R342

Dear National Fire Academy Student:

Congratulations on your acceptance into the U.S. Fire Administration's National Fire Academy's *Training Program Management* (TPM) course. TPM promises to be challenging and rewarding. The 10-day course will enable you to discuss and evaluate many of today's issues facing the training officer in a fire or emergency medical services organization. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of what is beneficial to bring to class, and to notify you of the individual course project that is part of the class requirement.

TPM addresses many leadership aspects of the fire and emergency services training function, such as the complexities of performing training need assessments, how to deal with personnel involved in a training function, and even how to develop a training budget for your organization. In some cases, you will be asked to make some decisions regarding your home community, or organization.

We realize that organizations often have very different training support systems and levels of sophistication. We ask you not to get "hung up" on trying to think that your organization will have everything that we may ask you to bring. **It will be helpful to you if you can bring the following things to class.**

1. A mission statement specifically written for the training function in your organization.
2. A breakdown of your annual budget for training, including programs and personnel.
3. Any policies or procedures that may govern your training function, such as the development, delivery, or evaluation of training programs.
4. A list of training programs that your organization currently offers.
5. Any computer (or other high technology) programs that you are using within a training function, and that you would like to share. The programs that you bring will be made available for other students to see.
6. Any other outstanding, traditional training programs that you would like to share with the class.

Also, we would like to inform you about a course project that is required by each student. This project is designed to allow students to investigate a key issue or problem that has been identified as being important to their fire service organization in the area of training. Basically, the paper has four sections – background and significance of the problem or training issue; sources (both people and materials) and what they say about the problem; your own conclusions and recommendations about solving the problem; and a reference list.

We ask that you **do not** work on this project before coming to class. You may begin to think about a couple of directions and issues that you would like to consider. Remember that the issues or problems selected must relate to your own training division, and be a leadership or management responsibility of the training officer to solve and implement. Some of the topics from previous classes include:

- Developing more effective training for skill retention
- Solutions in training career and volunteer firefighters together
- Developing weather guidelines for outdoor training
- Moving fire training records into useful information management systems
- More effective ways of developing annual training requirements
- Protecting and upgrading a training facility
- Training solutions for merging EMS personnel with fire service personnel
- Solutions to training inconsistencies between shifts
- Issues and solutions of developing and delivering computer-based training
- Developing and delivering fire fighting simulations for local training

You will be expected to locate written materials and use people to obtain recommendations. Then, you will be able to reach your own conclusions and be in a position to implement recommendations upon returning to your organization.
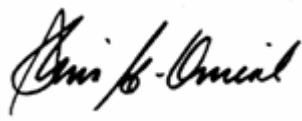
Papers will be typed and the format will be presented and discussed in class. The computer lab on campus and computers within your classroom are equipped with PC Pentiums running Windows XP and using Microsoft Office, which includes Word and PowerPoint. Word Perfect is not available anywhere on campus. You will have Internet access only during these timeframes and with these designated computers. Papers will be due within the course, unlike many courses where the paper is due 6 months following the completion of the course.

Increasing numbers of students and instructors are bringing laptop computers to campus. You alone are responsible for the security and maintenance of your equipment. The Academy cannot provide you with computer software, hardware, or technical support to include disks, printers, scanners, etc. There is a limited number of 120 Volt AC outlets in the classrooms. A Student Computer Lab is located in Building D and is available for all students to use. It is open daily with technical support provided in the evenings. This lab uses Windows XP and Office 2007 as the software standard.

End-of-class graduation ceremonies are an important part of the course and you are expected to attend. Please do not make any travel arrangements to leave campus until after you and your classmates graduate.

Should you need additional information related to course content or requirements, please feel free to contact Mr. Gerry N. Bassett, Training Programs Curriculum Training Specialist, at (301) 447-1094 or email at gerry.bassett@fema.dhs.gov

Sincerely,

Dr. Denis Onieal, Superintendent
National Fire Academy
U.S. Fire Administration