

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# Maine Fire Training & Education

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1999 STRATEGIC PLAN

*"In Service"* SINCE 1948

# MAINE FIRE TRAINING & EDUCATION SOUTHERN MAINE TECHNICAL COLLEGE

## STATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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*Maine Fire Chiefs' Assoc.*

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*Maine Federation of FFers*

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**Steve Boucouvalas**  
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**Donald Curtis**  
*EMTC Fire Science*

**Al Nygren**  
*Professional FFers of Maine*

**Brian FitzPatrick**  
*Maine Municipal Association*

**John Dean**  
*SMTC Fire Science*

## STRATEGIC PLANNING STEERING COMMITTEE

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**Steve Doyle, S. Portland**

**Brian FitzPatrick, MMA**

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**Phil McGouldrick, Cape Elizabeth**

**Tim Polky, St. George**

**Don Robishaw, Rockland**

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**John Dean, Wells**

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**John Duross, Saco**

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**Miles Haskell, MFT&E**

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**Jethro Pease, Morrill**

**Roy Woods, Caribou**

**Mike Sturgeon, MFT&E**

**Bob Webber, Winter Harbor**

## STRATEGIC PLANNING FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

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*Sixty-five fire service leaders from around the state who gave their time, energy and expertise to make this plan a realistic, practical and attainable road map to the future.*



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## T O T H E F I R E S E R V I C E C O M M U N I T Y O F M A I N E :

I am very proud to present the Maine Fire Training & Education strategic plan. This plan represents more than a year of work by fire chiefs, training officers, fire instructors and education & safety professionals statewide. It is our road map for the next 5 years.

*This plan is our vision into the future.* The strategic plan confirms why we exist, what we believe in, the values we bring to our work, the direction in which we are headed, as well as what we plan to accomplish over the next few years.

*This plan is a work in progress.* This plan is a flexible, living document. We will continually chart progress toward completing the objectives of the plan. We will revisit our assumptions and goals on a regular basis, updating as needed.

*This plan builds on the strengths of the past.* Maine citizens and firefighters are much safer --and much better protected and able to protect themselves -- today than at any time in Maine's history. Since 1960, fire deaths of Maine citizens have been cut nearly 75%! Firefighter deaths have been cut in half in the last generation. But much is left to be done. Maine's fire loss is still too high. This plan organizes and focuses resources where they will be most cost-effective.

*This plan represents a consensus of fire professionals statewide.* More than 100 emergency services leaders, representing a broad cross-section of Maine -- labor and management, career and volunteer/call, north and south, rural and city -- worked together to develop and validate this plan. The "strategic consensus" that this plan represents will be essential to accomplishing the work necessary to make this plan a reality.

*Much of this plan can be accomplished without additional resources.* By working in close cooperation within the Technical College System and with other public and private training, education and safety agencies and organizations, we can accomplish much of this plan within existing resources.

*Additional resources will be money well spent.* Where additional resources are necessary they will be "leveraged" to ensure maximum cost-effectiveness. MFT&E's 50-year partnership with other state fire agencies, county fire schools and local fire departments has proven to be highly effective and very efficient.

Maine citizens -- and Maine's 12,000 firefighters, 90% of whom are volunteers -- deserve the very best in life-saving fire training & education. This plan is our shared vision to ensure that *Maine's Bravest* are *America's best!* I welcome your comments and ask for your passionate support!

Sincerely,

Steve Willis  
State Fire Administrator



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## M I S S I O N   S T A T E M E N T

The mission of Maine Fire Training & Education (MFT&E) is to make Maine firefighters, citizens and visitors safe through proactive prevention, protection and response training and education.

### WE BELIEVE THAT....

- Those served by MFT&E deserve the highest quality training and education, responsive to current and local needs.
- The needs of the fire service are best met by working cooperatively in all of our relationships.
- MFT&E resources need to be available on an equitable basis.
- MFT&E should advocate pro-active efforts to make Maine safer.
- Safe and healthful training practices are in the best interest of all served.
- Recognition and development of our personnel is the most cost-effective approach to accomplishing our mission.

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## Q U A L I T Y   I M P R O V E M E N T   I S   C E N T R A L   T O   R E A C H I N G   O U R   G O A L S

### WE PLEDGE TO...

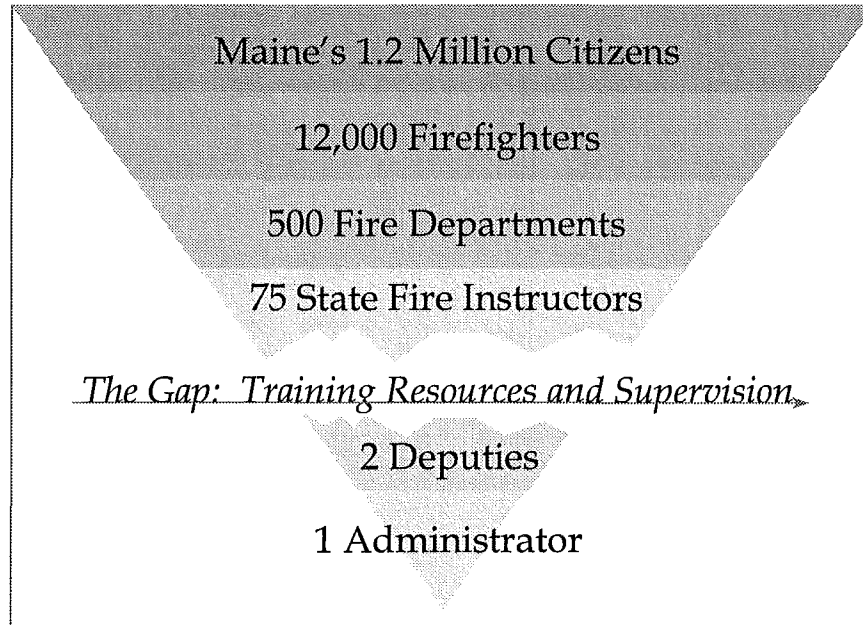
- Foster in all MFT&E personnel a commitment to quality, and a belief in the value of continuous process improvement.
- Upgrade the MFT&E infrastructure to meet the future needs of MFT&E's customers.
- Maximize people's abilities by supporting continuous professional development.
- Increase awareness of MFT&E's capabilities and limitations.





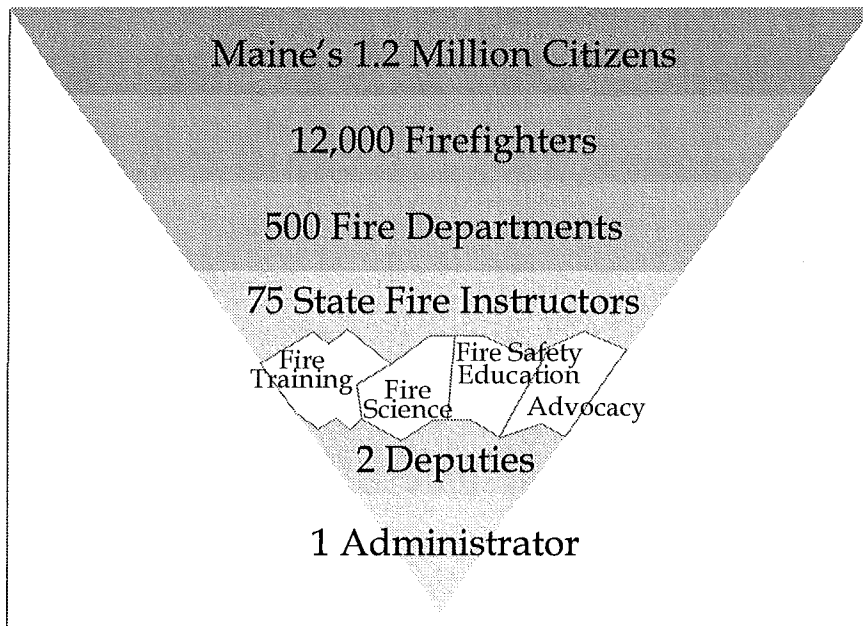
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O U R C H A L L E N G E



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B R I D G I N G T H E G A P






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## GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

### Goal **FIRE TRAINING**

To prepare Maine's 12,000 firefighters to prevent and safely mitigate fires and other emergencies in their communities.

### *Objectives & Strategies*

**1** To strengthen the middle level of the MFT&E organization by adding full time Fire Department Service Supervisors and Resource Developers to ensure adequate span of control, quality of services, and strict compliance with applicable safety laws, rules and recommended practices.

A. **\*\*** We will add two Fire Department Service Supervisors -- one in each MFT&E Region -- each with ½-time secretarial support; to recruit, develop, support and supervise state and municipal fire instructors and lead the development of training materials and facilities.

B. **\*\*** We will add four specialists (Curriculum Development; Equipment, Compliance/Certification and Technology Specialists), and one support person to build and maintain the training infrastructure necessary to provide the highest quality life-saving training and education to Maine's citizens and firefighters.

**2** To support the development of Maine firefighters by providing -- and supporting -- safe, up-to-date fire training and education which complies with applicable standards and regulations and complements other high quality programs.

A. We will provide standardized training to fire department and brigade members statewide that meets applicable standards, laws and requirements, is contextual and based on local needs.

RESOURCES REQUIRED: \* Some Additional \*\*All Additional



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**FIRE TRAINING CONT.**

- B.** We will strengthen our support of instructors at the local and regional levels by providing state-of-the-art curriculum, train-the-trainer programs, and coordination of resources and services.
- C.** We will require firefighters to successfully complete a physical fitness assessment prior to any training that might put the firefighter's health at risk.
- D.** We will integrate public education and risk reduction awareness training into all levels of fire suppression training.
- E.** We will target instructor recruitment and development to special instructional areas.
- F.** We will enlist other organizations (Bureau of Labor Stds., OSHA, Central Maine TC, ME Municipal Assoc., Maine Emergency Management Agency, etc.) in the development and review of safety procedures in all MFT&E courses.
- G.** We will develop a solid funding base to meet the needs of customers statewide.
- H.** We will continue to explore innovative funding sources (private, public, federal, grants, scholarships) for special program initiatives in response to specific customer needs.
- I.\*** We will strengthen the Firefighter Training Facilities Grant Program to assist local communities in the construction of regional hands-on training facilities.
- J.\*** We will continue to explore the feasibility of a centrally-located state fire academy facility.
- K.\*** We will identify, promote, and create as wide a diversity of training opportunities (technical rescue, specialized apparatus, etc.) as possible to meet specialized training needs.
- K\*\*** We will implement a comprehensive MFT&E curriculum process that ensures timely development and update, references to applicable standards, cost-effectiveness, uniform format, completeness, and local applicability in a variety of formats that meet student needs.
- L\*\*** We will provide or obtain state of the art equipment as required for each course.

RESOURCES REQUIRED: \* Some Additional \*\*All Additional





## Goal **FIRE SCIENCE**

To develop Maine's fire service leaders - present and future - so they can lead efforts to make Maine safe from fire.

### *Objectives & Strategies*

- 1 **To provide the opportunity for students statewide to pursue Fire Science certificates and degrees in formats that meet their needs.**
  - A. **We will strengthen** existing, and create a wider variety of, student opportunities:
    - = Technical College Associate Degree courses at all sites that can support them
    - = Officer Training Modules for credit: (LFD, Fire Attack Schools, etc.)
    - = A variety of transfer options (National Fire Acad. military, other colleges, etc.)
    - \*\*Leadership development educational opportunities for career & volunteer officers
    - \*\*Distance Education (Educational TV, World Wide Web/Internet based courses)
  - B. **We will continue to work to overcome the cost barriers** to a fire service education.
  - C. **We will improve marketing** of fire service educations for pre-service students.
  - D. **We will provide comprehensive career-preparation and career-enhancement opportunities** for fire science students, including training opportunities in hazardous materials, EMS/Paramedic, Driver/Operator, Firefighter I+II, and Fire Officer.
  - E. **\*\*We will strive to make fire science courses available** within 30 minutes travel time of every fire officer in Maine.

RESOURCES REQUIRED: \* Some Additional \*\*All Additional

**F I R E   S C I E N C E   C O N T .****2**

**To provide every Fire Science student with the training needed to meet the qualifications of the fire, rescue and EMS service.**

- A.** We will ensure that our curriculum is based on applicable standards and address appropriate levels of student career preparation.
- B.** We will ensure that every instructor meets appropriate standards prior to teaching.
- C.** We will ensure all fire science courses meet Associates of Arts and Sciences standards.
- D.** We will prepare graduates fully for career challenges, and assist them in gaining career placement.
- E\*\*** We will strive to provide a mentoring program for fire science students.
- F\*\*** We will strive to provide state of the art educational environments for fire science students.
- G\*\*** We will strive to develop 3-year Fire Science/Paramedic Dual Associate Degree Options for students statewide.
- H\*\*** We will strive to maximize higher education options ( B.S., M.A., Ph.D.) for our graduates.

**3**

**To provide every student with a clear, flexible professional development path.**

- A.** We will provide preparation for a wide variety of career paths, and guidance/counseling to assist students in choosing the right path for them.
- B.** We will provide employment mentoring opportunities for students, including live-in programs, job shadowing, job application skills, (resume development, written testing, interviewing, physical agility testing, etc.)

**RESOURCES REQUIRED: \* Some Additional \*\*All Additional**



## FIRE SCIENCE CONT.

- C. We will promote life-time learning and career advancement preparation.
- D\*\* We will strive to develop a fire science internship program statewide to provide the opportunity for students to work on the job to gain valuable experience and provide valuable service to Maine communities.
- E\*\* We will strive to develop a Fire Service Career Opportunity Clearing House to connect public and private employers with qualified applicants.

## Goal FIRE SAFETY EDUCATION

To help citizens develop the knowledge and skills they need to prevent fires and protect themselves from hazards.

### Objectives & Strategies

- 1 To ensure that every person in Maine can get high quality fire and life safety education, taught by trained instructors, teachers and parents, and supported by local fire departments and school officials.
  - A. We will develop train-the-trainer programs for public fire safety education instructors.
  - B. We will provide public fire education presentations for interested persons and groups.
  - C. We will provide up-to-date educational materials that are applicable to local needs.
  - D. We will seek the support of local fire department and school officials in the effort to bring fire safety education to all the citizens of Maine.
  - E. We will provide the mass media with timely and pertinent public service announcements.

RESOURCES REQUIRED: \* Some Additional \*\*All Additional



FIRE SAFETY EDUCATION CONT.

2

To identify Maine citizens at greatest risk to fire, and target appropriate programs to meet their needs.

- A. We will work with other agencies to gather data for risk analysis.
- B. We will create partnerships to address needs to those citizens at greatest risk.
- C. We will identify, develop and provide appropriate programs to meet the educational needs of those at greatest risk.
- D\*\* We will strive to identify or develop an educational intervention program specifically targeted to reduce the risk of fire for Maine's senior citizens.

Goal

ADVOCACY

To make Maine people the safest in the nation.

Objectives & Strategies

1

To improve MFT&E organizational processes and leadership development to ensure a viable, dynamic agency offering the best customer service.

- A. We will systematically review and improve task assignments and follow-up.
- B. We will ensure coordination and resource-sharing among both regions.
- C. We will promote and model team-building at all levels of our organization.
- D. We will improve internal and external communications to build understanding, consensus and ownership among personnel and customers.

RESOURCES REQUIRED: \* Some Additional \*\*All Additional



## ADVOCACY CONT.

# 2

**To provide a one-stop resource center that will make available training materials and technical assistance to the fire service and the public.**

- A. We will improve the MFT&E audio-visual library contents & process to ensure the latest training aids are available to every fire department in Maine for free.**
- B. We will produce or customize and provide state of the art materials that are not available from outside sources.**
- C. We will promote the adoption of the Fire Department Accreditation Program, in partnership with I.A.F.C., ME. Fire Chiefs and Maine Municipal Association.**
- D. We will network with other resource centers (Cable TV, libraries, government agencies) to broaden and improve the quality of materials available to Maine fire services and citizens.**
- E\*\* We will provide complete packages of materials to local trainers that meet specific training needs. (for example: Curriculum, handouts, and audio/visuals for chimney fires, car fires, etc.)**
- F\*\* We will implement a comprehensive directory and tracking system for all materials available for fire service training and education.**
- G\*\* We will acquire and utilize all available technology to get resources to those in need.**
- H\*\* We will establish a full time Resource Coordinator (with secretarial support) to identify resources, evaluate and quantify the need for materials, and make them available to Maine firefighters and citizens in the a timely and user-friendly way.**
- I\*\* We will develop the ability to communicate electronically with every Maine fire chief.**



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**ADVOCACY CONT.****3**

**To enhance the development of MFT&E personnel by maintaining dynamic, on-going communications; providing challenging assignments; and encouraging and supporting attendance at training and education opportunities.**

- A. We will recruit the “best and brightest” candidates for MFT&E positions.
- B. We will provide mentors to help new, and newly assigned, personnel.
- C. We will provide the opportunity for MFT&E employees to take on challenging assignments, and the support necessary to help them succeed.
- D. We will improve MFT&E instructors’ opportunities to attend in-state professional development (training, education, and networking) opportunities.
- E\*\* MFT&E will attempt to host or co-host a national conference annually in Maine.
- F\*\* We will strive to provide opportunities for every MFT&E instructor to network with other fire instructors on at least a quarterly basis (within a 30-minute drive from home), and with out-of-state fire service instructors and leaders on at least a yearly basis.

**4**

**To provide & support training and education programs, and policies and procedures that meet the diverse demographic, political & cultural needs of the people of Maine.**

- A. We will research and define the demographic, fire department affiliation, political, and cultural diversity of Maine people and the Maine fire service.
- B. We will enhance policies and procedures that promote diversity in MFT&E personnel.
- C. We will actively recruit and prepare personnel to enhance MFT&E diversity.
- D\*\* We will strive to enhance our diversity until MFT&E reflects the diversity of Maine.
- E\*\* We will help make the fire services of Maine stronger and more diverse by advocating and promoting programs to recruit and prepare women, minorities, and other potential members.

RESOURCES REQUIRED: \* Some Additional \*\*All Additional





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