UNDERSTANDING THE FIRE SERVICE TODAY

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COURSE CONTENT:
• RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION CONCERNS
• TRAINING CHALLENGES FOR THE FIRE SERVICE
• BWC’S - PUBLIC EMPLOYEES RISK REDUCTION PROGRAM (PERRP)
• OPEN DISCUSSION

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RECRUITMENT & RETENTION
• NFPA ESTIMATES THAT THERE WERE APPROXIMATELY 1,056,200 FIREFIGHTERS IN THE U.S. IN 2017
• 373,600 (35%) CAREER FIREFIGHTERS (+3%)
• 682,600 (65%) VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS (-6%)
• 29,819 FIRE DEPARTMENTS
• 2,785 CAREER DEPARTMENTS
• 7,721 COMBINATION DEPARTMENTS
• 19,313 ALL VOLUNTEER DEPARTMENTS

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RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

- For the past 31 years there has been a steady increase in the number of career firefighters; however, the number of career firefighters per 1,000 in population is consistent during this time period.

- For the past 31 years the trend in the number of volunteer firefighters is less apparent with 2017 being the lowest number ever recorded, and the number of volunteer firefighters per 1,000 in population is steadily decreasing.
RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

**VOLUNTEER:**
- 1986: 808,200 Rate per 1,000 – 7.88
- 2017: 682,600 Rate per 1,000 – 5.80

*DECREASE OF 17%*
THIS IS CONCERNING!

**CAREER:**
- 1986: 237,750 Rate per 1,000 – 1.73
- 2017: 373,600 Rate per 1,000 – 1.80

*INCREASE OF 57%*
MISLEADING NUMBERS!

**RECRUITMENT & RETENTION**

- VOLUNTEER SIDE... WHAT DOES THIS ALL MEAN?
- WHAT ARE THE ISSUES FACING THE VOLUNTEER FIRE SERVICE?
  - TWO INCOME HOUSEHOLDS
  - MANAGING CHILDREN'S SPORTS/ACTIVITIES
  - SICK
  - TRAINING REQUIREMENTS
  - WHAT THE FIRE SERVICE IS FACING TODAY
  - TIME DEMAND/DEDICATION FOR CALLS
  - LACK OF COMMUNITY MINDSET?
  - SHOULD THIS JOB BE 100% VOLUNTEER?
RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

• What are the issues facing the career fire service?
  • What the fire service is facing today
  • Many areas the pay just isn’t worth it
  • Competing from the same pool of candidates
  • Many departments now offering reduced training for candidates with experience
  • Departments now allowing “transfers” from other career departments
  • Simply a lack of interest in this profession today

RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

• Possible solutions:
  • Promote our industry
  • Public education
  • Train our staff
  • Improve compensation (career and volunteers)
  • Fund training completely
  • Incentivize
  • House Bill #575 – Changes to ORC 5747.31
    • Tax incentive – (Volunteer)
      • 1-5 Years - $500.00
      • 6-10 Years - $1,000.00
      • 11+ Years - $2,000.00

TRAINING CHALLENGES

• Minimum standards for fire training:
  • 24 Hour (Exterior Firefighter)
  • Firefighter I - 125 Hour (Exterior Firefighter)
  • Firefighter II - 256 Hour (CAREER FIREFIGHTER)
  • EVOC
  • NIMS 100, 200, 700, 800
  • RAILCARE (COMMUNICATIONS, OPERATIONS, TECHNICIAN)
  • Officer development training
    • NIMS 300, 400
TRAINING CHALLENGES

• MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR MEDICAL TRAINING:
  • CPR – 8 HOURS
  • FIRST RESPONDER – 40 HOURS
  • BASIC EMT – 130 HOURS
  • PARAMEDIC – 900 HOURS
  • ACLS – 16 HOURS
  • PALS – 12 HOURS

• IN ADDITION TO THE MINIMUM TRAINING STANDARDS THERE ARE MANY AREAS THE FIRE SERVICE NEEDS TO FURTHER TRAIN THEIR FIREFIGHTERS:
  • AUTO EXTRICATION
  • ACTIVE SHOOTER – RESCUE TASK FORCE TRAINING
  • DISASTER PREPAREDNESS
  • SPECIAL RESCUE – ROPE RESCUE, WATER RESCUE, ICE RESCUE, TRENCH COLLAPSE, CONFINED SPACE, BUILDING
    COLLAPSE, HAZMAT, SWIFT WATER
  • FIRE INSPECTOR
  • FIRE INVESTIGATION
  • FIRE / EMS INSTRUCTOR
  • OFFICER DEVELOPMENT / LEADERSHIP

TRAINING CHALLENGES

• CONTINUING EDUCATION:
  • FIREFIGHTER CONTINUING EDUCATION – EVERY 3 YEARS
  • 54 HOURS OF C.E.
  • MEDICAL CONTINUING EDUCATION – EVERY 3 YEARS
  • FIRST RESPONDERS – 16 HOURS OF C.E.
  • EMT-BASIC – 40 HOURS OF C.E.
  • PARAMEDIC – 86 HOURS OF C.E.
TRAINING CHALLENGES

• Do the training requirements for the fire service need to be adjusted?
• Is this contributing to the lack of interest on the volunteer side?
• Is this not worth the pay for career firefighters?
• Are we recognizing the preparation the fire service must take in order to protect their communities?

BWC’S – PERRP

• What is the Public Employees Risk Reduction Program (PERRP)?
  • Created in 1992 and moved under BWC in July of 2005
  • Responsible for:
    • Ensuring public employees in Ohio have a safe and healthy working environment
    • Identifying workplace hazards and reducing those hazards through effective safety and health programs.
    • Developing and enforcing mandatory job safety and health standards.
    • Maintaining a reporting and recordkeeping system to monitor and reduce injuries and illnesses.
    • Providing assistance, training and other support programs to help public employers and workers understand their rights and responsibilities.

BWC’S – PERRP

• Employer and Employee Responsibilities
  • Each public employer in Ohio must:
    • Provide a place of employment free from recognized hazards.
    • Take reasonable measures to avoid the general duty clause.
    • Meet and maintain a safety committee.
  • Each public employee in Ohio must:
    • Comply with all safety and health regulations.
    • Comply with any reasonable safety and health policies developed by their employer.
BWC’S – PERRP

• SO WHAT PROMPTED THE LEGISLATIVE CHANGE FOR PERRP TO NOW OVERSEER THE FIRE SERVICE?

• JUNE 30TH, 2017 – HB 27 WAS PASSED WHICH MADE CHANGES TO OHC 4167
  • THESE CHANGES EXTENDED BWC’S OVERSIGHT THROUGH THE PUBLIC EMPLOYEES RISK REDUCTION PROGRAM (PERRP) OF FIREFIGHTERS, EMTS, AND PARAMEDICS REGARDING SAFETY AND HEALTH CONCERNS
  • THIS LAW CHANGE WENT INTO EFFECT ON SEPTEMBER 29TH, 2017

BWC’S – PERRP

• WHAT ARE SOME OF THE MAIN CONCERNS FOR PERRP?
  • PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT
  • RESPIRATORY PROTECTION POLICY
  • ANNUAL MEDICAL SCREENING
  • BACK FAT TESTING
  • SCRUBS FIT TESTING
  • CONTACT POLICY
  • APPARATUS STANDARDS
  • PUMPs AND AERIAL TESTING
  • DEVICES TRAINING
  • LADDER TESTING
  • HOSE TESTING AND STANDARDS
  • INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
  • NFPA STANDARDS

BWC’S – PERRP

• WHAT STANDARDS EXIST FOR THE FIRE SERVICE THAT PERRP PLANS TO USE IN REGULATING THE FIRE SERVICE?
  • OSHA STANDARDS
  • NFPA STANDARDS

• WILL THE CAUSE ANY UNDO STRESS FOR MANY FIRE DEPARTMENT?
  • VOLUNTEER
  • CAREER
QUESTIONS:

• OPEN DISCUSSION

WORK CITED

• HTTPS://WWW.NFPA.ORG/-/MEDIA/FILES/NEWS-AND-RESEARCH/FIRE-STATISTICS-AND-REPORTS/EMERGENCY-RESPONDERS/OSFDPROFILE.PDF
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