

Memo

To: Authorized Instructors, Programs, Students, and Instructor Authorization Applicants
From: Paul Wobosel, Arizona State Fire Training Director
Date: 1/12/2010
Re: OSFM Training Update 1-12-10

Authorized Instructors:

Please make sure this information gets to your Program Managers if they are not on the Authorized Instructor Distribution List.

Status Update:

As I said in my first email since this all happened, 100% of our efforts are currently directed at saving training operations. Here is why:

I will most likely only have days/weeks before I am released. We have to find a way to back up all of our operating data which is currently on the agency server. Once I am gone, there are no assurances we can retrieve this information. This is all of our forms, policies, procedures, databases, and historical documentation. I am not referring to ERMA, that is a equal but separate issue. ERMA/STARS will probably be available to us, but we are currently indebted to AZDOA-ISD Department approximately \$20K for conversion to the unfunded ERMA System. Monthly access fees are currently about \$800.

Yesterday, we had a meeting with some representation from AFSI and the AFCA to convey the OSFM Training status. This information will be presented to the AFSI Committee this Wednesday where discussion will be held for a possible solution. We went to AFSI because they represent all branches of the Arizona Fire Service which is broader than the AFCA.

Programs in Limbo:

We know we have hundreds of students caught in the certification process at various levels of completion. We will work on processing certification or refunding these fees as soon as we know the disposition of training. Unfortunately, we cannot do either at this time and realistically it will be weeks before we can even begin this process. I have had dozens of volunteers offer to process these records. As soon as we secure our operations/data we will be looking for assistance. Please be patient!

IFSAC Accreditation:

If we can save training, we will be able to restore IFSAC Accreditation. We are still researching how this will impact IFSAC Certs in the short term. We do have options to restore this capability seamlessly in the short term as well as a long term solution. This all depends on how we transition training.

CRITICAL NOTE:

The State of Arizona is not going to continue to fund training certification for the Arizona Fire Service.

I have received calls and emails from several organizations that they are prepared to proceed on their own accord for training certification or bring in outside agencies to provide this service. This is understandable because it is our nature to stabilize emergencies. Please proceed with caution and consider this:

This unfortunate event may be the best opportunity the Arizona Fire Service has had in a long time. We have seen funding for this office decimated from what it once was. Over the past 18 months we have made tremendous efforts to restore training capabilities but this has been extremely challenging due to our very limited staff and financial support offered from the state. We have spent more time trying to communicate, answering questions, and explaining change than we have spent making change. The majority of funds collected through certification fees over the past 12-months were from individuals that are not even members of the Arizona Fire Service (FF I&II Programs). Rather than Fire Departments and active fire service personnel investing in outside agencies to resolve this crisis, consider banding together and investing in ourselves as a whole.

This is an opportunity for the fire service to take ownership for training certification and break free from the agency that has limited our abilities. In order to be successful, this is the time to unite rather than go it alone. Please give AFSI, our Arizona Fire Service, an opportunity to address the core challenges of fire training certification. I will try to keep everyone informed as long as I am here.