efficient utilization of personnel and resources.
- Conducted a complete review of the agency's fiscal accountability to ensure budget stewardship and fiduciary responsibility.

- Selected the new State Fire Marshal, Brian McGraw.
- Staffed a dedicated position for Community Risk Reduction (CRR) and committed to working with you to find ways to reduce the devastating effects of fire to our Commonwealth.
- Utilized the 18 Month Training Calendar to better schedule, plan, and serve the fire services community.
- Successfully added five new positions to support training.
- Conducted several statewide stakeholder visits throughout the last three years and plan to conduct additional training meetings in 2017.
- Restored the Conference and Education Grant which had not been funded since 2011.
- Collaborated with the Virginia Fire Services Board to achieve greater flexibility in policy application and revisions.
- Increased delegation and authority at the Division office level.
- Partnered with the Virginia Fire Chiefs Association to host the 1st and 2nd annual Sound the Alarm/PIO summit.

As the new VDFP, we strive to make data driven decisions that ensure the best usage of our funding, resources, and personnel, while reducing the previous silos/mentalities.

In closing, we offer our sincere thanks and appreciation to all who have participated, supported, and been involved in this process.

Sincerely,

Melvin & Brook

## AGENCY OVERVIEW

The Virginia Department of Fire Programs is the State's premier training and education agency for the delivery of training to Virginia's fire services. It is the mission of VDFP to develop and deliver quality fire services training programs that will enhance the ability of emergency service providers to protect life, the environment, and property.

VDFP is one of 11 state agencies within the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security. VDFP is headquartered in Glen Allen, VA and has seven regional training offices that house both our training support staff and State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO) staff. The seven regional offices are located in Glen Allen (Division 1), Culpepper (Division 2), Farmville (Division 3), Chilhowie (Division 4), Hampton (Division 5), Roanoke (Division 6), and Fairfax (Division 7). VDFP currently has 77 full-time staff, 17 part-time staff and over 400 state certified instructors who deliver our training programs through site-specific mobile training at any of the regional training facilities, or at locality training centers.

As VDFP moves into the future, we will continue to strive to provide state-of-the-art fire, rescue, and technical training programs to the Commonwealth.



## STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

The agency has set forth the following strategic initiatives and we have made substantial progress in the following areas of improvement:

- Adjusting curriculum development committees to ensure greater inclusiveness
- Implementing a Community Risk Reduction focus
- Implementing new allowances for test reading for HMO and HMA
- Implementing a new Training Records Management System
- Planning for a new Learning Management System
- Enhanced logistics support for training programs
- Greater delegation of Train-the-Trainer certification to localities
- Inclusion of Mental Health/Behavioral Health courses

The agency has set forth the following strategic initiatives moving forward:

- Leveraging Technology – on-line time sheet submission for adjunct instructors and instructor paperwork
- Safety Officer to oversee all VDFP training
- Streamlined Curriculum Development process
- Reevaluating course delivery and testing processes



## TECHNOLOGY/NEW TRAINING DATABASE/TESTING PROCESS

Technology is an increasingly essential part of every business aspect. The Virginia Department of Fire Programs has been working to implement a New Website, New Training Database, and a New Testing Process to better serve the needs of our stakeholders and customers. Through the leverage of technology, the Virginia Department of Fire Programs will be able to simplify and streamline processes that affect all levels of stakeholders.

- *New Website*

To better serve the multitude of stakeholders and deliver a medium in which essential information can be obtained through a streamlined process, the Virginia Department of Fire Programs has been working to implement a new website. The new website will ease the process of finding the needed information for the specific stakeholder.

- *New Training Database*

The new Training Database will better serve stakeholders by providing a solid foundation for record retention. Additionally, the new Training Database will automate many processes such as school requests, instructor scheduling, instructor verification, and course schedules.

- *Computer based testing process*

Using technology to perform written testing will provide stakeholders with immediate feedback to the completion status of their written testing. Additionally, computer based testing will allow for a more flexible testing schedule in which students can choose a time to test based on their individual and personal needs.



*The NFPA -1072 Standard for Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction Emergency Response Personnel Professional Qualifications was released in December 2016. The agency has identified a cross section of subject matter experts (SME) that are willing to serve to review our current program and make the necessary updates. The committee will include VDFP staff, locality representation, and other state agencies. With the reaccreditation of the agency due in April of 2018 we will work to update our programs no later than December 31, 2017.*



## STUDENT AND INSTRUCTOR SAFETY POLICY

Safety in the workplace is an important factor to ensure the success of any organization. This holds true for the fire service community where safety procedures and practices have been employed to reduce the number of accidents, injuries, and deaths associated with the fire service. To provide realistic training, students and instructors frequently operate in an environment that resembles that of an emergency scene, which can contain carcinogens and other atmospheric and environmental hazards.

The Virginia Department of Fire Programs has secured a grant to provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to those instructors who are most likely to participate in higher hazard training programs. Along with the issuance of the PPE, the Virginia Department of Fire programs will set forth a policy/procedure regarding the care and maintenance of PPE to ensure that all instructors are minimizing their risk of contamination.

Additionally, the Virginia Department of Fire Programs will be looking to employ a full time Safety Officer/Risk Manager. This new position will give the Department of Fire Programs the ability to review programs to ensure they meet a high level of safety in accordance with industry standards. The Safety Officer will also be used to perform accident and injury reviews to determine the factors that contributed to the event and steps needed to negate those factors.

## CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS/5 YEAR TRAINING TREND

### *Curriculum Highlights*

Courses developed or revised this year:

Instructor Level III

Officer Level I

Officer Level II

Driver Operator- Aerial

Driver Operator Pumper

LP Gas Emergencies

Emergency Building Shoring

Machinery Rescue

Rural Water Supply

Basic Pump Operations

VDFP Training Course Coordination Program

### *Calendar Year 2016 Training Statistics - Courses by Division*

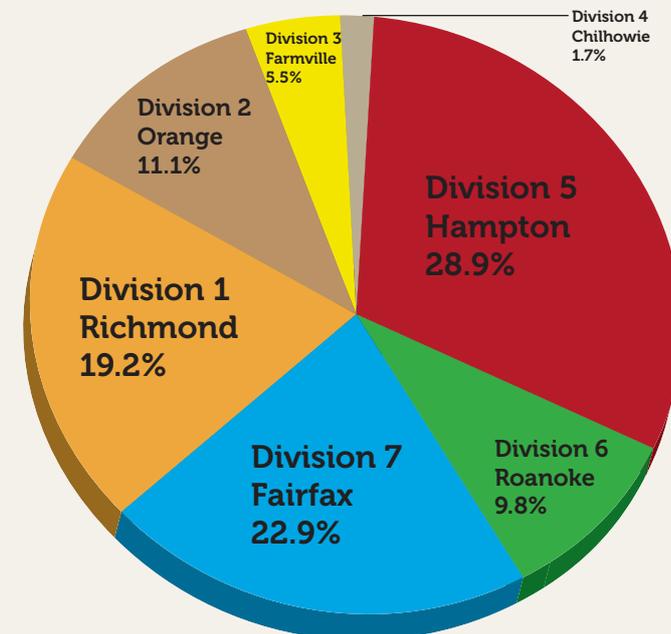
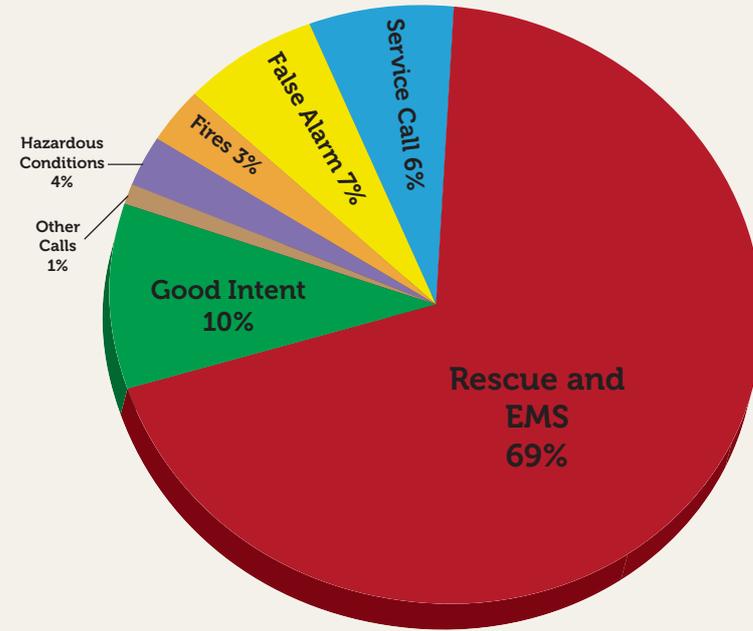
Division 1	246
Division 2	246
Division 3	160
Division 4	95
Division 5	327
Division 6	152
Division 7	277
ARFF	33
Quality Assurance	34
Technical Rescue	220
VA Fire Marshal Academy	189



## 2016 VFIRS HIGHLIGHTS (Preliminary)

- In 2016, fire departments in Virginia responded to 874,500 total incidents including Aid Given and Exposure Fires for the year, averaging 2,389 calls every day; one incident every 36 seconds.
- There were 27,767 fires in Virginia for 2016, which accounted for only 3% of the total incidents and resulted in a total dollar loss of more than \$245 million.
- Fire service responded to 600,646 rescue and EMS calls in 2016, which accounted for 69% of the total incidents.
- 473 or 83.7% of a total of 565 fire departments reported incidents to VFIRS for 2016.
- Incidents occurred at a rate of 104 incidents for every 1,000 Virginia residents.
- Structure fires accounted for 37% of fire incidents. Natural vegetation fires made up about 22%, and vehicle fires accounted for close to 18% of fire incidents.
- Aid was given 54,829 times by fire departments to departments in other jurisdictions.
- There were 363 exposure fires that spread from the original source fire to another building, structure, or vehicle.
- July was the month with the most incidents at 74,160, while April had the highest number of fires at 2,866.
- The average response time of fire departments for 2016 was 8.6 minutes.
- Each fire incident on average had 3 pieces of apparatus and 6 total personnel.
- Fire service accumulated 5.7 million hours responding to incidents.
- 17% of structure fires involving enclosed or portable/mobile structures had a detector that operated and alerted the occupants.

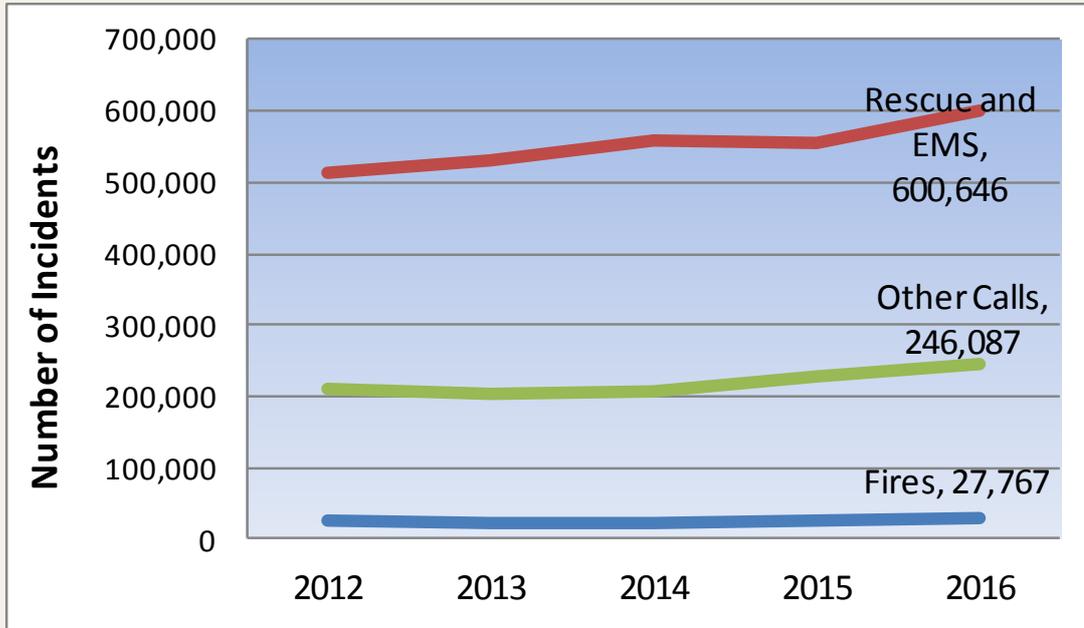
### Incident Type Summary, Virginia 2016 (Preliminary)



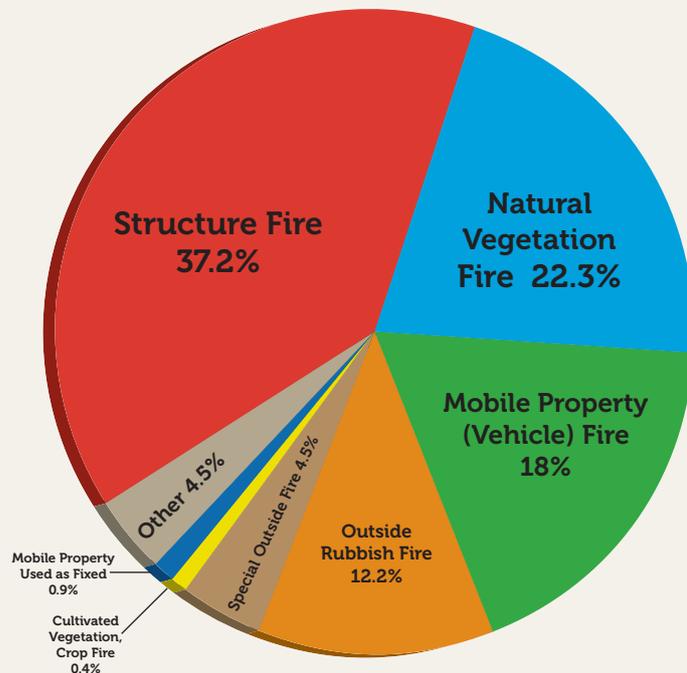
### Incidents by VDFP Division, Virginia 2016 (Preliminary)

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT QUICK FACTS

Total Incidents By Type, Virginia, 2012-2016 (Preliminary)



Fire Incidents by Category, Virginia 2016 (Preliminary)



- Personnel was the #1 Top Need reported by fire departments; Apparatus was the second highest need.
- Overall, fire departments reported that their total estimated amount of additional funding needed for FY 2017 would be \$1.2 billion.
- 50% of fire departments reported that they need an engine / pumper.
- For equipment, thermal imaging cameras (48.5%) are most needed by fire departments; self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) (45%) ranked second.
- 40% of respondents reported that they need improvements or remodeling of their existing stations.
- 67% of all fire departments responded that they need more volunteer firefighters; 33% showed a need for paid firefighters.
- 41% of departments reported that Fire Fighter - Level I training was their #1 top priority. 26% responded that Vehicle - Level I training was their #1 top priority with technical rescue.
- 54% of fire department funding comes from local government funding (not including ATL); 17% from fundraising and donations.
- Fire departments anticipate having their funding reduced by \$28.6 million in FY 2017.
- Fire departments reported that 37 of their stations have no computer available for incident reporting and 23 stations have no internet service.



## AID TO LOCALITIES AND GRANTS

### *FEMA Assistance to Fire Fighters (AFG) Grant*

VDFP was successful in obtaining federal funding through the FEMA funded AFG competitive grant program. The goal of the AFG program is to enhance the safety of the public and firefighters with respect to fire-related hazards by providing direct financial assistance to eligible fire departments and fire agencies. In 2016, VDFP received \$267,022 in federal funding to purchase 85 structural turnout gear and 15 technical rescue gear.

### *Aid To Localities (ATL)*

The FY 2016 Aid to Localities amount awarded to localities was \$26,441,331. Within the fiscal year 258 jurisdictions collected their ALT funding after submitting the required annual report and disbursement agreement. The amount paid to the qualifying localities during FY16 was \$24,342,845.

### *Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System (VFIRS) Grant*

The VFIRS Hardware Grant program provides funding to grantees for the acquisition of a personal computer/tablet or the upgrade of existing hardware. During the 2016 fiscal year, VDFP awarded VFIRS grants to 36 fire departments covering 27 localities. Each department received a \$700 award. The total 2016 VFIRS amount awarded was \$25,200.

Locality	Award	Locality	Award
Augusta County	\$700	Town of Bluefield	\$700
Botetourt County	\$700	Town of Boydton	\$700
Campbell County	\$1,400	Town of Chatham	\$700
Cumberland County	\$700	Town of Cheriton	\$700
Henry County	\$5,600	Town of Independence	\$700
Middlesex County	\$700	Town of Marion	\$700
Northumberland County	\$700	Town of Glade Spring	\$700
Pittsylvania County	\$700	Town of Tazewell	\$700
Scott County	\$700	Town of Urbanna	\$700
Warren County	\$700	Town of Warsaw	\$700
Westmoreland County	\$700	Town of Wytheville	\$700
Town of Berryville	\$700	Alexandria	\$700
Town of Blackstone	\$700	Richmond	\$700
Town of Bloxom	\$700	Suffolk	\$700

*Conference and Education Assistance Grant*

The Conference and Education Grant Assistance program provides financial assistance to Virginia based non-profit organizations providing training, conferences, and seminars to educate fire and emergency services personnel. VDFP awarded 7 Conference and Education grants in FY2016. The total awarded through the 2016 grant was \$74,246.

FY2016 Conference and Education Grant	
Organization	Awarded
Virginia Fire Chiefs Association	\$31,500.00
Virginia Chapter of International Association of Arson Investigators	\$5,850.00
Virginia Fire and Life Safety Coalition	\$4,275.00
Virginia Fire Prevention Association	\$7,200.00
Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department	\$21,686.40
Firefighters and Friends to the Rescue	\$675.00
City of Fairfax Fire Department	\$3,060.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$74,246.40</b>



*Regional Fire Services Training Facilities (RFSTF) Grant*

The RFSTF Grant Program provided training props for regional fire services training facilities throughout the Commonwealth. During the 2016 fiscal year, VDFP awarded grants to 14 fire departments. The total amount awarded was \$495,811.

Locality-Name	Award
Accomack	30,500.00
Bedford	14,000.00
Botetourt	50,000.00
Spotsylvania	50,000.00
Chilhowie	46,100.00
Farmville	49,111.00
Bristol	46,100.00
Galax	23,000.00
Hampton	50,000.00
Harrisonburg	13,500.00
Lynchburg	38,500.00
Martinsville	20,000.00
Newport News	50,000.00
Roanoke	15,000.00
<b>RFSTF Total</b>	<b>\$495,811.00</b>





## STATE FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

The mission of the State Fire Marshal's Office is to make fire safety a way of life in the Commonwealth of Virginia. We accomplish this by:

- Educating citizens and visitors about fire hazards and fire prevention techniques
- Identifying factors that increase risks from fire and implementing programs to reduce those risks
- Ensuring compliance with the Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code (SFPC) through education and progressive enforcement activities, including:
  - Fire prevention inspections of schools, night clubs, health care facilities and other occupancies in localities that do not have a local fire code official
  - Fire prevention inspections of state-owned facilities, including colleges and universities, health care and correctional facilities, and offices
  - Inspection of construction projects in state facilities
  - Investigation of complaints
- Providing technical assistance to local building and fire officials in the application and enforcement of the Statewide Fire Prevention Code and the fire safety related provisions of the Uniform Statewide Building Code
- Analyzing fire incidents to identify needed changes to fire safety related code provisions
- Administering programs to regulate explosives, fireworks, and fire-safe cigarettes.
- Providing training to fire inspectors, fire investigators, and public educators through the Virginia Fire Marshal Academy

We have 36 total personnel serving the Commonwealth from our headquarters in Glen Allen and five regional offices throughout the Commonwealth.

There were 57 civilian fatalities in residential structure fires in the Commonwealth during FY16 (July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016). The causes of these fires include smoking materials, cooking, and heating equipment.

Contributing factors in several of the fires were non-working or missing smoke alarms. We believe these deaths can be reduced and possibly eliminated through targeted Community Risk Reduction programs (CRR). CRR is a process to identify and prioritize local risks, followed by the integrated and strategic investment of resources (emergency response and prevention) to reduce their occurrence and impact. We have created and staffed a Community Risk Reduction Coordinator position to identify and leverage opportunities to partner with like-minded organizations, such as Vision 20/20 and the American Red Cross, and to provide greater emphasis to our public education programs. During calendar year 2016, a total of 32 public education courses were delivered to 449 students, including:

Program	# of Courses	# of Students
Communicating with Children	20	302
Fire & Life Safety Educator 1 & 2	9	123
Youth Firesetting Prevention & Intervention 1 & 2	3	36

The SFMO currently serves as the fire code enforcement authority for approximately 62% of the land mass of the Commonwealth and 17% of the population in 61 counties, 4 cities, and 118 towns within the Commonwealth. In Fiscal Year 2016 (FY16), we conducted 9,900 total inspection activities, including:

Fire Prevention Inspections	6,678
Construction Inspections in State-owned Buildings	1,438
Life Safety Code Surveys in Health Care Facilities	1,006
RCIP Inspections of Cigarette Retail Sales Locations	591
Investigation of Citizen Complaints	98
Inspections of Critical Infrastructure / Key Asset Facilities	89
<b>Total Inspection Activities</b>	<b>9,900</b>

We certified 147 blasters and pyrotechnicians and issued 650 operational permits for activities such as the manufacture, storage, sale, and / or use of explosives and pyrotechnics, including fireworks shows on State-owned property.

*This year marked the end of an era in the SFMO with the retirement of State Fire Marshal Charles E. Altizer, P.E., on April 1, 2016. He began his career with the SFMO in Marion, Virginia in 1974 and rose through the ranks, becoming the State Fire Marshal in December 1995. He made significant contributions to the fire safety and code development communities during his tenure. The American Fire Sprinkler Association named Ed the 2016 "Fire Sprinkler Advocate of the Year" for his efforts to make Virginia safer by advocating for fire sprinklers throughout his career. We wish Ed all the best in retirement!*

#### Virginia Fire Marshal Academy

In January 2016, the Virginia Fire Marshal Academy (VFMA) was moved into the State Fire Marshal's Office. VFMA provides training related to fire prevention, fire inspection, and fire investigation throughout the Commonwealth. Courses include certification training for Fire Inspector (NFPA 1031), Fire Investigator (NFPA 1033), Basic Law Enforcement for Fire Marshals, Environmental Crimes, Fire & Life Safety Educator (NFPA 1035), and Youth Fire Setting Prevention and Intervention, as well as numerous continuing education and professional development offerings. The success of the VFMA programs depends on a dedicated cadre of adjunct instructors who share their knowledge and experience with the next generation of fire marshals.

Program	# of Courses	# of Students
Fire Inspector (NFPA 1031)	5	97
Fire Investigator (NFPA 1033)	4	75
Basic Law Enforcement	1	29

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