

“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress  
working together is success.” – Henry Ford

March 12, 2007

*President's Foreword*

The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) has assembled for 134 years to address leadership concerns – interoperability, government relations initiatives, leadership, firefighter and life safety issues. From long ago days of incompatible hose couplings, fire chiefs have come together, stayed together and worked toward success – that’s what the IAFC is all about.

In October 2006, nearly 200 of our nation’s top fire service leaders met for more than two days to discuss the future of the fire service, hear from top speakers in the industry, and develop a two-year strategic plan for the IAFC. This forum included IAFC board members, committee, section and division leaders, state fire chiefs associations and key corporate partners. They reviewed a document drafted from input received since our last strategic plan. Over the course of several days, small groups discussed and debated what the IAFC needs to do to continue to be the top fire service leadership organization. At the end of the forum, a plan was developed that will serve as our guide for the next two years.

This strategic plan is the result of our diversity, coming together and strategizing for our future. It will serve as the association’s guiding document over the next two years. We have had to adapt to changing times in this all-hazard environment and I believe this strategic plan and the work of the association not only reflect those changes that were brought upon us but seek to meet the challenges ahead.

As we implement the goals and strategies contained in this document, I am confident that we will continue to focus on the core commitment upon which our organization was founded – to protect and serve our respective nations and their citizens.

I challenge every organization to work in concert with the IAFC to implement this plan and to continually strive to raise the bar of expectations. Please join with me in this endeavor to lead a unified fire and emergency medical service toward our common goals.

Sincerely,

Chief James B. Harmes, CFO  
IAFC President



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## 2007-2008 Strategic Planning Session Definitions

### IAFC Mission Statement

To provide leadership to career and volunteer chiefs, chief fire officers and managers of emergency service organizations throughout the international community through vision, information, education, services and representation to enhance their professionalism and capabilities.

### Definitions:

- **Goal** – An aim, the final result of action. Something to accomplish to assist in moving the organization forward. An over-arching goal developed by the board to fulfill the organization's mission.
- **Strategy** – A possibility; a plan or methodology for achieving a goal. These are items that should be considered or evaluated in order to achieve a goal. A strategy to achieve a goal is developed by both the board and experts in the field (committees and sections).
- **Possible Action Items**– To make advances, especially for the purpose of creating a desired result. Specific activities performed for the purpose of creating a desired result. Possible steps taken by the association and experts in the field (association committees and sections) to realize a strategy that achieves a goal.  
(NOT ALL MAY HAPPEN, BUT ARE SUGGESTIONS OF HOW TO IMPLEMENT THE STRATEGY. IMPLEMENTING DEPENDS ON COST, RESOURCES REQUIRED AND STAFF REQUIREMENTS.)



## International Association of Fire Chiefs

### 2007-2008 Strategic Plan

The goals and strategies below make up the IAFC Strategic Plan. The IAFC will make every endeavor to accomplish the goals and strategies in the most effective and efficient way possible. The IAFC commits itself to totally integrating human relations concepts and approaches throughout the entire implementation phase of the plan.

This section lists the six goals and their strategies that comprise the strategic plan. The following section outlines possible action items that may be considered as a means to accomplish the strategies. Each action item will be evaluated for impact and cost effectiveness as strategies are addressed.

The measure of our success will be at the strategy level. Biannual updates will outline the work completed on each strategy. This information will permit the board of directors to make strategic decisions to ensure the plan serves as the IAFC's guiding document.

#### I Goal: To be the leading voice on issues that impact fire-rescue and EMS services

##### Strategies:

- I.1 Increase the visibility, influence and presence of the IAFC.
- I.2 Build relationships and develop strong partnerships/alliances with agencies and organizations.
- I.3 Promote fire service involvement at the local level to enhance grassroots support.
- I.4 Proactively encourage, embrace and practice diversity in all aspects of the organization.

#### II Goal: To educate fire, EMS and emergency services leaders on major issues and initiatives.

##### Strategies:

- II.1 Provide timely training, education and resources on emerging issues and initiatives; promote distance-learning opportunities and incorporate emerging technologies for information transfer.
- II.2 Add value to the IAFC's educational offerings.
- II.3 Partner with other organizations where mutual benefits may be gained to identify best practices that can be adapted.

III Goal: To grow the IAFC.

Strategies:

III.1 Increase membership and maximize the value of IAFC membership.

III.2 Increase value to the membership.

III.3 Enhance partnership and collaboration efforts with allied organizations to strengthen the influence, visibility and effectiveness of the IAFC.

IV Goal: To create and enhance alliances to serve as catalysts to improve public safety.

Strategies:

IV.1 Create a paradigm shift where fire chiefs are the leaders in making and influencing policy for public safety services.

IV.2 Position the IAFC and its members to provide leadership on critical issues in public safety.

IV.3 Champion a culture of preparedness inside and outside public safety.

V Goal: To identify, increase and diversify revenue sources and partnerships to ensure achievement of the IAFC's mission and maintain financial stability.

Strategies:

V.1 Develop public and private partnerships and business ventures that generate non-dues revenue.

V.2 Establish educational initiatives and partnerships to enhance revenue.

VI Goal: To lead firefighter and life-safety initiatives that will limit life loss and injuries of firefighters and civilians.

Strategies:

VI.1 Encourage fire chiefs to develop and implement mandatory programs that keep firefighters physically safe.

VI.2 Encourage fire chiefs to develop and implement mandatory programs that keep firefighters healthy and medically safe.

VI.3 Encourage fire chiefs to adopt, develop and promote mandatory programs that enhance firefighter safety through best practices models for risk management.



The information below is a detailed version of the IAFC Strategic Plan. The adopted Strategic Plan consists of the goals and strategies listed. The possible action items are options that will be evaluated for implementation based on effectiveness, impact and cost.

I Goal: To be the leading voice on issues that impact fire-rescue and EMS services

Strategies:

I.1 Increase the visibility, influence and presence of the IAFC.

Possible Actions:

- I.1.a Provide greater influence with the executive branch through 1) greater advisory roles to DHS, the White House, etc. and 2) placement of fire service leaders in key positions in government.
- I.1.b Coordinate the combined scheduling of IAFC events and activities to increase participation and productivity (e.g., IAFC Leadership Orientation and CFSI Dinner).
- I.1.c Support the initiatives of the IAFC Emergency Management Committee and implementation of the *Strategic Plan for the Development of a National Mutual Aid System*.

I.2 Build relationships and develop strong partnerships/alliances with agencies and organizations.

Possible Actions:

- I.2.a Identify and align with the key stakeholders from public and private sectors that have a vested interest in fire service issues.
- I.2.b Survey fire chief associations, IAFC divisions and members to determine their wants and needs for communication of fire service information from the IAFC.
- I.2.c Speak at conferences of other national organizations to promote alliances with regard to legislative issues.

I.3 Promote fire service involvement at the local level to enhance grassroots support.

Possible Actions:

- I.3.a Encourage members of Congress to join the fire caucus.

- I.3.b Educate fire service leaders on legislative processes and how to be an effective advocate of fire service issues.
- I.3.c Educate fire service leaders on current fire service priorities to increase involvement in legislative actions.
- I.4 Proactively encourage, embrace and practice diversity in all aspects of the organization.

Possible Actions:

- I.4.a Encourage the board of directors to be inclusive and use diversity in making selections and appointments.
- I.4.b Encourage sections, divisions and committees to be inclusive and use diversity in making selections and appointments.
- I.4.c Encourage the board of directors, sections, divisions and committees to plan educational programs, meetings and bylaws developments that would be inclusive of human relations.
- I.4.d Evaluate the need for a chief diversity officer/human relations director and report to the IAFC board.
- I.4.e Partner with public and private organizations to complete studies of the human relations factors in fire service recruiting, hiring, promotion, management and leadership.
- I.4.f Develop and make recommendations to the board that will lead to enhanced membership education and self-awareness in human relations.
- I.4.g Provide human relations lessons learned in an effort to promote solutions to human relations problems.

- II Goal: To educate fire, EMS and emergency services leaders on major issues and initiatives.

Strategies:

- II.1 Provide timely training, education and resources on emerging issues and initiatives; promote distance-learning opportunities and incorporate emerging technologies for information transfer.

Possible Actions:

- II.1.a Identify the target audience and conduct a needs assessment (learning/educational needs).
- II.1.b Conduct member surveys.
- II.1.c Educate members on how to utilize the IAFC's educational opportunities to their benefit (e.g., how to pay for it, how to get there, how to use what you learn and pass it on, certifications).
- II.1.d Partner with industry (e.g., Apple iPod) to provide technologies to members.
- II.2 Add value to the IAFC's educational offerings.

Possible Actions:

- II.2.a Offer company officers educational opportunities to develop into chief officers.
- II.2.b Develop an educational track for the Chief Fire Officer Designation (CFOD) and offer at least one course or topic at each conference.
- II.2.c Provide greater topic diversity in educational activities (hazmat, EMS, etc.).
- II.2.d Provide conference content on the IAFC website for attendees and for a cost to non-attendees.
- II.3 Partner with other organizations where mutual benefits may be gained to identify best practices that can be adapted.

Possible Actions:

- II.3.a Solicit diverse speakers for all IAFC conferences.
- II.3.b Facilitate the implementation of standardized reciprocal training programs with state and federal agencies in all areas, especially wildland fire training.

### III Goal: To grow the IAFC.

#### Strategies

#### III.1 Increase membership and maximize the value of IAFC membership.

##### Possible Actions:

- III.1.a Change the constitution and bylaws to give flexibility in establishing new member categories and dues structures.
- III.1.b Implement membership COLA.
- III.1.c Explore new membership/dues options, such as group membership discounts, demographically/geographically-driven discounts and different benefit levels. Expedite the authorization process where possible for making these changes.
- III.1.d Amend the constitution and bylaws to allow the board to authorize three year promotional program. Research, test and discover what works and implement.
- III.1.e Create incentives for state and provincial associations to help grow IAFC membership.
- III.1.f Establish a task force to review the rate structure of the IAFC, considering a flat rate for an entire department and reduced fees for associate members, retirees and volunteers.
- III.1.g Retain a marketing firm to create a professional communications and marketing strategy for informing current and potential members of the value of IAFC membership.

#### III.2 Increase value to the membership.

##### Possible Actions:

##### Develop Programs

- III.2.a Create or partner to provide web seminars and conferences.
- III.2.b Start affiliated entities for smaller groups of fire service personnel, such as fire commissioners, arson investigators, code enforcement officials, public information officers.

##### Develop and Deliver Products

- III.2.c Design new webpage on IAFC website entitled “IAFC Governance” to better inform members of the association’s structure.

- III.2.d Pursue umbrella insurance policies for personal liability insurance, health insurance and legal advice.
- III.3 Enhance partnership and collaboration efforts with allied organizations to strengthen the influence, visibility and effectiveness of the IAFC.

Possible Actions:

- III.3.a Create opportunities for these organizations to network with IAFC members.
- III.3.b Seek opportunities for collaborative efforts on critical issues impacting both internal and external organizations.
- III.3.c Take a leadership role to revive or develop a confederation of fire service organizations.
- III.3.d Establish more formal relationships with non-governmental organizations such as the National League of Cities, National Association of Counties, NEMA, FEMSA. Publicize information about these relationships in *IAFC On Scene*.
- III.3.e Encourage state fire chief associations to participate with the state branch of such organizations as National League of Cities and the National Association of Counties.

IV Goal: To create and enhance alliances to serve as catalysts to improve public safety.

Strategies:

IV.1 Create a paradigm shift where fire chiefs are the leaders in making and influencing policy for public safety services.

Possible Actions:

IV.1.a Ensure support for existing alliances.

IV.1.b Provide opportunities for organizational partner participation in IAFC programs.

IV.2 Position the IAFC and its members to provide leadership on critical issues in public safety.

Possible Actions:

IV.2.a Identify critical issues in public safety.

IV.2.b Develop a process for the production of white papers to address critical issues.

IV.2.c Develop ways to identify, enhance and utilize leadership skill sets of IAFC members.

IV.2.d Produce white papers to engage thought leaders in addressing critical issues.

IV.3 Champion a culture of preparedness inside and outside public safety.

Possible Actions:

IV.3.a Conduct an in-depth assessment of capabilities and limitations.

IV.3.b Increase awareness of the capabilities and limitations of the fire service.

IV.3.c Develop a checklist of fire service action steps necessary to maintain mission-critical functions.

- V Goal: To identify, increase and diversify revenue sources and partnerships to ensure achievement of the IAFC's mission and maintain financial stability.

Strategies:

- V.1 Develop public and private partnerships and business ventures that generate non-dues revenue.

Possible Actions:

- V.1.a Enhance federal partnerships.
- V.1.b Tap into other federal funding agencies beyond USFA and DHS. Exploit the knowledge of our membership base that reaches beyond the fire service.
- V.1.c Maximize federal grant earnings.
- V.1.d Reframe the IAFC by aggressively altering the perception of the fire service's importance on the Hill. Position the IAFC for the future.
- V.1.e Enhance private partnerships and sponsorships.
- V.1.f Partner with corporations to coproduce/sponsor public education, training materials, conferences, workshops. Work with corporate partners to market and promote the fire service image while increasing IAFC visibility and revenue.
- V.1.g Partner with other organizations and experts in the field, such as AARP and state chiefs associations.
- V.1.h Explore high-profile merchandising opportunities.
- V.1.i Partner with corporations to provide services to members (professional liability/health insurance, volunteer department insurance package, billing services for fire-based EMS providers, etc.).
- V.1.j Continue to unite the IAFC and the IAFC Foundation for the common good.
- V.1.k Work with members to identify foundations and potential projects with grant funding.
  - V.1.l Establish and implement a public fundraising strategy.
- V.1.m Pursue private sector-funded endowment/trust.
- V.1.n Explore national fundraising events such as golf outings, gaming and dinners.

- V.1.o Develop a fee-for-services strategy.
- V.1.p Partner or provide a logo for fee to existing consulting services, using existing and retired members, as either part of the IAFC or as a separate entity.
- V.1.q Sell advertising on website.
- V.1.r Enhance and increase conferences.
- V.1.s Evaluate the feasibility of partnering with other organizations such as FAMA/FEMSA on conferences.
- V.1.t Evaluate the cost of business in using outside conference management to maximize profitability.
- V.1.u Maximize investments.
- V.1.v Maximize the value of the IAFC's physical assets, such as exploring sale and lease-back of current building, reinvesting, headquarters location move.
- V.1.w Consider more aggressive investments for cash resources.
- V.2 Establish educational initiatives and partnerships to enhance revenue.

**Possible Actions:**

- V.2.a Deliver educational opportunities toward career advancement.
- V.2.b Provide distance learning opportunities.
- V.2.c Establish educational partnerships to assist the IAFC in delivering corporate training through financial support and logistical assistance.

VI Goal: To lead firefighter and life safety initiatives that will limit life loss and injuries of firefighters and civilians.

Strategies:

VI.1 Encourage fire chiefs to develop and implement mandatory programs that keep firefighters physically safe.

Possible Actions:

VI.1.a Promote the adoption and enforcement of a zero-tolerance philosophy for behaviors that deviate from or fail to comply with published safety standards and best practices.

VI.1.b Recognize, publish and celebrate organizational and individual successes whenever they are the result of behaviors that are consistent with safety SOPs/BMPs.

VI.1.c Continue to support and aggressively promote the partnerships and principles of organizations such as Responder Safety, National Fire Fighter Near-Miss Reporting System and the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation.

VI.1.d Review existing best models for safety practices and develop an IAFC recommended model procedure for the following:

- Rules of engagement
- Vehicle operations
- Roadway safety
- Accountability
- Rules of disengagement
- Seatbelt use

VI.1.e Recommend a topic for the 2007 National Firefighter Safety Stand Down, to include SCBA use, new SCBA standard (NFPA 1404), proper protective clothing use, proper use of maydays, and effective and predictable firefighter self-survival techniques.

VI.2 Encourage fire chiefs to develop and implement mandatory programs that keep firefighters healthy and medically safe.

Possible Actions:

VI.2.a Partner with the International Association of Fire Fighters, the National Institutes of Safety and Health and other appropriate agencies to analyze data on chronic diseases suffered by firefighters.

- VI.2.b Establish alliances with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other health-related organizations to address health and safety issues for firefighters.
- VI.2.c Continue to partner with and support the International Association of Fire Fighters to develop strategies to institutionalize the wellness/fitness initiative and incumbent physical ability testing (IPAT) to include a designated liaison.
- VI.3 Encourage fire chiefs to adopt, develop and promote mandatory programs that enhance firefighter safety through best practices models for risk management.

Possible Actions:

- VI.3.a Promote the use/application of the vulnerability-assessment tool developed by the IAFC/NFPA Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Section.
- VI.3.b Advocate the promotion, education and installation of residential fire sprinklers and smoke detectors to reduce firefighter risk exposure.
- VI.3.c Promote the development and use of a comprehensive safety program that includes a dedicated/competent incident safety officer (ISO), health and safety officer (HSO) and risk manager.
- VI.3.d Encourage further technological development toward safety design and injury prevention in all emergency vehicles, including ambulances and equipment.
- VI.3.e Promote the value of programs for firefighters and their families, including psychological, emotional and behavioral wellness, recognition, training and intervention.
- VI.3.f Develop a research bank, including statistics, benchmarks and resources, that can be used by fire chiefs to educate the elected and appointed officials to the importance of a complete risk-management program as related to firefighter safety.