

MINUTES

RURAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS STUDY COMMITTEE

December 1, 2015

The Rural Fire Departments Study Committee met at 1:00 p.m., Tuesday, December 1, 2015, Room A, MAC, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Committee members present: Senators Greg Standridge, Co-Chair; Scott Flippo, Larry Teague, and Jon Woods; Representatives James Ratliff, Co-Chair, Ron McNair; Non-legislative members: Brad Bain, Steve Beck, Joe Fox, Dewayne Franklin, Charles Gangluff, Bill Lacy, Kevin McMasters, Bart Rowe, Richard Sims, Kendell Snyder, Jimmy Sullivent, Jr., Lindsey Williams and Lynn Zeno. Seth LeMaster (AGIO) attended in the absence of Shelby Johnson.

Other legislators present: Senators Jonathan Dismang and Jason Rapert; Representatives Charles L. Armstrong, David L. Branscum, Mary Broadaway, Kim Hammer, David Hillman, Joe Jett, Bob Johnson, and Dwight Tosh.

Representative Ratliff called the meeting to order.

Welcoming Remarks by Co-Chairs

Senator Standridge and Representative Ratliff welcomed committee members and guests to the meeting.

Consideration to Approve Minutes from the September 30, 2015 Meeting [Exhibit C]

Without objection, the September 30, 2015, meeting minutes were approved.

Update on Status of Prison Fire Tanker Refurbishments

Mr. Joe Fox, State Forester, Arkansas Forestry Committee (AFC) presented an update on fire tanker refurbishments and provided the following information on the trucks/equipment for calendar year 2015:

- 49 tanker-styled trucks delivered/distributed to fire departments; four at the prison/one in shop
- 26 trucks on the AFC yard -- seven are ready to be picked up by fire departments or prison
- The issued trucks are valued at \$5.7 million; trucks on the yard/prison are valued at \$2.9 million
- 46 fire departments on the waiting list
- Department of Defense (DoD) recycled items; program includes approximately 4,159 items such as spotlights, tires, fire boots, axes, safety glasses, etc., that have been distributed to fire departments (\$1.266 million value)

Mr. Fox stated AFC has experienced a technical issue regarding a new DoD security designation that states that a title cannot be issued or transferred to a fire department on any item that has a military code "Q6" designation.

Representative Hammer requested that Brian Rodgers, with Hilbilt Manufacturing Company in Benton, be allowed to present a short report on how the company works with fire departments to build tanker trucks.

Brian Rodgers stated that Hilbilt is currently working on a 2,500 gallon dump tank for the Mount Judea Fire Department. He said customers can request customization on tanker trucks and the turnaround time varies based on the modifications and customizations. There is a standard one-year warranty on all parts manufactured by Hilbilt, but not on the truck itself. Mr. Rodgers noted that Hilbilt works mainly on tanker trucks, but occasionally works on brush trucks.

National Fire Protection Association Presentation

Randy Shafer, Director, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), Southern Region, stated NFPA is a nonprofit organization established in 1896 to develop codes and standards for the fire service and building community. Currently, over 300 have been developed and published, including sprinkler system standards, electrical standards, “exit” signs, fire alarms, firefighter clothing, etc. Mr. Shafer said that after a devastating fire in New York many years ago, NFPA created the Building Exits Code (renamed NFPA 101: Life Safety Code), which has evolved into one of the most widely used codes in the country.

Kevin McMasters questioned the recent publication of NFPA 1403, advocating the 10-year life cycle on turnout gear for fire departments. Mr. Shafer responded that the committee is looking into the matter and will discuss it during the next code cycle -- most codes have a 3-year cycle due to technology being the driving factor in changing the codes. He also stated if the turnout gear is more than 10 years old, it is out of compliance with the standard code.

Representative Hammer requested that committee staff contact NFPA to get an exact timeline as to how they are dealing with the issue of a 10-year life cycle for turnout gear and forward the information to committee members for review.

Randy Shafer stated he would provide information on the codes and procedures, their implementation, and their application to Arkansas.

Lindsey Williams advised that Arkansas does not adopt NFPA standards in its entirety. The Arkansas Fire Prevention Codes are based on those developed by the International Code Council.

Senator Standridge made a motion to form a subcommittee for the purpose of reporting back to the committee on the findings of topics discussed with NFPA, Insurance Services Office (ISO), and other issues at today’s meeting. He appointed Ken Brown, Joey Weaver, Tommy Knowle, David Steele, and Lamar Harvey to serve as members of the subcommittee. Without objection, the motion carried.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:04 p.m.