

FIRE SAFETY ISSUE
May 1991

Primary responsibility: Karen Fernicola
Sharon Ransome

Overview

Institute staff and consultants participated in several fire service conferences in May, and we continued to respond to requests for assistance from fire service officials throughout the country. Sharon Ransome continued her orientation to the fire safety issue, and Sarah Cole joined our team at month's end as secretary. We began updating the issue plan for 1992.

Highlights

A TriData report updating trends in smoking materials fires in the United States revealed that 25 of the 42 states participating in the National Fire Incident Reporting System did not report careless smoking as the leading cause of fire deaths for 1989. TriData shared its report with the members of the Technical Advisory Group for Cigarette Fire Safety.

We worked with the Federal Relations Division to set up a June briefing by Phil Schaenman on his international and domestic research on fire protection and prevention practices for Congressmen Boucher and Valentine, whose subcommittees oversee, respectively, the U.S. Fire Administration and the Building and Fire Research Laboratory (formerly the Center for Fire Research).

Public hearings on the Consumer Product Safety Commission's agenda and priorities for 1992 and 1993 revealed a continuing commitment to the National Smoke Detector Project. In conversations with CPSC staff, we repeated The Institute's commitment to working with the CPSC to support increased use and maintenance of smoke detectors in the United States.

We provided information on grant writing and sources of funding for fire service projects to a staff member of the Congressional Fire Services Institute. We also suggested possible funding sources to the chairman of the National Association of State Fire Marshals for a joint apprenticeship program with the International Association of Fire Fighters.

Institute staff and consultants participated in meetings of the National Fire Protection Association and NFPA's Education Section; International Association of Arson Investigators; Metro Chiefs Section of the International Association of Fire Chiefs; Public Educators Section of the Western Association of Fire Chiefs; and the National Fire Prevention and Education Conference of the International Society of Fire Service Instructors. All meetings served to enhance the visibility of TI's Fire Safety

Education Program and the industry's long-term commitment to the fire service.

In addition, TriData's Phil Schaenman participated in the Conference on Fire Safety Design in the 21st Century, sponsored by Worcester Polytechnic Institute and the National Science Foundation. He presented a paper on "Overcoming Barriers of the Municipal Infrastructure," which encouraged increasing the education level of fire service officials regarding technological advances in fire protection.

We met with TriData staff to discuss topic ideas for new Institute-sponsored research reports to ensure that the fire service is aware that the industry is maintaining its significant level of commitment to public fire safety education.

In May, The Institute's Fire Safety Education Program received 120 requests for information, resources and funding from 34 states and Canada.

We responded to a management request to suggest cutbacks from the fire safety issue budget to accommodate any possible overruns in other cost centers. We also began working on a draft of the issue plan for 1992.

Sharon Ransome continued to learn aspects of the fire safety issue and the grants program, and attended her first fire service conference. Sarah Cole was hired as the fire safety/public smoking issues secretary at month's end.

Next Month's Goals

Complete draft of 1992 issue plan.

Begin training Sharon on giving presentations on TI's grants program and the "fire-safe" cigarette issue.

Begin training Sarah to handle routine fire service requests for public education materials.

Complete and distribute minutes of last National Volunteer Fire Council Foundation meeting.

Contact Congressional Fire Services Institute about sponsoring public education awards for fire departments featured in Proving Public Fire Education Works report.