



NEW HAMPSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS, INC.

Working Together to Make a Difference

547 Charles Bancroft Hwy.

Litchfield, NH 03052

www.nhafc.org

Email: nhfirechiefs@gmail.com

Minutes of a Meeting of the NH Association of Fire Chiefs

NH Fire Academy, Concord, NH - Thursday, February 12, 2026

Following informative seminars on the Nashua Active Shooter incident and the new Cancer Screening opportunities for career and retired career firefighters, the meeting was called to order at 1125 hours.

After a salute to the flag, a moment of silence was requested for departed members

Welcome from Host: Director Wholey thanked everyone for attending. He also thanked the seminar presenters.

INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS. Members were asked to introduce themselves and where they were from.

Special Guests: Nick Brown from Senator Shaheen's office and Maddie Kolaja from Congresswoman Goodlander's office, and Steve Pecora from Governor Ayotte's office.

Minutes: A MOTION (Gamache/Poulin) to approve the minutes of the December and January meeting carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: The December/January reports were presented. A MOTION (Poulin/Cole) to approve them carried unanimously.

Communications: n/a

Applications for membership: ED Lemire stated that we have nine (9) new applications that have been approved, Chiefs Jeff DiBartolomeo of Kensington, Steve Johnson of Strafford, Timothy Wilder of New Durham and Ken Berkenbush of Epping. Also Asst. Chief Jeff Marshall of Milford, Deputy Chiefs Brian Evengelista of Wolfeboro and Erik Aucella of Strafford, Capt. Timothy Lavoie of Goffstown as an Associate member and Rob Short of Cyber Communications Sales is a new Advocate member.

Life Membership: n/a

President's Report: (Watkins) –

- He and Chief LaRoche attended the “Five Families” meeting.
- He attended the Traffic Safety Committee meeting and has been placed on the enforcement subcommittee.
- He has charged the Nominating Committee with presenting a slate of officers for the ensuing year and reappointed Chief Jason Lyon as Chair.
- He was concerned at how we choose attendees for CFSI. He stated that the President, 1st Vice President and Executive Director should automatically go and the remainder be chosen by the board.
- He asked that any committee member please represent the NHAFC. If there is a disagreement, they're asked to consult the board.

Report of the Executive Director: (Lemire)

- The March 12 meeting will be hosted by the Barnstead Fire Department and feature a home-cooked corned beef and cabbage dinner.
- The April Annual Meeting will be at the Common Man in Plymouth on the 9th. Our guest speaker is Chief Darryl Jones of the Pittsburg Bureau of Fire.
- Commissioner Quinn has reappointed Craig Clough to the Trauma Medical Review Board after receiving our recommendation.
- We're waiting for the notification of proceeds from our time at the Nash Casino.
- Ad book proceeds to date: Total: \$32,815.00 ; Vendor: \$22,970.00; Assn: \$9,844.00.

1st Vice President Report/Professional Development Committee - (Chief LaRoche)

- On January 21st he had a meeting with stakeholders from the NH Ambulance Association ahead of the Data Collection Meeting
- January 23rd was the first stakeholder engagement for data collection meeting. The collection tool and directions were discussed, as well as the feasibility of the timeline presented by RAND Group. RAND was also looking for some agencies to try the collection tool. He received that this week and will identify some departments that are able to trial the tool and provide feedback.
- Last week he attended the hearing on HB 1555 to hear the debate and support the Fire Marshal.
- The Grafton County EMS study, from MRI, has been released.

Government Relations – (Schmidt) –

For the initial six weeks of the 2026 legislative session, committees have been working to schedule and hold hearings on hundreds of bills. The pace has been brisk as the House and Senate are forced to deal with far more bills than the normal second year of a two year session. The first major deadline for both bodies is March 26. That is “crossover” date by which all House bills must be acted upon by the House and all

Senate bills by the Senate. Those which pass either body crossover to the other body for their consideration. We have included a updated chart with all of the bills that we have been following for the Association. There are several ongoing issues on which we have prepared brief summaries:

- ***HB 1555 (Code Appeals)*** – The bill that was introduced in response to a small business owner who purchased a winery and testified that the local fire chief’s decisions regarding code compliance forced him to choose between closing his business or building a new building. The bill would freeze the applicability of the fire code for 20 years on a property after issuance of a certificate of occupancy, allow for the Fire Marshal to hear appeals of decisions by local fire chiefs, enable fire chiefs to grant variances to the state fire code, allow the Fire Marshal to allow exceptions to the state building code, and allow the state Building Code Review Board to hear appeals of decisions by a local fire Chief. At the initial hearing, a number of concerns were brought forward regarding freezing the applicability of the state fire code and the various proposed processes in the bill. Although the Committee expressed interest in working on an amendment to the bill, they were unable to have a subcommittee work session. The Committee may act on the bill as soon as this week. If there is an amendment, we will provide to the Association.
- ***HB 1004 (Sprinkler Exemption Expansion)*** – The bill would expand the existing exemption from sprinklers to include a detached building with up to 4 residential dwelling units. The exemption would apply to new construction and renovations or conversions of detached buildings. At the initial hearing, the supporters argued that expanding the exemption would help make housing units more affordable. Marshal Toomey conveyed concerns regarding the proposal from a life safety perspective. There was acknowledgment that the bill would have to be amended in order to ensure it did not create a conflict with the single stair construction standard passed last year. The committee has not yet acted upon the bill.
- ***HB 1777 (E-911 Funding)*** – At the initial hearing, the sponsor explained that during the most recent budget process, she learned that revenue from the E-911 funds were being used for purposes other than those for which they are intended. Specifically, funds were used to provide radio communications. She stated that NH Department of Safety was improperly using the funds. The bill is intended to tighten the language and add new auditing requirements. Director Doyle testified in opposition. He stated that, if passed, the bill would alter radio communication funding, which is critical to emergency services. He stated that NH’s use of the funds is consistent with FCC regulations and that, since 2012, the funds have been used for this purpose. He stressed the need to continue to allow the fund to be used as it is currently. The House Science, Technology and Energy Committee vote 12-5 to kill the bill. It will head to the House floor later this month.

- **HB 1064 (Government/Government Employee Liability)** – The bill proposes to increase the existing liability caps and create personal liability for government employees. The basis for the bill’s return was a tragic accident involving the son of a current lawmaker who’s son suffered a severe brain injury while performing school related farm work under the supervision of a school district employee. The Representative who’s son was injured testified in support and described in detail the brain injury to her son and the extensive medical costs the family has endured, and will continue to experience for the rest of his life. Current liability protections limit their ability to garner sufficient resources, unlike if a similar instance had occurred outside of the auspices of government. There was support for the bill from plaintiffs’ attorneys. Opposition was provided by the NH Municipal Association, NH School Boards Association, and NH Police Association. As written, they expressed the bill lacked sufficient definitions, which would lead to overly defensive practices by governmental employees who are seeking to avoid litigation. Further, they expressed concern that higher judgements could lead to higher property taxes. The House Judiciary Committee has scheduled a committee vote for Friday. The bill may end up being recommended for passage. If so, NHAFC may be asked to participate in a larger effort to stop the bill from passing.
- **HB 1300 (Local Property Tax Cap votes/State Elections)** – As introduced, the bill would have redrawn NH’s congressional districts. Since Governor Ayotte has indicated that she is not supportive of redrawing the Congressional lines, a “replace all” amendment has been introduced which would require that during state November elections (even years), voters would be given an opportunity to vote on a cap on local property taxes. [Here](#) is a link to the amendment. WMUR’s Close Up recently had a debate between a supporter and an opponent of the concept. Here is a link to the debate for those who may be interested: [New local tax cap amendment splits state reps | CloseUp](#)
- **HB 1602 (Battery Stewardship)** – The House Environment and Agriculture Committee voted 14-0 to pass the bill and it will head to the House floor soon. The bill would create a Safe Battery Recycling Stewardship Program. NHAFC prepared a letter in support of the bill and Chief Jay Lyon attended the hearing to testify about the challenges associated with fire caused by lithium ion batteries. The proposal has support from the business community, battery manufacturers, waste haulers, and environmentalists.
- **SB 564 (prohibiting road length restrictions).** – This bill includes the following provision “...Municipalities shall not limit maximum road length so as to impede development, provided that the proposed roadway or extension thereof fully complies with the state fire code, including but not limited to standards for life safety, property access, asset preservation, emergency vehicle access, and roadway design.” During a subcommittee work session yesterday, the committee recommended passage of the bill. It will head to a full committee vote in the upcoming weeks before heading to the Senate floor.

- **Risk Pools (SB 661/SB 605/HB 1491)** – There are a number of bills which seek to alter the regulation of risk pools. **SB 605** would allow for any special assessments to be paid out over 36 months. The hearing on the bill was held last week. No action has been taken yet. **SB 661** appears similar to legislation from last year which provides new requirements on risk pools, which will remain governed by the Secretary of State’s office. It had a hearing on Tuesday. **HB 1491** was heard last week. It proposes to carve out “assessment pooled risk programs” from regulation by the Secretary of State’s Office and transfer the regulation to the Insurance Department. HealthTrust testified in favor of the bill. It is not yet clear if the House and Senate will be able to align on whether to provide more regulatory powers to the Secretary of State’s office or transfer some of the risk pool regulation to the Department of Insurance.

2nd Vice President Report (D. Chamberlain) –

- The Scholarship Committee met virtually Monday, January 12 at 1300 hours.

Sgt. At Arms (Fraitzl) – No report

Committee Reports

Scholarship Committee – (Marshal Toomey/Chief D. Chamberlain)

- The Scholarship Committee met virtually Monday, January 12 at 1300 hours and completed a framework for a new program. It was presented to the Board on February 4 and pending a wording change, will be approved at the March Board meeting.

Division Reports

Fire Marshal: (Marshal Toomey)

ADMINISTRATION:

Personnel:

We have two full-time Fire Protection Specialist positions posted and are currently seeking approval to post a State Building Inspector position. An additional 10 vacancies are presently on hold.

Legislation:

Legislative hearings are underway for the 2026 session. Our priorities for this session include an update to the state fire code to the 2024 editions of NFPA 1 & 101, some clean-up on investigation language, and clean-up on incident reporting to align with NERIS. We continue to provide input on bills when questions arise. We are actively following:

HB 1004 exempting certain dwelling units from automatic sprinkler system requirements

Oppose as introduced.

House ED&A hearing January 28, 2026

HB 1159 relative to updating the state building code

Support

House ED&A hearing January 28, 2026, OTP

HB 1180 updating the definition of the state building code to include the International Energy Conservation Code 2024

Monitor

House ED&A hearing January 28, 2026

HB 1271 relative to third-party code review and inspection services for building permits

Monitor

House ED&A hearing January 28, 2026, Refer to Interim Study

HB 1555 relative to the administration and enforcement of the state fire code

Oppose as introduced, Monitor amendment introduced and passed

February 10, 2026

House ED&A hearing January 28, 2026, executive session February 10, 2026

SB 426 repealing the permissible fireworks advisory committee

Support

Senate ED&A hearing January 14, 2026, Passed Senate January 29, 2026

SB 494 relative to the state fire code, fire incident reporting and investigations, and the duties of the state fire marshal

Support

Senate ED&A hearing January 14, 2026, OTP-A, Passed Senate February 5, 2026 and referred to Senate Finance Committee

SB 509 preventing municipalities from limiting dead-end road length if compliant with the state fire code

Monitor

Senate Commerce hearing January 27, 2026

State Emergency Response Commission (SERC)

The State Emergency Response Commission is seeking a member from the NH Association of Fire Chiefs. Please contact Assistant Director Brian Allard with any questions brian.h.allard@dos.nh.gov.

Board of Fire Control:

The Board of Fire Control held a regular meeting at the IPOC on Tuesday, February 10th at 1 pm. The next meeting will be in May 2026.

BUREAU OF INVESTIGATIONS:

The Bureau of Investigations has 25 open cases at this time. This includes 9 criminal cases and 5 incidents involving fatalities. Investigators responded to 7 scenes in the month of January.

New cases:

- On January 7, 2026, investigators responded to Canterbury to assist with the origin and cause of a building fire. The cause of the fire is undetermined at this time but there are no criminal indicators.
- On January 16, 2026, investigators received a report from the Claremont Fire Department regarding a juvenile who sustained significant burn injuries. It was determined that the youth had been with other juveniles utilizing a fire pit when the accident occurred. The juvenile is still receiving medical care and is expected to recover. Investigators are continuing to monitor the status.
- On January 19, 2026, investigators responded to Loudon to assist the Loudon Fire Department with a building fire at an automotive shop. Loudon FD will be completing the origin and cause investigation report; however, all information obtained to date suggests that the fire was accidental.
- On January 27, 2026, investigators responded to Holderness after a reported building fire, and an occupant in the building sustained injuries. The investigation into the origin and cause is still ongoing, and the occupant who sustained injuries is expected to have a full recovery.
- On January 29, 2026, investigators responded to Monroe for a reported building fire. The investigation is still ongoing; however, there have been no indications to date that the fire is of a criminal nature.
- On January 30, 2026, investigators responded to Epping to assist the Epping Fire Department with a building fire investigation. The Epping FD will be completing the origin and cause report. All available information at this time suggests the fire was accidental.

Fatal Fire/CO Incidents:

- On January 1, 2026, investigators responded to an apartment building fire in Manchester, which resulted in two fatalities involving a 75-year-old male and a 5-year-old female. Several additional injuries were reported; however, they were determined to be non-life-threatening. The Manchester Fire Marshal's Office is investigating the origin and cause of the fire, which is ongoing; however, there is no evidence to suggest it resulted from a criminal act. The State Fire Marshal's Office worked alongside the Manchester Fire Department, Manchester Police Department, NH State Medical Examiner's Office, and the Massachusetts State Medical Examiners' Office.

Youth Firesetter:

- In January, we received one referral for YFS services.

BUREAU OF BUILDING SAFETY & CONSTRUCTION:

State Building Permit System:

In January, a total of 23 permits were processed through the State Building Permit System:

- Building: 7
- Electrical: 5
- Plumbing: 0
- Fuel Gas: 1
- Mechanical: 4
- Fire Protection: 3
- Fire Alarm: 3

Technical Assistance, Educational & Healthcare Reviews:

During the month of January, the following activities were completed:

- Educational Plan Reviews: 6
- Healthcare Plan Reviews: 9
- Inspections Completed: 217
- Technical Consultations Provided: 135

Variance Requests:

A total of 8 variance requests were processed in January.

Fireworks Safety and Enforcement Program

The Fireworks Safety and Enforcement Program conducted the following in the month of January:

- Proximate Licenses Issued: 0
- Display Certificate of Competency Issued: 0
- Consumer Fireworks Retail Store Licenses Issued: 1
- Explosive Magazine Inspections: 0
- Proximate Audience Inspections: 2
- Technical Assistance: 0

Modular Building Program

The Modular Building Program conducted the following in the month of January:

- Inspections: 13
- Audits of Manufacturers: 0
- Audits of Educational Facilities: 1
- Labels Issued to Manufacturers: 155
- Units Shipped to New Hampshire: 23

Tramway and Amusement Ride Safety

The Tramway and Amusement Ride Safety section conducted the following in the month of January:

- Amusement Registrations: 25
- Amusement Inspections: 25
- Amusement Incidents: 0
- Tramway Registrations: 3
- Tramway Inspections: 38
- Tramway Incidents: 6

BUREAU OF OUTREACH & EDUCATION:

Hazardous Materials:

In the month of January, the hazardous materials section had no incident responses but consulted on a nitrogen dioxide/carbon monoxide issue at an ice rink. In that case a build-up of nitrogen dioxide and/or carbon monoxide from use of an ice resurfacer, combined with increased heating system use during cold weather, is believed to have caused several occupants of the rink to feel ill.

The SFMO Hazmat Section is working with NH Recycles and the NH Department of Environmental Services (DES) in 2026 at several training events about solid waste safety involving lithium-ion batteries. The first event is in Laconia on February 12 and will be attended by transfer station personnel and local government officials. Fire Departments are encouraged to attend as well. This training will be offered next in New London on March 19. More information and a registration link is available at NH Recycles website: <https://www.nhrecycles.org/solid-waste-safety>.

Tier II reporting is due by March 1 for calendar year 2025. Facilities are required to report on the presence of hazardous chemicals stored, used or released in their businesses that meet a threshold established by the EPA. Information concerning hazardous chemicals stored and used by businesses is sent to the state through the Hazardous Materials Section at the SFMO and also to individual jurisdictions. Reporting toxic releases is similar but different and goes to the DES. Refer to the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA Sections 311-312) for more information. Contact the SFMO if you know of a facility in your jurisdiction that is not reporting storage, use or release of chemicals. You can contact us at: hazmat@dos.nh.gov.

Incident Reporting:

NFIRS ended on December 31, 2025. All departments should have transitioned to NERIS in January 2026.

We are planning to have NERIS training on June 4th at the NH Fire Academy. Please save the date.

Please reach out to the state fire incident data team for any incident reporting questions at nhfirs@dos.nh.gov and have your NERIS contact person sign-up for the NH NERIS Newsletter by sending an email to FMO@dos.nh.gov.

Community Risk Reduction (CRR):

Announcing new training opportunity from **National Association of State Fire Marshals (NASFM)**
Best Practices for Addressing Homelessness and Migrant Issues!

Homelessness and migrant-related displacement continue to create complex fire and life safety challenges nationwide—encampment fires, unsafe temporary shelter conditions, code compliance gaps, and increased risk to responders. To support states and local jurisdictions, NASFM has developed a Comprehensive Guide for Local Jurisdictions: Best Practices for Addressing Homelessness and Migrant Issues, made possible through FEMA's FP&S grant program (Award EMW 2023-FP-00222).

NASFM's Best Practices Guide and Training help communities coordinate a holistic response to homelessness and migrant displacement, improving safety while preserving dignity.

Online - Homelessness & Migrant Issues Best Practices

This online class takes about 1-2 hours to complete and includes modules on: Understanding the Crisis, A Compassionate Response, and Sustainable Systems and Solutions. Receive a certificate of completion after final quiz.

Included are downloadable resources such as the 71-page NASFM Comprehensive Guide for Local Jurisdictions and a Planning Worksheet to guide notes as you complete the course. Afterwards, use these resources to build your own customized local plan.

Register Here: NASFM Training Portal - <https://nasfm-training.org/>

May 5, 2026 * Concord, NH * 9AM - 3PM

NASFM and the NHSFMO are working together to bring this training to New Hampshire. Communities need practical solutions that reduce risk, protect dignity, and save lives. NASFM's Best Practices Program equips leaders with guidance and training to strengthen preparedness and response. This 6-hour in-person training will blend

lecture and workshop formats with opportunities to network with local resources. Stay tuned for more details!

Register Here: <https://forms.office.com/g/GUu5U84N4U>

Outreach Events:

In January, we conducted two K9 demonstrations and participated in Mascot Day at Pat's Peak.

The Fire and Life Safety Educator Network discussed community risk reduction with CRR expert, Mike Sinsigalli. Together we explored key aspects of CRR from challenges departments face to current educational programs. Our next meeting is Wednesday, February 11th at 10:30-11:30AM EST. We will discuss homelessness and migrant-related displacement. Meeting access is provided upon registration or by contacting our office. Use the [registration link](#) to receive a calendar invite.

The Bureau of Outreach and Education team is excited for the new year. Last year we partnered with all counties and hope to do it again!

Are you interested in having the NH SFMO join an event in your community? Please reach out to us as early as possible so we can make every effort to attend your event. We also have [resources and equipment](#) for fire departments to borrow. Send your request to us at FMOpublicEducation@dos.nh.gov.

We invite anyone in a fire department to complete our brief 12-question end-of-year survey. It takes only a few minutes, and your feedback directly influences the programs, resources, and educational offerings we develop for the year ahead. It is not limited to one per department.

2025 SFMO Outreach Survey Link: www.surveymonkey.com/r/NHSFMO-BOE



Public Education:

Residents could have less than 2 minutes to escape a home fire once the smoke alarm sounds. In the event of a home fire, every second counts. Fires in high-rise and condominium buildings are especially dangerous. Encourage residents to know where all the exit stairs are and how to escape in an emergency.

Our public education theme for February is “[Home Fire Escape Plans.](#)” When escaping a fire, make sure to close the door behind you. If you cannot escape, get behind a closed door and call 9-1-1. A closed door can act as a barrier between you and the fire. Close Before You Doze: Always close your bedroom door before you go to sleep. Share these safety tips to help increase awareness in your community about the importance of a closed door.



Training Opportunities:

The SFMO can present training courses to fire service professionals law enforcement officers, and building inspectors. These training courses are typically two to three hours in length.

Currently, one class is being scheduled in Bradford for late February or early March, but the time and date have not been determined. Chief Mechanical Inspector Marc Prindiville and Mechanical Inspector Aurelian Ricardo will present information about Heating and Fuel Gas Appliance Inspections.

The SFMO will also present information on how to use the Emergency Response Guidebook at the Auburn Fire Department on March 4th at 6PM. Seating is limited. Contact Deputy Fire Marshal Anthony Booth for questions or to register: anthony.m.booth@dos.nh.gov.

If you are interested in hosting a future session, or would like to suggest a future training topic, please reach out to us at FMOPublicEducation@dos.nh.gov.

Topics include:

- Application of the NH State Fire Code: A Scenario Based Training
- NFPA 1 and 101 2021 Edition Updates
- Inspections of Multi-Family Dwellings
- Tent Inspections
- Commercial Cooking and Food Trucks
- Solar Installations for One- and Two-family Homes
- Display Fireworks Inspection Essentials
- Heating and Fuel Gas Appliance Inspections
- The Basics of LP Installations for One- and Two-family Homes
- Fire Investigation for First Responders
- Collection of Witness Data in Fire Investigation

- Fire Investigation Case Studies
- Air Monitoring
- PEAC Software
- An Overview of the 2024 Emergency Response Guidebook

Fire Standards/Training/EMS – (Director Wholey)

Administration

Personnel

- We continue to work within the hiring process under Governor Ayotte’s Executive Order to receive waivers for position vacancies.
- We have extended an offer for the position of part-time Promotional Testing Program Coordinator.

Grants

- We have received notification of the grant award for the 2025 National Fire Academy grant to the Department of Safety, which pays for off-campus NFA classes for the Division.
- We have received notification of the grant award for the 2025 Homeland Security Grant for additional technical rescue equipment.
- We are gathering quotes for potential equipment purchases through the FEMA Grants.
- The Division has submitted three EMS initiatives to New Hampshire DHHS for federal funding through the Rural Health Transformation Fund:
 1. Expanded Workforce Concepts Initiative
 2. Expanded Mobile Integrated Healthcare (MIH) Concepts Initiative
 3. Expanded Bariatric Capability Upgrade Initiative

Special Projects

- The Firefighters First Cancer Screening Initiative has begun. Information regarding the program may be found on the website: <https://www.firefightersfirst.nh.gov/>
 - Information sessions for eligible members will be held in-person at the Fire Academy on February 12, and virtually on February 17, 18, 23, and 26.
- The Raymond S. Burton Fire and EMS Training Facility classrooms and training grounds were turned over to the Division on January 16th, in time for the

Firefighter I & II class. The contractor continues making progress on the fire station, which should be complete in the next few weeks.

- The *Law Enforcement Officers, Professional Firefighters, and Emergency Medical Technicians Career Development, Recruitment and Retention Program* established in New Hampshire RSA 188-F:70 remains active and available. Emergency Service Dispatchers are also eligible.
 - Program details: <https://www.fstems.dos.nh.gov/resources/recruitment-retention>

Legislative/Administrative Rules

- The 2026 Legislative Session is underway with over 1,073 Legislative Service Requests filed for the upcoming session. The Division is working with DOS Leadership to review and strategize for possible fire and EMS service impacts.
- The proposed Trauma Rules are working through the internal DOS process.
- Administrative Rules to make the full transition to ETA's and sunset the former process have been developed and are working through the internal DOS process for submission to JLCAR.

Outreach

- Chief Bibeau delivered the Continuing Education program “The Cost of Code 3” to the Lakes Region at the LRCC Auditorium on January 13th.
- Captain Williams met with the Rye Fire Department on January 16th and traveled to the Stratham and Newfields Fire Departments on January 22nd.
- Captain Brunelle met with Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid on January 20th to discuss potential On My Time training. He met with members of the New Hampshire Air National Guard at our ARFF site about future training on January 21st.
- On January 27th, Captain Brunelle traveled to Hanover, Enfield, and Bristol to meet with Chiefs and Training Officers from those Departments.

Mental Health & Resiliency

- *NAMI Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training* – Pembroke – February 16 - 20
- *NAMI Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training* – Antrim – March 9 – 13

Curriculum

Firefighter

- The visiting committee met in December to review the final modules of Firefighter I. The committee voted to recommend the curriculum to the FSTC pending some final adjustments.
- The visiting committee will meet in February to discuss the Firefighter II curriculum.

Fire Inspector

- Test bank item validation is underway for First Responder Inspector.

Driver-Operator

- The January meeting was postponed.
- The next meeting will be on February 11th to review all three programs.

Fire Officer

- Initial curriculum development has begun for Fire Officer I and II.
- A visiting committee for Fire Officer programs will be requested during the March FSTC meeting.

Interfacility Transfer (Bureau of EMS)

- Captain Robblee and Rachel Larry are overseeing an EMS Visiting Committee to revise the IFT and PIFT training programs.
- The next meeting on February 9th will review the curriculum learning objectives.

Future Program Development

- *Fire and Emergency Services Instructor (I, II, & III)*. The new NFPA standards for Instructor professional qualifications (NFPA 1020) were released at the beginning of the year. Development of these programs will begin in 2026.

Bureau of Firefighter Training

Courses/Programs

- Firefighter I & II
 - *Bethlehem (FF I & II)* – January 21 - June 28
 - *Lakes Region Community College (FF I & II)* – March 23 - May 8
 - *Spring Recruit School (FF I & II)* – March 30 - June 26
- Technical Rescue
 - *Ice Rescue Technician* – Holderness – February 7 & 8

- *Ice Rescue Technician* – Canaan – February 28 & March 1
- *Ice Rescue Technician* – Raymond – March 14 & 15
- *Trench Rescue Technician* – Concord – May 26 - 29
- *Confined Space Technician* – Concord – June 15 - 17
- Driver Operator
 - All inquiries for these programs should be directed to driveroperator@dos.nh.gov
- Hazardous Materials
 - *Hazardous Materials Operations with PPE & Product Control* – Fitzwilliam – April 18 & 19
 - *Public Safety WMD/CBRNE Response: Sampling Techniques* – Concord – April 28 - 30
 - Hazardous Materials Awareness:
<https://www.nhfaemslearning.org/login/index.php>
- Airport Rescue Firefighting
 - Spring Live Fire Recertifications will begin in March:
<https://www.fstems.dos.nh.gov/training-education/aircraft-rescue-firefighter-training>
- “On My Time” Program
 - We continue to offer guidance to departments participating in this program.
- Electric Vehicle Training Resources
 - The links for the electric vehicle training resources may be found on the website: <https://www.fstems.dos.nh.gov/resources/firefighter-department-resources>

Apparatus/Equipment

- Crash 5 is scheduled to have an annual pump test in Spring 2026.
- Engine Three is out of service for tires and State Inspection.
- Ladder One is out of service for repairs.
- All other apparatus and Fleet Vehicles are in service.

Facilities, Prop Usage and Projects

- The Concord Fire Department used the IAFF Fireground Survival props on our campus on January 13th and 14th to conduct a class for their department.

- The mobile Forcible Entry prop traveled to Littleton Fire for their use from January 23rd to the 27th.
- The Milford Fire Department used the Forcible Entry prop over the weekend of January 30th and 31st.
- Parts have been ordered for repairs to the lighting in and around the “B” Building and the Northwest side of the Drillyard.
- A new maintenance reporting database has been implemented to better track items needing repair and reduce downtime for equipment and props.
- General clean-up and organization of the Fire Station has begun

Bureau of Certification and Support

Courses/Programs

- Instructor I/II/III Programs
 - *Instructor I* – Concord – January 20 - March 2
 - *Instructor I* – Peterborough – March 3 - April 11
 - *Instructor I* – Bethlehem – April 6 - May 16 **Seeking additional students**
 - *Instructor II* – Virtual – March 24 - April 23
 - *Instructor III* – Virtual – May 4 - July 13
- Fire Officer I/II Programs
 - *Fire Officer I* – Concord – February 2 - March 30
 - *Fire Officer I* – Hampstead – April 2 - May 21
 - *Fire Officer II* – Virtual – May 6 - June 24
- Fire Inspector Programs
 - *First Responder Inspector* – Concord – March 26 - May 7
 - *First Responder Inspector* – Concord – June 4 - July 2
- Instructor Development
 - *Firefighter I PPE & SCBA Modules* – Concord – February 19, 20, & 21
 - *Firefighter I PPE & SCBA Modules* – Bethlehem – February 22
- National Fire Academy & Specialty Programs
 - *Supervising Emergency Medical Services* – Stratham – February 21 & 22
 - *Incident Safety Officer* – Hudson – February 23 & 24

- *Decision Making for Initial Company Operations* – New Hampton – March 14 & 15
- *Managing Disciplinary Challenges in the Fire Service with Curt Varone, JD, MS, EFO* – Concord – June 3 & 4
- *National Fire Academy 3-State Weekend* – Emmitsburg, MD – June 6 & 7
- If you would like to see a specific NFA program or host an NFA program at your department, please contact Captain Burns at Anthony.T.Burns@dos.nh.gov.

Education Technology

- Moodle (January)
 - User Logins: 3304 (225% increase over December)
 - Course Enrollments: 1713
 - Course Completions: 1391
- 24 projects and modules are in progress for 2026 course development.
- All classrooms are full service.
- Firefighter Cancer Screening Initiative video released on January 27th and has over 70,000 views on social media.

Instructors

- New State Fire Instructor applications are available on RespondNH.
- State Fire Instructor Renewals are due June 30, 2026. Applications for renewal will open on April 1, and State Fire Instructors will be sent a notice of the required renewal.
 - Active/Current New Hampshire State Fire Instructors: 245
 - Active New State Fire Instructor Applications In-progress: 46

Testing & CPAT

- Instructor Development in January covered practical exam evaluator training on January 29, 30, and 31. We had 29 Division staff and instructors in attendance to standardize how practical examinations are scored, ensure inter-rater reliability, and understand the testing instruments.
- Winter weather has caused challenges in the safe execution of practical testing, and we will continue to put the safety of our students and evaluation staff first.
 - Monthly testing is the 2nd Tuesday of every month, with Firefighter I physical exams on the following Saturday. Submissions must be entered

by the last day of the month prior to the month you wish to test:

<https://www.fstems.dos.nh.gov/certification-testing/monthly-testing>

- The monthly testing registration process is undergoing a refresh with an online application in development.
- CPAT tests through August are open for registration:
 - April 28 - Merrill Fay Ice Arena - Laconia
 - June 23 - Merrill Fay Ice Arena - Laconia
 - August 6 - Merrill Fay Ice Arena - Laconia
- Department member assistance is needed for CPAT on testing days. Please confirm available personnel to assist with PC Nick Poulin at Nicholas.a.poulin@dos.nh.gov prior to the test date.

Program Support

- The new Division Seating Policy was released on February 9. We will communicate with our community partners regarding the policy, which will impact Fall 2026 seating.
- Fall 2026 course registration will open April 15.

Bureau of Emergency Medical Services

Boards and Commissions

- The Trauma Medical Review Committee will meet on February 18th at 0930.
- The Privacy Committee will meet on February 25th at 1300.
- The Medical Control Board will meet on March 19th at 0930.
- The Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Coordinating Board will meet on March 19th at 1300.

Operations

- Unit licensing closed on January 1, 2026. There are 283 licensed EMS units.
- There is an increase in provider licensing renewals due to the upcoming recertification and re-licensure periods.
- The state-level suspension of all out-of-state travel has created additional processes for vehicle inspections and Compliance-related investigations.
- Educational Training Agencies (ETA) support and relicensing are ongoing with no observed issues. Since inception, we have seen an average of a 5% increase in NREMT pass rates across all levels of initial training.

- The Administrative Packet for the application and licensing information can be found on the Division website: <https://www.fstems.dos.nh.gov/licensing/eta-licensing>

Courses/Programs

- EMS Continuing Education and Simulation Education
 - *Diabetic Emergencies* – Virtual, February 19th
 - *The Subtle Symptoms of Cerebellar Stroke (Simulation)* – Bethlehem, February 14th
 - *Prehospital Obstetric and Neonatal Care (Simulation)* – Gorham, February 28th
 - *Human Trafficking in NH - Emergency Medical Services* – Concord, March 4th, and Virtual, March 19th
 - *Fast & Furious – Tachy-dysrhythmias of the Young & Old (Simulation)* – Concord, March 11th, and Tamworth, March 26th
- EMS in the Warm Zone
 - Awareness and Operations courses are available free to students through our online training platform: <https://www.nhfaemslearning.org/login/index.php>
 - The RTF Concepts class is a half-day, in-person training with grant funding opportunities available. Questions regarding the program should be directed to Shawn Croteau at Shawn.A.Croteau@dos.nh.gov.
 - *Rescue Task Force Concepts* – Bethlehem – February 16

Clinical Systems

- Work continues Version 10.0 Protocol Development.
- Both the FT EMS Training Coordinator and the PT Initial Programs Coordinator positions remain vacant. The Division will continue to run programs as staffing allows, which will include SIM training, EMS in the Warm Zones training, and continuing education.
- All EMS bulletins may be found on the website: <https://www.fstems.dos.nh.gov/ems-systems/ems-bulletins>

Data Management

- Under the Director of the State of New Hampshire Fire Marshal, as of January 1, 2026, all fire response information shall be recorded using the National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS). The Data Management team

continues to work closely with the Fire Marshals office on fire incident reporting system.

- For departments using NHESR, the Division's NHESR team continues to work with fire departments to assist with the transition. Questions may be directed to the NHESR@dos.nh.gov team.

Compliance

- There are currently 7 active investigations and ongoing cases.
- Approximately 125 investigations were completed in 2025.

Preparedness and Special Projects

Staff continue to support AED, MIH, and IFT programs and outreach around the state. There are 14 current MIH programs in the state.

Fire Standards and Training Commission – (Chiefs Clark/Miller) –

The Commission last met on January 8th with a full agenda. At that meeting the following was accomplished:

- Chief Frank Fraitzl was elected Chair and Robert Field Vice Chair
- The revised curricula for Haz-Mat Ops Course was discussed and there were questions concerning the pre-requisites which was referred back to the Curriculum Committee. The Curriculum Committee has met and resolved.
- The Rules Committee is actively reviewing the applicable rules for any required updates,
- The Curriculum Committee was requested to review the section of the rules that relate to Courses and Curriculum. That review is underway with some changes required.
- It was reported that the Visiting Committee reviewing the Firefighter I and II curriculum continue to meet monthly. Expectation is that FF1 might be ready for public comment at the March Commission meeting.
- The Burton Fire & EMS Academy work is in its final stages with the classrooms now being utilized. Fire Station, propane facility and final groundwork have not yet been completed. A recent visit to the classroom building indicated that the upgrades are impressive.
- Next Commission Meeting is March 5th at 9 am.

Homeland Security and Emergency Management – (Director Buxton) – No report

Division of Emergency Services and Communications – (Director Doyle)

Committed to training, educating and certifying emergency and community responders to protect the citizens and visitors of New Hampshire

- Laconia facility update: Construction continues, on track and on budget; Interior construction is underway;
- Genasys Emergency notification platform ([NH Alerts](#)) is up and running, If you are interested in becoming a POC for your community to use the ENS for local messaging, please let us know. The statewide ENS system is offered to local communities *at no cost*. For more information, reach out to Matt White, matthew.w.white@desc.nh.gov at DESC;
- Piscataqua River / High Level Bridge reponse group meeting last week – ICS 217- a passed along to Portsmouth PD and Fire for review and planning for a table-top exercise;
- Met with Exec. Councilor John Stephen and Dir, Wholey of FSTEMS re: CPR / AED awareness during EMS week in May...more to follow;
- Our Trainees are well into their training. We have 9 in the class with a rough timeline of the end of February when they'll be OJT and side-by-side for the next phase of their training;
- Reviewing EAS/WEA Alert generation and protocol review for those agencies with authorized access;
- Community Events / school visits reminder – connect with our Public Outreach / Education Team for more info: Patrick Cavanaugh (603-271-6911), DESCPIO@dos.nh.gov;
- C.A.R.E.S. update is in full swing and the website has been completed. Reach out to our CARES Team for more information (cares.desc.nh.gov) or to include them in any outreach efforts in your community (NH911CARES@desc.nh.gov);
- REMINDER of the Tuition Reimbursement Program which was extended to Dispatchers and Telecommunicators. Beginning with the Fall 2025 semester, public safety telecommunicators and dispatchers will be eligible to participate in the CCSNH Career Development, Recruitment, and Retention Program. This program supports first responders by providing reimbursement for tuition and required fees. For more information, see <https://www.ccsnh.edu/law-enforcement-officers-professional-firefighters-and-emergency-medical->

[technicians-career-development-recruitment-and-retention-program](#) Please pass this information along to your Dispatchers;

- Social Media / Public Education Updates:

In January, the Division used its social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, and X) to spotlight the work being done across DESC while reinforcing key public safety messaging for New Hampshire residents and visitors. Content highlighted the roles and responsibilities that support the state's 911 system, shared a recap of 2025 call volume to provide insight into operations, and promoted the revamp of the New Hampshire 911 C.A.R.E.S. website, which improved accessibility and user experience. Social media was also used to reinforce important reminders such as Text-to-911 and the critical importance of knowing your location during an emergency, while also recognizing employee achievements and work anniversaries. These platforms continue to be an essential tool for connecting with the public and promoting the mission and work of New Hampshire 911.

- Media events:



- 4th Interoperability Roundtable discussion in Merrimack County last month – received good feedback. Next one will be in Cheshire county in March @ SWFMA in Keene on March 19... details to follow. More info can be requested from Asst. Director Tim Scott at timothy.c.scott@desc.nh.gov
- Legislative update:

Bill Num	Title
HB 1055	Granting The State Board Of Education Rulemaking Authority Relative to Student Use Of Cell Phones and Personal Communication Devices In Schools.
HB 1129	Authorizing Superintendents or Their Designee to Allow Limited Use Of Personal Laptops and Tablets In Schools and Establishing That Such Use Is Exempted Under School Cell Phone Use Policies.
HB 1193	Naming A 911 Call Service Center In Laconia In Honor Of Bruce G. Cheney.
HB 1436	Relative to The Classification and Protection Of Personal Digital Information and Cloud-stored Files.
HB 1503	Allowing The Department Of Education to Allocate Funds to Create A Database Of Maps Of Public Schools For Emergency Use Cases.
* HB 1777	Relative to The Enhanced 911 System Fund.
SB 423	Reestablishing The Commission to Study The Incidence Of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder In First Responders.
SB 537	Repealing The Authorization For The Public Utilities Commission to Approve Alternative Forms Of Regulation.

- Bureau of Communications & Interoperability participated in national-level response coordination and information sharing meetings focused on emergency communications before, during, and after Winder Storm Fern.
- Members of our Per Support Team / Comfort Dog participated in the Mental Health and Wellness symposium at FSTEMS in January;
- Any questions, comments, concerns, please reach out...

E 911 Commission – (Chief Thomas) – No report.

Forests and Lands – (Chief Sherman) – No Report

NH Information Analysis Center – (James Heinz-liaison) –

Large Public Gatherings, Summer of 2026: The summer of 2026 will certainly have a great deal of gatherings to celebrate, among other things, the 250th anniversary of the USA as well as the FIFA World Cup. The NHIAC reminds you that large public gatherings remain a vulnerable target for attacks, including vehicle ramming. If you are not already on the planning committees for these events, we encourage you to join them.

(U) Haz-Mat: The NHIAC is aware of a disturbing trend of using chemical and bio toxins to harm domestic partners.

(U) Trafficking: Human Trafficking is getting harder to detect. The NHIAC in cooperation with the NHHTCTF has produced a 90-minute program for first responders. Please contact Intelligence Liaison Officer Jim Heinz at James.B.Heinz@dos.nh.gov

(U) **Water Supply:** If you have a municipal water supply in your AOR, the NHIAC recommends that you build relationships with the owners/operators. Physical and cybersecurity threats against the water/wastewater sector are increasing, to include the use of counterfeit programmable controlling devices.

(U) **UAS/Drone Activity:** NHIAC is interested in drone activity conflicting with Fire/EMS operations. Please report any incidents of drones flying or hovering around your emergency operations or fire stations to law enforcement, particularly in reconnaissance type of behavior. Please also inform your Fire Service Intelligence Liaison Jim Heinz at James.B.Heinz@dos.nh.gov. Please see the following link for more information. [Drone Response Playbook for Public Safety](#)

(U) **Operation Flashpoint:** A memo has been sent out in a few editions of the NHIAC monthly Fire/EMS Bulletin regarding Operation Flashpoint. The awareness campaign was developed in partnership by FBI and DHS. See this link to review the program overview and objectives – [Operation Flashpoint Program | CISA](#). Members of the NHIAC continue to be out in NH communities working with businesses on bomb making materials awareness. As we all know, some of the materials used in the Boston Marathon bombing were purchased locally. An educational and informational program has been developed and is being presented which includes visual aids and informational sessions by members of the NHIAC.

(U) **Cybersecurity:** If you have not yet moved over to a “.gov” domain, it is important to do so. The NHIAC can be used to assist in getting resources. Please contact Intelligence Liaison Officer Jim Heinz at James.B.Heinz@dos.nh.gov or you can contact the Overwatch Foundation directly at www.overwatch.org

(U) The NHIAC is an integrated, all crimes/all hazards information sharing network that analyzes and disseminates information to engaged stakeholders from a variety of sources. If you are interested in receiving items from the NHIAC, contact ILO Jim Heinz at James.B.Heinz@dos.nh.gov for an Information Sharing Agreement (ISA).

Commission to study the Incidence of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in

First Responders – (Chief Watkins) – No report

Board of Fire Control – (Chiefs Clark/Emanuel) –

The Board last met on February 10, 2026. The highlights of the meeting are as follows:

1. Marshal Toomey reviewed the status of the move of his office to Hazen Drive in late Spring.
2. The Marshal gave a 2025 annual report which indicated a very busy year with a staffing shortage.
3. The Board held discussions concerning Fire/CO deaths in the State and lack of working smoke and/or CO detectors continue to be an issue. Red Cross is working hard to get detectors into homes. Homes are where deaths occur.

4. Proposed legislation was reviewed with far less proposals impacting, the Marshal's Office than last year. Vigilance is required as there are proposals to make the Fire Code more lenient.
5. Updates on the new NERIS reporting system that is now required as January 1, 2026. All three Chiefs on the Board advise some modifications that should be made especially in the categorizing of the incidents. Overall, it appears that this will be a great tool for data. Over 19,000 incidents have been entered into NERIS to date.
6. The proposed amendments to NFPA 1 and NFPA 101 version 2024 have had a public hearing and have been approved by the Board and sent to the legislators.
7. A discussion concerning the State Haz-Mat Teams was held including possible sources of funding. It is expected that the NERIS reporting will capture more smaller Haz-Mat Incidents that are not reported as such. It was noted that the Fire Academy does not offer the Haz-Mat Technician course and going to an out-of-state course is not feasible for call or volunteer firefighters.

Next scheduled meeting is May 12, 2026.

NH Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Coord. Board – (Dep. Chief Paquette) – No report

National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) – (Chiefs E. Thomas/Cathy) –

- The OSHA Task Force has resumed their meetings and the NVFC in conjunction with the IAFC, IAFF, and the Metro Chiefs continues to negotiate the changes proposed by OSHA.
- Cancer Prevention and early detection is a crucial aspect in defeating cancer.
- The NVFC has many resources dedicated to prevention and early screening. I encourage all Combination Chiefs and call and volunteer firefighters to visit the NVFC website to see what resources are available, and to read the Lavender Ribbon Report addressing best practices for lowering your exposure risks to cancer.
- <https://www.nvfc.org/take-action-to-reduce-risks-during-firefighter-cancer-awareness-month/>

EMS Trauma Medical Review Committee (Dep. Chief Clough) – No report

Building Code Review Board – (Asst. Chief Pouliot/Chief Reinert) –

- The January meeting was canceled and the next one will be February 13.

Manufactured Housing Installation Standards Board: (Chief Blanchette) –
No report

NH Drug Overdose Commission – (Chief Thomas) – No report

New England Fire Chiefs – a Division of the IAFC – (Chief Jones) – No report

Old Business –

New Business –

Good and Welfare –

- Chief Emanuel also mentioned the following:
- Coffee with the IAFC Safety Health & Survival Section (SHS): 3rd Thursday of the month at 11AM
Candid conversations around the world's largest kitchen table
Grab your coffee and join the SHS Section Board and guest speakers each month for candid conversations about the topics that matter most to firefighters.

- From the latest research to real-world firehouse experiences and lessons learned from close calls, no topic is off the table. We're here to discuss the issues directly impacting firefighter mental and physical well-being. <https://www.iafc.org/about-iafc/sections/shss/coffee-with-shs>

- Safety Stand Down Program: June 14 – 20, 2026
Safety Stand Down 2026, June 14 – 20, has announced “**Firefighter FITNESS: Fit to Serve, Fit for Life**” as the official theme for this year’s campaign, focusing on the foundations of physical fitness, how they can continue to be met throughout the years, and sustainable strategies for long-term success.

Safety Stand Down is a joint initiative of the [International Association of Fire Chiefs](#) (IAFC) Safety, Health and Survival Section, the [National Volunteer Fire Council](#) (NVFC), the [National Fire Protection Association®](#) (NFPA®), the [Fire Department Safety Officers Association](#) (FDSOA), and the [International Association of Fire Fighters](#) (IAFF). Held each year during the third week of June, the campaign works to reduce the number of preventable injuries and deaths in the fire and emergency services. In support of Safety Stand Down, responder agencies are encouraged to suspend all non-emergency activities during the campaign week to focus on training and education related to this year’s theme.

The campaign web site at www.safetystanddown.org includes resources to help departments plan for and implement Safety Stand Down. Additional tools and specific action plans for the week will be released in the weeks prior to the event.

Raffle - Counted by Chiefs Fraitzl and Sitar. \$355 was collected, \$175 was given for prizes and \$180 was forwarded to the Treasurer.

The meeting was adjourned at 1203 hrs.

Respectfully submitted,
Chief Brent T. Lemire, ret.
Executive Director, NHAFC

January 8, 2026