

THE GATEWAY REPORT

GATEWAY IX

ISSUES CRITICAL TO NORTH CAROLINA'S EMERGENCY LEADERSHIP SERVICES

A report presenting the conclusions and recommendations
from the participants of

THE GATEWAY IX CONFERENCE

**NCSFA Offices
Raleigh, NC
February 18 – 20, 2009**

TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE
Introduction	1
Conference Agenda	1
Participants	2
Review of Gateway VIII Conference	2
Overall Issues – 2009	6
Strategic Recommendations	12
Guest Speakers	12
Attachment 1	13

INTRODUCTION

At the invitation of the NC State Firemen's Association President Jack Parker, thirty-five elected or appointed emergency services leaders from twenty state organizations or agencies convened on February 18th in Raleigh, NC for the ninth annual Gateway Conference. The title, "The Gateway Conference", recognizes that we stand in the "Gateway" to our future. This group of emergency services leaders has the opportunity to lead our industry through a portal, or gateway, of positive change. This leadership opportunity gives us a chance to reflect upon lessons learned from past experience, and plan for our future direction. The following report documents the discussions, conclusions, and recommendations of the participants of the conference.

Our hope is that the emergency services in North Carolina will benefit from the experiences of our leadership in attending the conference, and act upon the issues and recommendations in this report. Action is needed at both the association and individual level. Above all, it is hoped that the contents of this report will stimulate additional, continued thought and discussion of these and other issues relevant to our emergency services. May these discussions create a passion to seek out improvement in all aspects of our service to the communities we protect, and to those dependent upon us for leadership.

CONFERENCE AGENDA

The following agenda was adopted for the conference:

Wednesday, February 18th

- Review accomplishments since Gateway VIII Conference in 2008
- Determine status/progress of 2008 issues and strategies

Thursday, February 19th

- Continue review of Gateway VIII (if needed)
- Develop list of issues that need addressing in 2009
- Prioritize list of issues
- Create goal statements for each of the priority issues
- Develop action plans for each priority issue

Friday, February 20th

- Develop recommendations needed to support action plans
- Next steps/follow up

The conference was convened on Wednesday evening by NCSFA President Jack Parker who welcomed the participants, and asked Ken Mullen, of the NC Association of Fire Chiefs, to offer the invocation. Introductions by attendees followed.

PARTICIPANTS

Bobby Hedrick	NC Fire Marshals Association
Tommy Curry	NC Fire and Line Safety Educators Council
Marty Dailey	NC Association of Fire Chiefs
Cloyce Anders	Volunteer Firemen's Insurance Services
Jim Hanline	NC Society of Fire-Rescue Instructors
Ken Mullen	NC Association of Fire Chiefs
David Watson	NC Fire and Life Safety Educators Council
Mike Hill	Volunteer Safety Workers Compensation Fund
Chris Perry	NC County Fire Marshals
Larry Hughes	NC Office of State Fire Marshal
Rick Hall	NC Society of Fire-Rescue Instructors
Ryan Cole	Western NC Association of Fire Fighters
Dave Anders	NC Professional Fire Fighters and Paramedics
Scott Alderman	NC State Firefighters Association
Paul Miller	NC State Firefighters Association
Dean Coward	NC State Firefighters Association
Jack Parker	NC State Firefighters Association
Walter Jones	NC Fallen Firefighters Foundation
Glenn Clapp	NC Association of Haz-Mat Responders
Tommy Cole	NC State Firefighters Association & Piedmont NC Firefighters Assoc.
Joel Faircloth	NC Association of Rescue and EMS
Gordon Joyner	NC Association of Rescue and EMS
John Grimes	Eastern NC Firemen's Association
Wes Greene	NC State Firefighters Association
Jim Prevette	NC Forest Service
William Hunt	City of Shelby Fire-Rescue
Tommy Blanton	Western NC Association of Fire Fighters
Scott Burnette	Western NC Association of Fire Fighters
Winfield Abee	NC Community Colleges
Doug Howell	NC Emergency Management
Mike Sprayberry	NC Emergency Management
Tim Bradley	NC Office of State Fire Marshal
David English	Eastern NC Firemen's Association
David Bullins	Statesville Fire Department
Tim Pope	Eastern NC Firemen's Association
Rick Barbour	Facilitator

REVIEW OF GATEWAY VIII

Participants reviewed the purpose, goals, vision, issues and strategies of the 2008 Gateway Conference report. The purpose of the review was to validate the purpose, goals, and vision of the Gateway Conference, and to identify the status/progress of the 2008 conference initiatives.

PURPOSE

To facilitate a meeting among the leaders of North Carolina's Fire Service to foster consensus on key major issues facing our industry and develop a vision for working towards those issues in a consolidated manner.

The group reviewed the purpose and recommended that "Fire Service" be changed to "Emergency Services", to more accurately represent the make-up of the industry.

GOALS

- 1. Provide an environment for leaders from different arenas to meet and network.*
- 2. Provide individual leadership development.*
- 3. Identify the means to success and the roadblocks that create failure.*
- 4. Identify 4-6 issues that all participants can agree upon as being "key" major issues to advancing our industry.*
- 5. Develop a strategic vision and plan for partnering solutions to the key issues.*

These five goals were established for the first Gateway Conference in 2000. The group agreed to adopt these same goals for 2009.

VISION

"A fully inclusive NC fire service that fosters consensus on major issues facing our members and the citizens we serve, and that develops coalitions for working towards solutions."

The group reviewed the vision and recommended that "fire service" be changed to "Emergency Services", to more accurately represent the make-up of the industry.

ISSUES

The 2008 Gateway Conference identified two categories of issues: 1) Issues to be supported (monitored), and 2) Issues to work on. Two issues were identified in the category of supported/monitored, 1) Communication/Coordination, and 2) Emergency Vehicle Operations and Drivers Safety – "25 in 5". Four issues were identified in the category of Work/Accomplish, 1) Firefighter safety, 2) Junior Member Programs, 3) Residential Sprinklers, and 4) Benefits. The following represents the 2009 conference participants' perceptions of the progress/status of these issues since the 2008 conference.

SUPPORTED/MONITORED (Status/Progress)

Communication/Coordination

- The group acknowledged that progress was being made in the area, but a continuing effort is needed in 2009.

Emergency Vehicle Operations and Drivers Safety – “25 in 5”

- Seat Belt use has increased
- There was only one “Rollover” accident involving a driver who had attended training
- North Carolina leads the nation in seat belt use in fire service nationwide

WORK AND ACCOMPLISH (Status/Progress)

Firefighter Safety

- Training needs identified
- Classes developed and conducted
- Instructors trained
- Requests for training materials have increased
- 100 Departments have taken the “seat belt pledge”
- Developed incentive campaign to drive participation
- Positive competition between organizations
- Seat belts are checked at NCFE memorial
- Link was established on website to reflect seat belt pledge
- Commitment of officers to safety measures

Junior Member Program

- Worked with OSHA on apprentice program
- Misconceptions about the program will be addressed by the “standard”

Residential Sprinklers

- Reed Jarvis was not selected
- Drafted rules for plumbers/mechanics licensing board that will allow plumbers to install sprinklers
- “Sprinkler” video will be made available
- North Carolina had the largest representation at the ICC hearings - Amendment passed and we are forging ahead with implementation plan

Benefits

- Instructor benefit passed
- Working with IRS on inclusion and have engaged a law firm to assist us in moving our challenge forward and asking for Congressional help with new legislation
- Disability coding is before IRS
- Pension fund equity did not gain traction in legislature – need to revisit this in order to garner support
- Heart attacks are now included
- Workers Compensation Rates are lower for organizations with fewer accidents

OVERALL ISSUES - 2009

The following issues were identified by the group as the most significant issues facing emergency services in North Carolina in 2009. The issues relate to both the citizens of North Carolina, who depend upon our organizations for protection as well as members of our own organizations. The issues are, therefore, relevant to all our members whether volunteer or paid, and to their communities.

The issues were broken into two separate categories: 1) Issues to be supported/monitored and 2) Issues needing action plans to address in 2009.

SUPPORT/MONITOR

Junior Member Program

- Continue to increase awareness

Federal Level Pension (IRS process)

Benefits

- Basic
- 401K
- Separation Allowance

“25 in 5”

Residential Sprinklers

Legislative

- Parity with law enforcement
- Equality in Pension Fund
- Reimbursement for Sales and Use Tax

ACTION PLANNING

The group “Brainstormed” the following eighteen issues:

- Health and Wellness
- Fatality and Injury Task Force
- Education for Fire Departments and General Public
- Higher educational opportunities for emergency services personnel
- Safety (NFPA 1403 Compliance)
- New Fire Officer Class for Chiefs (including rescue and EMS)
- Education Process in NC for photo-electric and ionization detectors
- Educate administrative staff and Chiefs about importance of FLSE

- Linkage with Emergency Management
- Background checks
- Gateway benchmarks and accomplishments
- Credentialing/Accountability
- Investigate alternative funding streams
- Emergency Service caucus
- Expansion of emergency service into non-traditional areas (HAZMAT)
- NC Pension Fund communication process
- Handicap accessibility of private quarters in fire departments
- Availability of “pick-up” firefighters

After a discussion of each of the issues, the voting members of Gateway IX were asked to vote for their “top six/most important” issues. The following six issues received the most votes (individuals who introduced the issues and the number of votes each issue received are in parentheses)

- Health and Wellness (Mike Hill/14)
- Fatality and Injury Task Force (Ryan Cole/13)
- New Fire Officer Class for Chiefs (Ken Mullen/14)
- Linkage with Emergency Management (Doug Howell/11)
- Gateway Benchmarks and Accomplishments (Ryan Cole/9)
- Credentialing/Accountability (Walter Jones/11)

Once the six issues were determined, the large group was divided into six sub-groups and assigned the responsibility of developing a goal statement and the action steps needed to address each of the issues. The six individuals named above agreed to serve as the “team lead” for the issue they introduced. Since Ryan Cole suggested two issues that made the top six, he asked Tommy Blanton to assume the “team lead” for the Gateway Benchmarks and Accomplishments issue.

The following represents the “action plan” each team created: (Attachment 1 represents a list of the names of participants and the team they worked on)

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Goal: To reduce deaths due to heart attack and stroke by 25% by 2015.

Action Items:

- By using the USFA/NVFC emergency H/S issues in the VFS “The 5 Million Mile Walk”- 8,000 participants X 3 miles per week 50 weeks per year X 5 years
- Include the fatality task force (one of the other six issue groups)

- Package the 5 personal safety issues in the 2009 “25 in 5” FF safety program
- VSWCF/OSFM (Funding for CPAT testing?)

FATALITY AND INJURY TASK FORCE

Goal: Reduce fatalities and injuries of NC Emergency Services personnel

Action Items

- Identify behavioral factors causing injuries
- Adopt strategies for changing behaviors
- Institutionalize strategies for behavioral change
- Measure outcomes
- NCSFA umbrella
- Regionalization
- Data identification
- Data collection
- Data compilation
- Data analysis
- Diverse group
- Medical support
- Lessons learned
- Identify behaviors
- “Near Miss” program
- On site support
- Trained in analysis
- Insurance industry support
- Criteria for “on scene” support/analysis

NEW CHIEF CLASS

Goal: Develop new class for Chiefs (either volunteer or paid, also open to secretaries/assistant chiefs) designed to update them on critical issues.

Action Items

- Determine what chiefs need to know
 - Rosters
 - LODD
 - Report of fire conditions
 - Pension Fund
 - Fire incident reporting
 - Emergency Management interface
- Legislative change to be eligible for state grants

- Updates
- Develop the class
 - NCSFA
 - OSFM
 - NCAFC
 - Community college
 - Rescue Association
- Topics
 - Dates for rosters
 - Dates for grants
 - New members on roster
 - Benefits – State/Federal/Workers Comp
- When/How Often
 - Annual
 - Mid-winter
 - 3 regional fire schools
 - As needed
- Criteria for instructors
- Specific to chiefs
- Tracked by NCSFA
- Addition to rating schedule from adoption forward
- Alternative delivery
- Accreditation model
 - One person
- Include specialist groups
 - Fire/Rescue/EMS
- Home study/Classroom combination

LINKAGE WITH EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Goal: Enhance/improve understanding between emergency management and fire/rescue and EMS services

Action Items

- Grant Programs
 - How to get involved in Homeland Security process (HLS)
 - State Emergency Response Commission (ID people)
 - Eligibility (education)
 - Periods of eligibility
 - Workshop at NCFSA and NCAFC conferences
- Interstate Mutual Aid System (IMAS)
 - NCSFA – working issue (Frank Burns)
 - NC role in national plan
 - State Mutual Aid

- Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC)
- Conference topic
- Network/State Disaster Management Process
 - Roles and responsibilities
 - Access to resources
 - Resource management
 - Communications
 - Association meetings/newsletters/website

GATEWAY BENCHMARKS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Goal: To improve effectiveness of Gateway by accurately tracking progress of action items and ensuring accountability

Action Items

- NCSFA statistician to track, make contacts, name responsible agency, and report on prior year(s) progress
- Assign goals to sub-committee, association
- Match issues to proper agencies
- Task committees and agencies held accountable at Gateway
- Update of Gateway in statistician's report at conference
- Creation of Gateway website page within NCSFA website
- Statistician to assist with Gateway facilitator
- Possible name change of Gateway to create new birth for forward progress

CREDENTIALING/ACCOUNTABILITY

Goal: Provide a standardized system of accountability and recognized expertise/certification to insure the safety of all emergency providers

Action Items

- Identify who is affected
- Promote need (validation/buy-in)
- Identify any present systems that may be used/adapted for use
- Identify lead agency for support/facilitation
- Final system design/implementation (project costs/funding potential).

Outcomes

- Provide for personal accountability
- Identify levels of training/expertise
- Provides a system framework that is expandable
- Provides for use with National Resource Typing
- Provides for system standardization

Gateway IX Conference 2009

- Prevents self-deployment
- Encourages participation
- Promotes routine evaluation and improvement

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Each agency agreed to the following strategic actions to support implementation of the six action plans:

- Each association and partnering organization will make representatives available to assist “team leads” upon request.
- Each “team lead” agrees to meet together during the Instructor Conference on May 8th.
- Each association and partnering organization agreed that the NCSFA office in Raleigh will serve as the “home location” for future Gateway meetings.

GUEST SPEAKERS

On Friday morning, two guest speakers addressed the conference participants. First, Fred Bone of Bone and Associates, NCSFA’s lobbyist, provided an overview of legislative issues of interest to the industry. Second, Steve Sloan, Assistant Director of NC Emergency Management overviewed several projects they are working on and their interface with conference participants.

Attachment 1
List of Participants by Team Assignment

Health and Wellness

Mike Hill – Team Lead
Tommy Curry
Rick Hall
Joel Faircloth
John Grimes
Jim Prevette

Fatality and Injury Task Force

Ryan Cole – Team Lead
Bobby Hedrick
William Hunt
Tim Pope

New Chief Class

Ken Mullen – Team Lead
Larry Hughes
Wes Greene
Scott Burnette
Winfield Abee
Tim Bradley

Linkage with Emergency Management

Doug Howell – Team Lead
Marty Dailey
Jim Hanline
Paul Miller
Dean Coward

Gateway Benchmarks

Tommy Blanton – Team Lead
David Watson
Scott Alderman
Glenn Clapp
David English
David Bullins

Credentialing/Accounting

Walter Jones – Team Lead
Cloyce Anders
Chris Perry
Dave Anders
Jack Parker
Tommy Cole