
ARSON FORUM REPORT

AND ANALYSIS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR
FEDERAL ARSON
POLICY AND
PRIORITIES



FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

UNITED STATES FIRE ADMINISTRATION

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Introduction and Contents

From January 20 through January 22, 1993, 31 individuals from across the country gathered at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Members of the group came from as far as Los Angeles, San Francisco and Broken Arrow, Oklahoma -- and as close as Westminster, a town 15 minutes from the Academy campus.

The group included a former fire chief, an FBI psychologist, prosecuting attorneys, fire investigators, a volunteer fire fighter, a state fire marshal, an expert in fire statistics, insurance executives, criminologists, a scientist, college professor, federal officials and two attorneys in private practice.

And, as an expert group, they were asked to take a hard look at how arson is being prevented, analyzed, investigated, prosecuted and how arson control units are being trained and managed. Then, as a group, they were asked to generate specific, actionable ideas for consideration as programs and policies by the United States Fire Administration.

For much of the conference, the 31 experts were divided into five "working groups," each "working group" focusing on one of the following subjects: prevention, training, statistics, management, and investigation/prosecution.

This document is the result of their labors. It includes the following sections:

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Methodology

1. The 31 conference participants were selected from a list of several hundred nominees by a committee of IAAI and USFA representatives. Each participant was selected on the basis of demonstrated expertise and line experience. Individuals were not selected because of their affiliation with any particular organization or interest.
2. The conference participants were assigned to one of five working groups. Working groups focused on the areas of training, management, statistics, prevention and investigation/prosecution.
3. Each working group was assigned a leader and a recorder. Their respective responsibilities are shown in appendix A.
4. Each working group first was asked to define, as specifically as possible, the nature of their assigned area as well as problems and concerns related to that area. Then, each group was directed to identify and prioritize projects, policy recommendations or concepts to address the problems and concerns noted.
5. Groups were given the opportunity to review and comment upon each other's work. In the final session, written proceedings were distributed, reviewed, revised and adopted. They are shown later in this document.
6. This document then was drafted by the conference committee and circulated to all 31 participants for comment. Minority positions are contained in appendix B.

Executive Summary

As requested, the five working groups defined problems and concerns and then proposed numerous approaches addressing those problems and concerns.

No matter as complicated and serious as arson falls neatly into categories. It fell to the Conference Committee, under the direction of Coordinator Jack Ward, to consolidate and summarize their work.

The Committee did so by establishing seven "challenges." Each "challenge" was accompanied by a goal. Then, each goal was followed by recommendations organized into the following groups:

Group One

Projects judged to have:

- "high impact," that is, likely to have a strong, positive effect on the challenge.
- "low cost," that is, the project can be completed at a relatively low, one-time expense.
- "low development," that is, projects that can be completed within a defined, reasonably short period of time.

Group Two

Projects judged to have

- "high impact."
- "high cost."
- "low development" time.

Group three

Projects judged to have

- "high impact."
- "low cost"
- "high development" time, that is, the project is likely to take considerable time to complete.

Group four

Concepts in need of further development

Group five

Policy recommendations

Actions requiring legislative or regulatory action.

The following pages contain the conference participants' recommendations.

Challenge: Arson prevention has two subparts: efforts aimed at eliminating conditions that promote arson, and efforts to discourage repeat offenses. Professionals engaged in arson prevention must be comfortable in various disciplines including psychology, criminal investigation, data collection and management.

Goal: To reduce the incidence of arson in the U.S.

High Impact/Low Cost Low Development	High Impact/Low Cost High Development	Concepts in Need of Development	Additional Policy Recommendations
Develop working relations, e.g. joint committees, with educators, social service agencies, law enforcement professionals and others dealing with family problems.	Reach agreement on a universally accepted approach to dealing with juvenile fire-setting, such as the Institute for Social Analysis prototype now being tested.	Adopt "juvenile firesetting" theme as part of USFA public education program.	none
Develop a joint committee to encourage better integration of information on code violations, unsafe conditions, delinquent taxes, vacant or depreciating buildings and other arson-prone conditions.	Create prototype for community-based volunteer groups to patrol communities plagued by arson, and report information to law enforcement officials.		

Challenge: Many federal, state and local agencies are involved in arson control. Jurisdictional questions inevitably surface, sometimes resulting in decreased effectiveness and efficiency.

Goal: To make better use of resources and improve the quality of arson control activities through improved coordination and cooperation.

High Impact/Low Cost Low Development	High Impact/High Cost Low Development	Concepts in Need of Development	Additional Policy Recommendations
Continue USFA funding of Arson Unit Managers Course in partnership with ATF and FBI.	none	Develop and offer arson control training courses at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.	none
Reopen NFA Arson class to insurance industry personnel.		Develop and offer training on "immunity statutes."	
Establish a "dispute resolution" hotline to allow agency heads to quickly resolve escalating jurisdictional problems.			

Challenge:

Today's arson control unit manager must balance concerns ranging from the effectiveness and quality of the unit's work, to training and qualifications, data collection and analysis, worker safety and health, and adequate funding. Specialized training and assistance is generally unavailable to arson control unit managers.

Goal:

To improve the quality of arson control unit management as a means of improving the quality and efficiency of units.

High Impact/Low Cost Low Development	High Impact/High Cost Low Development	Concepts in Need of Development	Additional Policy Recommendations
Produce and distribute unit manager's guide to unit operations.	none	Encourage USFA to study "firefighter as arsonist" issue.	Encourage funding of Federal Law Enforcement Training Center for Fire/Arson programs including a state-of-the-art burn building.
Produce and distribute unit manager's guide to case management.		Encourage USFA and Department of Labor joint study of fire investigator safety and health issues.	
Continue USFA funding of Arson Unit Managers Course in partnership with ATF and FBI.			

Challenge: Successful investigation and prosecution of arson cases requires well-trained and managed personnel from the first responder to the expert investigator, forensic technician and prosecuting attorney.

Goal: To establish and exceed standards for all personnel involved in arson investigation and prosecution.

High Impact/Low Cost Low Development	High Impact/Low Cost High Development	Concepts in Need of Development	Additional Policy Recommendations
Videotape and manual for first responders on "red flags" of arson and appropriate collection and preservation of evidence during suppression, overhaul and post-fire operations.	Establish minimum training standards for expert fire scene analysis, supplemental investigation techniques, and expert testimony.	Enhance development and promotion of the "career arson prosecutor" concept.	Encourage Justice Department funding and development of a National Arson Prosecution Initiative.
	Establish certification criteria for fire investigators.		Enact a Federal Arson Immunity Reporting Act.
	Develop and publicize standards of ethical scientific conduct for forensic testing.		

Challenge: Effective crime prevention -- regardless of the crime -- requires help from the public. With the exception of major incidents such as the Los Angeles riots and Happyland Social Club fire, the American public is unaware of the severity or scope of the U.S. arson problem.

Goal: To increase public involvement in arson prevention and assistance with arson investigation.

High Impact/Low Cost Low Development	High Impact/Low Cost High Development	Concepts in Need of Development	Additional Policy Recommendations
none	none	Adopt "public role in arson prevention" as a theme of the USFA public education program.	Enact legislation setting civil penalties for filing fraudulent claims in arson cases, including attorney fees and costs.

Challenge:

Observers agree that national statistics do not reflect the true magnitude or severity of the U.S. arson problem. In part, the problem is caused by the fact that in some jurisdictions, for a fire to be designated as "arson," analysis of fire debris must positively identify an accelerant or charges must be brought against an individual. Therefore, many arson fires are not recorded as such. Also, arson statistics are recorded many ways by different organizations -- further adding to questions about the true degree to which arson is a problem. As a result, policy-makers are ill-equipped to assign resources to the problem, and investigators are hampered as they pursue individual cases.

Goal:

To present an accurate, timely and consistent statistical view of the U.S. arson problem.

High Impact/Low Cost Low Development	High Impact/Low Cost High Development	Concepts in Need of Development	Additional Policy Recommendations
Produce a unified arson incident reporting form common among USFA, NFIC and FBI.	none	Develop AIMS 2000 system compatible with uniform reporting form, and capable of operating on range of platforms and various configurations.	none

Challenge: Many elected and appointed public officials are unaware of the magnitude of their communities' arson problem. Nor are they aware of effective arson control strategies.

Goal: To encourage public officials to establish arson control as a resource priority, and to promote interagency cooperation.

High Impact/Low Cost Low Development	High Impact/High Cost Low Development	Concepts in Need of Development	Additional Policy Recommendations
Series of guides on arson for mayors, city managers and financial officers, city council members, police chiefs, fire chiefs.	Produce videotapes and offer courses on the arson problem and effective approaches to public officials.	Expand National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program to include fire investigation management concepts.	
Place articles on arson and arson control in publications read by public officials.			
Establish working relationships, e.g. joint committees, with associations representing public officials, e.g. National League of Cities, International City Managers Association, etc.			

DATA GATHERING AND ANALYSIS ISSUES IN ARSON CONTROL

- I. Data needs:
 - A. Data is needed to accurately describe the nation's arson problem through data collection and analysis
 - B. Should include a comprehensive review of existing programs:
 - C. Uniform Crime Report (UCR)
 - D. National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS)
 - a. Property Insurance Loss Register (PILR)
 - b. National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)
 - c. State Specific Programs
 - E. Data is needed for use in active case management
 1. Arson Information Management System (AIMS) and similar programs for:
 - a. State Investigators
 - b. Regional Investigators
 - c. Local Investigators
- II. Recommended Solutions/Deliverables
 - A. Direct the Development of a Unified Arson Incident Report Form
 - a. Common between USFA, NFIC, and FBI
 - (1) Would insure better reporting
 - (2) Is more efficient and cost effective
 - (3) Saves time
 - (4) The new NFIRS module is very similar to FBI/UCR data elements
 - b. Data collected will serve as the basis for all applications via unified form employing several tiers of data:
 - (1) Page 1 (First Tier)
 - (a) General data to serve statistical needs of all levels
 - (b) Filled out by local fire or police agency for our investigations
 - (c) Filled out by State Fire Marshal for their cases
 - (d) All data is collected by State Fire Marshal for statewide analysis and national submittal
 - (2) Page 2 (Second Tier)
 - (a) Case-specific information AIMS use
 1. Names
 2. Economic information
 3. Insurance information

- (b) Collected for agency use but not forwarded (to protect case-specific, confidential information)
 - (3) Page 3 (Third Tier)
 - (a) Other investigative material
 - 1. Lab report
 - 2. Photographs
 - 3. Diagrams
 - 4. Other investigative product
 - (b) Collected but not forwarded
 - c. Develop means for quality assurance for information collected
 - d. Develop training for systems
 - (1) Develop improved documentation and instruction manual
 - (2) Develop audit mechanism to insure data integrity
 - (3) Develop mechanisms for fines/enticement
- B. Develop AIMS 2000 system using following criteria:
 - 1. Must be compatible with new NFIRS/UCR report format
 - 2. Must be "user friendly"
 - 3. Should operate on several platforms:
 - a. MS/DOS
 - (1) Windows
 - (2) UNIX
 - (3) OS/2
 - b. Apple/Macintosh
 - c. Mainframe
 - d. Network
 - 4. Should be capable of operating in either portable, stand-alone, or network configuration
 - a. Must include development of complete documentation and instruction manual
 - b. Must include "support" from USFA
 - (1) Training
 - (2) Telephone support
 - (a) Toll Free Phone
 - (b) Problem solving
 - c. Should be made available at nominal cost or free
 - d. Upgrades should be made available to all registered users regularly
 - e. Data manipulation and query capabilities should be flexible
 - f. Should include geographic mapping capability
 - g. Should contain two tracks:

- (1) Case management system
- (2) Early warning system
- h. Should include the development of an oversight committee
- i. Must include Alpha testing in:
 - (1) At least one (1) state
 - (2) At least one (1) county
 - (3) At least one (1) forest service organization
 - (4) At least one (1) local jurisdiction
- j. Should include a substantial Beta testing prior to release of final software media to facilitate debugging
- 5. Key Elements for Success
 - a. Timing - "Just in Time" to revisit the issue
 - a. State Fire Marshals - Key - central state collection point for data
 - b. "Standards of conduct"
 - (1) What information must be collected
 - (2) NFPA 921 now requires uniform collection of data
 - d. Recognize that data from FBI/UCR, USFA/NFIC, and AIMS are all significant to the success of this project
 - e. Provide fiscal support to state fire marshals to implement system¹
 - f. Program must be marketed to appropriate participants in the fire investigation industry

III. Analysis of current systems

- A. NFPA - determines extent of arson by statistical sampling and extrapolation
 - 1. Strengths
 - a. Reputation
 - b. Non-governmental organization
 - c. Widely drawn sample
 - 2. Weaknesses
 - a. Depends on the model
 - b. Subject to sampling errors
 - c. Under-reports
 - (1) Only source that shows arson to be declining!
- B. PILR - Lists insurance industry report on all fires involving member companies and identifies property owners
 - 1. Strengths

¹When NFIRS was started, seed money was provided to defray startup costs

- a. Person specific
 - b. Accurate dollar loss data
 - c. Trackable by property or person
 - d. Not Specific to arson/fraud
2. Weaknesses
- a. Not all insurance companies participate
 - b. Not arson specific
 - c. Insurance driven
 - d. Lacks identifiable points
 - (1) Names
 - (2) Identifiers
3. FBI/UCR - Law Enforcement driven
4. Strengths
- a. Gathers arrest data
 - b. Gathers dollar loss
 - c. FBI is mandated to collect the data
 - d. a validation process exists
5. Weaknesses
- a. Arson is not reported if other more serious crimes are involved in the case
 - b. No target specific data
 - c. Voluntary compliance
 - d. FBI is an unwilling partner by congressional action
 - e. Much of raw data is protected
- C. State Specific Systems - Frustration with other systems has resulted in the development of various systems in several states including New York, California, Florida, and Michigan
6. Strengths
- a. Data gathering is tailored to the needs of individual state
 - b. Data analysis is localized
7. Weaknesses
- a. Comparability and compatibility
 - b. Makes national projection difficult

MANAGEMENT ISSUES IN FIRE & ARSON

- I. Recognition that Fire/Arson issues need to be known at all levels of management.
 - A. Realize magnitude of the problem
 - B. Understand needs of investigative groups
 - C. Increase Public Awareness and support of issues related to fire and arson
 1. General lack of public awareness on all fire issues, particularly arson.
 - D. Elected Officials/Policy Makers - There is a lack of appreciation of severity of problem by policy makers and legislative bodies.
 1. Develop Courses/materials to educate:
 - a. Mayors
 - b. City Managers
 - c. City/Town Councils
 - d. Commissioners
 2. Possible partners:
 - a. National League of Cities
 - b. National Association of Counties
 - c. National Governors Association
 - d. International City Manager's Association
 - e. League of Municipalities
 - E. Recommended Solutions/Deliverables:
 1. The Elected Official's Guide to Arson - Joint United States Fire Administration/International Association of Arson Investigators/National League of Cities
 2. The Fire Chief's Guide to Arson - Joint United States Fire Administration/International Association of Arson Investigators/International Association of Fire Chiefs
 3. The Police Chief's Guide to Arson - Joint United States Fire Administration/International Association of Arson Investigators/International Association of Chiefs of Police/Police Education Research Foundation
 4. Resource material
 - a. Pamphlets
 - b. Newsletters
 - c. Seeded Articles in industry publications
 - d. Informational Video
 - e. Public Service Announcements
- II. Encourage local officials insurance industry to seek more between UCR and NFIRS and PILR
 - A. Expand National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program to include fire investigation management concepts

III. Jurisdictional Issues - Encourage Cooperation and Public/Private Partnerships between

1. Fire
 2. Law Enforcement
 3. Prosecutor
 4. Insurance
 5. Private
 6. Legal
 7. Associations
 8. Other
- A. Recommended Solutions/Deliverables
1. Continue to develop and provide funding for Arson Unit Managers Course in partnership with ATF and FBI.
 2. Reopen NFA Arson class to insurance personnel
 3. Expand educational opportunities at Federal Law Enforcement Training Center
 4. Increase educational opportunities involving immunity statutes
 5. Explore the establishment of an ombudsman hotline for informal jurisdictional dispute resolution
 6. Develop programs that train the trainer to deliver fire investigation training

IV. Managerial Development

- A. Management Practice Issues
1. Administration
 - a. Task Force Management
 - (1) Urban
 - (2) Rural
 - (a) Special problems of small community arson
 - (b) Politics and interference
 - (3) Paid
 - (4) Volunteer
 - b. Case file management
 2. Finance
 - a. Budgeting
 - b.
 - (1) Performance based
 - (2) Activity Based Costing
 - c. Non-traditional funding
 - (1) Cost recovery
 - (2) User fees
 - (3) Privatization
 - (4) Grants
 3. Personnel
 - a. Health & Safety

- (1) Wellness
 - (2) OSHA
 - (3) Protective Equipment
 - b. Performance Measures
 - (1) Positive Incentives
 - (2) Result orientation
 - c. Recruiting
 - (1) Fire fighter arson
 - (a) Civil rights issues
- 4. Information
 - a. Technology applications
 - (1) Computers
 - (2) Telephone
 - (3) FAX
 - (4) Radio
 - (5) Surveillance equipment
 - b. Data Gathering
 - (1) UCR
 - (2) NFIRS
 - (3) NFIC
 - (4) PILR
 - c. Media
 - (1) Proactive Strategies - Marketing
 - (a) Internally within organization
 - (b) Externally with public
 - (2) Dealing with generally
- 5. Managing Limited Training Opportunities
 - a. Who goes?
 - b. Enough courses?
- B. Recommended Solutions/Deliverables
 - 1. Unit Manager's Guide to Unit Operation¹
 - 2. Unit Manager's Guide to Case Management
 - 3. Continue to develop and provide funding for Arson Unit Managers Course in partnership with ATF and FBI.
 - 4. Recommend that United States Fire Administration study investigator safety issues
 - 5. Recommend that United States Fire Administration study fire fighter arson issues

¹This course should include Management Theory; Command and control vs. Molecular models (problem oriented teams) and methods to Stimulate Innovation and creativity

- V. Critical Issues for Immediate Congressional Action
1. Increase United States Fire Administration resources and funding
 - a. Office of Fire Prevention and Arson Control
 - b. National Fire Academy
 - (1) Faculty
 - (2) Facilities
 - (3) Courses
 2. Increase of resources at Federal Law Enforcement Training Center for Fire/Arson programs
 - a. Faculty
 - b. Facilities
 - (1) Provide funding for the construction of a state-of-the-art burn building at Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glyneo, Georgia
 - c. Courses
 3. Recommend that the United States Fire Administration facilitate periodic meetings involving various groups and agencies involved in arson issues

INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION ISSUES IN ARSON CONTROL

- I. Fire Suppression Personnel
 - A. Training should include:
 1. Recognition of "red flags" of arson
 2. Preservation of evidence during suppression, overhaul and post fire operations
 - B. Recording and documenting observations
 1. Post-fire discussions
 2. Detailed written documentation of observations
 3. Develop guidelines for when it is appropriate for suppression personnel to report on the cause of fires
- II. Fire Investigator - Public and Private
 - A. Establish minimum uniform training standards for fire scene analysis
 - B. Establish minimum uniform training standards for latent investigation techniques
 - C. Establish minimum uniform training standards for preparation and presentation of expert testimony
 - D. Establish strict uniform criteria for certification of fire investigators to include:
 1. Experience requirement
 2. Job responsibility requirements
 - E. Promote cooperation between public and private sectors, including the enactment of a federal arson immunity reporting act
 - F. Establish and promote continuing education and professional development
- III. Prosecutors - Federal & State
 - A. Develop training programs for prosecutors in handling arson cases
 1. Basic training
 2. Advanced level training.
 - B. Promote the creation of designated, specialized arson prosecution units
 1. Encourage the funding of specialized seed grant positions
 - C. Promote the development of career arson prosecutors
 - D. Develop avenues of communication between the arson prosecutor and investigators
 1. Fire service and fire investigation agencies
 2. Insurance industry and their attorneys
 3. Other arson prosecutors and organizations such as:
 - a. National College of District Attorneys
 - b. National District Attorneys Association
 - c. American Bar Association

- E. Encourage the Justice Department to establish a National Arson Prosecution Initiative
- IV. Forensic Testing and Standards
- A. Identification of scientific issues, testing for scientific issues, and development of standards
 - 1. Support the effort to establish a federal test burn facility
 - 2. Develop, support, and publicize ethical standards of scientific conduct
 - 3. Allocate resources to develop and implement training standards and programs for laboratory forensic analysts
- V. Arson Awareness
- Arson awareness is an essential component of arson control. It should include cooperative public/private efforts to promote recognition of the scope of the arson problem
- A. Develop a national media campaign to increase arson awareness
 - 1. Cooperative media campaign in partnership with the National Ad Council
 - a. Should emphasize local level distribution
 - B. Educate other public sector entities including:
 - 1. Legislative
 - 2. Judicial
 - 3. Local government officials
 - C. Create interagency cooperation where it does not exist, and enhance interagency cooperation where it does exist
 - 1. Identify and fully utilize available resources for training and funding, both public and private
 - D. Legislative proposal:
 - 1. Enactment of a Federal Arson Immunity Reporting Act.
 - 2. Model legislation to provide civil penalties for filing fraudulent claims in arson cases, including attorney fees and costs

PREVENTION ISSUES IN ARSON CONTROL

PREVENTION

Arson Prevention techniques can best be defined from two perspectives: Pro-active (preventing the arson fire) and reactive (after the arson fire).

Traditionally, the effective approach to arson prevention is through a reactive response by establishing and maintaining a base of knowledgeable, well-trained investigators whose successful efforts will provide deterrence of potential arsonists and a reduction of repeat offenders. This must be continued as part of any prevention program.

With it accepted that investigation, detection, and prosecution can serve well as reactive prevention measures, pro-active methods can play a significant role in preventing the loss of lives, destruction of property and the erosion of our communities and environment.

Looking at prevention from the standpoint of motive, there are both long term (general) and short term (specific to a property or circumstance) approaches. An effective approach to arson prevention is from the motive-based perspective. However, juvenile/vandalism firesetting, arson-for-profit, arson by the mentally impaired, concealment of a crime, revenge-motivated arson, extremist-motivated arson, and serial arson, all may require different prevention techniques.

Effective record keeping and resulting accurate statistical data are necessary in any prevention program to ensure that available resources are being efficiently utilized.

Juvenile/vandalism and arson-for-profit are the most visible motives that can respond successfully to long-term, pro-active techniques.

JUVENILE/VANDALISM FIRESETTERS

- USFA should identify and provide the delivery mechanism for a universally accepted juvenile firesetting program, such as the Institute for Social Analysis' (ISA) prototype component program now being pilot tested.
- USFA should establish a means for actively promoting this program and communicating the impact arson has on everyone's lives thereby increasing awareness of the problem, on the order of a "Learn Not To Burn" or "Just Say NO!" campaign.

As a long term benefit juveniles will understand better the devastating implication of firesetting behavior which can carry through into adult lives.

Audiences must include, but not be limited to:

- General Public,
- Schools,
- Parents,
- Medical Community,
- Mental Health Community,
- Fire Service,
- Law Enforcement,
- Legal Profession,
- Judiciary.

USFA must also make connections with other public and private sector agencies and associations to help generate a better understanding of the positive impact of effective arson prevention programs.

Targeted groups should include, but not be limited to:

- Congressional Fire Service Caucus,
- IAFC,
- IAFF,
- National Volunteer Fire Council,
- National Arson Forum,
- National Association of District Attorneys
- PTAs,
- NFPA.

ARSON-FOR-PROFIT

USFA should encourage the fire service community along with local government and other various agencies to share information on fire inspections, code violations, unsafe conditions, vacant or depreciating buildings, or other possible arson prone conditions with other agencies, such as the insurance industry, and support a movement to broaden the existing Arson Reporting Immunity Laws that are in all 50 states, to include sharing of "pre-fire" information to assist in identifying possible arson targets.

This information should include:

- information on delinquent taxes, code violations, disconnected utilities and other important indicators of potential arson, such as utilized through the AIMS program;

- access to and/or development of data bases of this type of information. Fire department access to the Automated Property Loss Underwriting System A-PLUS) might be a first step.

USFA should promote better quality and more frequent fire inspection. Such pro-active steps can:

- make for good detection/protection devices
- help identify arson-prone properties
- increase owner value of property through forced capital investment for upgrading
- increase owner's awareness of public scrutiny

USFA must work toward improving the level of training of investigators, increasing detection of arson after the fact and identifying indicators of potential arson fires prior to the fact are effective prevention measures.

GENERAL PREVENTIVE TECHNIQUES

USFA should support and promote a variety of techniques that can address more general approach to arson prevention.

Loss Management

- Identify target properties
- Maintain fixed fire protection/detection systems
- Securing flammable liquids and combustibles
- Securing the property
- Limit available fuels through better housekeeping

Community Based Programs

- Train and encourage the fire service to work in cooperation with existing community based anti-arson task force groups or create their own. These groups should address issues such as:

Media Relations

Anti-arson or fire safety workshops

Citizen or neighborhood patrols

Public Relations/Media Programs

- Develop "Media Kit" for use with community based-programs, including public service announcements, sample speeches, news releases and a user's guide.

Prevention Task Forces

- encourage participation by fire service and prevention task forces (i.e., multi-agency cooperative efforts supported by the insurance industry).
- recognize and utilize resources currently existing in the public and private sector.

Investigation Training

- USFA should continue its enthusiastic support of arson investigation through fire & arson investigation and arson management courses, and current updates of fire investigation science and technology curricula.

CONCLUSION

The success of any long term prevention programs may not be immediately evident. Long term problems require dedicated long term solutions. This is particularly true with arson prevention programs. A change in the mindset of the general public is often the key to success.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION ISSUES IN FIRE AND ARSON CONTROL

Introduction

The quality of the arson investigation is directly related to training. Priorities in the training and education process are numerous and complex. The sub-committee on training and education recommends the following priorities be addressed.

- Quality of the training and education process.
- Improved accessibility and availability of training and education programs.
- Sufficient funding to allow the enhancement of existing programs and address the growing needs and complexities of current and future fire and arson investigation community.
- Establishment and enhancement of in-service/continuing education and career path in the training and education process.

If the training and education process is going to meet present and future needs it must meet the challenges of the constantly increasing burdens on existing resources. We must continue to seek new and innovative approaches to an old and growing problem. We must encourage cooperative partnerships between Federal, State, Local, and private entities to collectively address the arson problem. It is also essential that we also utilize this group collectively in addressing training and education needs.

The education process must go further in interfacing the interdisciplinary components of the arson investigation community to create a more cooperative team approach and bring that information to the attention of the public.

The training and education process must also address the need for a career path of training for all disciplines involved in the fire/arson investigation and control profession.

Why

Expectations of professionals in all fields are greater today than ever before. As a result additional and continuing education and training must be provided that will keep up with not only changing legal standards but new technology as well. Cross training and awareness component is necessary for coordination among agencies charged with the responsibility for investigating fire cause and arson. The emphasis must be placed on determining "the cause(s)" as opposed to "a cause." It must be remembered that the quality of the investigation is directly related to the quality of the training and education the investigator receives.

Who and What

- Group I:** Those individuals that have a direct responsibility for the investigation of the crime of arson.
- Group II:** The educator that provides the training and education to the arson investigator.
- Group III:** Those individuals that provide support to those that investigate arson.
- Group IV:** Those individuals that do not have the responsibility to investigate or litigate arson, but through their normal activities have the ability to impact the overall reduction and control of the crime of arson.

Group I Arson Investigator

1. Investigator Areas of responsibility.

This individual is one of the keys to the arson control process. This individual may have a variety of responsibilities and role in the investigation process depending on statutory authority and other mandated requirements.

a. Fire/Arson Investigator

Responsibility: Completes scene investigation to determine the origin and cause of the fire, if a crime has occurred this individual will continue the investigative process through criminal prosecution.

Required Training: Determination of the Origin and Cause of the fire, criminal investigation techniques, and the litigation process.

b. Arson Investigator

Responsibility: To complete the criminal investigation and follow the process through the litigation process.

Required Training: Criminal investigation techniques, litigation process, and an awareness level of training in the area of fire origin and cause determination.

c. Fire Investigator

Responsibility: To complete the fire investigation (Determination of the origin and cause of the fire), and when a crime has been committed work with the Arson Investigator to complete the criminal prosecution.

Required Training: Fire cause determination and the related areas of controlling the scene and evidence so that investigative activities can be used in the litigation process when it is determined that a crime has been committed. Awareness of the criminal investigation and litigation techniques.

Certification or Documentation of Credentials: Training and education programs delivered to all categories of Fire/Arson investigators should be performance based to provide an avenue for evaluation of the level of proficiency of the user. This evaluation process should when appropriate contain both knowledge and practical (skill) applications.

Group II: Educator

Responsibility: To prepare or develop courses, instructional materials, evaluation instruments, and deliver instructional programs to meet the needs of the Arson Investigator.

Training: The educator should possess the technical knowledge and experience of Fire/Arson Investigation and also be competent in instructional techniques.

Certification or Documentation of Credentials: The educator must be required to provide documentation of their knowledge and abilities relevant to the entire instructional process or to their limited instructional responsibilities as a part of the entire course(s).

Group III: Support Personnel

Responsibility: This group is quite extensive, and will have a variety of responsibilities from codes and standards, legal community, engineering disciplines, laboratory technicians, arson unit supervisors, and a variety of others to numerous to list.

Training: The individual should be first trained and duly qualified as to the specific area of responsibility, and also receive training to the awareness level of their specific role in the total arson investigation.

Certification or Documentation of Credentials: Many of these individuals already possess certification or license in their respected fields.

Group IV: Other Individuals with Concerns or impact on the Arson Problem

This as in Group III is a diverse population within society. Examples include state and local government officials, fire service members, and many others.

Training: The level of training would be limited to an awareness of the arson problem and their impact to assist in the control of this problem.

Where

Countless facilities exist on a state by state basis which are capable of providing designated training services to fire and arson investigators. There are also numerous programs which are presented in specific topical areas by municipal and state governmental agencies. These programs address the specific needs in those geographical areas. This component of training and education needs to continue to grow, in both course content and course offerings through cooperative arrangements with the appropriate federal agencies responsible for these program areas. (ie. USFA, ATF, FBI, NIST and others). In addition, this training needs to be coupled with the training efforts both on-site and field offered by the National Fire Academy and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms. These agencies have some of the specialized facilities needed to present a hybrid on-site educational opportunity and the capability to establish and maintain an appropriate field delivery of appropriate training and education programs and materials for use at the local level. Enhancement of the delivery capability and programs will ultimately have a positive effect on the nations arson problem.

When

Training and education must be viewed as a continual process given the ever increasing complexity of the field. The frequency of the existing training programs at the federal level must be increased wherever feasible. The extremely limited capacity at these facilities has caused a backlog of students as much as three years. The improvement and coordination of local training through assistance from the United States Fire Administration and the National Fire Academy Field Programs will also increase the availability and access to essential courses.

How

In order to achieve the goals set forth it will be necessary for adequate funding and support to the United States Fire Administration and other agencies involved in the research, education, and control of arson. The establishment, revision, and delivery of programs cannot occur without this support.

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