

# DELAWARE STATE FIRE PREVENTION COMMISSION

ANNUAL



REPORT



JULY 2022

# THE COMMISSIONERS

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A group of men and women who are now and have always been truly dedicated to the health and well-being of every man, woman and child in Delaware since 1955.



RONALD MARVEL  
CHAIRMAN



ALAN ROBINSON  
VICE CHAIRMAN



LYNN TRUITT



WILLIAM (Bill) KELLY



JOSEPH LEONETTI, SR.



RICHARD PERILLO



Willard (BILL) BETTS



STATE OF DELAWARE  
STATE FIRE PREVENTION COMMISSION  
DELAWARE FIRE SERVICE CENTER

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1463 CHESTNUT GROVE ROAD  
DOVER, DELAWARE 19904

September 3, 2022

The Honorable John Carney  
Office of the Governor  
150 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
South, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Dover, DE 19901

Dear Governor Carney:

Enclosed is the Annual Report of the State Fire Prevention Commission for FY 2022.

It has been an honor for the Commission to serve the citizens of Delaware for the past year. The duties and activities of the Commission have continued to expand again this year. Even with the increase in activities, we find it important to place specific emphasis on the areas of fire protection, Emergency Medical Services, and especially fire prevention.

Many important events have taken place in the last year that will enhance the Commission's ability to deliver efficient, quality service to the citizens of Delaware.

We look forward to the coming year and appreciate your support, and the support of your office.

Sincerely,

*Ron Marvel*

Ron Marvel  
Chairman

RM/sl

## GRATITUDE AND EXCELLENCE

The Commission faces many challenges in the continued support and oversight of the Office of the State Fire Marshal, The Delaware State Fire School as well as the Volunteer and Career Fire Service. We graciously accept this daily task. One of the most pressing challenges is the evolution of the Volunteer Fire Service into a combination fire service. The demand placed upon today's Fire & EMS system, can no longer be placed solely on a volunteer. Part of the demand has been placed upon men and women who have chosen as a career to be Firefighters and EMTs.

Additionally, our firefighters are being called upon to deliver services that were not even thought of in years past. Service such as post explosion firefighting, the local and national opiate overuse epidemic, disease such as COVID 19, chemicals such as anthrax being used against us to deter our response and Firefighters/EMTs actually being the target of terrorists acting against our country.

Although the Commission is called many things, The Commission, the Fire Commission the Fire Prevention Commission, one word is synonymous with the Commission, and that is dedication. The Commissioners are a group of men & women who are now and have always been truly dedicated to the health and well-being of every man, woman, and child in Delaware. And have done so, since 1955, with no compensation except for the knowledge that we have played a small part in making Delaware a safe and wonderful place to live and raise our families.

Thank you for allowing us to serve our State.



Delaware State

**Fire Prevention Commission**

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## **STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Statutory Responsibilities of the State Fire Prevention Commission may be found in Title 16, Chapter 66 of the Code and are summarized as follows:

- The Commission shall consist of seven persons appointed by the Governor.
- They shall hold regular meetings at least once a month and special meetings may also be called.
- They shall also have the power to promulgate, amend and repeal regulations for the safeguarding of life and property from hazards of fire and explosion.
- Prior to promulgation, they shall hold at least one public hearing on each regulation, amendment or repeal and shall have the power to summon witnesses, documents and administer oaths for the purpose of giving testimony.
- They shall appoint the State Fire Marshal and State Fire School Director. They shall have complete jurisdiction and management over the State Fire School and the Office of State Fire Marshal.
- The Commission shall have power to authorize new fire companies or substations, resolve boundary and other disputes; prohibit cessation of necessary fire protection services.
- The Commission is empowered to enforce its orders in the Court of Chancery.
- The Commission shall promulgate regulations requiring financial audits of volunteer fire and ambulance companies and the Smyrna and Georgetown American Legions Ambulances and the Mid-Sussex Rescue Squad. Has authority, after a hearing, to impose a civil penalty.

The seal of the State Fire Prevention Commission, Delaware, is a large, circular emblem with a sunburst border. The outer ring contains the text "STATE FIRE PREVENTION COMMISSION" at the top and "DELAWARE" at the bottom, separated by small squares. In the center of the seal is the coat of arms of the State of Delaware, featuring a ship on a rocky shore with a rising sun in the background.

## **AGENCY OVERVIEW**

The State Fire Prevention Commission is charged with the protection of life and property from fire for the people of Delaware and to oversee the operation of the Delaware State Fire Marshal's Office and the Delaware State Fire School.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS and ACTIONS DURING FY 2022**

- The Commission continues to work with DEMA, DPH, NREMT agencies regarding disseminating COVID 19 Pandemic information to the Delaware Fire Service and EMTs. Working with their BLS Medical Director regarding the evolving COVID 19 Pandemic care and safety practices for both COVID 19 patients and EMTs is vital.
- The Commission continues to work with their BLS Medical Director with regard to the evolving Opioid epidemic and the safety of our responding members of the emergency service. Overdose deaths still rising in Delaware. Delaware's 515 overdose deaths in 2021 set a record in the state's history. The death toll increased 15% over 2020 deaths. Delaware is now third in the nation for overdose deaths per capita. Narcan is used to reverse the effects of an overuse of Opioid, yet with the introduction of Fentanyl (10 times more potent than morphine) and Carfentanyl (10,000 times more potent than morphine), the effects can be extreme. It is vital that the emergency service is aware of possible conditions that can affect them as a responder. The Office of Emergency Medical Services has a stock of Naloxone made available through grant funds. This Narcan is made available to both BLS and Police. It is distributed by request through OEMS.
- The Commission maintains open discussions with the Office of Emergency Medical Services with regard to EMS calls that are not medical in nature. The guidance given to the commission continues to be, if a patient is found to be living in deplorable conditions, needs assistance or needs placement. Overall, the hospitals and case managers refer those cases to state agencies such as Child Services, Division of Services for Aging and Adults with physical disabilities.
- The Commission is charged with certifying Delaware EMTs. The Commission certified 1,838 Delaware EMTs by June 30, 2022. 133 were decertified due to lack of application.
- The Commission made a motion to maintain the annual scratch rate at 9%. Clear oversight and discussion have improved the scratch rate statewide.
- The Commission monitored required audit submissions from the Delaware Volunteer Fire Service. The Audit Committee has worked tandemly with the Commission successfully. Six extension requests were requested, 4 fines were levied. \$5,100.00 in civil penalties were levied.
- The Commission updated fire and ambulance regulations through the regulatory process.

- Office Duty Statistics – Administrative Specialist II

Fire Company Information Update -	60
EMT (Initial) Certification -	185
EMT Recertification -	600
EMT Reciprocity -	252
EMT Card Reprints -	15
EMT Background Checks -	302
EMT State Verification -	252
BLS Annual Financial Form -	16
Update Student Record -	1060
EMT Verify Student Record -	600
Meetings	97
Training Attended -	11
Scanning/Archiving Files -	250
Incoming Agency Office Calls -	1927
Financials (First State Financials) -	469
Fire Company Audit -	63



## **Volunteer Ambulance Company Fund**

The 147<sup>th</sup> General Assembly amended Title 11 section 4101; this amended Title established the Volunteer Ambulance Company Fund. Furthermore, the “State Fire Prevention Commission” (SFPC) was tasked with providing these funds to Volunteer ambulance companies on a proportionate basis across the state and this number being based on approved dispatched ambulance runs.

The SFPC being tasked to develop the methodology and disbursement plan reviewed multiple levels of data and decided to base the completed number of ambulance runs per company on the compilation of the required documentation of all state certified “Basic Life Support” (BLS) companies. The reports pulled to show the ambulance runs per agency and statewide is the Delaware Emergency Medical Reporting System (DEMRS). DEMRS was decided as the source of this data for numerous reasons but the driving thought was the requirement to do these reports to be in accordance with the Medical Standing Orders as signed by the SFPC.

The DEMRS data will show all run types to include BLS Transport, Cancellation, Patient Refusal, Public Service, Standby Only, Agency/Assist, DOPA/DOA, Unable to Locate patients/scene, Termination of Resuscitation and Transfer of Care. In order to assure the validity of the information a Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement validation score of 85 percent will be used as the minimum validity accepted as accurate reports. The reports mentioned above are entered by the providers who operate within the BLS system.

The SFPC distributed \$5,022,267.37 for the period of July 1, 2021 until June 30, 2022. The funds are distributed on a bi-annual basis.

## ACTIVITY

The following information is an outline of the Commissioners' activities for  
FY 2021:

1.	Commission Meetings	12
2.	Hearings	
	• Public Hearings	0
	• Appeal Hearings	0
	• Grievance Hearings	0
	• Boundary Hearings	0
	• Audit Hearings	13
	• Scratch Hearings	3
	• EMT Hearings	1
	• Ambulance Hearings	0
	• Fire Company Hearings	0
	• Regulations Hearing	1

### **Ambulance Inspections**

The State Fire Prevention Commission has a Compliance Officer whose primary responsibility is to inspect the fire service and private ambulances throughout the state. This inspection process is to ensure that the ambulances are carrying the Commission required equipment and are maintaining it. 400 ambulances were inspected in 2022. As a result of those inspections 253 deficiencies were found and corrected.

It is the Compliance Officers mission to keep ambulances on the road and serving the public. The Compliance Officer does have the authority through the Commission to remove an ambulance from service if it is found to be out of compliance with equipment that could place the public at risk, equipment has expired, or equipment is not functioning. Two ambulances were taken out of service in 2022. Two (2) fire service and zero (0) private. Fortunately, most ambulances taken out of service are corrected within hours of being taken out of service and the units are back serving the public.

### **New Ambulances in Service**

Compliance Officer is responsible for inspecting and placing new ambulances into service. This process requires the filling out of paperwork with information about the new unit going into service and any old unit that is being remove from service. Sixty-one (61) new Units Statewide were placed into service in 2022.

### **Arrest Notifications**

Fiscal year 2022 marks the seventh year of arrest notifications form DELJIS. The Compliance Officer and Executive Assistant are notified of any EMT arrested by law enforcement through

the DELJIS system. Once notified the Compliance Officer will check the DELJIS system for the charges and the Fire School student records data base to see if the name received is still a certified EMT. All persons seeking to be an EMT or work in the health care field are subject to a background check. Some of these people do not finish their EMT training, do not recertify, or voluntarily give up their EMT certification, but are still in the DELJIS system because they had the background check. Not all notifications are EMT certified. All EMT's in the State are required to self-report any arrest to the Commission, their Fire Chief, or Employer in writing.

All information found with regard to the notification is sent to the Deputy Attorney General assigned to prosecute cases at hearings before the Commission. Deputy Attorney General reviews the charges and information is forwarded to see if the charges meet the requirements for action by the Commission.

For the Calendar year 2022 the State Fire Commission received 28 arrest notifications. Nineteen (19) of the notifications were determined that the individuals were not certified EMTs. Nine (9) were determined to be active EMTs.

### **Complaints**

Compliance Officer/Investigator is responsible for investigating all complaints reported to the Commission. 2021 Calendar year was the seventh full year of the Commission having a full-time investigator. Once a complaint has been received and it is determined that the Commission has authority to do an investigation, the complaint is assigned a number and a case is opened. The Investigator collects all the pertinent information about the complaint and creates an electronic file for that case. At the conclusion of the investigation the findings are reviewed by Commission BLS Director when the case deals with patient care or protocols and the Deputy Attorney General reviews the case for presentation to the Commission at hearings.

During the calendar year of 2022 the Commission received 96 complaints. Forty-five (45) of the 96 complaints required no action by the Commission. Fifty-one (51) complaints resulted in cases being opened and investigations being done by the Commission Investigator.

### **Investigations**

The Compliance Officer/Investigator conducted 51 investigations in 2022. Nine of the fifty-one investigations were a direct result of arrest notifications.

### **EMT Certification**

There are approximately 1,831 EMTs certified in Delaware.

- 2022 EMT (Initial Certification) - 185
- 2022 EMT Recertification - 955
- EMT Reciprocity - 252
- EMT Background Checks - 437
- EMT State Verification - 252
- EMT Verify Student Record - 500
- EMT Returned Applications due to Deficiency of Information - 42

# **FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

FOR THE PERIOD – JULY 1, 2021 TO JUNE 30, 2022

## **GENERAL FUND (01)**

	2021 Appropriation	2022 Disbursement
Personnel	\$293,100.00	\$293,100.00
Travel	13,000.00	13,000.00
Contractual Services	56,620.00	56,620.00
Supplies	5,100.00	5,100.00
Fire Prevention Education	75,000.00	75,000.00
Total for FY22	\$422,801.78	\$422,820.00

Total Unencumbered and Reverted June 30, 2022 \$0.00

## **Ambulance Distribution Fund**

Ambulance Fund	\$5,022,267.37
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