

# **VIRGINIA FIRE SERVICES BOARD**

Training and Education Committee  
Thursday, February 23, 2023  
Virginia Beach Convention Center  
1:30 PM

## **Minutes**

A regular meeting of the Training and Education Committee was held at the Virginia Beach Convention Center. The meeting was called to order by Committee Chair Scott Garber and a quorum was present.

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Scott Garber, Committee Chair – Local Fire Marshal  
Ben Reedy – Insurance Industry  
Jerome Williams – Certified Fire Instructor  
Walt Bailey – Virginia Fire Service Council  
James Calvert – Industry (SARA Title III)

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT**

Abbey Johnston – Virginia State Firefighters Association  
Donald Hart – Virginia Association of Counties

### **AGENCY MEMBERS PRESENT**

Nicholas Nanna, Deputy Director  
Michael Parris, Deputy Chief of Training and Operations  
Ken Brown, Coordinator of Community Risk Reduction  
Will Merritt, Marketing and Communications Manager  
Amanda Kennedy, Curriculum Development Manager  
Spencer Willett, Government Affairs Manager

### **GUESTS PRESENT**

Larry Gwaltney	Jim Forgo
Chris Shaver	Scott Arft
Josh Irvine	Tony Prata
Lance McClintock	

### **CHANGES IN THE AGENDA**

There were no additions to the agenda

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comment given

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## **CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting (December 2022)

**Motion:** To approve minutes from the February 2022 meeting of the Training and Education Committee.

**Motion:** Calvert, **Second:** Reedy

**Discussion on the Motion:** None

**Vote:** Unanimous approval

**Action:** Minutes approved

## **REPORT FROM THE VDFP CHIEF OF TRAINING**

Deputy Chief of Training and Operations Michael Parris gave the report on behalf of Chief of Training Jamey Brads. Chief Parris gave an update on Division 7, where the agency found that issues effected every area not just one class. The open chief positions in Division's 4 and 7 have been filled.

The special operations branch is moving forward with revising the heavy-technical rescue program to meet accreditation standards. The logistics section is updating multiple trailers for training purposes. The trench trailer is 75% complete and is moving to a convex box style container for transport. The large animal rescue trailer is in service. The command cab module has been updated for the ARFF simulators. In addition, Parris stated that the watercraft rescue trailer is in the early stages of the procurement process. All SCBA units have been flow tested and are in service.

Online testing material is being put onto servers and the agency will pilot this internally. The branch is working with the community college system to provide technology access in areas where Wi-Fi or internet connection is not available.

The modular firefighting program is being piloted in Charlotte County. These students are testing on module 1 now.

VDFP has assisted VDOT with developing a program for emergency vehicle driving for VDOT employees who drive emergency vehicles. VDOT will run this program with oversight from VDFP.

There are new forms on Cornerstone. These forms address retirement and reciprocity of training. There are several on-demand classes online, including cancer prevention and awareness. The

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agency is also looking at expanding instructor permissions. Statistics were provided on class numbers and training.

## **COMMENTS FROM THE COMMITTEE CHAIR**

Committee Chair Garber turned the floor over to other committee members.

Jimmy Calvert spoke about his work with the community colleges. He stated that the community colleges would like to work with VDFP to assist in testing and this would be at zero cost to VDFP or the locality. He also spoke about plans to offer Firefighter I and Firefighter II classes at the community college level at Central Virginia Community College. He stated that the college would like to work with VDFP and the board on funding these types of opportunities. Central Virginia Community College would eventually like the board and the agency's support in approaching the Commonwealth of Virginia about increasing programs like this.

Nicholas Nanna stated he has been working with Tidewater and Peninsula Community Colleges, which offer an associate degree in fire sciences. There is discussion about creating a program that would allow someone with a fire science degree an accelerated route to achieving certification as a firefighter. This would assist areas with recruiting firefighters. Nanna further stated that a workgroup was being convened to examine fire training at the community college level.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

No unfinished business

## **NEW BUSINESS**

No new business

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Clerk of the Committee  
Spencer R. Willett



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

**Brad Creasy**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## *Virginia Department of Fire Programs*

**Jamey Brads**  
BRANCH CHIEF  
TRAINING & OPERATIONS

### **Memorandum**

To: Brad Creasy, Executive Director  
Fire Board Members

From: Jamey Brads, Branch Chief  
Training and Operations

Date: February 10, 2023

Subject: Report Training and Operations

The Training and Operations Branch continues to support both funded and non-funded deliveries. Since our last report that was presented in December:

- School processing issues in Division 7:
  - To date we have determined all seven localities in the division have been affected, not just the original three that were reported.
  - The majority of the original 56 courses have been reviewed and corrected, however, we continue to find additional sessions in need of review and correction.
  - We have determined that some of the courses conducted were assigned session ID's by the Division, but never placed in CSOD for enrollment, processing, or closing for student credit.
  - Additionally, we have discovered that many of those who are conducting or overseeing Division 7 training do not know our business processes regarding program delivery and certification. Training and Operations staff is working to educate the locality training staff and instructors as we receive and process new session requests.
  
- The branch continues to work on filling vacancies.
  - We have filled the Division 4 and Division 7 Chief positions. Chad Stanley, Division 4, and Marc Brade, Division 7, will join the team on February 27.

- We have collected applications from a number of adjunct instructors to begin filling divisional gaps.
  - Each division chief was asked to submit hiring packets for up to five instructors based on the needs of their division.
  - In the coming weeks, we will review our current list of instructors to purge those that are no longer active and begin onboarding the new instructors.
- Special Operations Updates
  - We are currently working on updating all of our HTR foundational programs, Vehicle, Rope, Confined Space, Trench, and Water, at Operations and Technician levels to be reaccredited.
    - The Water program will encompass Surface, Swift, and Watercraft. These updates and changes will begin July 1, 2023.
    - The Division will begin virtual instructor updates in May and adjunct instructors and locality instructors will be required to attend.
    - IFSAC and Pro Board will begin their review of the programs in Fall 2023 and conclude Spring 2024.
    - HTR is also modifying the flow chart for program pathways and pre-requisites.
  - The HTR Branch currently has 80 plus Funded Programs scheduled across the Commonwealth
  - Special Operations Division has now grown to include the ARFF Branch. We are excited to bring new energy into the programming and delivery of the programs. The annual ARFF Chiefs meeting was conducted in January in Glen Allen. We will be delivering 15 programs across the Commonwealth this calendar year.
  - Chief Riddleberger will be on the VFRC conference floor at the VDFP booth all day on Friday, February 24<sup>th</sup> to answer any questions regarding curriculum and programming changes in Special Operations.
- Logistics Updates
  - Much division work is currently directed towards building out new and servicing existing trailers.
    - New trench trailer is approximately 75% complete.
    - Large animal rescue trailer has been placed in service.
    - Upgrades to ARFF II command cab module.
    - Confined Space prop and equipment trailer in planning stages.
    - New watercraft (boat operations) trailer in the procurement process.
  - All SCBA and SABA units have flow tested.
  - New Division 7 and 4 trucks have arrived.
  - Collaborating with the IT department to procure new AV equipment for conference and training support.
- Development of the online testing solution continues
  - We have continued to work with both our internal IT staff, ScanTron staff, and VITA to get the software installed on the servers and permission groups built for access to the data.
  - The testing data has been copied and placed on the server for validation once the above step has been completed.

- Once validation of this phase is completed, we will start to pilot online testing for compliance and functionality.
  - We are working with several different partners within our localities and the Community College System for access to computer labs.
  - Our IT Department is exploring purchasing devices for the agency that could be deployed for online testing.
- Development of the Modular Firefighter I/II curriculum continues to progress
    - To be eligible for certification, students must be successful in all four modules and Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations.
    - The first pilot is currently being delivered in Charlotte County in a hybrid format, online for the requisite knowledge and in-person for the requisite skills components.
    - Module I has been completed to include testing.
    - Both the Learning Development and Accreditation staff attended the testing for Module I.
    - The outcome of the skills testing was within the normal skill testing outcomes.
    - The outcome of the written testing showed the need to provide some additional assistance to the class coordinator and students so everyone could be better prepared for written testing from the hybrid delivery of the material. To this objective, we conducted a follow up meeting with the Class Coordinator with some very positive comments being received from the Class Coordinator.
    - To properly assess the success of the program we plan to complete additional deliveries using both Hybrid and Instructor Lead deliveries. Once piloted in different departments the feedback will be evaluated as to the success of this delivery.
    - Course materials are being reviewed by the Firefighter SME group as each Module is completed and any needed adjustments will be made. We are currently in talks with other jurisdictions to offer additional pilots.
- VDOT/EVOC Partnership
    - The branch, with support of the Learning Development Division, is currently partnering with VDOT to meet their EVOC training needs. The division has completed initial drafts of training materials reviewed by VDOT staff and contractors. A training plan, with a handoff of material/training, will begin following the cumulative review and training plan approval.
- Cornerstone OnDemand (CSOD)
    - The agency has taken steps to mitigate the exception request processing time with a change in business process and a critical system update.
      - System update: All prerequisites on events have been streamlined to include only the highest pre-req needed for registration. This has drastically cut down on the amount of requests we are receiving.
      - Business Process update: Division staff are now responding to requests within 24 hours of receipt during operating business days.
    - Reciprocity and Retirement/Relocation Forms: New self-service forms have been added to the system to aid students in processing records. We have additionally added a Retirement/Relocation form to support account inactivation needs.
    - Two OnDemand courses have been released in the system in the last few months. Cancer Prevention and Awareness (Training and Operations) and Video recast of

- o a Mayday presentation (VFMA). Over the next year, 20 OnDemand courses/content on variety of fire service training will be added to the system.
  - o Instructor permissions: numerous processes, procedures, and trainings are in development to shift the current administrative support permissions to validated external stakeholders. We will begin testing these permissions with a small subset of instructors to validate.
- Some statics that may be of interest:

<b>FY22 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022)</b>	<b>FY23 to date</b>
<b>1,754</b> individual sessions delivered	<b>989</b> individual sessions delivered
<b>21,103</b> Students attended training	<b>12,205</b> students attended training
<b>215</b> cancelled sessions	<b>170</b> cancelled sessions
<b>849</b> No-shows	<b>345</b> no-shows
<b>132,695</b> Instructional hours delivered	<b>78,654</b> Instructional hours delivered

*Jamey Brads*

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