

Iowa Fire Service & Emergency Response Council

Meeting Minutes August 5, 2025 Fire Service Training Bureau

Council Members Present:

Bridget Edson – *IA Emergency Medical Services Association*

Jeff Kling – *Public Member*

Lonni Koch – *IA Firefighters Association*

Cody Nicely-Green – *IA Professional Firefighters*

Absent (Excused):

Ellen Hagen – *IA Firefighters Association*

Jamie Lee – *IA Fire Chiefs Association*

Adam Lathrop – *Ex-Officio/Iowa Division of Labor*

State Fire Marshal and FSTB Staff:

Dan Wood – *State Fire Marshal*

Jess Dunn – *FSTB Bureau Chief*

Hailie Mathews – *FSTB Management Analyst*

Jeannie Guttenfelder – *DIAL*

Jennifer Ware - *DIAL*

Guests:

(none)

Call to Order:

Chair, Jeff Kling, called the meeting to order at 9:58 AM on August 5, 2025. Roll call taken (see above).

Approval of Agenda:

Motion

Lonni Koch made a motion to approve the August 5, 2025, agenda. Seconded by Bridget Edson. Approved 4-0.

Approval of Minutes:

Jess Dunn emailed the draft March 11, 2025, minutes to the council members for review. No corrections were received. No further discussion.

Motion

Lonni Koch made a motion to approve the March 11, 2025, minutes. Seconded by Cody Nicely-Green. Approved 4-0.

State Fire Marshal Update (SFM Dan Wood):

Fully staffed agent wise. Running hard on calls. Currently racing season and with football season and the Iowa State Fair season coming up. Lots of bomb coverage at those facilities. No incidents at those facilities. Two retirements before July of next year. One Des Moines agent and the SAC. The SAC is the supervisor over the bomb squad and the arson investigators. Ron has been the SAC for 15 years and Dave has been a bomb tech for almost 30 years.

Senate File 659 Update – The Senate file 659 study committee was put together by groups from the fire service, legislators, the commissioner, the legislative liaison, homeland security, emergency management, and city and county representatives to look at countywide fire coverage. First meeting was July 9th. Next meeting will be August 20th. Meeting every third Wednesday of the month. Sen. Webster wants to look at all possibilities and what it would take to achieve countywide fire coverage. That it was the committee has been tasked to do. Many areas to look at. The SFM shall conduct a study of fire protection services in the state to analyze whether the structure of a countywide fire protection services would maximize fire protection coverage and response times. Looking at the four most populace counties: Polk, Glenn, Scott, and Johnson. Fire districts don't stop at county lines. Must look at surrounding counties too. For example, Polk County is surrounded by Boone, Story, Jasper, Marion, Warren, Madison, Dallas, etc.

Objectives:

- Consolidation, expansion, or movement of equipment. Consolidation, expansion, or movement of positions. Consolidation, expansion, or movement of stations and affects on local budgets.
- Examining NFIRS/NERIS data to look at current response times and possible placements of stations to maximize coverage in response times.
- Proposed structure of countywide staffing, pay benefits, and other stipends.
- Equipment needs and placement of equipment.
- Analysis of current communication challenges and recommendations.
- Examining advantages and disadvantages of current city townships and fire protections districts models versus the countywide approach.
- Examining current laws. Such as, 28E agreements, 357B – how prior fire districts are made, 357F – how EMS districts are made, 357G – relates to city EMS fire districts, and 357J – pattern for the countywide model.

- How or have other states looked at adopted model and a countywide approach, emphasis on Midwest states.

SFM Wood will be putting this report together before June 30th, 2026. Currently has reached out to those counties. The counties will be helping with GIS mapping to see where stations are. NERIS/NFIRS coordinator is getting response times from all fire departments in those counties. Will first be looking at time to page to time on scene for fire and EMS calls. Then will look at if stations in the right place and cost of moving stations. Followed by checking if equipment is in the right place. Intent is not to get rid of volunteer fire service.

Question on rural component - bill originally started looking at four smallest counties instead of four most populace counties. Immediate benefit was not seen. Decided to look at four most populace counties and to see if that could be successful and if parts of that could be applied to smaller counties in the future.

Question on supplementing EMS - the committee will be looking at the EMS side of things and how that would work together. Most EMS services are county, hospital, or city based. A lot of EMS and fire are together. Some aren't, mainly in rural areas.

Question on 357J – no one has officially taken advantage of 357J. Crawford County has taken advantage of the structure side but not the taxation side.

Fire Service Training Bureau Update (Bureau Chief Jess Dunn):

Jess Dunn – The FSTB budget will remain status quo. As of the end of 2024, we will no longer receive funds from the income tax checkoff fund. There is roughly \$29,000 of funding remaining from the income tax checkoff fund. No further funds will be received.

The bureau is once again fully staffed. The Accounting Technician 3 position has been filled by Kendra Slings. Kyle Gorsh has also joined the training bureau. He had previously been with the SFM office, then went to the professional responsibility bureau during the reorg and has been moved back to SFM office. Kyle will be working on community risk reduction and helping Bureau Chief Dunn with various projects.

Administrative rules 661-251 will need updated. Contains several outdated NFPA standard references. Also needs updated to include the bill that recently passed stating that if you are a registered sex offender you cannot be certified or serve as a volunteer firefighter. SFM Wood is working with the administrative people to get this added to the administrative rules. It will be under the certification code section.

Acadis Update – The bureau is still in the process of moving to Acadis. Currently in the build out phase. Hailie Mathews, Acadis Administrator, is working through the data migration from FileMaker to Acadis. Moving over 50,000 records into the new software. Continually looking for opportunities to test the new software both internally and externally. Next week, there will be a FOII class testing the new software, including requesting portal accounts, logging in, and certification testing. Program coordinators will be able to test inputting classes, registering students, etc. We are also importing the training and certification data for the staff members from Waukee Fire Department and

Clive Fire Department. Members from those departments will login and confirm the accuracy of imported data. Anticipated go live for the new software system is February 2026. During the 101st Annual State Fire School, Hailie will be helping individuals request portal accounts, log in, etc. The new software will be a major upgrade for the fire service of Iowa.

Curriculum Update – On July 1st the bureau switched the FFI and FFII curriculum to Jones & Bartlett. Now, HazMat, FFI, and FFII curriculum are all through J&B. Started offering J&B test on July 1st. Offering both, J&B and IFSTA, testing banks through July 1st, 2026. Driver Operator Pumper curriculum will be transitioning to J&B on January 1st, 2026. Currently, the bureau allows students to challenge the DOP test. Many students are challenging the test without taking the class, resulting in a 35% pass rate for the year. Starting January, students will be required to take the DOP class prior to testing.

Training Tower Update – Opening ceremony was held on June 30th for the training tower. It was very successful. First users were the Polk City Fire Department, and a FFI class hosted by the bureau this fall. Polk City is scheduled to use the training facility for non-fire training evolutions.

Field Programs – The bureau has ordered a new forcible entry prop that should be arriving within the next couple of months. The forcible entry prop is one of the most popular props used. We have also ordered two new trailers to replace aging equipment that spends a lot of time on the road. Through July 31st of this year, we've delivered 153 props to departments around the state. 2,203 students have taken advantage of those props, which equates to over 50,000 contact hours in just half a year. The live burn simulators, MOBAT, and forcible entry props are the most sought after. The driving simulators have also been very popular.

Certification/Accreditation – Once Acadis goes live the bureau will no longer allow students to bill their department for certification testing. We continuously experience issues with nonpayment and/or late payment and much time is spent in tracking down payments, in many cases. Several fire departments no longer allow their members to bill the department and require their members to pay the bureau directly for testing. It is the individual's certification. Moving forward, payment will be required at enrollment from the student testing. If students would like to be reimbursed, they can submit their invoice to their department for reimbursement. This should alleviate many of the payment issues the bureau is currently experiencing. Once Acadis goes live, the bureau will be transitioning the testing software. All certification testing will be electronic. Students wishing to take the test on paper will be able to do so, here, at the bureau. FFI and FFII have a pass rate of 59% and 77% respectively for the year. Previously, more students were failing HazMat Awareness and passing HazMat Operations. We are now seeing more students pass HazMat Awareness and fail HazMat Operations. There have been no changes made to the curriculum or the testing banks. Advanced level classes such as, Instructor I and II, Inspector, etc., all have high passing rates.

Question on administrative rules – fire brigade standards could be included in update after review.

Question on pass/fail statistic - pass/fail numbers include all testing attempts, not just the first attempt. For example, year to date, there were 694 HazMat Operations exams that were taken. 280 passed, 414 failed.

Question on how many full-time departments in FF1 class – 18 students registered. One or two students from full-time departments. Harder to say, some could be part-time or full-time.

OSHA Update:

(None)

Old Business:

(None)

New Business:

(None)

Community College Update:

(None)

Public Comments:

None received.

Action Items:

No action items. The next meeting will be Tuesday, December 2, 2025, at 10:00 am via zoom.

Consideration of Applications for 2025 Fireworks Grants:

Jeannie Guttenfelder from DIAL was present to give an overview of all 2025 firework grant requests. The council reviewed all applications and prioritized based on education, extractors, then equipment. The council decided on:

\$64,879.25 for 12 education requests

\$206,092.35 for 22 extractor requests

\$1,763.70 for 1 equipment request

For a total of \$272,735.30 in grants awarded.

Motion

Cody Nicely-Green made a motion to approve, seconded by Bridget Edson. Approved 4-0.

Adjournment:

Motion

Bridget Edson motioned to adjourn the meeting at 12:27 pm. Seconded by Cody Nicely-Green. Passed 4-0.