

1993 Scholarship Report

to the

COMBINED EMERGENCY SERVICES FOUNDATION

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Combined Emergency Services Foundation
Scholarship recipient 1993.

Volunteer with the
Country Fire Authority of Victoria

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INTRODUCTION

I wasn't really prepared for the size and capacity of the pumps on the appliances I saw in the early stages of the scholarship.

The emergency pumpers would carry 1000 to 1500 gallons of water with a 1250 gallon pump capacity. They carry 600 feet of 4" or 5" some 6" pre connected canvas hose and 1000 feet of 3" canvas.

One unit had 1 mile of canvas on the rear of the tanker. When asked why they required that much hose they told me that the hydrants are 2 mile apart.

When they get a grass fire most departments have to run out canvas, put out as far as they can reach, pack up, and move on to the next area. Rural departments had a small jeep unit with 200 gallons of water.

It wasn't until I got to California that I saw any vehicles that were similar to ours in Victoria.

The Department of Forestry and Fire Protection is responsible for wild land fires out in the Rural Areas.

In Massachettus they had a vehicle called a "scrub buster" which had a large pipe frame out the front to push the small trees over and make a track through the scrub. It carried 200 to 300 gallons of water.

Firefighters don't stand on the back of a moving vehicle to fight fires they walk along side or run out the necessary hose.

All the vehicles are diesel powered with automatic transmission to reduce maintenance costs.

Vehicles are twin cab with roll over frames built in and they usually just replace the cab and chassis and have the body refurbished and painted, unless they have been fortunate enough to be able to buy a new unit off the floor.

I was fortunate to be able to attend a Fire Expo in Baltimore which is like a large motor show only it is all fire appliances and equipment. We were there for four hours and didn't see it all, and I was told this is one of the smaller shows.

Every make of fire appliance displayed and available to be purchased by the Fire Department. How would you like to send two volunteers up to purchase a new unit, you have up to \$400,000 to spend.

I spoke to the guys in Tennessee who had done just that. They informed me the money was there to spend so they did.

SCHOLARSHIP ITINERARY

I gave a list of my objectives and the States I would like to see to Chief Jack Snook of the Tualation Valley Fire and Rescue. He became ill and passed the organisation of the itinerary on to Chief Gary Nees.

Chief Gary Nees was really the main contributing factor in the success of this scholarship tour. His attention to detail even down to who my host would be in each State. He would then follow up with a phone call to each host about mid way through to make sure everything was going to plan. I would like to acknowledge Chief Gary Nees of the Tualation Valley Fire and Rescue.

OREGON: 3rd July to 8th July - 4 days
Saturday and Sunday recovery days

Tualation Valley and Clackamas County

HOST: Chief Gary Nees - Tualation Valley Fire and Rescue

CONTACTS: Battalion Chief Rob Schneider
District Chief Dave Fox
Lieutenant Doug Myers - Paramedic
Volunteer Chief Jeff Butts
Training Officer Gary Ness
Battalion Chief Ken Frentress - Clackamas County
EMS Project Officer Kyle Gorman - Clackamas County

CANADA: 9th July to 11th July
Vancouver

MASSECHUSETTS: 12th July to 16th July - 5 days

City of Hingham, Hopkinton, Holliston, Hyannis at Cape Cod.

HOST: Chief Richard K Wehter - of the town of Hingham

He went on leave on the 13th July and then we were hosted by Captain Paul Peaslee of the town of Hingham.

CONTACTS: Stephen D Coan - Director Massachusetts Firefighting Academy
William M Hollick - Deputy Director
John L Corcoran - Instructor
Kathleen A D Amelio - Program coordinator
Fredrick W Piechota Jr - Deputy Director Development and Certification
John J O'Donoghue - Program Development
Val Denault - Co ordinator Recruit Training
John P McNamara - Worcester Fire Department
Andrew Reardon - Norwell Fire Department
Chief Richard J MacMillan - Hopkinton Fire Department
Chief Dave Chisholm - Hyannis Fire and Rescue Department
Volunteer Chief John Morian - Perkiomen Township
Earle S Everhart of E J Murphy and Co - Vehicle builders and restoration

VIRGINIA: 17th July to 23rd July - 7 days

17th & 18th - sightseeing Washington DC

Fairfax County

HOST: Chief Glen Gains - Fairfax County
Deborah J Keys - Administrative Assistant

CONTACTS: Sandra L Werner - Volunteer Co ordinator Fire and Rescue
Department
James M Strickland - Assistant Chief EMS
Lieutenant Lawder - Fairfax Training Academy
Ralph Lacey - Firefighter (Our driver)

Loudon County

HOST: David Hunt - Assistant Fire Marshall

CONTACTS: William Goldfeder - Director Loudon County Fire and
Rescue

MARYLANDS

City of Frederick

HOST: Walter F Murray Jr - Deputy Director Support Services

CONTACTS: Commissioner Bruce L Reeder
John W Droneburg - Director Public Safety Division also
President of Volunteer Association
Edward J Kaplam - Acting Chief National Fire Academy
Emmitsburg

TENNESSEE: 24th July to 29th July - 6 days

City of Knoxville

HOST: Chief Roger Hawks - Rural Metro Fire Department

CONTACTS: Chief John Yu - Knoxville Volunteer Rescue Squad
Chief Baron Kennedy - Volunteer Chief Tazewell and New
Tazewell Fire Department
Lieutenant Ross Dempster - Paramedic Rural Metro
Mark D McConnell - General Manager Rural Metro
Chief James Atchley - City of Sevierville
Chief Ted Esch - Seymore Volunteer Fire Department
Wayne Wagganer - Fire Marshall

ARIZONA: 30th July to 4th August - 6 days

Saturday and Sunday - social

City of Pheonix

HOST: Deputy Chief Gary Morris - Phoenix Fire Department

CONTACTS: Chief Bob Beckitt - Terrance in Canada (visitor to Pheonix)
Daryl Wiseman - Firefighter/Paramedic
Craig Laser - EMS Training Division Pheonix fire Training Academy
Leigh Naig - EMS Co ordinator St Josephs Hospital and Medical Centre
Pheonix Airport Fire Department
Dr Richard Gerkin MD - Fire Department Physician

LAS VAGAS AND GRAND CANYON - 5th August to 6th August

CALIFORNIA - 7th August to 10th August

City of Sacramento

HOST: Ron Coleman - State Fire Marshall

CONTACTS: Art Cota - Division Chief State Fire Training
Alicia Hamilton - Fire Service Training Specialist
Richard C Wherton - National Firefighter
Denny Bungerz - Joint Apprenticeship and Training Program
Larry Navarrette - Arson and Bomb Investigator
Richard W Schell - State Forest Ranger, Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Dan E Francis - Fire Academy Administrator, Department of Training

11th August to 13th August

Disneyland and Universal Studios

Return to Melbourne

TRAINING ACADEMIES VISITED

- * Tualation Valley Fire and Rescue Academy
- * Clackamas County Fire and Rescue
- * Massachusetts Firefighting Academy
- * Fairfax County Training Academy
- * Louden County Fire and Rescue Academy
- * Marylands Training Academy - still under construction
- * Pheonix Fire and Rescue Academy
- * California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Training Academy

FIRE DEPARTMENTS

I visited at least 4 fire departments in each county, during my visit, some volunteer and some career.

It was interesting to note that some volunteers had a paid Chief who was on duty each day, while he completed all the administration work, he was always available.

PREFACE

The opportunity granted to me as a Volunteer of the Country Fire Authority by the Emergency Service Foundation is most appreciated.

To have had the opportunity to study, and discuss the operation of the fire service in the United States of America is something most volunteers just could not believe. I for one had to pinch myself on several occasions, to believe the hospitality that was extended to us by the American Fire Service, it was truly outstanding.

My objective was to study training concepts of Volunteer Fire Departments in the United States of America, and adopt the concepts to our own service.

The specific areas of study were:-

- * recruitment of volunteers
- * retention of volunteers
- * Training requirements of volunteers in busy built up areas and also of small rural counties.
- * training and Accreditation
- * Competency Based Training and its effects on standards
- * Methods used to encourage volunteers to further their training.
- * look at fire protection in rural counties
- * fire prevention programs carried out by rural managers
- * community awareness of Volunteers and other services provided
- * integration of EMS in the fire service

SECTION 1 THE POLITICS

1.1 What's Going on in the United States?

The Politics in the fire service are similar to Victoria.

- Budget Cuts
- Regionalisation and consolidation of fire Departments
- Rationalisation of equipment
- Decentralise the power of management back to the stations
- Lack of availability of volunteers during the day

The role and responsibility of the Fire Service Departments that I had access to is very similar to the CFA. It is community based and relies on county or city taxes for funding of its career Fire Departments. The volunteer Departments are funded by the town or by donation.

The major concern in volunteer Departments is the growth taking place in their areas and the availability of manpower during the day. In Seymore the town had grown from 3,000 people 3 years ago to 10,000 at the moment and the amount of new buildings going up, it was still growing at a rapid rate.

This was not an isolated case, as everywhere I went, their seemed to be large developments of housing, in what was formally rural areas.

In Loudon county in the State of Virginia we drove around a subdivision of 1000 acres owned by IBM and on the other side of the freeway was another 1000 acre subdivision owned by Zerox.

These subdivisions initially were set up to sell 200 homes a month but with the down turn in the economy they were down to 12 per month. Prices ranged for condominium type apartments, from \$125,000 to \$175,000 and homes started at \$250,000 and went to \$400,000.

Nobody could tell me where all the people were coming from. Think of the impact on the Fire Departments with this type of development taking place.

The fire service is responsible for a number of specialist areas as well as fire.

- Fire Suppression
- Emergency Medical Services relates to 60 to 70 % of their calls
- Hazardous Materials
- Trench Rescue
- Heavy Rescue
- Smooth Water Rescue
- Cold water Rescue and Dive Rescue
- Sea Rescue (Cap Code area)
- High Angle Rope Rescue

The amount of equipment required to cover each of these was extensive and each Department either had a specialist vehicle or a trailer that could be attached.

REGIONALISATION

In areas where regionalisation had not taken place it was not uncommon to see 8 to 10 vehicles in the station. But where there had been some consolidation, specialist vehicles would be placed strategically around the district, thus covering the area more economically.

I was interested in the development of the consolidation of the Beaverton and Tualation Valley Fire Departments. They covered an area of 180 square miles, had 17 stations, 9 in the North under a Battalion Chief and 7 in the South under a separate Battalion Chief, they have 75 to 80 people on duty at any one time.

They only had 4 Volunteer Companies left and they were extremely efficient although they were not always turned out first generally because of the time delay, they would be the second or third responder.

Each vehicle was fitted with an on board computer as well as a radio and each emergency vehicle was fitted with a electronic device to change the traffic signals to green on approach, this was introduced to try and reduce accidents with emergency vehicles.

In Massachusetts, discussions were taking place on regionalisation, and they had employed Chief Jack Snook as their consultant. The State of Massachusetts is very old English and very traditional, and so change is inevitable as a cost saving measure.

However, it is meeting with a fair amount of resistance from the career personal as it will involve closing some stations, as they look at their standards of cover and the close proximity of other Fire Departments located just over the county boundary.

One firefighter told me I would never see it and neither would he.

Another said as long as we all keep talking about it then we don't have to do anything, so it will just keep on going.

Hyaniss Fire Department situated at Cape Cod has a population of approximately 25,000, from Friday lunch time to Monday lunch time, it grows to 200,000 people as they arrive at their holiday homes.

This is a fully career operated station which raises its money from Municiple taxes. It runs 1 emergency pumper which carries 1500 gallons of water with a 1250 gallon per minute pump fitted and a foam nozzle fitted to front and operates from a joy stick in the cabin.

When the driver pulls up to a building he can pump 1500 gallons of water onto the structure fire while the crew are running out the canvas hoses and fitting up the hydrant.

This can be converted to foam at the flick of a switch in the case of flammable liquid or airport call.

Chief Dave Chisholm had just purchased a new ladder truck for \$474,000 but had budgeted for \$500,000 so he was going to run a publicity program in local papers informing the public how he had saved them \$26,000.

Hyaniss is involved in airport emergency and sea rescue as well as all of the previous mentioned areas. The number of vehicles that operate out of the station are:-

- 2 EMS Ambulances
- 1 emergency pumper - 1500 gallon tank, 1250 gallon/min pump
- 1 100 ladder truck - 1500 gallon tank
- 1 Heavy Rescue - 500 gallon water , 500 gallon AFFF
- 1 Dive Team Rescue
- 1 Foam Trailer
- 1 Hazmat Trailer
- 1 Aluminimum boat
- 2 Rubber rafts
- 1 Sea rescue boat
- 1 Water Tanker - 2000 gallons
- 1 Ice rescue trailer

1.2 Rural Metro

I was hosted by the Rural Metro Fire Department in Tennessee and Chief Roger Hawks.

This Fire Department was a privately owned Department which had gone public to the stock exchange 2 weeks prior to my arrival.

Its head office was in Pheonix in Arizona. They have 12 sales staff who are paid on a commission basis to obtain business, commercial, industrial and residential contracts for Rural Metro to provide the fire service.

Each pay a subscription to Rural Metro, fees are set according to insurance category and risk.

They have approximately 90% of structures covered in the Urban areas but only 40% in rural areas because of the strong tradition in the area. It is not uncommon for 4 generations to have occupied the same house.

If they had not had a fire over that time they could not see why it was necessary to pay a subscription to the fire department.

However, if you don't pay you will be charged a minimum of \$800.00 per hour and standard operating procedures said a minimum of 3 units to turn out to structure fires so you would be up for \$2400.00 per hour and the money was collected.

The Fire Service was very professional to the stage that the Rural Metro Mechanical Officers provided a user pay system. A maintenance service to neighbouring volunteer departments

Rural Metro provided a fire service and EMS service to the greater Knoxville area and had a number of stations located strategically to cover the area of responsibility. They were in the process of purchasing land on a new subdivision to cater for the development.

Chief Roger Hawks was a quiet achiever in that he would plant a number of seeds at the Chiefs meetings and the neighbouring Volunteer Departments would develop the strategy as their own. This resulted in mutual aid being developed and providing strong support to each of the Volunteer Fire Departments.

Rural Metro had recruited 43 volunteers to aid their fire service and it also allowed the other Community funded fire Departments to see that there was little difference in their operation. The Volunteers had elected Chief Roger Hawks as their representative on the volunteer association. This was a significant gesture of the local volunteers around the Knoxville area in the faith and value they placed in Roger as there representative. The strong bond that had developed between the volunteer fire departments and Rural Metro was evident, in that they looked to Rural Metro as a public information bureau.

SECTION 2 INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

2.1 ICS

The Incident Command System model is now used Nationally, across the United States by all emergency services. The fire service seems to carry all the manuals in their command vehicles. If the police are the Command Agency then they bring out the box with a break down of other agency responsibilities and like wise if the EPA or fire are the responsible agency. It has been used extensively in earthquakes, structure fires, floods etc.

The only difference to ours that I could pick up is that they have written specifics for Hazardous materials, and other incidents.

I was most impressed when I arrived at Tualation Valley and asked Chief Nees how Chief Jack Snook was recovering from his heart transplant and he informed me that they were running all the enquiries using ICS. Instead of Operations having to do most of the work it was Planning and Logistics. A daily report was received from the hospital at 7.00 am and then broadcast through close circuit T.V. to all 14 stations. Because Chief Snook was so well known he was receiving calls from all over the States so all incoming calls to the administrative office were asked what the nature of their call, if they were inquiring about the health of Chief Snook they would be transferred to either ICS Command or Officer in Charge of Communications. They also had a person assigned to his home to transport his wife and children to the hospital or the children's sporting events.

Chief Snook's wife was relieved of all the pressure of answering phone calls and she knew her children were being picked up from sports, etc.

When I asked why use ICS for this, I was told it was a great way to allow staff the opportunity to use their skills.

The Tualation Valley Battalion Chiefs vehicles were set up as command vehicles in what we would call dual cab for-runners. They were fitted with fold down tables, tabards, Sector Boards, and panels, that could be used either to put a map on or use as a white board, on board computers and radios were also fitted.

These were set up similar to the way we would operate. Pheonix had a \$500,000 truck set up as a ICS command post. Each post was marked, ICS commander, assistant, logistics planning, etc. It had 4 video monitors, radios, telephone, ready to connect, six conditioned (need to be).

I thought this was an outstanding vehicle, it is used about 3 times a month on average, but I was told it was going out for a refit and total refurbishment. The type of vehicle we would consider as a State Command Vehicle.

SECTION 3 FITNESS PROGRAMS

3.1 Career Fire Fighters and Fitness Programs

Career Firefighters, this position is open to both men and women and each has to pass a physical examination as well as an agility test.

Everyone earns the right to apply to become a firefighter with the women increasing their upper body strength. Until recently a lot of departments set the agility test so hard that women had no hope of passing. It has now been modified to cover on the job activities like dragging hoses, lifting ladders, etc.

Most Fire Departments are placing increased emphasis on the physical fitness of their staff, with testing each year or every 3 years. The test consists of a physical and agility test for each person.

With increased fitness and increased upper body strength this has reduced the amount of compensation claims for injury. It has also picked up at an early stage any cardio vascular problems.

It was noticeable to me that everywhere a fitness program had been initiated the attitudes of those on station was exceptional. On the other hand, where there was no program in place, it was also quite noticeable of guys just sitting around and couldn't see any need to participate in any physical fitness program.

SECTION 4 TRAINING AND ACCREDITATION

4.1 Career/Volunteer Firefighter

All training for career/volunteer firefighters has been developed using N.F.P.A. standards. The training is available from all accredited state and county fire training facilities.

The standards are exactly the same for volunteers as career, the only difference is the career firefighter does an 18 week course and the volunteer does it part-time at weekends etc. to reach the same level. After a period of 6 months on when the training officer thinks you have gained enough experience you can sit the exam to firefighter 1 level and become accredited to this level.

From there you can move on to firefighter 2 level which requires a further 6 modules or 84 hours of theory plus the required practical skills.

You can decide to do additional modules on Hazardous materials, management, firefighting, foam, sprinkler operation, arson detection. On completion of above modules you can sit an exam for level 2.

If you wish to become an officer then you will be required to do the officer modules and sit the necessary exam to become accredited. Even in the volunteer ranks the Chief can appoint or you can be elected to Captain but you cannot put the strips on your helmet until you have passed the required exams to become accredited.

Usually the State Fire Marshall handles the accreditation forms and sends a representative to see that the theory and practical part of the exam are carried out to his satisfaction.

SECTION 5 VOLUNTEERS

5.1 The Volunteer System

Firefighters fit into three categories in the United States of America:-

- * career
- * call
- * volunteer

"Career" firefighters are employed on a full-time basis to provide a service to the community.

"Call" people are firefighters who can be called into the station when required and are paid. This payment varies considerably from \$4.50 per turn out, up to \$8.57 per hour for night rate and \$11.00 per hour during the day.

"Volunteer" which is strictly voluntary.

The cities and counties operate in different ways and I can see with regionalisation it will become more efficient.

However, at the moment they have:-

- a fully paid Chief with the remainder volunteers
- a fully paid Chief and two firefighters for daytime manning and volunteers manned at night.
- a volunteer chief with 2 paramedic/firefighters on duty and remaining volunteers.
- one paid firefighter on duty all the time with remainder all volunteers.
- a total volunteer department with 2 staff rostered on when available.
- a total volunteer department as we know it.

5.2 Recruitment and Retention of Volunteers

While recruiting and retaining volunteers are activities that support one another the development of a video called 'Recruiting and Retaining Volunteers' was to be shown on the emergency education network on the 18th August, I have arranged for a copy to be forwarded from the State Fire Marshalls Office in California. Loudon County have a similar approach to ours that your neighbour may be leading two lives, the other being a volunteer with the fire and rescue department. With a brief description of the activities Fairfax County has taken a different approach they ask you to become a volunteer and explain all the benefits.

Benefits of being a volunteer

- * free training
- * satisfaction of helping others
- * learn skills that last a life time
- * life insurance
- * workers compensation
- * personal property tax reductions
- * education tuition assistance
- * retirement program (not all counties)
- * join at any age
- * medical insurance (not all counties)

In Tennessee, volunteers are either recruited personally or by word of mouth.

In most cases, recruit applications are left to sit on the table for 3 months while an investigation into their background is carried out. If they are still interested they can commence their training and are not allowed to ride on any fire vehicles until such time as they have completed there basic training.

Most agreed if you could retain the volunteers for 2 years then generally you had them for life, the exception being work commitments, family demands or moving out of the area.

Cadet Program

A cadet program has been developed to encourage juniors to join the fire and rescue service. Cadets are considered as Red Hats. Cadets range from 13 to 16 years of age are eligible to do recruit training but are not allowed to ride on vehicles until they are 18 at which time they join the senior ranks.

At Leesburg I spoke to a young cadet who spent most of his summer break at the fire station. Leesburg has a career chief and the remainder were volunteers. They would find jobs for him to do around the station, at all times encouraging him into the service.

5.3 Volunteer Retirement Benefit

This retirement system was in place in Loudon County and also had been introduced in California and is based on a points system for active volunteers.

- * for every year you are active up to 25 years service you get points for the number of callouts.
- * number of trainings attended (credit for number of hours in course)
- * number of meetings attended.
- * being an officer
- * each volunteer had to earn a minimum of 80 points per year, for every 1000 points, a years credit was granted. A volunteer running 2000 calls per year could get 2 years credit.
- * You can not claim until you reach 55 years of age. You receive \$10.00 per month and up to \$250.00 per month maximum depending on the points you had gained.

5.4 Other Benefits for Volunteers

- * Tax benefits were offered by the county to volunteers on personal property tax, giving a 95% rebate on vehicles used for transport to fires. Each vehicle carried a window decal and these were given to volunteers free of charge.
- * other benefits included discounts to volunteers at department stores and restaurants etc.

SECTION 6 RESCUE UNIT

Knoxville Volunteer Rescue Unit

John Yu a chinese american is truly a remarkable man. He is the Chief of the Knoxville Rescue Unit. This rescue unit is completely volunteer and has 65 volunteers to man three stations. The Unit has a 27 board of Directors to oversee the operation.

6.1 Areas of Responsibility

- * Operate EMS but no transport
- * Cave Rescue
- * Vertical Rescue
- * Search and Rescue
- * Vehicle and medical quick response
- * Technical rescue
- * Heavy Rescue
- * Water Rescue
- * Support for Fire Departments
- * Hazardous Materials

They run 3200 calls per year and have 16 vehicles , 7 boats and several trailers set up for hazmat and trench rescue, etc and assets of over 2 million dollars.

Funding is provided by City Government, County Government, United Way and Private Donations of \$240,000 per year.

They have a budget of \$250,000 provided by the above sources and require equivalent amount to replace equipment and vehicles.

John Yu has incorporated a background of running this rescue service like a business. Briefly John is the President of a Personnel agency in Knoxville.

6.2 Recruitment of Volunteers

A sub committee was set up to go and ask suitable people to volunteer their time to the rescue unit. John has recruited Accountants, Computer Operators, Motor Mechanics, Spray Painters, Body Builders, just to name a few with the ulterior motive of making the rescue unit self sufficient in administration and maintenance.

Volunteers are required to meet stringent training requirements and at recruit training they are required to attend 11 weeks orientation program of 4 hours per week, to be instructed on the Knoxville volunteer standard rescue procedures. If you miss more than 1 training session during this orientation you are automatically out. The last recruit course started with 26 and finished with 23, of the three that left there were various reasons, did not pass agility test, or found it was too demanding. If you miss 2 training sessions after you have joined the senior ranks, you are called to the Chiefs Office to discuss your future.

There are 107 volunteers on the waiting list, both male and female.

6.2.1 Volunteer Manning

Volunteers are required to fill out a roster stating their availability for a 12 hour shift, either day or night. From this a daily roster is drawn up to have minimum of 2 on duty preferably 3 to be at the station for each of those 12 hour shifts.

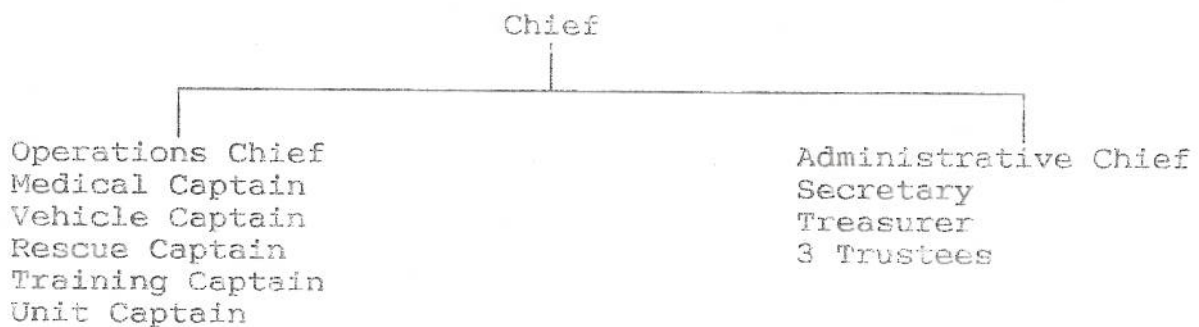
Chief John Yu averages 45 hours per week at the station over and above his full-time employment. He has 6 people who have averaged 2300 hours each per year in the previous year.

Age limit is from 16 to 82 years, they have only one 82 year old, he is the Chief who started the Rescue unit and is called upon for advice on many occasions.

6.3 Certification

The Knoxville Rescue Squad certification committee has used the N.F.P.A. standards as a minimum, but the Rescue Squad have set a higher standard certification system because of the nature of their rescue work.

6.4 Office Structure



6.5 Fundraising

They have \$360,000 in the bank at any one time with a \$100,000 minimum balance to be left for a disaster fund.

This money and more is committed in the business plan over a 3 to 5 year period. John informed me, he had just completed 2 fundraising drives that were successful. They had raised \$50,000 in 8 weeks, in the first and a further \$50,000 in 12 weeks in the second drive.

This was done by using coupon books. The first was managed by the bank, they sell the books for \$5.00 the Rescue get \$2.50 and the agency gets \$2.50 but all expenses come out of the agency's margin.

They have little difficulty selling coupon books, the agency does all the work and the Rescue collects the money.

One of the reasons they can sell so many books is that the Fire Departments and the Rescue Department are held in such high regard in the Community. They have worked hard in every State I visited to raise the profile of the Fire and Rescue Services and here is just one instance where it is really paying off.

6.6 Meetings

Until John took over as Chief, the Board Meetings used to take 5 to 6 hours, they now take 1 hour with a maximum of 3 minutes extension. John's professionalism and pre planning has allowed the streamlining of this operation and it is hoped that it will continue after John's 2 year term as Chief is completed early next year.

To keep vehicles clean and to encourage the volunteers to take pride in their vehicles he arranged for all wheels and bumpers to be chrome plated. This resulted in the vehicles being washed on a regular basis.

The paint work on all vehicles was immaculate (recruited spray painter and chrome plater). On a major emergency he could pull 50 volunteers out of 65, but was concerned if these major incidents occurred back to back, as he was always conscious of maintaining a good relationship with the volunteer employers.

6.7 Arson Investigation

Arson investigation was usually carried out by trained officers of the Fire Marshalls Office.

Additional assistance is provided to local fire, and at law enforcement agencies in arson, bomb, fireworks and fire extinguisher investigations as well as explosive ordinance disposal. Other responsibilities include training of local law enforcement and fire personal in fire and explosive investigation.

In California and also Loudon county they have trained dogs to smell accelerant detection.

In Loudon county I was privileged to see "NIKI" a Labrador Retriever cross do her morning workout. She is trained to smell 18 different types of accelerant in an arson situation. The work out consisted of 8 different types of accelerant which were spread through the burns building at the training academy and Niki was put through her paces, each time she found one she was fed. The only way she is fed is by working for her meals.

The dog sits when she finds the accelerant and puts her nose on the spot.

eg. gasoline reduced by 50% with water. 3 eye dropper drops on concrete, left for 20 minutes in 95°F temperatures and dog found spot in about 3 minutes.

6.8 Fire Prevention

Fire Prevention in the United States is certainly different in many ways to the way we operate. It exists as a public education program in towns and cities and doesn't move into rural areas at all.

Booklets are produced advising the community how to prevent fires from occurring in the home and a list of all the prevention measures similar to ours. The installation of smoke detectors is compulsory and Insurance Companys in some states have actually sponsored the purchaser of smoke detectors to get them into existing homes. One of their slogans is "CHANGE YOUR CLOCK (daylight saving) CHANGE YOUR BATTERY SMOKE DETECTORS SAVE LIVES".

They also encourage the use of stickers to indicate childrens bedrooms.

Residential sprinkler systems are becoming more popular in new residents. A lot of installation is placed where the fire is likely to break out in basements where the boiler is located, in kitchen areas or in front of the open fire places. This has reduced the cost considerably and has made it more attractive to install. However if you can afford full sprinkler system it is highly recommended.

They have developed a residential sprinkler head which barely protrudes below the ceiling level and is hardly noticeable in the building.

In Tennessee they have set up a mobile caravan to demonstrate the efficiency of residential sprinkler heads. The only modification to the standard caravan is they have built a glass wall across so you can actually feel the heat.

They set a rubbish tin full of paper alight and it runs up the curtain to the ceiling and the heat activates the sprinkler system and extinguishes the fire.

They replace the curtain that is burnt and the sprinkler head and with the use of squeegee sponges they can have it ready for the next demonstration in about 15 minutes. (I have details of the construction of the system). Mobile homes are a big hazard when they catch fire because of their construction. They last about 4 minutes until they are completely lost.

The Fire Marshalls Office is designing and negotiating a sprinkler system with a manufacturer that will have a 100 gallon tank fitted in the wall with a small electric pump with battery back up that will pump at 12 psi at a cost of \$400.00 US.

6.9 Fire Prevention Officer

The Fire Prevention Officer which may be from the Fire Marshalls Office or a nominated officer in a fire department is responsible to inspect the plans and the finished buildings and issue a certificate to every new building and every building which is going to be sold.

In most areas I visited they would mark on the plans where the smoke detectors were to be installed and charged a fee of \$30.00 per home if a boiler was installed then a further fee of \$100 for gas and \$50.00 for diesel.

As close as I could ascertain from speaking with the Fire Departments no one in rural areas had any form of fire prevention except maybe smoke detectors in their home.

The roadsides didn't have any work done on them and farmers didn't provide any breaks.

On the east coast of the USA the humidity is so high that wild land fire as we know it would be relatively small.

In California the conditions are similar to ours and farmers don't have private units nor do they do any prevention work on roadsides or property boundaries and in a lot of cases the Fire Department based in the local town weren't equipped to handle grass fires and so you had to wait for the California Forest and Fire Protection Agency to arrive which could be 30 to 45 minutes at least.

6.10 The National Fire Fighter Apprenticeship

The National Fire Fighter have set up a joint apprenticeship and training program and have entered into an agreement with the United States Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management to co-ordinate the selection and training of wild firefighter apprentices. The wildland firefighter Specialist Apprenticeship program is designed to assist individuals who want a career in fire management with the United States Forest Service, or the Bureau of Land Management.

More specifically, it is designed to take on entry level firefighter with the minimum of 3 months of actual wild land fire fighting experience, who meet the attached form. They provide training and work experience over an 18 working month period that will allow that individual to reach journey level status as a wildland firefighter.

The training program consists of 3 major parts:-

- * Academy Training
- * On the job Training
- * Related and Supplemental Training

During this time the apprentice is required to successfully complete a four week basic academy, a prescribed program of supplemented and related instruction and supervised on the job training and a four week advanced academy. Physical conditioning is stressed during the course and they may be required to run 1.5 to 5 miles each day.

This program can be completed over several summers and attracts university students during their summer break who have an interest in his area and wish to raise some extra money as well as some unemployed who meet the selection criteria. When students elect to do this apprenticeship over an extended period it may take 4 years part-time to complete in conjunction with their university program. Others are able to gain full-time employment through this program.

SECTION 7 FIRE SERVICE EQUIPMENT

7.1 Appliances and Equipment

The fire appliances used by the fire service in America was extensive in its design. This was evident when I visited the Fire Departments in each state and at the Fire Expo in Baltimore. Each manufacturer had a standard design but each was subject to modification to suit particular Fire Department needs.

7.2 Engines (are what we would call pumpers)

Generally, one twin cab with rollover safety built in, is fitted with a mid mounted pump with either front operation or side operation and a capacity of 1000 to 1250 gallons per minute and a carrying capacity of 1000 to 1500 gallons of water. Each unit had 600 feet of 3 inch or 4 inch canvas pre connected in 100 foot length and had up to 500 feet of 5 inch or in some cases 6 inch in 50 foot lengths. If you were located in areas where the hydrants were spaced a fair distance apart then it was not unusual to build a rack on top of the tank to carry a further 1000 feet. As I mentioned earlier one Fire Department I visited had 1 mile of canvas hose on board simply because the hydrants were 2 miles apart.

How did they move the 6 inch hose when it was full of water? With great difficulty, they would have to drain the water and then reconnect.

The crew compartments were set up for 6 personal, two of which could get into breathing apparatus in transit. Safety belts are worn by all crew members.

In Pheonix four days prior to my arrival they had a roll over accident with an engine on the way to a call; and only for the rollover frame built into the cab, and crew being belted in, then their would have certainly been some fatalities. They made a video of the accident and praised the driver for his actions and used the video to emphasise the necessity for advanced driving skills under emergency conditions. I was given a copy of the video as a training medium.

7.3 Ladder Trucks

Most had water carrying capacity up to 1000 gallons and with ladders that would extend from 100 to 130 feet.

Hose carrying capacity was 500 feet of 4 inch with a smaller amount of 5 inch.

Most were not pre plumbed and required the ladder climber to carry the hose up the ladder as he went, some had monitor fittings, others had to fit the monitor prior to elevation.

In Frederick I was shown a front and rear steer ladder truck fitted with all of the above equipment; but required a person mounted in the rear to steer the rear end of the truck so that it could negotiate the narrow streets and alleyways. It carried 750 gallon of water with a 1250 gallon pump, 30 gallons of foam 250 feet ladder line, plus 1000 feet of 3 inch hose and 1000 feet of 4 inch hose.

The aerial appliance with buckets attached were available at the Fire Expo I attended, but these appliances weren't very popular with Fire Departments. Nobody could explain to me what the problem was and resorted to tradition.

The Aerial Appliance at the Pheonix Airport was constructed specifically for airport use.

It consisted of a 480 hp detroit diesel motor which was turbo charged, and was extremely loud when started up. The tyres were 1.5 metres high and 450 mm wide and it was necessary to hose the tyres down after a 5 mile drive under emergency conditions.

The location of the fire department on the airport was such that 3 miles was the longest distance they had to travel. However, if they travelled outside to the city area the tyres became a concern.

The truck carried 1000 gallons of water and 500 gallons of foam. This was delivered through a hydrolic arm which could be elevated hydrotically to 100 feet. On the end of the arm was a hardened spike which could penetrate the walls of an aircraft and spray foam or fog into any part. In order to ensure the safety of the passengers and crew, an infra red camera was attached to the base of the hardened spike with a monitor back to the inside of the cab. This allowed the operator to detect the rows of rivets and lap joints and structural components as well as humans prior to entry. Our airports may have similar equipment, but I haven't had the opportunity to see it.

7.4 Trucks

The trucks were water carriers which carried 1000 gallons to 5000 gallons and usually didn't have a pump fitted, if they did, it was for draughting purposes only.

They had a quick release chute at the rear and could unload a 1000 gallons in about 30 seconds. Each truck carried either a canvas tank which was supported by a metal frame or a blow up type tank. These were automatic, when you pulled the cord the circumference ring would automatically inflate and as the water level rose so did the outside ring.

These portable tanks were generally double the capacity of the truck. Engine Companies would then draft from these tanks with a flat bottom suction. I was told it was not unusual to pump water onto the fire and then wait for the carrier to bring more water before they could pump any more, a stop start system.

It wasn't until I went to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection that I saw a vehicle that resembled an appliance in rural Victoria. They had a pump and run capacity carrying 800 gallons of water and were equipped with similar equipment as our tankers.

7.5 EMS Tankers

Most Fire Departments operated their EMS service from their Engine (or Pumpers) with the exception of Departments that were approved to transport and these had Ford F450 diesel vehicles with automatic transmission with a suitable body fitted. Most were specified along a similar system (vehicle specifications available on request).

7.6 Other Vehicles

Rehabilitation vehicles were essential in most areas. Some required them because of the heat others because of the cold.

These were fitted with airconditioning and heating and areas for fireman to take a rest while at the fire and were manned by a Paramedic.

Rescue Vehicles varied considerably both in size and the type of equipment they carried. It depended on the area and the type of rescue operations they were likely to encounter. Most had a portable generator fitted to the vehicle with enough capacity to operate lighting and air compressor to operate air equipment.

7.7 Hazmat Vehicles

Hazmat Vehicles carried all the necessary equipment to either dam up a spill or absorbents to soak up the different spills.

SECTION 8 CAD

8.1 Computer Aid Dispatch

The Computer Aid Dispatch centres in each State were working on county dispatch and in most cases covered State Police, Sheriffs Department, EMS and fire. The larger centres used sophisticated hi-tech equipment that allowed the receiver of the call to type in the type of call and set a prefix which automatically sent it to the required agency dispatch. They would then turn out the equipment and personnel required.

In most cases they were manned by civilians with a Senior Officer of each agency available to assist callers with special needs.

Tualation Valley and Pheonix had a map system that they could pull up on the screen and give details to the emergency vehicle along the way and also a log of response times were kept to assist in the pre-planning of the emergency services. Each agency in the large centres would have at least 3 consoles with 1 console set aside as a back up and to be used if all others were filled.

The smaller CADs used a card system as back up and were not as hi- tech as the large ones.

Tualation Valley and Pheonix were equipped with on-board computers and were able to bring up all the information that was received at the CAD centre and monitor the movement of other calls in the vicinity.

SECTION 9 EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE

9.1 History

EMS has evolved because of a need to provide a service, which in the United States in the early 70s was I am told was only average. The ambulance service provided was slow as far as response time was concerned. This was because of the large areas that they had to cover.

I understand that the Phoenix Fire Department was the first to look at offering a medical service through its fire service in the early 70s. (I stand to be corrected on this statement)

Initially this met with resistance by the Fire Departments in the Phoenix area and with many other fire departments across the country.

However the Phoenix Fire Department realised the potential of this program and initiated the service. Presently 65 to 70% of total responses are EMS calls.

In 1973 President Nixon signed the law creating the Emergency Medical Systems nationwide. This has developed across the States to the stage that the public now expect when they call 911 for a medical emergency that a fire truck will arrive which is capable of providing medical aid.

Statement: The back bone of these systems is the emergency medical technicians who provide service to ill or injured patients on a daily basis.

9.2 Was It Necessary In The Fire Service

With the public education programs, and the inclusion of smoke detectors in residential premises, alarms and sprinklers in commercial and industrial buildings, the number of callouts was reduced considerably, as was the number of large structure fires. In fully manned stations it was a simple matter of justification of the fire service and the equipment and manpower required.

9.3 Can It Be Justified?

Here was an opportunity to maintain employment and become involved in a community activity which will assist the justification of the service.

The Phoenix Fire Department provides a tried system of responses to emergency incidents. All firefighters are trained to the level of EMS. There are 45 engine companies spread throughout nearly 428 square miles of the City of Phoenix. Of these 45 companies, 24 are Paramedic Engine Companies.

In addition, one two man medic vehicle provides service in the downtown area. The remaining companies are EMTS.

9.4 The Levels of Training

There appeared to be several levels as I travelled across the states but all agreed that the N.F.P.A. or some other body will arrive at 3 levels and set a National Standard.

9.4.1 Level 1

E.L.S. - Basic Life Support on 1st Responder level

Requires approximately 50 hours of training

This is similar to our Senior 1st Aid Certificate plus advanced oxygen and additional skills in handling patients, etc.

This level is where most fire departments started, carrying all the necessary equipment on the fire trucks.

Their responsibility: To help and stabilise patients, look after haemorrhaging/fractures and assist in any way possible. Call Ambulance to transport if required.

Many calls are to homes where someone has a sprain or a strain or children have cut themselves, burns, etc.

While these may not be life threatening, it is important to provide necessary treatment, and reassure the patient as well as the parents and arrange for them to seek medical aid.

Most Volunteer Departments I visited operated at this level if they were involved. Some adopted to have separate medical response teams.

9.4.2 Level 2

E.M.T. - Emergency Medical Technician

This requires 120 hours of training and certification at this level.

This level of training does not allow the use of drugs but is advanced to the stage where they can set up I.V.s in preparation for the Paramedics.

At this level it is necessary to have involvement of an Emergency Medical Practitioner to advise and assist with the training.

Most do this course on a full-time or part-time basis.

It started out that the younger members of the crews were looking for more training because of the inadequateness of the BLS and so over the years this has developed.

In career stations this is the minimum standard for employment. In Phoenix everyone had to obtain these levels back in 1973 on the change over.

9.4.3 Level 3

Paramedics or A.L.S. - Advanced Life Support

This required a minimum of 1740 hours training and with the exception of the Phoenix Fire Department who provided their own training, was carried out at a University or Community College, in conjunction with a local hospital as this requires time spent in various areas of the hospital.

Breakdown

Post Graduate Internship - 400 hours
Lectures - 640 hours
Field Internship - 450 hours
Clinical Internship - 250 hours (hospital)

9.5 Frederick Volunteers

In Frederick the County has elected to fund the ALS training to volunteers but it is conditional that the volunteer sign a contract to provide a minimum of 36 hours/month usually 3-12 hours shifts, which is convenient to the volunteer.

The three on duty when I arrived were a nurse on her day off, a medical technician on her day off, and a guy I had met the day before down at the dispatch centre on his day off. I asked each of them individually wouldn't they much rather be at home relaxing and they all said no, this is very rewarding but it does require dedication.

Most stations I visited were assigned the role of BLS in their particular area but usually had at least 3 or 4 trained to EMT Level and in one case they had one trained to Paramedic level.

The Seymore station had volunteers training so that they could incorporate a BLS on EMT into their fire service.

In the early days when a fire truck turned up to a house, people would say we need an ambulance our house is not on fire. But what has now been excepted as normal has had a number of spin offs.

- The public see a very efficient service operating in their community (better use of tax payers money).
- Has provided community interaction which assist in fundraising (especially in volunteer departments which were solely funded by donations).

- More efficient involvement of time and resources of personnel.
- Volunteers concern, population increased rapidly in some areas. They require enough activity to keep involvement without getting too much to create burn out.

9.6 Transport

Generally fire departments across the country don't transport patients. This is let on a contract basis to a transport company with the driver having minimum BLS level training. These contract operators transported patients to hospitals but were also involved in moving aged personal requiring treatment at hospitals or nursing homes and day centres.

However as this had become quite a big business in some areas the larger fire departments were providing transport as part of their Paramedic service. This was meeting with some resistance and transport companies were trying to get State Legislation through to stop this progress. It seems inevitable to me that it will be viable for the larger fire departments to provide this service.

Response times for Medical Calls is 9-10 minutes in most areas with Ambulances being 10-15 minutes but they are trying to reduce this to 9 minutes.

- BLS - Most of our career fire fighters and some volunteers would require very little additional training to the Senior First Aid Certificate and advanced oxygen to meet this level.

9.7 EMT (Emergency Medical Technician)

Multi skilling ambulance officers and integrate into fire service fire personnel will eventually be looking for more training. Extra \$1600 US

ALS/Paramedics - Ambulance officers or senior Emergency care Nurses. Multi skill into fire service. Extra \$2600 per annum US.

9.8 Industrial Relations

This matter needs careful consideration but I believe can be worked through.

This will be a long term goal to secure the future of emergency service in Victoria.

9.9 Set Up Career Path

A career path would need to be set up to incorporate both medical and firefighter advancement through the ranks so that we don't have separate structures.

This will take time as multiskilling, previous experience, and qualification will need to be evaluated.

9.10 Pre Hospital Treatment Guidelines

It is important that the Medical fraternity be involved which I am sure they already are with the Ambulance Service.

The advisory committee to set the pre hospital guidelines for all Emergency Medical Systems is invaluable.

9.11 Equipment

Heart monitors and defibrulators are automatic, computerised and run on their own power so when you have been trained in their use it is only a matter of normal training to keep up your skills. All other equipment which requires special training in general first Aid.

Paramedic specialist equipment and drugs are handled in their training.

9.12 Manning levels - Career Stations

In busy volunteer stations they have 3 career EMTS/Firefighters on staff and they man the fire or medical calls with the volunteers able to pick up the remainder.

- In Rural country towns where volunteer ambulance drivers occur most of which are involved in the local fire brigade should be automatic progression.
- Rescue brigades would have necessary skills to do ELS.

9.13 Hands On Experience

4th August Station 10 - Phoenix in Arizona

We had the opportunity to ride on ALS truck for the day.

Crew of 4. Crew went to Salvation Army pool to swim, a part of physical fitness program.

Call No 1. 10 minutes in pool, get a call on the radio from an office block regarding lady with chest pains, nearest BLS team alerted. ALS truck responds, on arrival found lady already on ambulance stretcher, after consultation it was diagnosed that patient had pain in shoulder and chest, heart and blood pressure were regular vital signs were normal. Crew established that patient needed to go to hospital to be checked out by doctor. One of our crew, rides in ambulance to hospital.

Call No 2. Collapsed women in transport depot, nearest BLS unit despatched (had to wait at railway crossing for train to pass 5 engines 1000 m long) proceeded to incident, patient collapsed out in the sun 108°F (much cooler than previous days 117°F) large cut to her head. History indicated surgery 10 months previous, heart irregular, check on Blood Pressure and heart monitor, requires IV to stabilise, transport to hospital, one of our crew travels to hospital in ambulance.

Call No 3. Possible collapse aged male in caravan. Friend unable to get in. Team had to force entry, found elderly male collapsed on the floor. Assisted him to couch for examination, hadn't eaten since Saturday (now Wednesday), been to Doctor on Monday had tests, found Doctor appointment card for today, missed appointment, found tablets from Monday unopened. Found rash on body, suspected dehydration, possible infections. Had difficulty convincing him to go to hospital, finally persuaded him to go, called for an ambulance. Patient put on stretcher and is semiconscious, transported to hospital.

ALS Team replaced all stores from hospital each time they attend and write out an order for items.

Spoke to:-

Phoenix - Craig S Laser - Paramedic Training Co Ordinator.
Leigh Naig Base Station Co Ordinator for Paramedics
St Joseph's Hospital and Medical Centre

Knoxville - Jacki Kirby Trauma Nurse Co-Ordinator
"Co Author of Trauma Update for the EMT"
Department of Surgery University of Tennessee Medical
Centre.
Ross Dempster - Paramedic Rural Metro Fire
Department.

FairFax County - Assistant Chief James Strickland
Emergency Medical Service

Clackamas County - Kyle Gorman - EMS project Manager

LETS LOOK AT A DAILY PROCESS TO IMPROVE THE SERVICE
INSTEAD OF TALKING ABOUT MISSION TALK ABOUT VISION.

9.14 EMS Departments Visited

Portland, Oregon

Tualation Valley Fire Department Career

Massachusetts

Hingham and Cape Cod Career

Tennessee

Rural Metro Fire and Rescue Career

Karnes Volunteer

Seymore Volunteer

Virginia

Fairfax County

Leesburg career chief Volunteer

Maryland

Advanced Life Support Crew 12 hours shift Volunteer
Frederick - Maryland

Arizona

Phoenix Fire and Rescue Career

Problems Encountered:

- High stress level.
- Need to develop a strategy to rotate people on apparatus to avoid conflict and reduce stress level.

SECTION 10 THE POSITIVE ATTITUDE

10.1 "The Way"

The Phoenix Fire Department has developed a publication called "The Way". It is some 46 pages so I will endeavour to describe it briefly to you.

This publication was developed with the intent of describing the Department philosophy. It was a positive move to address the human and physical resources and has supported an environment that encourages excellence.

They have set standards by which to measure personal and organisational behaviour and to provide a model of behaviour.

The development of a positive work environment has developed a 100% positive attitude in each individual no matter what race or gender. Everyone is looking out for one another and this is maintained by commitment and discipline; preferably self-discipline. Where self-discipline breaks down disciplinary action must be imposed, in a method that will bring a positive outcome eg. correct or resolve the problem.

Some of the key elements are:

- * Providing the best possible Service to Customers.
- * Provide the best possible support to members.
- * Encourage members to fit PFD member characteristics.
- * To manage change and strive to always improve.
- * Each member is directly responsible for the welfare and support of the Department.
- * Members will support "The Way".
- * Everything gets passed on and members don't get left behind.

This then allows for the Philosophy and Culture to be developed and to "making a commitment" to developing "The Way" in a positive manner.

The Philosophy of "being responsible for ourselves and each other", make us responsible and accountable for his/her own actions and to some extent, for the well-being of other members. The internal relations program clearly identifies four behaviours that are to be practiced by all members.

They are:-

- * Consideration
- * Discretion
- * Tolerance
- * Unity

Consideration be considerate of one another's values, ideals, possessions, feelings, etc.

Discretion be discrete in the things we say and do to each other.

Tolerance be tolerant of our differences. We are white, black, male, female, Catholic, Jewish, old, young, disabled, and lots of others. These are differences that make us stronger as a family and better able to serve the needs of our diverse community.

Unity Value the unity of the Fire Department, not only in good times, but in difficult times as well.

10.2 Being Self Disciplined

Self discipline is the foundation for managing behaviour. Imposed discipline, when necessary, should be designed to correct the situation and return the member to a positive, productive and healthy position.

10.3 Being Responsible Leaders

Leadership is the critical element in maintaining the high standards of performance and the positive image of the Fire Service within the community.

10.4 Maintaining the Environment

We must all accept the responsibility associated with maintaining our positive environment, delivery of quality service, and for cultivating change and improvement in the future.

10.5 Establishing Individual Expectations and Roles

You are not just an employee here, you are a member, so your expectation and role will only be as good as we commit to making it.

10.6 Rules of Conduct

There is a list of some 20 rules, members need to abide by in summary: every member of the PFD is expected to operate in a highly self disciplined manner and is responsible to regulate his/he own conduct in a positive, productive and mature way. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action ranging from counselling to dismissal.

SECTION 11 CONCLUSIONS

11.1 Conclusion

I have deemed it a great honour as a volunteer fireman with the Country Fire Authority to have the opportunity of being able to study the fire service in different States of the United States of America.

This would not have been possible without the opportunity provided by the Combined Emergency Services Foundation Scholarship.

To the Combined Emergency Services Foundation, I thank you most sincerely.

The effort that Chief Gary Nees of the Tualation Valley Fire and Rescue put into organising my itinerary was outstanding. To those who hosted us during our stay in each State and the Fire Departments I visited, thank you for your hospitality. In many cases it was extended beyond the call of duty to the extent that we were given a private tour of the Kennedy Compound at Cape Cod just to mention one.

Having been associated with the Country Fire Authority as a volunteer for over 30 years and held office at various levels it was indeed an inspiration to be able to study the different aspects of the Fire department and to find in many respects that we are similar in our culture both career and volunteer. Even to some of the political moves with budget cuts, regionalisation, recruitment and retention of volunteers, etc.

My perspective of the vision of our fire service in the future is certainly different to my past perceptions. It will be important in my view that we learn from the experienced and adapt our organisation to the future needs of the Victorian Fire Service.

The community awareness and appreciation of the fire service in both volunteer and career stations was very strong.

They worked hard at promoting this endeavour with letter drops and publicity through the local media to encourage the concept "volunteers working for your community".

The professionalism of the career and volunteer departments was outstanding with the volunteer training and accreditation program developed to such a level that men and women from all walks of life were interested in continuing to raise their standards and in some cases it gave them the opportunity to apply to become a career firefighter with credits for their previous training, because the national standards are the same.

The integration of the EMS and Fire departments was an outstanding success and even volunteer departments were becoming more interested in being involved.

SECTION 12 RECOMMENDATIONS

I think it only fitting having had the opportunity to view Fire Departments in the United States that I submit the following recommendations for consideration.

12.1 Recommendation

That the volunteer certificates and accreditation program be extended to include all levels of training.

Initially to establish this concept it needs to be on a voluntary basis at all levels in order to counter the reactions of these senior members who can't see the need. However, in order to maintain a progressive and professional service to meet the needs of the community it will be necessary to give our volunteer firefighters the opportunity of gaining all the necessary skills to meet the demands of the fire service.

It should be established using National competency's and set at various levels, up to Officer level.

The utilisation of Recognised Prior Learning could also be incorporated for those who have gained skills either in their workplace or community activities.

This will further enhance the professionalism of our service, and for those wishing to obtain a career position it will provide them with some recognised accreditation that will enhance their opportunities.

12.2 Recommendation

That volunteers be given a tax concession for the community service provided. This may be in the form of reduced registration cost for the vehicle used to transport volunteers to fires, or allowance that may be claimed for the provision of the service.

This will provide a positive approach to recruiting volunteers and provides additional incentive for volunteers to attend training and other associated activities.

I realise that there will be some anomalies in that some volunteers will be more involved than others, but I feel sure that it would provide an incentive.

Other areas of consideration may be discount cards to department stores, for volunteers and career staff.

It all comes back to community awareness of the service provided.

12.3 Recommendation

That the Fire Service consider providing medical service as part of its charter.

With the co-location of a number of ambulances into fire stations it would allow the opportunity of fire fighters to be cross trained as well as Ambulance Officers to become multi skilled.

As stated earlier in this report it would require very little additional training for career firefighters to reach a Basic Life Support Level. The amount of training required to reach EMT level is not unachievable for those members prepared to further their skills.

The ambulance officers would be responsible for those Paramedic services. I would see the long term effect of providing a cost effective and more efficient use of resources and with the multi skilling of both agencies a closer liaison of personal in the wider community, thus providing more community awareness of the service provided.

12.4 Recommendation

Community Appreciation of the service that volunteer fire fighters provide to your community.

The work put into community appreciation and awareness in the United States is outstanding.

We should develop a strategy incorporating most of our existing material to inform the wider community of the operation and commitment volunteers provide.

We should also use every opportunity to get feedback for services provided on the way the public perceives the effectiveness and efficiency of our operation.

12.5 Recommendation

Incident Command System

That we initiate a strategy that involves all emergency services using the ICS model as standard procedures.

When this plan is activated all emergency services would be familiar with their responsibility and the standard procedures required by each agency.

This should become a national system by which all emergency services will work

It could be further developed to provide a common system that emergency services can utilise at local, state and national levels.

The ICS system has a number of components. These components work interactively to provide the basis for an effective ICS operation.

One of the areas which is essential for good management of incidents is common terminology, which can be used in joint operations by many diverse users.

Again we should be looking at a common goal to provide the most cost effective and efficient emergency service which operates on a National Set of Procedures which can encompass all emergency services working together.