

Preparing Firefighters for the Assignment of Acting Officer

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## CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I hereby certify that the following statements are true:

1. This paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another.

2. I have affirmed the use of proper spelling and grammar in this document by using the spell and grammar check functions of a word processing software program and correcting the errors as suggested by the program.

Signed:  Cameron Haller \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## ABSTRACT

The problem that this research will address is the format in which personnel are assigned the designation of “Acting Lieutenant.” The Sidney Department of Fire and Emergency Services does not possess a formal policy or procedure that addresses the role of acting officer. The role of acting officer is a key component to the mission of the department. Success hinges upon this officer, who is a crucial link between management and labor and the primary display of our expertise to the external customer. The department has met with success and failure by practicing the current methods employed at the department, which are based entirely on seniority.

The purpose of this study is to find a procedure or process to prepare and assign personnel to the position of acting lieutenant. The research used in this study is descriptive, using three surveys, national standards, and existing literature. The research questions that will be addressed are:

1. What standards should be utilized to develop an acting lieutenant development program?
2. How do departments in the state of Ohio and nationally prepare, develop, and assign company officers?
3. What level of training is appropriate for personnel in an acting position?
4. What does the experience, education, and staff of SDFES state is needed of an acting officer?

The results indicated that the Sidney Department of Fire & Emergency Services is in need of a formal policy and procedure that addresses eligibility, requirements, training and assigning. The recommendation that follows provides the means by which the department can implement policies, procedures, and training.

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## INTRODUCTION

### **Statement of the Problem**

The problem that this research will address is the format in which personnel are assigned the designation of “Acting Lieutenant.” The Sidney Department of Fire and Emergency Services (SDFES) does not possess a formal policy and procedure to use as a guideline to train, assign, and prepare personnel to act in the capacity as lieutenant. On about 120 occasions annually, firefighters are simply moved up into the position of acting lieutenant based upon nothing more than seniority of the personnel on duty. Personal qualifications, ability to succeed, and motivation of the individual are of no concern to the selection process.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to find a procedure or process to prepare and assign personnel to the position of acting lieutenant. The chief, union president and labor-management teams will use this research to quantify the need for personnel development. At face value, the purpose appears to be simplistic and not involved. However, preparing individuals for the assignment of acting lieutenant is rudimentary in the health and safety of personnel and the success of the individual personnel who are expected to excel at the assignment in which they have been placed.

### **Research Questions**

The research utilized for this applied research project will be descriptive, using a survey and existing literature.

1. What standards should be utilized to develop an acting lieutenant development program?

2. How do departments in the state of Ohio and nationally prepare, develop, and assign company officers?
3. What level of training is appropriate for personnel in an acting position?
4. What does the experience, education, and staff of SDFES state is needed of an acting officer?

## **BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE**

The Sidney Department of Fire and Emergency Services (SDFES) is a full-time career department that operates out of two stations and responded to 3,303 calls for service in 2011, according to the annual department summary. The City of Sidney is approximately 12.02 square miles with a population of 21,229. The median household income is \$41,040 and the primary source of revenue is an income tax of 1.5%. The city uses a council/manager form of government in order to manage day-to-day activities (U.S.). The City of Sidney is a rural community and the county seat of Shelby County. SDFES is the only paid fire department in the county. The department offers a wide range of emergency services which includes emergency medical services, fire suppression, technical rescue, and hazardous material mitigation. SDFES consists of three divisions: Administration, Operations, and Prevention.

The Administration Division is responsible for management of all fiscal, human, and physical resources as well as the overall operation of a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week organization. Administration consists of the chief and an administrative assistant.

The Prevention Division is responsible for all facets of the City's Fire Prevention Program. This program includes an aggressive inspection program, fire investigations, fire safety education, juvenile fire setters, and plan reviews. The Prevention Division consists of the deputy chief and three lieutenants. The deputy chief oversees all aspects of Prevention and Training, as well as scheduling all maintenance/repairs. The deputy chief also performs as chief in the event absence. The two lieutenants in Prevention have the responsibility of carrying out inspections and performing the prevention programs. The training officer is a lieutenant and serves the department in all matters that concern training. The lieutenants may fill in for an operations assistant chief when that position is vacant due to his absence.

The Operations Division is responsible for the day-to-day delivery of emergency services including fire suppression, emergency medical, hazardous material mitigation, and technical rescue. Technical rescue includes auto extrication, rope rescue, trench rescue, confined space, and fast water. The Operations Division consists of assistant chiefs, lieutenants, and firefighters at full staffing levels one assistant chief, one lieutenant, and nine firefighters make up a crew and work out of two stations. Station One personnel consist of an assistant chief and seven firefighters. Station Two personnel consist of one lieutenant and two firefighters.

The position of lieutenant was first developed in 1982 at SDFES due to the addition of Station Two on the west side of town, located in close proximity to our industrial base and Interstate 75. Prior to the addition of Station Two, the senior firefighter on crew would become shift command in the absence of the assistant chief. The assistant chief had all the responsibility to make certain that the senior firefighter was capable of running the crew; there was not a formal process in place to assess the abilities of the senior firefighter. Upon the creation of Station Two, the senior firefighters would no longer serve in the capacity of shift command; their new responsibility was to serve in the capacity of acting lieutenant at Station Two. The ability to assess an individual's abilities as a lieutenant was not put into place at that time or to date.

To become an operation's lieutenant at SDFES one must complete a lengthy process. The lieutenant's position is the first promotable position at SDFES. The lieutenant at SDFES is the company officer. SDFES applies a unique process in which an individual becomes an operations lieutenant. The promotional portion is not unique. An interested individual must simply have five years of service with SDFES, state certification as a Firefighter II and EMT – Basic or Paramedic, and a valid driver's license. The promotional process is competitive and begins with a written test administered by a third party. The written test is primarily based upon four to five



books covering topics such as company officer, inspections, building construction, and tactical-based incident command. Based upon the score and seniority credits, a list is established in order from highest score to lowest passing score, greater than 70%. Until the year 2000, all a candidate had to accomplish was the highest passing score on the written test, plus seniority points. In 2000, the candidates, by direction of SDFES, began being subjected to an assessment center. The assessment center is generally comprised of real world-based exercises such as employee discipline, impromptu speech, selling one's attributes, in-box exercise, leaderless group, and an incident management scenario.

The candidates' scores are then combined. At the lieutenant level, the written score is 60% of the final score tally and the assessment center score is worth 40% of the final score tally. Successful candidates generally prepare and study for many hours. Emphasis is not only placed upon memorization and a passing score on the written test, but also on practical ability in a myriad of scenarios in which company level officers may and will find themselves having to deal with in an effective manner.

The uniqueness of the journey is the path that the individual must traverse after promotion. Lieutenants move through the fire prevention and training offices prior to obtaining the position of operations lieutenant. Lieutenants move through the offices in the event of personnel retiring or being promoted to the next levels within the organization. The tenure in fire prevention and training is entirely dependent upon the retirement and promotion of personnel. The time invested in the offices cannot be defined strictly. The benefits of officers learning the business side of the fire department have proven beneficial to the operations lieutenant and the department.

As mentioned above, the newly-promoted personnel report to the Prevention Division (FPO). The department began promoting personnel to prevention in the year 2000. The promotion to prevention allows the newly-promoted lieutenant to grow into the position and not be a firefighter on Friday and the operations lieutenant on Monday. While serving in prevention, the new lieutenant is required to obtain the certifications of Fire Safety Inspector and Fire Officer I. The Fire Officer I class must meet qualifications set forth in NFPA 1021. Successful completion of these two courses is required in order to serve in the capacity of operations lieutenant and assistant chief on an as-needed basis.

In 2008, SDFES incorporated a new position for the department, training officer. The training officer is located in the Prevention Division and reports directly to the deputy chief. With the addition of this position, an opportunity was presented to the lieutenant to serve as the training officer prior to being assigned to operations lieutenant. Lieutenants in this position are required to obtain certification as a Fire Service Instructor or an Emergency Medical Services Instructor. Achieving completion of Fire Officer II, that meets the standards in NFPA 1021, and Safety Officer is also strongly recommended and supported financially by the SDFES.

To date, the new process has been completed on nine promoted lieutenants. The process has afforded SDFES well-trained and well-rounded officers in the whole of what SDFES is trying to accomplish in all facets of the department. The process does require significant funding for training and back staffing while the training is being conducted. The lieutenants promoted under the previous format were good officers; however the focus was primarily on operations and not the whole of the department. Skills and abilities learned and practiced were not taught to the lieutenants prior to 2000 and had to be learned through experience, a great but difficult

teacher. The lieutenants of the previous promotional process were not afforded the opportunities to train or become certified in courses that would have significantly assisted them.

In 1996, SDFES began supporting education by paying in full for tuition, books, and lab fees for all members to earn an Associate's Degree in an emergency services related field. The work completed in earning a degree is beneficial to the promotion process. The earning of a degree is not a mandatory requirement for promotion at any level of SDFES, with the exception of the chief's position. The degree is strongly recommended at the assistant chief level and above. Candidates who obtain an associates degree generally fare well in the promotional process. Multiple firefighters have obtained degrees which makes them great assets on a scene and in the fire house.

SDFES has placed great emphasis on the training, education, and experience of the company officer we label as lieutenant. Strides have been made to ensure that the lieutenant is able to handle multiple tasks and responsibilities of the department prior to being assigned to the front right seat of engine two. The position of acting lieutenant has not realized those same strides in training, education, and experience. Since 2000, an operations lieutenant, serving his or her first tour at Station Two has been prepared and spent three to five years in the position of lieutenant. On the contrary, a senior firefighter can be placed into the position of acting lieutenant simply because he or she has the most consecutive years of service to SDFES on duty that day (City of Sidney, 2000). The contrasts of the two positions are stark.

Acting lieutenant at SDFES is placed in command of Station Two an important and distinct position. Station Two is comprised of two firefighters and one lieutenant or acting lieutenant. The station is comprised of a cross-staffed engine and paramedic ambulance. Lieutenants are required to pass and possess a variety of trainings, experiences, and education

events prior to being assigned to Station Two. The acting lieutenant must simply show up. The Station Two response district includes, but is not limited to, two different nursing facilities with high life hazards and limited water supply, industry based incidents, and mutual aid responses with volunteer fire companies.

SDFES utilizes the position of acting lieutenant approximately 120 times, department wide, per year due to assistant chiefs and lieutenants using earned leave. One-third of the year or more, an acting lieutenant is in place and running all activities at Station Two. Yet, SDFES Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) 200.00 requires that the senior firefighter on duty with the most consecutive years of service with SDFES is to be assigned to the position of acting lieutenant in the absence of the lieutenant, with approval from the chief. This particular clause has caused concern for all levels of employees at the SDFES. The only written requirement to be assigned the position is time of service. Soft rules have been applied, such as the individual must have at least five years of service on the department and the individual must be capable of performing in the capacity of incident command. However, not one rule or guideline or formal procedure has been placed in writing to prepare the individual.

The problem is quite clear; the department has a formal process by which an individual is prepared with knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform successfully in the role of lieutenant. On the contrary, an acting lieutenant is simply assigned the position based upon time and nothing else. The senior men with an excess of 20-plus years routinely serve in the position well, especially in the incident management side of the position, because their experience carries them through. The firefighter with five to twelve years of service struggles to garner the experience and respect of other firefighters needed in incident management to perform well. Not all

personnel assigned to acting lieutenant perform well in the personnel management forum. Simply, the firefighter has not been prepared to perform personnel management well.

Several scenarios have existed that create dilemmas for shift command personnel. One scenario is the lack of confidence and trust from all levels of firefighters toward the firefighter who has been placed in an official capacity to assure the entire station's health and safety both in station and at emergency events. Questions such as, "What makes him qualified? Does he know how to do (X)?" inevitably arise. Inexperienced personnel are being assigned to manage greater alarm assignments in an incident management system. Personnel issues are not handled correctly by the acting lieutenant, which leads to actions that may be inappropriate to the given situation. The problems can be summarized into the categories of incident and personnel management.

Three specific problems have occurred at SDFES and will be defined. In one incident, an opposing hose line was placed in service at a working room and contents fire. The decision resulted in a performance improvement plan (PIP) for the acting officer who made the decision. The firefighter was not permitted to participate as Acting Lieutenant until the PIP was successfully completed. A second problem took place at a carbon monoxide (CO) call for service. The source of the CO was a running vehicle from a suicide. The acting officer made the decision to allow himself and another fire fighter to enter without personal protective equipment and no air monitoring device, twice. The acting officer was disciplined with one shift off without pay and ordered to complete a PIP. The last example is related to the senior man declining the responsibility of assuming the acting lieutenant position. A senior man with greater than 25 years' service requested and was granted permission to abstain from the acting lieutenant position. The firefighter cited that the position was worthless and unsupported.

SDFES has attempted to make requirements that were both informal and formal. A committee was created to discuss the position. The committee died without having the opportunity to implement formal changes. The department was in the process of selecting a new chief when the committee disbanded. The new chief implemented a committee, affectionately called a “bucket”, to implement career tracks. The International Association of Fire Chiefs Officers Development Handbook was utilized to create career tracks for all levels, including the acting lieutenant (2003). The career tracks have been in place for two years in a volunteer effort to follow the guidelines. Success has not been realized from the voluntary program.

The objective of the preparing personnel is to move in a holistic manner toward fulfilling the department’s mission, vision, and values. The mission in part reads... “minimizing loss of life and property utilizing a highly trained and professional workforce.” The vision of the department is “to be a leader in our industry” and leading will be accomplished by “focusing on training and education to provide the highest level of customer service and satisfaction in a professional and compassionate manner.” The values section ends with excellence being defined as “we achieve distinction through training, teamwork, and technology.” SDFES has espoused the need for training and education in nearly all facets of the department. The underlying goal is to move SDFES one step closer to accomplishment of our mission, vision, and values.

The implementation from this research project is supported by the chief and union president. Both individuals were consulted prior to submitting this topic for the project. The research will be used to develop a specific process in which personnel are prepared and assigned as the acting lieutenant. The department will support the research and implementation monetarily along with the needed verbal support.

The formal process will result in personnel that are ready, willing, and able to perform in a challenging role of lieutenant on an acting basis. The health and safety of personnel on scene and in house will improve. Last and not least, customer service will be enhanced by placing prepared personnel in the proper position to succeed.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Standards are an important portion of the process which this research will recommend. A process depending upon an individual's assumptions of what needs to be included will not suffice. One doesn't have to look far for the responsibilities of a lieutenant, acting or promoted, at the Sidney Department of Fire & Emergency Services (SDFES) and the standards to which they are held. The city has placed the position description on the City's intranet. The description lists major responsibilities as: second in command of the shift, responsible for supervision at Station Two, trained in investigation, well versed in incident command, technical rescue knowledge, building construction experience, and fire behavior knowledge, to name a few (City of Sidney). The position description includes the phrase "thorough training and familiarity" and list several major items including firefighting (City of Sidney).

National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) 1021 (2009) is a nationally accepted standard that lists in detail the knowledge and skills needed for a firefighter to become a Fire Officer I, which includes the pre-requisites of Fire Fighter II and Fire Instructor I. Per NFPA 1021, knowledge and skills that are needed include: the areas of human resource management, community and government relations, administration, investigation/inspection, emergency service delivery, and health and safety (2009). NFPA 1021 is the standard that fire officers at all levels are accountable for.

The Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE) committee has developed national core and non-core curriculum for fire and emergency service leaders. FESHE has the mission to create higher education core curriculum for emergency services professionals to be recognized and to save life through education. The committee is another example of the National Fire Academy (NFA) playing a pivotal role in the development of emergency services personnel.



The model has been implemented throughout the nation. FESHE curriculum is another model or standard that can be referenced for guidance.

The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) produced a handbook in which NFPA standards are recognized and reiterated. The IAFC went one step further and provided an outline in which the training, experience, self-development, and education of officers is detailed (IAFC, 2003). The handbook sets forth specific to-do lists at each level such as public speaking and business communications classes at the college level for supervising fire officers, SDFES lieutenant level and above (IAFC, 2003). This research will utilize the 2003 handbook as a reference due to the fact that SDFES references this same document in our career path models used by shift command in annual performance reviews. Recognized standards are significant in the development of the process of preparing personnel for the acting lieutenant position.

The military is a great model of rank structure. In the fire service, on a general basis, the use of time in service (TIS) is an indicator of requisite knowledge and skill, similar to the military (Powers). The Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine branches of the service have the largest percentage of enlisted personnel, firefighters, in the E-3 to E-5 pay scale. The average E-4 percentage of personnel in the enlisted ranks for all four branches studied is 21% (Powers). The pay scale that the enlisted rank uses is universal. The name of the rank is not universal. E-4 is the promotion level in which personnel begin being tested, appearing in front of promotional boards, and the use of performance reviews are all utilized (Powers). All rates and branches, E1 to E9, use time in grade (TIG) as promotional criteria (Powers). E-4 through E-6 is the position for mid level managers, in the case of SDFES acting lieutenants and lieutenants. At each level in the military branches, skills and abilities are obtained, practiced, performed, and documented (Powers).

The City of Fitchburg, Wisconsin Fire Department has implemented and revised a personnel policy that sets an itemized list of eligibility requirements, training standards, and performance requirements to determine the authorization of “fill-in” personnel (City of Fitchburg, 2008). The policy has a scope, objective, and purpose that define all matters relating to the “fill-in” assignment. The policy has quantifiable objectives for the firefighter to pursue in order to be authorized for the “fill-in” position (City of Fitchburg, 2008). The firefighter must complete a request to the Chief in writing that is reviewed by the Fitchburg Fire Department officer staff. The firefighter is then either authorized or denied based upon the items in the standard. An appeal process is provided in the policy (City of Fitchburg, 2008).

“First-level leaders are the ones who are most responsible for a firm's day-to-day relationships with customers and the bulk of employees” (Priestland, p. 113). The quote above is Priestland’s work; however the thought came from the implementation of a program to shore up the success of BP Oil. In 2010, BP Oil began an incredible journey to re-connect with the largest group of employees at the company, the people they call “first-level leaders”. The name first-level leader has significant impact and was not brought about light heartedly. As a global company, terms like “manager” and “team leader” had negative connotations (Priestland, p. 116).

BP had attempted to train this significant population of associates with ad hoc training that was inconsistent on a global scale. A team was brought together to explore, document, research, and produce results on what was correct, incorrect, or just not beneficial. The slogan “Moving Slow To Go Fast” became the mantra for the group that was building the tools that would ultimately assist the company (Priestland, p. 117). The group had to meet demands such as cost neutrality, realistic logistics, appropriate doses of in-person and online offerings, and the

practicality of presenters. Perhaps the most challenging of all demands was that of time commitment from the employees to attend and participate in the training.

The focus group settled on a curriculum that addressed four main components. “Supervisory Essentials, Context and Connections, The Leadership Event, and Peer Partnerships” are the components of BP’s core first-level leaders program (Priestland, p. 119). The offering has proven beneficial to the people and to the company. The program is continually under review and evaluation by participants and executives. The reviews, numerically, have been positively scoring “8.5 out of 10” (Priestland, p. 120). What is most impressive is the fact that first-level leaders that have completed the program perform more effectively than personnel who have not completed the program (Priestland, p. 120).

SHINE is a model of understanding the human being and their motives (Hallowell). Dr. Shine is the main character in the book. He is a shoe shine booth owner in the Boston Logan Airport. Dr. Hallowell was so impressed by the shop owner’s ability; that the doctor was able to apply what he had studied for years previously. Dr. Shine embodied the ability to excel when the human spirit is made whole.

Dr. Hallowell develops five steps in the process of a manager assisting an employee to excel in a given position. The five steps are Select, Connect, Play, Grapple and Grow, and Shine. The book concentrates on the underlying benefits a manager can provide an employee. First is the ability to select the proper person for the job. Fitting a round peg in a square hole is absurd after all. The doctor makes a strong case that a connection must be made between all subordinates and the manager. To play is to use the higher level functions of the brain. Dodge ball is out of the question at work; however alternative solutions come from higher level connections. Growth is the result of adversity; therefore one must grapple and struggle with new

paths (Hallowell). The stress discussed is productive stress, not unnecessary bad stress from managers that do not have the best interest of the employee in mind. Once all the elements are in alignment an individual can SHINE (Hallowell).

Assistant Chief of Training and Safety Mike Wisko of the Galveston Fire Department started the formal officer development program; it began as a discussion (p. 83). The first thought that provoked the discussion was the loss of experienced staff and the loss of the experience and knowledge, created by the absence of these men and women. The discussion centered around two different workshops. One workshop discussed public image, leadership, and communication, while the second workshop discussed policies and procedures, operations, and firefighter safety (Wisko, 2011). The discussion was generated by anonymous open-ended statements. Inquiries were made relating to what the attendees had learned from previous officers and what the attendees wish they had known prior to becoming a company officer. The final product is a two-session program that is conducted for three hours each session and centers on the very topics that the incumbent officers wanted and needed to share. The program strongly recommends reading smoke and safety officer classes. In the end, Galveston Fire Department was able to harness the knowledge of current staff to systematically and routinely pass on the information in a productive manner to the newly-promoted staff.

Chief Wisko's areas of discussion were also presented to the entire officer staff of SDFES (2011). The areas of discussion were also presented to the two most senior persons on each shift. Eight out of seventeen staff have responded. The areas concentrated around incident management, policy/procedure, and knowledge that would have been good to have prior to obtaining the position. The technical side of the profession was mentioned by all parties that responded. However, 75% of the respondents mentioned terms such as leadership, guidance,

orientation, and trust to name a few. I call the preceding list the softer side of the management-leader tool box. A great firefighter who is technically sound may be the most inept manager-leader the department could ever produce. The results of the respondents will be examined and integrated as the research evolves.

The literary research has provided identified standards provided by national associations and organizations. The amount of responsibility placed upon mid-level managers is universal to public and private organizations. Written guidelines and procedures have been identified that will assist in building recommendations. Questions to ask and topics to breach were discovered that will assist the researcher in exploring thoughts, attitudes, and ideas. The literature review benefited the researcher on the broad topic of mid-level managers.

## PROCEDURES

The research utilized to explore this topic is descriptive. A comprehensive literature review was conducted with the intention to discover information that will aid Sidney Department of Fire and Emergency Services (SDFES) in developing a professional acting lieutenant development program accompanied by a personnel assignment policy.

The development of research questions began long before the project of a research paper was introduced. The SDFES began the process of assigning acting officers a long time ago. Recent formalized training of the officer staff produced a gap in the training between lieutenants and firefighters as acting officers. A committee was formed, but subsequently dissolved. That committee's work and diligence assisted in the development of the research questions.

Job descriptions, internal lieutenant standards, national standards, professional organization guidelines, other fire and emergency service policies, and best business practices were discovered and absorbed. The literature review began with internal documents pertaining to the City of Sidney. National standards in hard copy were referenced. Franklin University databases were utilized to obtain journal and trade magazine articles. The National Fire Academy website was utilized. The Harvard Business Review was a valuable resource providing instrumental pieces. Information searches were also conducted via the internet.

Three surveys were conducted in order to answer the research questions. The first survey is to be conducted internally (Appendix 2). The survey attempted to collect the ideology of the current personnel that serve as officers, promoted or acting. The population consists of the entire officer staff of eleven personnel and the two most senior firefighters from each shift, six personnel. The senior personnel surveyed are the individuals most likely to be placed in the acting lieutenant position. The survey was distributed via internal email at SDFES. All responses

were sent electronically. Two personnel requested a personal discussion in order to ascertain that their thought processes were understood and digested in the manner in which they preferred. The two discussions were informal, non-scripted, and after hours. In total seventeen personnel were presented with open ended statements. Eight, 47%, responded to the survey. The response would have been lower had the survey not been sent to personnel a second time. Respondents were not required to complete the survey.

The second survey collected data from fire departments throughout the state of Ohio. The departments consisted of varying size, number of personnel, and number of companies available. The key attribute will focus on the departments' first level leaders, either in a permanent or acting capacity. The data will consist of what policies are in place that define development and assignment of personnel into a position of lieutenant or acting lieutenant, what standards are referenced, and how the program and policy were implemented.

The data may also demonstrate two key issues. One set of data will be the existence of development paths for acting first level leaders. The second set of data will be the number of respondents that use acting officers.

The survey was entered into the collection tool referred to as Survey Monkey. The survey can be found in Appendix 3. The website [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com) is an internet based tool that permits easy dissemination and collection of surveys. The tool creates a link to the survey via the internet. The respondents can complete and submit the survey online.

A sample was used to collect the data. The use of the entire population of fire departments in the entire country is beyond the scope of this research. The sample size for the second survey was chosen via the office of the Ohio Fire Chiefs Association (OFCA). Email addresses in the current database of members were utilized. Efforts to contact the non-

respondents or respondents of this survey would be difficult. The survey was created online and a link was distributed by the staff of OFCA. The researcher does not have the ability through the survey tool utilized to ascertain the information of the personnel that did not respond. The survey link was sent via email with directions to 501 members of the OFCA that are listed as the Chief of the department. Eighteen percent or 89 responses were collected.

The third survey was conducted in order to receive input from the entire population of SDFES concerning “acting officers.” Data collected from this survey will identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to the current assignment and training of “acting officers.” The survey can be found in Appendix 4. The survey was based in part upon the research question number four, previous committee work, and the responses from the first survey to the officer staff.

Survey Monkey was used to create this survey also. It was utilized in an effort to collect data in an anonymous format. The internal email exchange was the tool used to disseminate the survey link with directions. All personnel at SDFES have an internal email address and internet connection. The current population of SDFES is 35 members, 63% or 22 responses were collected.

### **Definition of Terms**

Riding out of class. A firefighter who is performing the duties of a lieutenant. A lieutenant who is performing the duties of an assistant chief.

Acting officer. A person that is assigned the duties of an officer that is one classification above that person’s classification.



### **Limitations of the Study**

The main data collection tool used by this project is the survey. A total of three surveys were utilized in the data collection. The two internal surveys are limited by the collective knowledge and experience of the individuals at the SDFES. The external survey is limited to the state of Ohio and further limited by membership in the Ohio Fire Chiefs Association (OFCA). The OFCA is a fine organization; however not every Chief in the State of Ohio is a member.

Another limitation of the survey is opinion. Key internal survey questions have the potential to be skewed by opinion without reliable data to substantiate the opinion. The last limitation that will be addressed is the lack of survey preparation by the author of the project. Limited experience in drafting surveys leads to results that were not intended.

The limitations discussed are manageable. The project should not be affected in a detrimental aspect due to the limitations.

## RESULTS

The first survey conducted was directed at SDFES personnel that have obtained a tested officers position and all senior men who routinely perform the duties of the “acting lieutenant” at Station Two. The survey can be found in Appendix 2. In total, 17 surveys were presented to the personnel of SDFES. Three open-ended statements were used to elicit input of the officer staff and senior personnel of the department. Eight personnel in total responded.

The first statement was “List five things you wish you had known before you began filling in or promoting to an officer position.” The results that were presented the most often are in Table 1. In the table, S is the number of respondents and N is the number of respondents that agreed to the listed item.

**Table 1**

*5 Areas that One Wished They Had Known Prior To Officer Assignment*

	Areas of Knowledge		
	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	%
Responsibilities of Position	5	8	63
Command Experience	4	8	50
Mastery of Technical Skills	2	8	25
Training	2	8	25
Leading	2	8	25

Many other bullets were listed by the personnel. The table displays the areas in which common ground was indicated. Many of the responses supported the five listed areas. Examples include but are not limited to: Safety Officer was listed as a response. Safety Officer clearly

would fall into the category of responsibilities. Tactics was listed and would fall into the category of Command Experience.

The second statement was “List three areas you feel need to be addressed in department policies and procedures pertaining to LT.” Table 2 lists the three results with the most consensus among the respondents. S is the total number of respondents and N is the number of similar responses.

**Table 2**

*Policy and Procedure Focus Areas*

	Areas of Knowledge		
	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	%
Eligibility/Qualifications	4	8	50
Preparation/Career Path	3	8	38
Mentoring	2	8	25

Eligibility / qualifications was a predominant category among the many individual responses. As an example, knowledge of department policy, procedures and administration regulations was an individual response that would easily fit into this category. Office skills is a topic that was listed as a response under the first two statements by different respondents.

The third statement was “List three areas you feel need to be addressed in incident scene management for new officers or acting officers.” Table 3 lists the five results with the most consensus among the respondents. S is the total number of respondents and N is the number of similar responses.

**Table 3***Areas of Focus for Incident Scene Management*

	Areas of Knowledge		
	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>%</i>
Experience Levels	3	8	38
Department Policy & Procedure	3	8	38
Strategy & Tactics	3	8	38
Credentialing	2	8	25
Pass the entire Lt. Exam Process	2	8	25

The results indicate a strong need for experience and knowledge in the area of Incident Scene Management. The results also indicate that demonstration of that knowledge would be beneficial.

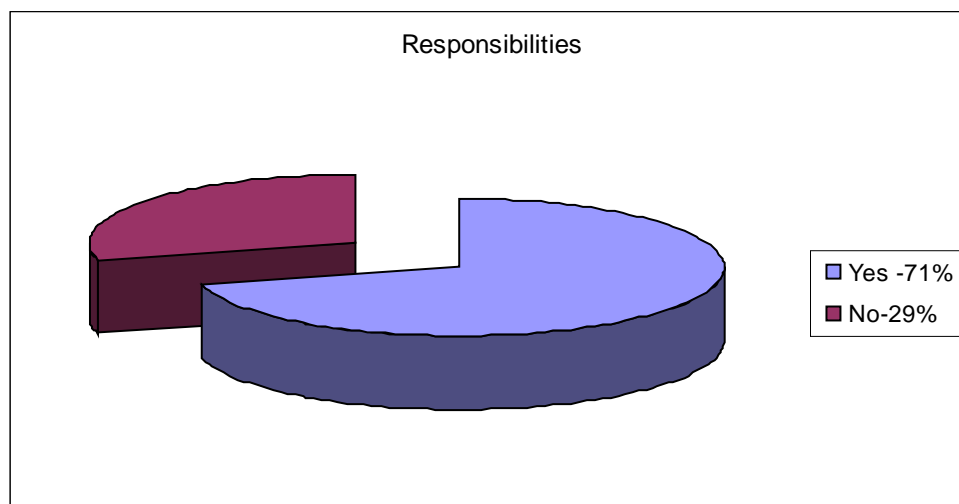
The comprehensive results of the first survey were utilized as the basis for the next two surveys. The responses were a strong indicator for the need to employ an educational, certification, and / or testing process. The senior personnel of SDFES did not indicate that the status quo of assigning personnel based upon seniority only is a wise practice. The number of senior firefighters that responded to the survey was one out of six.

### **Internal Survey**

Another survey utilized was an internal survey of the entire population of the SDFES. The survey can be located in Appendix 4. As stated previously, the questions were based upon the results of the original statements. The questions revolved around training, mentoring, testing, and certifications. The current population of SDFES is 35 members; 63%, or 22 responses, were

collected. The average experience in years of the respondents was 15.

The respondents who know the responsibilities of the acting officer at Station Two are listed in Figure 1.



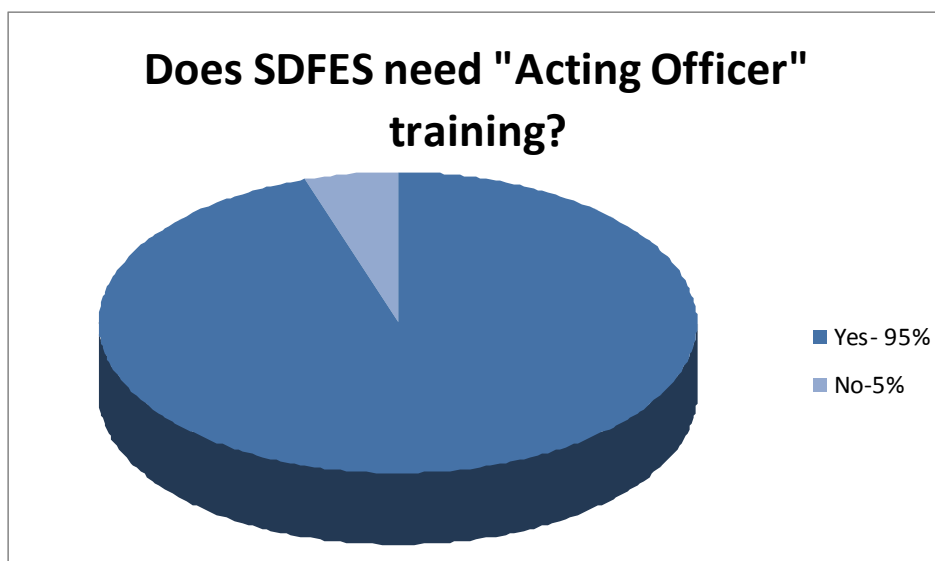
**Figure 1**

The ratio of personnel that know the responsibilities of an “Acting Officer” at Station 2.

A majority of the respondents indicate that they know the responsibilities of the “acting officer.” With the responsibilities a known factor, an overwhelming majority indicate the need for training (Figure 2). Question 3 presented the opportunity for input concerning what training is needed. The majority of responses indicate that mentoring by the Assistant Chiefs is a place to start. Fire Officer I & II, SOP training, and tactics training were all indicated in the responses. Several comments were directed at the department providing the needed training internally. The following is one exact example; “With a formal standard training program delivered by the department's Training Officer.”

Ninety-five percent of the respondents felt that mentoring sessions would assist the “acting officers” to become familiar with the role prior to being assigned to the position. The

amount of mentored sessions varied greatly. The responses ranged from objective-based sessions, as many as needed, to specific time frames, such as five 24-hour shifts.



**Figure 2**

The percentage of personnel that indicated training is needed for “Acting Officers”

The internal survey of SDFES asked the respondents to take testing of the “acting officers” into consideration. Eighty-two percent of the respondents indicated that testing is needed in order to be placed in the position of “acting officer.” The recommended content of the test varied a great deal. On-the-job training, general knowledge, SOPs, administration regulations, and table top command exercises were all considered to be test-worthy material. Multiple responses indicated the need for the “acting officer” to be administered the same test as the lieutenant, including the assessment center. Sixty-eight percent of the respondents indicated that the promotional process testing is prudent to qualify personnel to accept the assignment of “acting officer.”

Sixty-four percent of respondents indicated that SDFES personnel must make a

percentage of call-ins to be considered for the “acting officer” position. The percentage range of attendance was diverse and ranged from making 25% to 75% of the call-ins that are issued. A call-in is a situation in which the off-duty crews are called-in on an emergency basis to supplement the on-duty crew when resources are overwhelmed. Common call-in situations include greater than three simultaneous EMS calls, structure fires, and technical rescues. All scenarios are manpower dependent and personnel gain valuable experience.

The full population internal survey results focused on training, certification, mentoring, and testing. One auxiliary issue, emergency call-in attendance, was established to be of some importance to individual members.

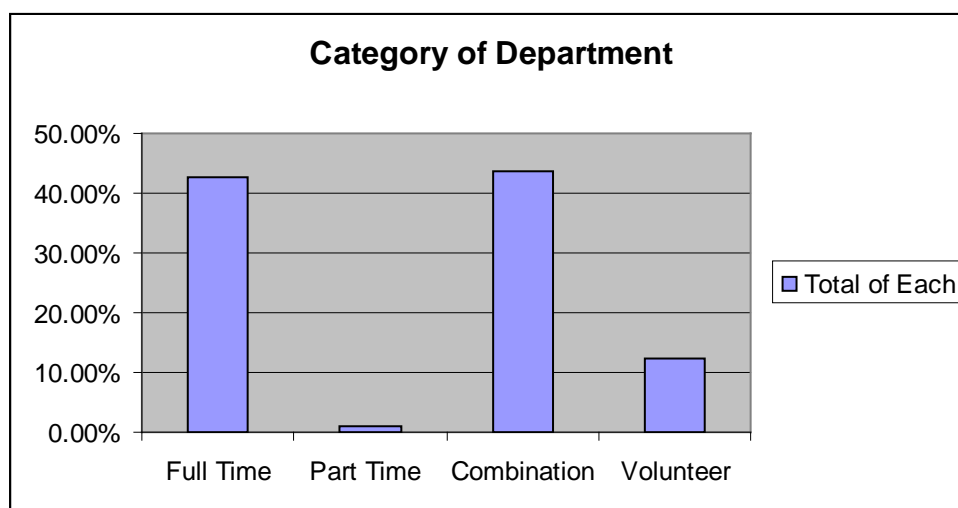
### **External Survey**

The final survey for this applied research project was presented to the Chief members of the Ohio Fire Chiefs Association (OFCA). The survey link was sent via email with directions to 501 members of the OFCA that are listed as the Chief of the department. The collection of this survey totaled 18% or 91 responses.

The survey asked for respondents to provide a regional location, 35 out of the 88 respondents that answered the question are located in the Northeast part of the state and only five respondents were located in the Southeastern region of Ohio. The surveyor’s intention was to obtain the OFCA Region number; the majority of responses were geographical in nature. The category of the department that the respondent worked for was also collected; the results can be read in Figure 3.

One last identifying mark was utilized to compare the departments that responded; that is the number of personnel assigned to operations per shift. The median of all departments that responded was seven firefighters and two officers on duty in operations per day. The mode

consisted of four firefighters and one officer on duty in operations per day. The personnel who responded and SDFES have similar personnel restrictions. Over 80% of the departments listed are comparable operationally to SDFES.



**Figure 3**  
Type of Fire Department Where Respondents Work

The external survey was searching for particular methods in which other departments throughout the state of Ohio train, assign, and utilize new and or “acting officers.” The survey also attempted to obtain the cost associated with training the personnel.

All the departments that responded presented varying answers to the question that asked in essence, “How many personnel can be assigned as an acting officer?” The answers ranged from all personnel with greater than two years service to a certain number per shift to “Most of the personnel can act at one time or another. There is no program to ensure continuity of command.”

Just over 71% of the departments utilize personnel as “acting officers” or personnel that ride out of class. On the contrary, 25.6% of the departments provide training for newly promoted personnel or personnel in a temporary position.



Forty-two percent of departments did not require certifications or training prior to testing for promotion. Several certifications were listed as examples; NIMS and ICS certification and/or classes were the most commonly selected if a department required any form of certification, followed closely by SOP/Rules & Regulation testing.

Forty-three percent of the departments utilize seniority as the only determinant in selection of acting officers. Roughly one-third of the departments responded that only certifications, qualifications, or seniority is utilized to assign personnel to a temporary officer position. Only 13.8% of the departments that responded assign personnel in regards to placement on a promotional list.

The survey results confirm that SDFES is not the only department that assigns personnel based upon seniority as a sole indicator. Based upon the findings of the survey, most departments assign based on seniority without regards to qualifications of any type.

The cost of training a newly-promoted officer in comparison to the temporarily assigned officer was also measured in this external survey. The median cost of training a lieutenant is \$1,000 as reported by the respondents. Exactly 23 out of the 56 personnel that responded to the cost question did so with uncertainty. “Minimal by current standards, all training in house; do not track; and has not been calculated” were actual responses to the question pertaining to cost. Temporarily assigned personnel costs answers were presented on a per-hour basis, or comments such as “None. Done on shift” were provided. The results were not intended to be per-hour wage increase.

The results of the survey indicate that the SDFES means of assigning acting officers is similar to fire departments that share similar demographics. Training and assigning acting officers is not uniform throughout Ohio per the survey results. Costs will be examined again.

## DISCUSSION

“Serving as second in command of a shift and responsible for the supervision of personnel and operations at the Fire Department; Thorough training and familiarity in fire fighting and the Incident Command System, fire investigation techniques; assisting in conducting in-house training for their shift and any special work assignments and oversees and assists many of the daily routine functions required for the efficient operation of the department” are all direct language listed as job requirements of the lieutenant per the City’s position description. The first survey asked the current officers and two most senior personnel on each shift to list five areas that they wish they had known prior to assignment; it is not coincidence that the list in the job responsibilities is strikingly similar to the responses. The personnel know from experience what is needed. The department needs to deliver the training, mentoring, and education now. If not now, when?

Private and public institutions are affected by the quality, skills, and traits of the “first-level-leaders” (Priestland). Internal and external customer service can hinge on the ability or inability of an acting leader to perform the necessary responsibilities of the position. All three surveys conducted for this research project have strong indications that development of leaders is a must. The Sidney Department of Fire & Emergency Services and Chiefs in other Ohio fire departments are all telling SDFES management that the time to implement a program and policy is now.

NFPA, NFA, and BP Oil all have created classes and standards that train leaders on the first level. NFPA 1021 is the standard in which personnel are measured to assure a quality product in first-level leaders and beyond. NFA has developed the core standards (FESHE) for the entire nation in the context of formal education objectives. BP Oil spent hours, days, weeks, and

years to develop a course which leaders were proud to be part of on a global scale. The process even had a motto “Moving Slow To Go Fast” (Preistland). SDFES has created a process by which lieutenants are promoted via testing and then as part of the process provided training and education that meet national standards. The personnel are then permitted to grow through time in grade, similar to the military (Powers). In essence, we are moving slow to go fast. On a routine basis, SDFES now places non-qualified, untrained, and loosely mentored personnel into a level of leadership which consists of a full one-third of the year, at a minimum of 120 twenty-four hour days. The personnel in the company officer position need and demand training to provide positive outcomes for all customers.

The entire department internal survey suggests that the overwhelming majority of personnel are in favor of an internal policy that includes training, mentoring, and attendance at drill sessions. In 2006, the City of Fitchburg Wisconsin approved and implemented a department policy for the purpose of establishing “eligibility criteria, training standards, and performance requirements for fire department members working as the acting officer of a fill-in company” (City of Fitchburg). Likewise, the SDFES staff understands what is needed to perform at the highest level, a policy similar to the City of Fitchburg policy.

Galveston Texas followed suit in or about 2011 by developing an officer development program (Wisko). The department at the time had similar concerns to SDFES, “fewer fires, more medical runs, senior officers retiring, younger officers being promoted, and a new generation of firefighters has become the norm” (Wisko). The first survey conducted concentrated on the officer staff and six senior men of the department. Qualifications and eligibility were listed by 50% of the respondents as areas that need to be addressed in department policy and procedure.

Approximately 71% of the fire departments that responded to the external survey use personnel that perform the job functions of personnel one step above their official job responsibilities; the majority of fire departments in Ohio use personnel in an acting, riding-up, or first-level leader position. Yet, nearly 74% of departments do not provide training to newly-promoted or temporarily assigned personnel. The military, BP Oil, and various fire departments nationwide have developed and implemented programs and policies to effect the successful implementation of first level leaders.

The internal survey indicated a strong need, nearly 64%, to attend call-in emergency events at SDFES. Fitchburg Fire Department placed mandatory drill attendance into their policy. “Satisfactory attendance at required FFD drills,” the exact percentage of attendance is listed in the policy (City of Fitchburg, 2008). The FFD policy can be located in Appendix 5. Avoiding political discussion, attendance at scheduled departmental drill sessions, similar to FFD, will have the benefit of ascertaining that personnel are prepared, on paper and via demonstration, to mediate an emergent situation. SDFES delivers training sessions that are conducted for the entire department; these trainings could be a good start for measuring attendance. Attendance at emergency call-ins should not be taken lightly and will be part of the recommendations.

The cost of training was researched within SFDES and via a question on the external survey. The internal cost of providing a new lieutenant with training is approximately \$7,500 and included Fire Officer I, Fire Instructor, and Fire Safety Inspector (City of Sidney). NIMS, incident management, and mentoring are all provided while on the job. The acting officer does not have a need to become a fire safety inspector. As important as Fire Officer I and Fire Instructor are, an acting officer may not need the certification if SDFES can train them in the critical areas as defined by SDFES. Providing the training in house will assure that the eligibility

requirements of the department are met. The department will benefit at one cost and not multiple individual costs. The cost can be significantly reduced by providing training by the chief, deputy chief and assistant chiefs. The subject matter will be specifically related to the job.

When asked, how we should train acting officers, this response was received, “Also make sure we have interested individuals, not everyone wants the position,” that is a direct quote from the SDFES internal survey. The quote could not be more profound. The author of “Shine” states that the first step to people excelling is selection (Hallowell). The truth of the matter is some people are content and productive without becoming the first- level leader.

A cost is associated with the training of personnel. An approach to training that is exclusively provided from outside of the department is cost restrictive. Training provided from resources within SDFES is also restrictive from an information stand point. The two approaches will need to be blended over a certain period of time. Departments that responded to the surveys and SDFES incorporate acting officer training into existing fire trainings. Cost can easily be managed by each department according to their means and needs with proper budgeting and planning.

SDFES has provided training in the area of NIMS and incident management. The department has provided guidance with career tracks, using the IAFC Handbook as the reference. A committee was started and ended. The committee’s work was used and shared in this project. The department personnel instinctively know that SDFES needs more; more consistent training, more mentoring, and a policy or procedure that will assist in the development of personnel. The listed actions will fulfill the SDFES Vision Statement.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Reviewing literature from the private and public sector, conducting three surveys, and analyzing the topics led to discussion; it is now time for the researcher to provide recommendations. The researcher offers the following recommendations to the Sidney Department of Fire and Emergency Services in an effort to provide quality leadership to all current officers, acting officers, and members of the department. The researcher strongly suggests that implementation follow-through be provided and implemented beginning in the calendar year 2014.

1. Company Officer will be the revised title of any member filling in or promoted to the role of Lieutenant at SDFES, the Operations setting. Lieutenants filling in for the Assistant Chief will keep the title of Shift Command.
2. The Chief of the Department in coordination with the Labor Management Committee should implement the suggested departmental policy in Appendix 6. The policy provides direction on the following areas:
  - i. Purpose
  - ii. Procedure
  - iii. Requirements
  - iv. Competencies
3. Due to the fact that departmental training has not occurred previously, all current officers, shall complete the initial Sidney Company Officer Development Training. All personnel that are eligible to promote to Lieutenant will be offered the class and they must apply in order to be accepted in the class. The training will be led by Chief

Jones. He will administer the program with any resource needed, including other instructors. The company officer development training should be objective-based and can be conducted on the duty day of each shift with a minimum of one session conducted as a whole group. All training shall be conducted with NFPA 1021, IAFC Officer Handbook, SDFES job requirements, and other national standards as guiding documents. The researcher provides an example itinerary; it can be located in Appendix 7. The following topics which have no bounds and are in no particular order are recommended:

- i. Administrative duties
  - ii. Incident Management/NIMS/ICS
  - iii. Leadership/Management Responsibilities
  - iv. Education of companies and the public
  - v. Other outside training may include: Smoke Reading, Blue Card, etc.
4. Mentoring should be given a higher priority. Duties of the mentor can be memorialized by policy that describes how many sessions of mentoring shall be provided and objectives for those mentoring sessions. Using the existing career tracks and current officer staff, the mentoring program can be edited and transformed into a formalized mandatory part of becoming a company officer at SDFES. A detailed mentoring SOG should be produced by a committee that consists of a minimum of one each: firefighter, lieutenant, assistant chief, and deputy chief.
5. The benefits of the initial class offering can be lost in the dynamic world of emergency services. The officer development training should not be a one-time event. It is recommended that the training be conducted on a bi-annual basis. The future

classes will include all personnel who have been employed for five years or more, plus current lieutenants. The researcher suggests that the positions of deputy chief and assistant chief be involved in the delivery of future classes under the guidance and direction of the chief.

Cost is always a factor in the implementation of programs. The primary cost is in time for this project. The first time cost is saddled on the Chief. Chief must prepare and organize the organizations first attempt at an Officer Development Class. The time estimate is 120 hours. The second largest time cost is the attendance and delivery of classes' on-duty 15 days at 7 hours per day, 105 hours of facilitating, will be needed to deliver the training. The 35 hours per attendee will then be multiplied to deliver how many personnel hours will be accounted. The estimate is 18 department members which calculate to 630 hours. A total of 855 personnel hours will be spent in delivery of this instruction, which is large investment of time and energy.

The recommendations are an attempt to assist SDFES in providing strong leadership to the company officer position. The position of company officer is a dynamic one. The researcher sincerely regards the position as a first-level leader. The title of first-level leader brings with it a lot of responsibility, pride, and decision-making opportunities. Company officers deal with a lot of decisions on a daily basis, both emergent and non-emergent. The recommended policies and programs are intended to prepare the company officer in making those difficult decisions. Training will not eliminate all risks associated with the position; however the intent is to provide a solid base in which the company officers will attempt to make the best decisions and choices possible for themselves, the crew, and the department.

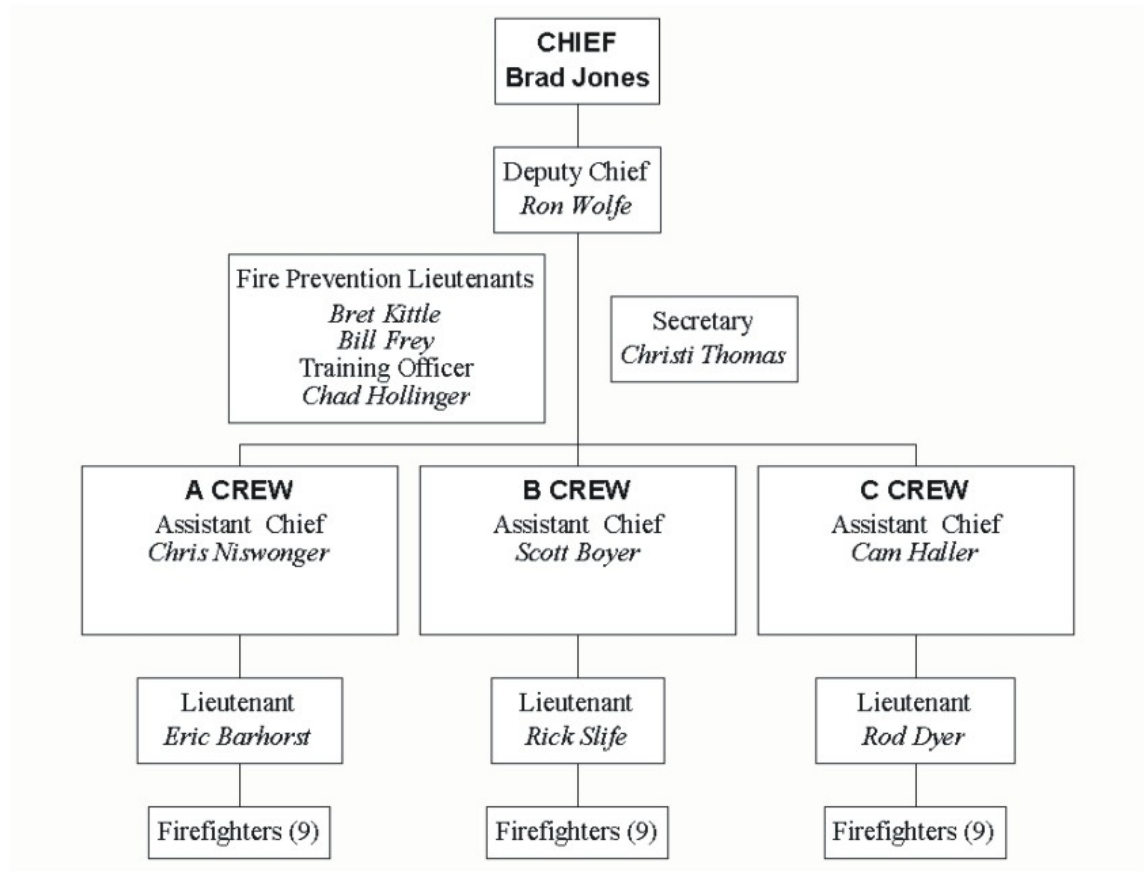


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**APPENDIX 1 – ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**



**APPENDIX 2 – INTERNAL SURVEY**

## Officer Sample

List five things you wish you had known before you began filling in an officer position.

List three areas you feel need to be addressed in department policies and procedures.

List three areas you feel need to be addressed in incident scene management for new officers.

**APPENDIX 3 – EXTERNAL SURVEY**

## State of Ohio Fire Chiefs

1. Does your department have a policy for training/preparing newly promoted officers?

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

2. What certifications must a new officer obtain or need as a pre-requisite prior to testing for promotion? Check all that apply.

Fire Officer I \_\_\_

Fire Officer II \_\_\_

SOP/ Rules & Regs Test \_\_\_\_\_

NIMS 800 \_\_\_\_\_

NIMS 200 \_\_\_\_\_

ICS 300 \_\_\_\_\_

Inspector \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor \_\_\_\_\_

None \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

3. Does your department utilize personnel that are assigned to ride out of class?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

4. Does your department require any of the following certifications or qualifications before a firefighter is allowed to ride out of class? Check all that apply.

Seniority only \_\_\_\_\_

Placement on a Promotional list \_\_\_\_\_

Fire Officer I \_\_\_

Fire Officer II \_\_\_

SOP/ Rules & Regs Test \_\_\_\_\_

NIMS 800 \_\_\_\_\_

ICS 300 \_\_\_\_\_

Inspector \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor \_\_\_\_\_

None \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

5. If none of the above methods of personnel "riding up" or out of class are utilized, how does your department assign personnel?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. How many personnel serve in a capacity in which they may be assigned to ride out of class on your department?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. What is the cost of training/preparing a new officer and/or a firefighter riding out of class?

New Officer \_\_\_\_\_ Riding out of class \_\_\_\_\_

8. What type of department do you work in?

Full-time \_\_\_\_\_ Part-time \_\_\_\_\_ Combination \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_

9. How many members are assigned to operations per shift at your department, how many are officers?

Shift \_\_\_\_\_ Officers \_\_\_\_\_

10. What region of Ohio are you locate in?


\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 4 – INTERNAL SURVEY

### Entire Sidney Fire Population

1. Do you know the responsibilities of the “acting officer” at Station 2? List three if you can.  
 Yes            No            Unsure
  
2. Does the fire department need to train “acting officers?” If yes, why?  
 Yes            No
  
3. How should the Sidney Fire Department train “acting officers?”  
 \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. Should a firefighter have opportunities to experience a mentored session(s) operating out of class prior to being assigned? If yes, how many?  
 Yes            No            If yes, \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. How many minimum years of service must an “acting officer” possess?  
 \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. What certifications must an “acting officer” possess? Choose all that apply.  
 Fire Officer I            Fire Officer II            MCTO series    NIMS 300  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_
  
7. Do we need to test “acting officers?” If yes, what testing methods should be used?  
 Yes \_\_\_\_\_            No \_\_\_\_\_            If yes, \_\_\_\_\_
  
8. Is the use of the promotional testing process a prudent system to qualify personnel to accept the assignment of “acting officer?”  
 Yes \_\_\_\_\_            No \_\_\_\_\_
  
9. Do “acting officers” need to attend a certain percentage or number of emergency call-ins to perform as an “acting officer?” If yes, what percentage  
 Yes \_\_\_\_\_            No \_\_\_\_\_            % \_\_\_\_\_
  
10. How many years of service do you have in emergency services?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 5 – FFD POLICY

	City of Fitchburg Fire Department				(Insert Picture)	
	Tab 2 – Department Policies Section 2400 – Personnel Policies					
	<b>Acting Fill-in Company Officer Authorization</b>				Policy Number	2411
				Version	1.1	
Version:	Prepared By:	Reviewed By:	Approved By:	Approval Date	Effective Date	
1.0	Richard Roth	NA	Randall Pickering	2006	2006	
1.1	Randall Pickering	NA	Randall Pickering	11-4-08	11-4-08	

**Subject:** Acting Fill-in Company Officer Authorization

**Scope:** All Department Members serving as or wishing to become an Acting Fill-in Company Officer

**Objective:** To provide a systematic process for eligibility, appointment, maintaining appointment training, and scheduling of Acting Fill-in Company Officers.

### Officer Promotional Process

Requirements for Firefighters serving as the Acting Officer of a Fill-in Company

#### Purpose

Establish eligibility criteria, training standards, and performance requirements for fire department members working as the acting officer of a fill-in company.

#### Initial Eligibility Criteria and Training Standards

- Successful completion of an initial probationary period with the Fire Department (12-month period following completion of FFD firefighter recruit training and receipt of a passing score on minimum skills evaluation).
- Satisfactory attendance at required FFD drills (50%/70% based on your classification requirement in the previous 12 months).
- Eligible to work as a fill-in company firefighter.
- Eligible to work as a fill-in company driver/operator. (Suspended for a trial period 6-1-07 to 6-1-09. Those authorized during the trial period will retain authorization if remaining criteria are still met.)
- Certified as a Firefighter I by the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) or equivalent.
- Completion of the FFD Company Officer Training Program (20 hours as specified by the FFD Training Division).
- Optional: Complete a 50-hour fill-in company ride-along (4 or more fill-in shifts serving in the capacity of the fill-in company officer and shadowed by an acting officer mentor designated by the FFD Training Division).

Note: In order to provide the individual with an opportunity to evaluate whether or not they want to serve in this capacity, the ride-along may be completed before a firefighter submits a request for authorization to act as a fill-in company officer.

#### Method of Appointment/Authorization

1. A firefighter seeking to work as the acting officer of a fill-in company shall submit a letter to the Fire Chief requesting authorization to do so.



2. Upon receipt of a request for authorization to work as an acting fill-in company officer, the Fire Chief will review the request with the FFD officer team and shall issue a decision authorizing or denying the request.
3. If the request is denied, the firefighter seeking authorization to work as a fill-in company officer may request a meeting with the Fire Chief and the FFD officer team to review and appeal the decision.

#### **Requirements for Maintaining Authorization**

- Complete or must have previously completed the 50-hour fill-in company ride-along (4 or more fill-in shifts serving in the capacity of the fill-in company officer and shadowed by an acting officer mentor designated by the FFD Training Division).
- Satisfactory attendance at required FFD drills (50%/70% based on your classification requirement in the previous 12 months).
- Maintain authorization to work as a fill-in firefighter and as a fill-in driver/operator.
- Monthly, submit a fill-in scheduling request which includes a preference for work as a fill-in company officer for at least one fill-in shift.

#### **Company Officer Training Program (20 hours)**

ICX Terminology and Philosophy	3 hours
Radio Procedures/Protocol	1 hour
Size-up/Fire Attack/CAN Reports	9 hours
Reports/Computer Issues	3 hours
Instructional Techniques	3 hours
City Policies/Injury Reporting	1 hour

#### **Tie Breakers for Determining Who is Scheduled to Work as the Acting Fill-in Company Officer**

1. Fire Department Officer.
2. Authorized firefighter with the least number of acting officer shifts worked in the past year.
3. Department seniority.

## APPENDIX 6 – SUGGESTED DEPARTMENTAL POLICY

<b>SIDNEY FIRE &amp; EMERGENCY SERVICES</b> Administrative Regulations <b>POLICY 102.05</b>	<b>EDUCATION/TRAINING</b>  <b>Company Officer Eligibility /          Authorization</b>
Approved: _____ Date: 04/28/2013 Revised _____	Page 1 of 1

### PURPOSE

Establish eligibility criteria, training standards, and performance requirements for Sidney fire department members working as a Company Officer.

### POLICY

This policy will provide a systematic process for eligibility, appointment, maintaining appointment, training, and scheduling of the company officer position.

### Procedures

#### Initial Eligibility and Training Standards

1. Successful completion of five years service with Sidney Fire & EMS
2. Current on annual skills evaluation (EMS, Fire, and Tech Rescue)
3. Satisfactory attendance at departmental wide trainings (50% is the minimum)
4. Certified in Ohio as a Firefighter II & (min.) EMT-Basic
5. Employee Job Performance Reviews need to be scored a 5 or greater in all areas of review.
6. Completion of the SFD Company Officer Development Training (Facilitator if AC or above)
7. Complete a minimum 36 hours of mentored sessions as a company officer. Mentored sessions may be waived by Chief for personnel currently in the role of CO. The mentored sessions can be completed starting in the firefighters fourth year of service. Current CO candidates may also complete mentored sessions prior to official assignment

#### Method of Appointment/Authorization

1. A firefighter seeking to be assigned as a Company Officer must submit a letter of intent to the Chief of the department. The letter is a request to perform in the role of Company Officer.
2. Upon receipt of the request to work as a company officer, the Chief will collaborate with the firefighter's officers and the training officer to ascertain completion of all eligibility standards.
3. The Chief will make the final determination of eligibility based upon input and the objectives
4. If the request is denied the firefighter seeking authorization as a company officer may request a meeting with the officers and Chief to review the request and appeal the decision.
5. Personnel that have obtained a rank of Lieutenant or above do not need to submit a letter.

#### Requirements for Maintaining Authorization

1. Complete or have completed the 36 hours of mentored sessions.
2. Satisfactory attendance at department wide trainings (50% or greater).
3. Performance review scores 5 or greater in every category.
4. Submit an activity report annually to immediate supervisor.
5. Complete the SFD Company Officer Development Training on a bi-annual basis.

**SFD Company Officer Training**

The training will consist of the following general headings.

- Administrative duties
- Incident Management
- Leadership/Management Responsibilities
- Education of companies and the public

The training will be held on duty over the course of four Fridays in January, February, and March beginning in the year 2014 (starting date for each crew is A-crew 1-3-14, B-crew 1-10-14, and C-crew 1-17-14).

The training will be conducted every other year. The first year will include all personnel that have been promoted to any officer level and firefighters with greater than or equal to 10 years of service with SFD. Subsequent years will include all interested personnel with greater than or equal to 5 years of service at SFD.

The Chief will lead, facilitate, and/or conduct the first training. In subsequent years, the rank of Assistant Chief and Lieutenant will be utilized to facilitate the training.

**Determining who is scheduled to be the Company Officer for the shift**

1. Fire Department Officer, unless working in firefighter capacity overtime.
2. Authorized firefighter on-duty with the least amount of shifts as the company officer.
3. Department seniority.

## APPENDIX 7 – EXAMPLE TRAINING ITINERARY

OCS 2008 Master Schedule					
	Mon. 02/23/08	Tues. 02/24/08	Wed. 02/25/08	Thu. 02/26/08	Fri. 02/27/08
0800-0910	Intro	Front Seat B Jee	FirePoint	Review Homework	Review Homework
0960-0990	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
0900-0915	Speeches 1 & 7	Speeches 4 & 7	Speeches 2, 3, 9	Speeches 5 & 8	Speeches 3 & 2
0915-1000	NIMS & KFD	Office Staff	Lease ship	Size Up	
1000-1010	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
1010-1130	Size-Ups 101	Radios 101	Empowering	FOG	City PD's 101
1130-1145	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
1145-1200	Speeches 2 & 9	Speeches 5 & 6	Speeches 3 & 8	Speeches 1 & 10	Speeches 4 & 7
1200-1300	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1300-1350	TeleStaff	TeleStaff	TeleStaff	TeleStaff	TeleStaff
1350-1400	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
1400-1445	Speeches 3 & 8	Speeches 1 & 10	Speeches 4 & 7	Speeches 2 & 5	Speeches 6 & 6
1445-1550	KFD Tactics	Reading Smoke 1	Reading Smoke 2	Tactics Comm.	Misc.
1550-1600	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
1600-1700	Capt. Role	Size-Ups	Lesson Plans	Expanding NIMS	Conclusion