

# State of Indiana Firefighter Training System



**J. Eric Dietz**  
**Executive Director**

**Briefing Document**  
**Governor Mitch Daniels Jr.**  
**August 29, 2005**

The ability of firefighters to perform rescues, suppress fires, provide medical care and help those in need is directly related to their training. Local fire departments provide training and education to the individual firefighter. The State certifies firefighters but provides little guidance or oversight.

The development of a state training system will enhance the capability of the firefighter to assist during domestic emergencies and terrorist events.

The state training system will provide consistency in firefighter training that will enhance the overall capability of the fire service to respond.

The development of a state training system that includes local and state partnerships is a critical component of the state homeland security strategy.

The process of developing a state training system will require a long-term commitment from you. We will use a process that encourages innovation and creativity at every level while determining where financial resources can be best utilized for the greatest return. The use of existing facilities throughout the Hoosier homeland will provide for cost effective implementation and eliminate duplication.

We have engaged the fire service in the development of this document and they are solidly behind the proposal. They all realize that it will not occur overnight and they are encouraged by your support.

Roger D. Johnson  
Indiana State Fire Marshal

# State Firefighter Training Institute

## Purpose

Indiana should fulfill its responsibilities to develop state-wide preparation for emergency response. Indiana requires an organized, trained, coordinated response to regional and state natural and manmade disasters. The first line of defense in every Indiana community is the career and volunteer fire fighter. The capability of local emergency responders will be enhanced by a State Firefighter Training System.

## Vision

Develop a state firefighter training that is comprehensive, high quality and delivers consistent training and education for firefighters, EMS personnel and other personnel.

## Mission

The mission of the State Firefighter Training Program is to effectively and efficiently provide fire service training to all Indiana firefighters, ensuring that national fire standards are met; quality of training and experience of fire instructors are sufficient; and that the core elements and foundation of an effective fire training system is established and maintained for future generations of firefighters.

## Benefits

The development of the State Firefighter training system will assist local fire departments in providing a consistent level of training for their firefighters as well as increase their individual and collective capability to respond to and mitigate disaster situations.

The system will provide a firefighter with increased opportunities for education and certification without adding “contact” hours. In addition, the development and use of web-based training for various modules of the certification levels will increase the availability of training throughout the state without additional costs to the state, the department or the student.

The system will enhance firefighter recruitment and retention in the volunteer fire service because it will improve the availability of training. A common complaint from Fire Chiefs and volunteer firefighter is that they don’t have instructors available in some of the smallest communities and therefore they can’t participate in the certification process. The system will provide access for all firefighters through a variety of methods to multiple levels of certification classes.

If the district training concept is accepted it will provide certification level training at the local level. The district concept is the key to the success of this program. Career fire departments don’t have the backup staffing to be able to send numerous firefighters to a central academy over a prolonged period of time. Volunteer firefighters don’t have the time to be able to attend a central academy. The number one complaint from volunteer firefighters is about time. An individual who works, meets family obligations and serves their local community through the volunteer fire department is not always willing to give up weekends to attend classes at a central facility. In many cases volunteers

don't have the vacation time to be able to take off work for a week to attend class at a central facility.

The system will provide a unique opportunity for Indiana's firefighters that is not available throughout the country. The development of extensive partnerships with Indiana 2 and 4 year colleges will grant credit for training that they are already taking towards a college degree. In addition, the partnership brings the technical expertise of educators to the table as the firefighter certification system continues to grow. Firefighters who actively participate in the certification system could earn enough credit hours to be eligible for a degree in five years. Firefighters who complete advance level training such as Officer, Instructor, Inspector and others with an additional 5 years of training could achieve an additional degree.

## **Scope**

This document should be used as a reference tool for the development of a statewide fire training program utilizing the Homeland Security District as a basis to deliver fire training to local jurisdictions and to enhance the coordination and communication between multiple agencies and multiple disciplines.

## **Background**

- Fire service is made up of 27,000 individuals, of which approximately 20,000 are volunteers.
- Firefighters are currently trained at the local level. In most cases, at their individual fire stations.
- Typically volunteer firefighters pursue training through the basic level.
- Full time firefighters are typically certified through the firefighter I/II level.
- The State provides a certification system with little oversight of the training that is delivered.
- Training and quality standards vary significantly from community to community.
- Law enforcement has a facility in Plainfield (ILEA).
  - The ILEA program has provided basic police officer certified training for all police officers hired at the local or state level.
  - The ILEA campus provides education, lodging and meals as part of the State commitment to law enforcement.

## **Applicability**

The State Firefighter Training Program applies to all volunteer firefighters and all career firefighters in Indiana's 10 Homeland Security Districts.

## References

NFA - National Fire Academy

NFPA – National Fire Protection Association

OSHA – Occupational Safety and Health Administration

IOSHA – Indiana Occupational Safety and Health Administration

## Focus Areas

### ▪ *Budget*

- District Training Grants - \$2.5 million annually (total State allocation)
  - These grants at \$250,000 per district would be used to fund the delivery of certification training as well as making improvements to training infrastructure. The cost of instructors, books, rebuilding of props is included as part of this expense.
- District Infrastructure Grant - \$1.5 million annually (total State allocation)
  - Would require an application with supporting documentation and approval by State Council.
  - Maximum annual award per district \$500,000
  - Would require local match (50/50)
- Additional State Staffing \$250,000 annually
  - Staffing would consist of 5 area managers that would be assigned two districts.
    - The staff would provide:
      - Guidance for infrastructure planning.
      - Assistance with program development
      - Oversight of funding support expenditures
- Possible Funding Sources
  - Fireworks
  - Insurance Fund
  - Homeland Security Funds (\$38 million annually)
  - F.I.R.E. Act Grant
  - State Trade Association
    - Indiana Propane Gas Association
    - Building Trades Council
  - Legislative Action
- Partnership Opportunities
  - Local fire departments who already have training infrastructures
  - Fort Wayne / \$15 million state funding
  - South Bend Fire Department – Swift Water Rescue (only one of its kind in the State)
  - Muscatatuck – Urban Training

### ▪ *Creation of State Fire Training Council*

- *Establishment of an Infrastructure Grant Fund.* This grant program would assist areas of the state that do not have adequate infrastructure to conduct FF

I/II training. Money from this fund would be matched dollar for dollar with local funds to purchase equipment needed for level 2 or 3 training facilities. (Proposed annual budget \$1.5 million for infrastructure grants – propose annual budget \$2.5 million for district training funds. District funds would be allotted upon acceptance of a training implementation plan by the State Fire Training Council)

- Seek funding sources.
- Develop a web based training system that is accessible to all districts.
- An annual report shall be developed and published.
  - The report should contain measurements and assessments of the system.
- Encourage innovation in the delivery of training that enhances the learning opportunities of the students.
- Develop partnerships with universities, trade unions, fire departments and other organizations that can assist with the development of district training programs.
- Encourage local district training councils to partner when certain facilities are not used to the extent possible.
- Develop a system to remove local district council members who do not participate.
  - Develop a system to conduct investigations of local district councils
- Develop a system to allow border state fire departments who do mutual aid with Indiana fire departments to attend state sponsored training.
- The state fire training council will be made up of:
  - Executive Director of Indiana Department of Homeland Security
  - State Fire Marshal
  - Director, Division of Training
  - Designee – Indiana Fire Chiefs Association
  - Designee – Professional Firefighters Union of Indiana
  - Designee – Indiana Volunteer Firefighters Association
  - Designee – Indiana Fire Instructors Association
- *Creation of District Fire Training Councils*
  - Each of the 10 districts will have a fire training council.
  - The overall goal of the council is to develop a training agenda, support training facilities, develop infrastructure plans that may include permanent or mobile training facilities, disburse money, oversee adjunct instructors, evaluate course delivery, evaluate instructors, etc.
    - Encourage innovation in the delivery of training that enhances the learning opportunities of the students.
    - Develop partnerships with universities, trade unions, fire departments and other organizations that can assist with the development of district training programs.
    - Seek out alternative funding sources.
      - Develop relationships to facilitate outside funding sources.
  - Develop a training implementation plan.

- This plan includes schedules, facility assessment; district firefighter training needs assessment, adjunct instructor selection processes, and coordination, staffing needs.
  - Councils will be responsible for the disbursement of budgeted funds for training purposes.
  - The council will approve sites for training based upon the level that the site possesses the capability to provide training that meets Indiana certification standards.
  - The district fire training council will be made up of:
    - 1 career fire chief
    - 1 volunteer fire chief
    - 1 career instructor
    - 1 volunteer instructor
    - 1 career firefighter
    - 1 volunteer firefighter
    - 1 university member
    - 2 citizens
  - The district fire training council will be elected by the NFIRS qualified fire departments in a meeting held each January.
    - Each eligible department would have one vote
    - The first year of existence the elections will be for staggered terms to allow for consistency.
    - Terms of office will be for two years
    - There shall be a Chair and Vice-Chair in each district.
      - These positions will have a term of one year.
      - An individual may not hold one of these two positions for more than 3 consecutive years.
  - No more than 2 of the 9 members shall be from the same county.
  - The committee will elect a chair, and a vice chair from the committee.
  - The chair will control agenda and preside over the committee.
  - The vice chair will assume the duties of the chair if the chair is absent.
  - The district fire training council will conduct regular meetings at least on a quarterly basis. The time, date and location shall be posted in a manner consistent with the rules of public notice.
  - The district shall develop an annual report submitted to the district members and to the State Training Council (STC) at a time and manner prescribed by the STC.
  - Each district will have an annual budget of unequal apportionment.
    - No more than 5% is to be used for administrative oversight purposes.
- *Funding of qualified training sites through the district councils.*
- By establishing partnerships at the local level with fire departments and universities, the district training sites will initially require little state funding for infrastructure development.

- Because each district has different needs and because each district will not enter this program with equal training capabilities, this program will not aim to provide identical training sites in each district. What this program will do, is provide the highest quality training from currently existing resources and assist districts with infrastructure costs via matching state grants.
- Sites will be selected based upon their ability to provide training for the firefighter with the following designations:
  - Level 1- Basic training only.
    - Minimum physical requirements/capabilities
      - 1200 square foot classroom
      - Computer in classroom
      - Tables/Chairs
      - Computer projection
      - Video projection
      - DVD projection
      - Exterior concrete/blacktop pad 2500 square feet
      - High Speed Internet connection capability
      - 3 computers for web based training
    - Requirements for Level 1 designation include capability to:
      - Raise, extend, and place ladders
      - Perform ventilation drills
      - Perform search and rescue drills
      - Perform forcible entry with a variety of doors, windows, and walls
      - Load/ Unload fire hose
      - Apply water and extinguishing agents to a simulated / live fire situation
      - Deploy a portable water tank
  - Level 2- Firefighter I/ II training.
    - Minimum physical requirements/capabilities
      - 2 - 1200 square foot classroom
      - Computers
      - Tables/Chairs
      - Computer projection
      - Video projection
      - DVD projection
      - Exterior concrete/blacktop pad 5000 square feet
      - High Speed Internet connection capability
      - 6 computers for web based training
    - Requirements for a Level 2 designation include capability or access to:
      - Have a water source, fire hydrant and static water source

- Capability to flow high volumes of water (excess of 1500 gallons per minute through a variety of nozzles)
  - Have capability to demonstrate the shut off of building utilities given tools. (electric, gas, and water)
  - Demonstrate ability to respond on apparatus to emergency scene
  - Have a facility that can be vision obscured to demonstrate search and rescue practices that include emergency evacuation procedures, proper breathing techniques, team integrity being maintained, room to conduct a search and rescue as a member of a team.
  - To perform SCBA drill through restricted passages
  - Attack an interior structural fire
  - Attack a passenger vehicle fire as a member of a team
  - Using an automobile prop and control flammable liquid leaks on that prop
  - Allow for extinguishment of class a materials, in an exterior setting. Exterior setting is defined as a stack piled materials in unattached structures.
  - Overhaul a fire scene
  - Extinguish a flammable liquid fire
  - Control a flammable gas cylinder fire
  - Clean, inspect, check, and return all equipment used to service
  - Set up ground ladders
  - Practice entering and exiting windows at ground and elevated levels
  - Perform horizontal, vertical, and positive pressure ventilation issues
  - Allow firefighters to demonstrate the ability to force entry into a structure with appropriate tools and safely
  - Extricate a victim trapped in a motor vehicle accident
  - Develop pre-incident surveys and complete pre-incident inspections
  - Deploy salvage tools and equipment
- Level 2 facilities will be required to develop a relationship with a college or university to allow for college level credit for education received within the system.
- Level 3- Specialized training sites. Can be a stand alone facility or combined with a level 1 or 2 training site.
  - Specialized Live Burn Options
  - Water Rescue
  - Swift water rescue
  - High Rise Firefighting
  - Hazardous Materials Technician Level

- Farm rescue
    - Confined space rescue
    - Aircraft training
    - Marine/Shipboard Firefighting
      - Boarding procedures
      - Floating Casinos
    - Drivers Training Simulation
    - Drivers Training Practice Area (5-7 acres)
  - Level 4- (Central Site) Special training capabilities beyond those available in individual districts.
    - 4 – 1200 square foot classrooms
    - Dormitories – 50 bed capacity
    - Cafeteria
    - Administrative Area – 3600 square feet
    - Will have all level 2 capability and multiple level 3 capability.
  - Level 5- Multi-disciplinary Homeland Security Training.
- As long as a site meets the requirements for the training they deliver, they are eligible for instructor compensation, as well as other costs directly incurred from training. Within in each district there may be many sites that meet level 1 classification, while an entire district may not have a site that meets level 3 requirements. The District Fire Training Council will make these payments based upon established criteria.
  - *Instruction of National Fire Academy courses.* These programs are available at no cost to the State. The NFA also provides a grant of \$25,000 to the State to deliver these courses. These are advanced level training courses designed for the officer. NFA courses will be available upon completion of the first district site. The NFA courses can be delivered at any Level I training site.
  - *Adjunct instructors*
    - Each district will require adjunct instructors.
      - Adjunct instructors will deliver the course content.
      - District fire training councils will develop a selection process based upon the minimum qualifications.
    - Minimum Qualifications for adjunct instructors
      - Certified as a fire instructor II/III for 5 years minimum
      - Teach at least 30 hours documented annually not at the district training sites
      - Complete 8 hours of instructional in-service annually at a college or university on adult learning techniques.



## **End State**

The implementation of a statewide training system will result in:

- Indiana better prepared to manage local, regional, and state-wide all-hazards.
- Improved delivery of local fire protection resulting in lives saved and property loss reduced.
- An integrated, seamless, escalation response for large fires and other disasters
- An accredited program of nationally recognized training and education for Indiana's fire service
- Compliance with OSHA
- Reduced risk of injury and death to firefighters.
- More frequent teamwork within the districts.
- The framework for the beginning of a multi-discipline Homeland Security Training program.
- A common core of professionally trained firefighters.
- Time and effort of firefighters being rewarded with college credit.