

**A STUDY  
OF  
FIRE SERVICE TRAINING  
IN  
WYOMING**

**JULY, 2005**



**Firescope Mid-America  
Greeley, Colorado**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Wyoming's firefighters are the front line responders to the critical needs of its citizens. Their training is absolutely key to their effectiveness and safety. Recognizing these facts, the Governor and Legislature authorized the study that produced this report. It is the outcome of a significant examination of the fire service training needs of public fire departments throughout Wyoming, and the services currently provided by the Department of Fire Prevention and Electrical Safety (DFPES).

An extensive survey of the Wyoming fire service was undertaken with regional meetings, stakeholder meetings and individual feedback from fire departments and firefighters. DFPES personnel were extremely conscious of the need for candor and permitted the consultants to gather information independently. In addition to input from the Wyoming fire service, an extensive literature search and a sampling of other state fire training systems was undertaken. Those fire departments participating in the eight regional meetings, along with their input can be found in Appendix A to the report. In addition, we received many individual comments by electronic mail.

A recent study by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency determined that 21% of the nation's firefighters have had no formal training on fighting structural fires. Further, 14% of all fire departments nationally have no trained members. The rural nature of Wyoming and the large percentage of small communities could mean that the numbers are even more troublesome in the State.

Wyoming firefighters either are or desire to be trained and certified to the provisions the NFPA Professional Qualification Standards for Firefighter, Driver/Operator, Fire Officer, Fire Instructor, Fire Investigator, Hazardous Material Responder, Rescue Technician and several others. The study addresses the programs and facilities needed to address training for these standards.

The recommendations in this study are focused on meeting the desires of the Wyoming fire services for increased quality and quantity in training. They are based on the input received as well as the recognized good practice embodied in NFPA Standards and Guides on Developing Fire Service Training Centers, Conducting Live Fire Training Evolutions, and Firefighter Health and Safety.

## **FINDINGS:**

- Communications from the State to the fire departments is lagging behind the expectations of the fire service.
- The work of and programs presented by the two field instructors employed by the DFPES are well received.
- The fire schools sponsored by individual fire departments (i.e. Cody, Wheatland) and the Wyoming Fire Academy Foundation at Riverton are well received and well attended.
- There are a surprisingly large number of quality training facilities in the State.
- The vast majority of Wyoming's fire departments are volunteer or combination (one or more full time employees plus volunteers).
- In nearly all cases, the training provided locally by members of a given fire department to its own members was regarded as effective.
- There is a significant concern among volunteer fire services that basic fire service training is nearly unattainable for their new members, except as a local function. National statistic point out that 21% of all firefighters lack any formal training for structural firefighting and 14% of all fire departments have no trained members.
- There is considerable difference of opinion on the merits of mandatory firefighter certification and recertification.
- There is clearly a difference of opinion throughout the State regarding the concept of a central training facility versus regional facilities.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- **The DFPES should develop and implement a plan to enhance communications with and among the Wyoming fire services.**
- **The DFPES should undertake an effort to develop or obtain a standard curriculum for Firefighter I and II, Driver/Operator, Fire Officer I and II, Fire Instructor I and II, Fire Inspector I, and Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations. These curricula should be made available to qualified trainers throughout the state along with their support materials. A full set of each curriculum and support materials should be available at each regional training site identified in recommendation six.**
- **The DFPES should undertake a program to expand its full time instructional staff and to employ on a part time basis a number of qualified field instructors who currently work or have recently worked in the active fire service.**
- **The DFPES should provide an easily accessible central record keeping system for the training records of Wyoming firefighters.**

- **The DFPES should continue to pursue the development and accreditation of its Firefighter Certification system.**
- **The DFPES should institute a program to further develop, support and utilize a network of regional fire service training facilities for Firefighter I and II training. The program should make maximum use of the existing training sites and be conscious of travel distances.**

**We also recommend that the State provide a mechanism and funding for a grant program to assist the local governments and foundations that own the sites in completing the development of those sites to meet basic training requirements and possibly add carefully selected specialty props. The sites are located at Casper, Cheyenne, Cody, Gillette, Jackson, Rawlins, Riverton and Rock Springs.**

- **The DFPES should facilitate the reactivation of the Wyoming Fire Instructors Association.**
- **The DFPES administrative and instructional staffs should regularly host meetings with the fire services in the field and maintain an important and visible role at the various fire schools.**

**The total costs associated with the recommendations can be characterized as follows. Amounts are stated in 2005 dollars.**

- **Capital Costs (one time/5 year life) = \$1,528,770**
- **Recurring Costs = \$222,746 per year**

## **INTRODUCTION:**

This report was commissioned by the Wyoming Department of Fire Prevention and Electrical Safety (DFPES) in early 2005. It is the outcome of a significant study of the fire service training needs of public fire departments throughout Wyoming, and the services currently provided by the DFPES. The objectives of the study and this report are as follows:

- To identify the fire suppression training needs of the Wyoming fire service.
- To explore alternatives for fire service training.
- To identify the strengths and weaknesses of the current sources of fire service training for Wyoming public fire departments.
- To gain feedback regarding the current training programs of the DFPES and directions for future efforts and resources.
- To identify enhancements and obstacles to successful fire service training programs in Wyoming.
- To identify potential measures to improve fire service training and to estimate the costs of same.

## **STUDY METHODOLOGY:**

Gathering information for this report was a significant task that involved several elements. The processes used are detailed here:

- Personal interviews were conducted with several individuals who have been heavily involved with the delivery of fire service training in the State. These individuals did include the two field instructors employed by the DFPES. No central office staff from the Department were included in the specific interviews. However, the central office staff did provide a wealth of background information for the study.
- Two stakeholder groups were contacted and met with the consultants at Riverton. These groups were the Boards of the Wyoming State Fire Chiefs' Association and Wyoming Fire Academy Foundation. These Boards were interviewed together (there is a good bit of cross membership) using a discussion format. The consultants were advised that the Fire Instructors group is not currently functioning and that the timing and logistics of a meeting with the Board of the State affiliate of the International Association of Fire Fighters organization would not work out within the time frames of the study.

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- A total of eight regional meetings were held to obtain input from “grass roots” fire service organizations. All public fire departments and county fire wardens in the State received written and electronic mail invitations to the meetings. The meeting locations were based upon the State’s Homeland Security Regions, but deviated slightly in order to facilitate shorter travel distances for participants. Specifically, the meetings were held during April, May and June, 2005 in the following communities:
  1. Cheyenne
  2. Cody
  3. Gillette
  4. Casper
  5. Riverton
  6. Jackson
  7. Green River
  8. Rawlins

During these meetings, the attendees were asked to respond to the following seven questions, concerning fire service training in Wyoming.

1. Considering all sources of fire training, what works well?
2. Considering all sources of fire training, what does not work well?
3. What subject areas or types of training are important to your organization?
4. How can your fire service training needs best be met?
5. How can the DFPEs best address your training needs?
6. Are personnel in your organization available for training throughout the year?
7. What general comments do you have on the subject of fire training in Wyoming?

All responses to these questions were carefully recorded by the consultants. Only clarifying questions were asked in an effort to avoid coaching or “prying” answers from the participants. The detailed input from these meetings is included in Appendix A to this report. It should be noted that none of the question responses or comments are attributed to any individual or organization. At the request of the State Fire Marshal, no member of the DFPEs staff attended any of these meetings. Although the attendance at the meetings was lower than had been anticipated, the quality of the responses and comments was extremely high. In addition, several individuals had taken the time to visit with neighboring departments who were unable to attend, in order to get their specific input to the questions, which were furnished in advance.

- Organizations that were unable to participate as well as individuals who did attend were invited to submit written comments directly to the consultants. Several individuals did so.

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Input from all of these sources was correlated to find the most often emphasized responses and their relationship with the objectives of the study. This process is the basis for the findings and the recommendations contained herein.

A literature search and current practices survey were also conducted by the consultants. The literature search included a review of applicable National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standards, current annual reports from fire service training agencies in Utah, Oklahoma, Illinois, Maryland, Montana, Iowa, and Kansas, and literature from a number of training facility equipment providers. Current practices were reviewed from the above referenced States, the National Fire Academy, the National Professional Qualifications Board for the Fire Service and the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress. The business plan for the Wyoming Fire Academy Foundation was also reviewed.

Cost estimates were obtained from a number of sources including pre-packaged fire training building manufacturers, general contractors and architectural estimating guides.

### **FINDINGS:**

The study produced a wealth of information that can be valuable as the State of Wyoming considers the training needs of its fire and emergency services. Specifically, the following facts can be stated and conclusions drawn as findings from this study. While several of the findings are the basis for subsequent recommendations, others are merely observations for which there are no specific recommendations within the scope of this report.

1. Communications from the State to the fire departments is lagging behind the expectations of the fire service. Newsletters or effective electronic communications are few and far between. Lead times for training sessions and meetings are perceived to be too short for scheduling needs. Communications from DFPEs are often unfavorably compared to the daily information bulletins provided by Montana Fire Service Training to their constituents via electronic mail. (See Recommendation 1.)
2. The work of and programs presented by the two field instructors employed by the DFPEs are well received. However, there is a clear consensus that more instructors are needed and they should be assigned throughout the State. (See Recommendation 3.)
3. The fire schools sponsored by individual fire departments (i.e. Cody, Wheatland) and the Wyoming Fire Academy Foundation at Riverton are well received and well attended. These programs focus on basic subject areas for the most part and do not provide in-depth programs on specialty areas, primarily because of time constraints. It is a perception that the DFPEs does a poor job of supporting these fire schools. (See Recommendation 8.)

4. There are a surprisingly large number of quality training facilities in the State. These training centers have been developed with local, private or grant funds, or a combination of these sources. They are generally owned by a municipality or fire protection district and are in many cases a long term project with development occurring as funds are available. The centers observed and evaluated by the consultants are located in Cheyenne, Casper, Gillette, Cody, Worland, Riverton, Wheatland, Jackson, Green River, Rock Springs and Rawlins. All are focused on providing the facilities necessary to train and test to National Fire Protection Association Standard 1001, Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications, 2002 edition. Several of the facilities have additional props to provide training in specialty areas such as technical rescue, confined space environments and hazardous materials emergencies. These facilities are discussed in more detail in a later section of this report. (See Recommendation 6.)
5. The vast majority of Wyoming’s fire departments are volunteer or combination (one or more full time employees plus volunteers). The following table delineates the demographics of the Wyoming Fire Service according to recent records published by the DFPES and our research.

Table 1: Wyoming Fire Department Demographics

<b>Fire Department Type By Organization or Staffing Pattern</b>	<b>Number of Departments</b>	<b>% of Total Fire Departments</b>
Fully Volunteer	105	70.9%
Combination	21	14.2%
Industrial	12	8.1%
Fully Career	5	3.4%
Federal, Military, State	5	3.4%
<b>TOTAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>100%</b>

Of additional note is the fact that 53% of the volunteer fire departments indicate that they have 20 or fewer members. Volunteer fire departments with less than 10 members represent 4.7% of the total of volunteer departments. <sup>1</sup> (No specific Recommendation)

6. In nearly all cases, the training provided locally by members of a given fire department to its own members was regarded as effective. However, the training is not well supported in terms of teaching/learning materials. (See Recommendation 2.)

7. There is a significant concern among volunteer fire services that basic fire service training is nearly unattainable for their new members, except as a local function. Further, there is concern that many small fire departments lack the financial and personnel resources to accomplish this training effectively, safely and in a timely manner. Nationally, 21% of all firefighters lack any formal training in structural firefighting and 14% of fire departments indicate that none of their members are certified<sup>10</sup>. There is reason to believe that these numbers may be a bit low since the survey included all fire departments, large and small. The situation in Wyoming is likely to be even more troublesome since so many of the fire departments are very small and lack significant training resources. (See Recommendations 1 through 6.)
8. There is considerable difference of opinion on the merits of mandatory firefighter certification and recertification. While some participants felt that a mandatory policy is the only way to maintain proper levels of skills and knowledge, others clearly felt that the mandatory requirement was tantamount to an unfunded mandate. (See Recommendation 5.)
9. There is clearly a difference of opinion throughout the State regarding the concept of a central training facility versus regional facilities. While nearly all parties agree that specialized facilities are important for safety, effectiveness and consistency, the concept of traveling to a central facility, wherever it is located, is not popular with all fire services. The Wyoming Fire Academy business plan focuses on the use of the facility at Riverton as a central physical plant for the training of firefighters not only in advanced and specialty areas, but also in certification training for Firefighter I skills and knowledge. The plan stresses this basic training as its focus for the future and proposes to use a cadre of 20 class sessions where firefighters would travel from their home towns to Riverton and be housed one night for each of the sessions. The business plan does not address the fact that there are at least ten other locations in the State that have either full or partial capability for properly teaching Firefighter I skills and knowledge.<sup>2</sup> (See Recommendations 3 and 6.)
10. The Cheyenne and Laramie Fire Departments currently train their personnel to Firefighter I and II levels through an association with the Northern Colorado/Southern Wyoming Fire Training Consortium. This organization operates two recruit academies per year and includes fire departments in the Colorado cities of Boulder, Fort Collins, Greeley, Longmont, and Loveland. This consortium also operates an officer development program that is used by its Wyoming members and occasionally by the City of Casper.<sup>3</sup> (No specific recommendation.)
11. The most common areas of specialty training mentioned as being important to fire departments were hazardous materials and technical rescue. There was some concern about the difficulty in obtaining and maintaining the required certifications in these areas, especially in the light of the many industrial hazards that exist in the State. (See Recommendations 3 and 6.)

## **ALTERNATIVES FOR TRAINING DELIVERY:**

The consultants were charged with examining the alternative ways to meet the training needs of the Wyoming fire service. In doing so, we examined the current system of limited state involvement, as well as the concepts of total state delivery and the blended approach. Input from the fire service would indicate that the current system is under funded and relies upon a central staff to deliver most of the certification training.

The concept of essentially all certification training being delivered by State personnel relies upon a very significant increase in staffing. Further, it does not acknowledge that there is a cadre of very well trained professionals (both career and volunteer) who are both willing and able to deliver quality training. In fact, most of the training in the State is currently delivered by one member of a department to the other members.

The blended approach seems to be the correct way to proceed. It acknowledges that additional staff is needed at the State level for scheduling, supervising and supporting a cadre of part time staff from the working fire service. It also allows the full time State staff to specialize in key areas that are needed for very specialized training.

One other alternative delivery system that was considered is a process that is commonly known as “training in context”. Widely used in Montana and to a lesser degree in some other states, this approach to training uses a coaching style and focuses trainees on both the risks and resources that are available in their community. This alternative uses a blended approach with both full and part time instructional staff. It clearly takes some instructor training to make it effective, but should be given some consideration by the Wyoming fire service. It does not preclude the need for training facilities that are both safe and effective for certain portions of the Firefighter I and II training or special programs.

In addition to the delivery methodology alternatives, the consultants examined three different approaches to providing the physical facilities for fire training.

The concept of a central fire academy was examined. The input from the field indicated some support but mostly a concern about the time and financial impact to potential users. The advantages of a central facility are apparent in that significant funds can be invested to provide a very broad scope of training at one place with course delivery personnel concentrated there as well.

A second approach considered was the use of mobile delivery props. This approach supports the concepts of taking the training to the constituents and the blended instructional staff. It requires either the purchase or construction of a series of mobile props that are transported via semi trailer to a community for a training program. In considering this approach, we contacted Maryland, Illinois, Oklahoma and Utah to determine their level of success. While there were mixed reviews on this subject, all agreed that the concept is both staff and maintenance intensive. Users often reported lengthy waiting times for use of the limited number of props. It clearly worked better in

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smaller states (geographically) and was essential in states where fixed training sites were few and far between.

The physical facilities approach that we found to be the most logical for Wyoming is the use of regional training sites. The long distances, rough terrain, and limited staffing seemed to be obstacles to the mobile prop approach. In addition, there is significant start up dollars involved for the quality and quantity of props that would be required. The regional sites are clearly more popular with the user base than a central facility due to the travel and time issues for volunteers and even career personnel.

The alternative to using a blended instructional staff to deliver classes in a given community, and then using regional training sites when necessary offers the greatest ease of access for the customers. It brings quality instruction to any fire department that needs the service and brings the training facilities much closer to the users. Certainly the persuading arguments were the desires of those surveyed and the existence of so many well developed and well distributed training centers. The number and breadth of these facilities is not proportionally available in many other states.

**TRAINING SITE ANALYSIS:**

The following is an analysis of the substantial fire training sites that currently exist in the State of Wyoming. Interior access to all of the sites was not possible during the study. However, in each case information regarding the facilities was obtained from their respective owner agency.

Table 2: Existing Training Site Analysis Detail

Location	Skills Bldg/ Tower	Live Burn Bldg.	Water supply	Classroom/ Mud	Classroom/ Clean	Paving	Run Off Cntrl	Rest-Room/ Rehab	Specialty Props
Casper	y	y	y	n	n	p	y	n	y
Cheyenne	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Cody	p	y	y	y	y	n	n	y	y
Gillette	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Green River	y	y	y	n	n	y	n	n	y
Jackson	p	y	y	n	n	y	y	y	n
Rawlins	y	y	y	n	n	p	n	y	y
Riverton	y	y	y	y	y	n	y	y	y
Rock Springs	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	n
Wheatland	y	y	y	n	n	p	n	n	n
Worland	y	y	y	n	n	n	n	n	y

NOTES:

- y= yes, n= no, p= partial
- Skills buildings or towers are assumed to provide opportunities to teach and test the vast majority of Firefighter I and II skills. Some skills such as breaking glass and forcing entry may have to be accomplished on simulators with replaceable parts.

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- Live burn buildings provide a controlled environment where training fires of reasonable size can be accomplished in accordance with NFPA Standard 1403, Standard on Live Fire Training Evolutions.<sup>4</sup>
- Water supply was difficult to determine without flow tests. However, the best information available indicates that a fire flow of at least 500 gallons per minute can be attained at all of the sites. Although, the standard<sup>5</sup> does not address a specific flow requirement, it is imperative that sufficient water supply be available for both primary and back up hose lines, for whatever training evolution is attempted. Both the primary and backup supplies should be reliable and deployed in accordance with NFPA 1403 to insure their degree of independence from each other.
- The two types of classrooms are for separate purposes. The “mud” classroom is a briefing/debriefing room for outside skills where users are likely in bunker gear and may well be smoky. The “clean” classroom is a quality teaching/learning environment that is comfortable and properly equipped with modern audio visual equipment and environmental controls.
- Paving, while not an absolute necessity, tends to make a facility usable during more of the winter months. Snow and mud control are substantially easier if the operating drill areas are paved. Paving necessarily needs to be properly installed and engineered to hold fire apparatus without damage. Areas directly adjacent to live fire props such as propane simulators, car fire simulators, etc., should not be paved.<sup>5</sup>
- Run off control is often difficult to determine. However, it is important in that some state environmental agencies are now requiring that water that has come in contact with smoke be retained for normal evaporation in that it might contain free carbons.
- There is a need for restrooms within easy access to the training facilities. In those locations where restrooms were more than 500 feet away, the chart indicates a “no”. While portable restrooms may function, they are certainly not desirable as a permanent installation. For permanent restrooms, the fixture count should be cognizant of the typical class size. In most cases, Firefighter I and II classes should not exceed 30 people for safety reasons. The rehabilitation facilities need merely be a place where clean water is available for rehydration. Places for light snacks and warm and cold beverages are highly desirable.
- The specialty props that were observed were generally focused on confined space, hazardous material, vehicle fires and vehicle extrication practices. The Riverton facility is adjacent to an area for wildland firefighting training as well. The only properly engineered flammable liquids burn facility that the consultants could identify is located at and operated by the Natrona County International Airport just north of Casper.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The following recommendations are offered based upon the findings of this study, recognized good practice in the field and the experience of the consultants.

**1. The DFPES should develop and implement a plan to enhance communications with and among the Wyoming fire services.**

Comment: This is a relatively simple and inexpensive solution to a number of identified issues. We are suggesting that a weekly electronic mail broadcast be sent to all fire departments and that a monthly hard copy newsletter be generated (made up primarily of the weekly information) for those agencies desiring a hard copy communication. The information (both weekly and monthly) should include training schedules for as far ahead as possible for not only DFPES programs but also all other sources of training that can be identified. The communications should also include articles and information from other sources about fire service issues and concerns. A better communication methodology should help clarify the intricacies of certification. Finally, there should be a mechanism for comments and information from the Wyoming fire service.

Financial Impact:

- .5 FTE Administrative staff = \$22,600 per year <sup>a</sup>
- Duplication, postage and mailing = \$1,350 per year <sup>b</sup>

**2. The DFPES should undertake an effort to develop or obtain a standard curriculum for Firefighter I and II, Driver/Operator, Fire Officer I and II, Fire Instructor I and II, Fire Inspector I, and Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations. These curricula should be made available to qualified trainers throughout the state along with their support materials. A full set of each curriculum and support materials should be available at each regional training site identified in recommendation six.**

Comment: Curricula for these standardized programs are readily available from several sources and we would suggest that the Wyoming fire service does not need to duplicate efforts. Providing a curriculum that includes class outlines, exercises, audio visual materials and evaluations will address an expressed concern that training is inconsistent. It also speaks to the problem of a lack of teaching materials in the field especially in small fire departments. Finally, these standard curricula are designed to be used with standard text and computer based programs that are readily accessible. In the process of selecting a curriculum, a peer review group from the user base is very important. It should also be noted that funds should be appropriated annually to update these materials that typically change on five year cycles along with their associated NFPA Standards and text books.

Financial Impact:

- Purchased Curriculum (8 sets) = \$14,536<sup>c</sup>
- Support materials (A/V, CD's, DVD's) = \$37,392<sup>c</sup>

**3. The DFPES should undertake a program to expand its full time instructional staff and to employ on a part time basis a number of qualified field instructors<sup>6</sup> who currently work or have recently worked in the active fire service.**

Comment: The programs delivered by the current DFPES instructional staff are generally well received. The fire service perceives these individuals as well qualified, well intentioned and hard working. Unfortunately, much of their time is unproductive in that it is “windshield time” as they travel from venue to venue. We would suggest that consideration be given to filling the vacant full time staff instructor position, adding one full time staff and assigning all four individuals to a quadrant of the State. They should be based in their respective quadrant and be responsible for coordinating and scheduling classes for approximately 25% of the user base. In addition, they should be responsible for some teaching load, particularly in specialty areas.

A common and extremely successful practice in many states is the use of contract or part time instructors who are active in the fire service. Input indicated that there is a cadre of personnel that would be interested in delivering courses, especially basic training, to Wyoming fire departments on a part time basis. Properly trained, certified<sup>6</sup> and supervised, these individuals are a valuable resource that could provide timely and trusted instruction with tools provided by the DFPES. Their schedules, resources and performance should be supervised by full time staff of the DFPES.

Financial Impact:

- \$88,600 for full time instructor (initial year)<sup>d</sup>
- \$99,720 per year part time compensation<sup>e</sup>
- \$15,876 mileage for part time instructors<sup>f</sup>

**4. The DFPES should provide an easily accessible central record keeping system for the training records of Wyoming firefighters.**

Comment: Providing a methodology for maintaining good quality training records is a positive for both local fire departments and the State. This request was heard regularly from local fire services. For the local community, it is important to have good records for risk management, maintaining certification, budgeting and compliance with Insurance Services Office standards. For the State, it provides valuable information for the certification system and a good perspective on overall training system performance.

Since there are a large number of small fire departments, we recommend that a system be chosen that could have a fairly simple paper format for later input to the electronic data base. We would hope that a choice of either computer based or paper input processes would encourage broad usage of the system.

As is the case with the National Fire Incident Reporting System in many states, one of the pitfalls is a failure to provide good and timely data back to the end user. An effective training records system will necessarily offer ease of record retrieval. Of course, ease of access has to be balanced with security for personal and educational data.

We encourage the DFPES to examine this possibility with the caveat that it may be very difficult to implement on a broad scale beyond what now exists for certification based records.

Financial Impact:

- Unknown, as software and software licenses vary widely with the scope of services and the number of users.

**5. The DFPES should continue to pursue the development and accreditation of its Firefighter Certification system.**

Comment: A good quality certification system is essential to the support of local fire services. It is the basis of insuring the effectiveness of the services and the safety of firefighters. Many of the constituents with whom we communicated expressed strong support for the system but a frustration with the time that it is taking to revise it and submit an application for accreditation. The consultants express some empathy for this process from past involvement.

The two major questions that always surround a certification system are the mandatory or voluntary nature of the system and whether or not there is a recertification or continuing education requirement. These are difficult questions that must necessarily be resolved by the user base and the people that they serve.

Finally, once accreditation is achieved through the National Professional Qualifications Board for the Fire Service<sup>7</sup>, we would encourage the state to seek accreditation through the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress<sup>8</sup> as well. The latter is a bit more rigorous inspection, but can open some doors between fire service training and community college programs in the future.

Financial Impact:

- NPQBFS = \$3,150 initially, \$2,000 annually<sup>g</sup>
- IFSAC = \$4,500 initially, \$2,000 annually<sup>h</sup>

**6. The DFPES should institute a program to further develop, support and utilize a network of regional fire service training facilities for Firefighter I and II training. The program should make maximum use of the existing training sites and be conscious of travel distances.**

Comment: The preponderance of input from the fire services seems to encourage the concept of developing and supporting a series of regional fire training sites that particularly address the skills training and testing for Firefighter I and II. While there is also support to further develop a “state fire academy” at the Riverton site, few people indicated that they could afford the time or expense of traveling long distances. With a number of very high quality sites developed or being developed, there was a great deal of loyalty to their “local” facility, especially for basic training.

The comparison of the Law Enforcement Academy at Douglas and a state fire academy are unrealistic for one very important reason. The huge majority of personnel trained at the Law Enforcement Academy are career employees of local governments and they are being paid to attend the academy. Conversely the vast majority of fire service providers in Wyoming (and most other states as well) are volunteer or part time. They are “employees” of small communities that do not have the resources to pay for several weeks of distant training. Nor do most of the volunteers have the luxury of leaving their normal source of income for an extended period of time. While the Wyoming Fire Academy business plan addresses the problem of volunteer time by spreading the courses out over 20 or so two day class sessions<sup>2</sup>, there is still the issue of distance and repeated travel.

The concept of a single central facility versus a set of geographically distributed sites begs the question; is it more cost effective to support a single site with long travel distances or smaller sites nearer to the customer base? We think that the regional sites are much more effective, especially since they, for the most part, already exist. As indicated in Table 2, all but two of the sites are at least marginally equipped to deal with Firefighter I and II skills<sup>9</sup>. It should also be noted that more and more of the knowledge based instruction for Firefighter I and II can be accomplished either on line or using home computer based programs. This trend will lessen the necessity for pure classroom based instruction.

The demand for training services is a difficult item to quantify without specific, historical information from each fire department. Using some sample numbers from other states and from the Wyoming fire department census, it could be estimated that there are about 4,200 firefighters in the State.<sup>1</sup> Assuming a 15% annual turnover would mean that 630 personnel need basic training annually. Experience in other rural states<sup>11</sup> indicates that, based on the number of Wyoming firefighters, about 30 courses per year could be expected with about 80 hours of contact instruction each, or 2,400 hours total. The average class size would be about 21 students. If an additional 240 contact hours are added for eight Firefighter II classes, it brings the total hours to 2,640. Only about 30% of those hours need to be at any specialized facility and the remainder will, in very many cases, be taught in a community fire station. Accordingly, total facility usage, Statewide, for Firefighter I and II could be estimated at 792 class hours or 16,632 person hours annually.

The other very important uses of fire service training facilities are focused on skills maintenance and specialty training. Obviously, those departments that are geographically close to a training facility will use it regularly for these purposes. Those more than just a few miles away will probably not use it very often. To do so often means that they must leave their community with only a skeleton crew for protection. Further, most skill maintenance drills do not require a special facility unless they include a dangerous element such as high angle, low angle or live fire activities. Use of a very distant facility for skills maintenance would truly be rare.

Certainly the Riverton site should be one of the sites supported and used in the program. In addition, it and other sites might opt to include facilities for more advanced programs and specialty areas. Efforts should be undertaken to avoid duplication of any specialized facilities that would experience very limited use.

We recommend that the State enter into cooperative agreements with the local governments or foundations that operate the local training facilities. These agreements would recognize use policies, scheduling responsibilities, clean up, security, maintenance responsibilities and financial commitments for the joint use of a given facility. Certainly if a facility developed with local or other than State funds is to be used as a regional training facility, the State (or the particular user base) should expect to be a partner(s) not only in its use but in its development, operational costs and upkeep. Data from similar sites indicate that annual utility and maintenance costs generally do not exceed \$5,000 per year<sup>i</sup>. This recommendation does not imply that the State should pay the entire annual bill. The financial arrangements for annual costs as well as long term maintenance issues should be negotiated with the other partners. The costs for materials used in a given class should generally be an expense for the sponsoring agency for that particular class. There may also be some additional services needed from the local agency. Specifically, they may need to supply fire apparatus and

equipment along with lighting and breathing air for certain training evolutions. All of these details need to be addressed in any agreement.

It should also be noted that there may be a need to supply self contained breathing apparatus and/or personal protective equipment for use by trainees. This need is driven by the lack of availability of such equipment at a trainee's home department. This equipment is not anticipated in the cost estimates below as departments should be encouraged to provide this equipment for all personnel as soon as they become affiliated as a member.

**We also recommend that the State provide a mechanism and funding for a grant program to assist the local governments and foundations that own the sites in completing the development of those sites to meet basic training requirements and possibly add carefully selected specialty props.**

The following paragraphs will address our recommendations for eight regional training sites and specific information regarding those sites. Unfortunately, there are other existing sites that are not included in our recommendations. This is not because they are substandard, but primarily because they are geographically too close to other sites to offer a balanced approach. The fact that they are not included in these recommendations does not mean that they are not worthy of continued development by local government and/or the State.

In recommending these sites we attempted to establish a distance criteria based upon user input. As can be observed by the details in Appendix A, there were several suggestions. The sites that are specifically recommended are generally conscious of travel distances less than 120 miles and the location of population centers.

Specifically, we are recommending that the State partner with existing centers that do or could easily meet the criteria for Level 1 as described below. Further, we recommend bringing all of the sites to Level 2 facilities. The importance of having classroom space that provides a quality teaching/learning environment cannot be overstressed. In addition, we feel that it is important for safety reasons to have a location to brief and debrief students prior to and after skills exercises or testing. Safety and customer service are the two overarching reasons to provide these facilities.

Level 1= Skills/Tower Building, Live Burn Building (or combination of all three), acceptable water supply, and accessible restroom and rehabilitation facilities.

Level 2 = Level 1 plus one classroom.

Level 3 = Level 2 plus one classroom and some specialty props.

**Recommended Sites:**

**Casper:** This site currently lacks accessible restrooms and rehabilitation facilities. It is well located close to hotels and restaurants just off Interstate 25. It is located in an industrial area.

**Cheyenne:** This site is currently a Level 3 site. This nearly new facility is excellent and they are in the process of adding additional specialty props. It is staffed with full time employees of the Cheyenne Fire Department. Food and lodging is within easy travel distance and the facility is close to Interstate 80.

**Cody:** This site lacks some of the facilities for simulating situations above and below grade. It needs a new combination burn and skills building. This site is one of the most active in the State and hosts many excellent training hours during the Cody Fire School. It is not far from food and lodging and is well located in relationship to potential land use conflicts.

**Gillette:** This site is currently a Level 3 site. It is fully developed and regularly used by Campbell County and adjacent fire services. Lodging and food services are near by. It is less than 1 mile from Interstate 90 and in an industrial area. It is staffed by full time employees of the Campbell County Fire Department.

**Jackson:** This is a marginal site. It does have a functional burn building and tower. Restrooms and assembly space could be available in adjacent municipal garage buildings. This facility is close to food and lodging. However, the latter is typically very expensive. The site is very compact but has been in place and used regularly for many years. Future development of the site would be very difficult and we are recommending that a new site be developed.

**Rawlins:** This site is currently a Level 1 site. This facility is adjacent to a fire station with nearby residential neighbors. Some restrictions would apply but they would relate to training past 10:00PM which would be highly unusual. Lodging and food service is near by and the site is within 1 mile of Interstate 80.

**Riverton:** This site is a Level 3 site. It is well developed and offers the most classroom facilities of any of the sites. It is located near lodging and food services and just a few blocks from the main highways in Riverton. There is a part time facility manager on site. In addition DFPES regional personnel are housed in the complex. With its central location in the state, it would be a good location for specialty training for high risk/low frequency services.

**Rock Springs:** This site is currently a Level 2 site. The site is located adjacent to a staffed fire station/classroom complex operated by the Rock Springs Fire Department. It is very near lodging and food services, and is located less than 1 mile from Interstate 80. Land use conflicts should not be a problem.

Grants from the State to these facilities would be money well spent. As the facilities are used by regional fire services, there may well be a desire to enhance the centers to Level 3. With good justification, these projects would merit serious consideration in the overall effort to provide a more effective and safer fire service for Wyoming.

Financial Impact: The following table addresses the estimated costs to develop each of the eight recommended sites.

Table 3: Development Costs for Regional Training Sites<sup>j</sup>

Site Location	Level 1 Costs	Level 2 Costs	Level 3 Costs
Casper	Restroom/Rehab Bldg., \$64,240	Single Classroom Bldg., \$95,150	Additional Classroom Space, \$65,450
Cheyenne	In place	In place	In place
Cody	Skills/Burn/Tower Bldg., \$310,516 Restroom/Rehab Bldg., \$64,240	In place	In place
Gillette	In place	In place	In place
Jackson Area	Skills/Burn/Tower Bldg., \$310,516 Restroom/Rehab Bldg., \$64,240	Single Classroom Bldg., \$95,150	Additional Classroom Space, \$65,450
Rawlins	Restroom/Rehab Bldg., \$64,240	In place	Single Classroom Bldg., \$95,150
Riverton	In place	In place	In place
Rock Springs	Repair of Existing Skills/Tower/Burn Bldg., \$80,000 <sup>k</sup>	In place	Additional Classroom Space, \$65,450

- 50% of annual utility and incidental maintenance costs at eight training centers = \$20,000<sup>i</sup>

**7. The DFPES should facilitate the reactivation of the Wyoming Fire Instructors Association.**

Comment: A number of highly motivated fire service personnel indicated a sincere desire to reactivate this organization. In a State with a small fire service population it would be almost essential that the State agency responsible for training be a catalyst for the continued operation of what will undoubtedly be a small group of fire service instructors. It is not appropriate for the State to provide the leadership. However, support for communications, meeting facilitation and other administrative tasks will likely make this work. The group can provide valuable feedback, serve as a focus group for training matters, and be the forum for improved relationships.

Financial Impact: Negligible

**8. The DFPES administrative and instructional staffs should regularly host meetings with the fire services in the field and maintain an important and visible role at the various fire schools.**

Comment: The perception that the DFPES staff has been less than supportive of the various fire schools may be just that, a perception, or it may be reality. In either case, the schools are very popular and draw a large “grass roots” participation. Interaction with the people who provide the basic service to the citizens of the State makes a great deal of sense. The consultants perceive that there is much good will and information exchange that can occur in this interaction.

Financial Impact: Some additional travel funds

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:**

The consultants would like to acknowledge the cooperation of the many wonderful members of the Wyoming fire service who assisted us. The sacrifice of their evenings and weekends is testimony to the importance of this matter.

We also wish to acknowledge the input of the Boards of the Wyoming Fire Chiefs’ Association and the Wyoming Fire Academy Foundation. Their genuine interest in improving the effectiveness and safety of the fire service is apparent.

Finally, we appreciate the support, cooperation and candor of Fire Marshal Jim Narva and his staff at the Department of Fire Prevention and Electrical Safety. It was obvious that they wanted this study to take place and they did not attempt to influence any part of it.

Considering all of the people that we met, we can say without reservation that the citizens of the State of Wyoming are in good hands, for sure.

**APPENDIX A**  
**DETAILED INPUT FROM**  
**REGIONAL MEETINGS**  
**AND**  
**STAKEHOLDERS MEETING**

REGIONAL MEETING SUMMARY  
CASPER  
MAY 14, 2005

Agencies represented:

- City of Casper
- Bar Nunn Fire Department
- Mills Fire Department
- Natrona County-Salt Creek

Responses to Questions:

1. **Considering all sources of training, what is working well?**
  - In house training
  - Fire and Emergency Television Network
  - NFA outreach classes
  - Fire Schools at Cody, Riverton, Wheatland, Buffalo and Newcastle
  - Casper College Associate Degree program
  - State EMS training
  - Montana Fire Service Training
2. **Considering all sources of training, what is not working well?**
  - Large time commitment to accomplish training
  - NFA courses are outdated
  - Lack of instructional methodology courses
  - Lack of ongoing training
  - Variety of courses available
  - Course content is poor in many cases
  - Not enough State instructors
  - State certification is not working
3. **What types of training are important to your department?**
  - Current technology
  - Safety
  - Wildland
  - Basic firefighting
  - “Big name” instructed courses
  - Hands on
  - Rope rescue
  - Water rescue
  - Trench rescue
  - High angle rescue
  - Injury prevention
  - Health and fitness

4. How can your training needs best be met?
  - Provide training materials for students and instructors
  - Host classes locally
5. How can the DFPEs address your training needs?
  - Firefighter I and II academy
  - Better communications
  - Develop and provide FF I and II curriculum
  - More SFM instructors stationed regionally
  - State training newsletter
  - Better networking from SFM office
  - State funded FETN subscriptions
  - Restore the image and expertise of the SFM office as a resource to fire departments
  - Develop and support regional training centers
6. Are personnel in your department available for training throughout the year?
  - Yes
  - Wildland season can be a problem
  - Hunting season can be a problem
7. What general comments do you have regarding fire service training in Wyoming?
  - Availability of hands on training
  - Better utilization of funds at the State level
  - More outside instructors should be used
  - SFM training should be coordinated with Community College training
  - Train on things that kill people
  - Balance book and hands on training
  - The State should either manage or fund record keeping

REGIONAL MEETING SUMMARY  
CHEYENNE  
APRIL 30, 2005

Agencies represented:

- Laramie County
- City of Cheyenne
- Laramie County District 2
- Laramie County District 8
- Wyoming Air National Guard FD

Responses to Questions:

1. **Considering all sources of training, what is working well?**
  - In house training is excellent
    - Provided when people are available
    - Provided by in house people
    - Occasional outside instructor
  - Formal Academies
    - FF I, FO I, DO are all taught locally based upon need
  - Sharing of resources works well
    - 4 different agencies work together
    - Work to find available instructors and locations
    - State Fire Marshal's office helps regularly
    - We share fire and EMS instructors
  - NFA Courses
    - State Fire Marshal's office has done a good job with these
  - Excellent support from the Cheyenne FD and their training center
2. **Considering all sources of training, what is not working well?**
  - Limited by in-house skill sets
    - Using the same instructors limits variety
  - Certification can be a problem
    - Instructors cannot be evaluators
    - Availability of evaluators
  - Availability of upper level classes
    - Fire Officer
    - Some only every 2 years, others not at all
  - NFA Classes
    - Some are not very current
    - Infrequent curriculum updates---if at all
  - Equipment is lacking for practical exams
  - Locally generated tests are not very good
  - Coordination of training schedules is poor and causes conflicts in time
  - Schedules need to accommodate volunteer staffing

- Reciprocity should be in place in Wyoming for other states and vice versa
  - There is a State sponsored Police Academy, but none for fire.
  - Limited opportunities to complete wildland task books.
3. What types of training are important to your department?
- Certification training for fire and ems
  - Professional development such as Fire Officer, Instructor and Investigator
  - Hands on especially for infrequently used skills
  - Interagency training
  - Weapons of Mass Destruction, cognizant of a limited amount of resources
4. How can your training needs best be met?
- Train the trainers
  - Qualified and credible instructors
  - Decent library of reference material
  - Audio-visual equipment
    - Computers dedicated to training
    - Projectors
5. How can the DFPEs address your training needs?
- Train the trainer programs
  - Packaged curriculum for classes
  - Be task oriented
  - List of available reference materials
  - Updated web site
  - More certified full time instructors
  - Clear administrative procedures
  - Instructional methodology classes and tools
  - Expanded code enforcement training
  - More wildland instructors (Dept. of Forestry)
  - Get national accreditation
  - Expand programs to meet customer needs at all levels
  - Centralized record keeping system to coordinate training from all agencies such as SFM, Forestry, Health, Homeland Security
6. Are personnel in your department available for training throughout the year?
- Not really in the summer.
  - Hunting season
  - Calving season
  - Primarily available in the evening for volunteers
  - Military deployments sometimes conflict
  - Depends on the level of training and the time required

7. What general comments do you have regarding fire service training in Wyoming?
- Encouraged by the fact that they are being asked
  - SFM does an outstanding job given the resources they have
  - Why not use internet based training
  - CD Rom/DVD based training would work
  - Regional facility in Cheyenne has improved relations among career and volunteer people
  - Regional facility helps us train to the same standard
  - There is a significant attitude in the state of Cheyenne vs. Wyoming

REGIONAL MEETING SUMMARY  
CODY  
MAY 7, 2005

Agencies represented:

- Park County Fire District 2
- Park County Fire District 4
- City of Cody
- City of Worland

Responses to Questions:

1. Considering all sources of training, what is working well?

- In house training is excellent
- Hazardous Materials training
- Train the trainer programs
- State sponsored fire officer training
- Cody and Riverton Fire schools are well attended and even use some National Fire Academy instructors
- Wildland training at the Riverton Academy

2. Considering all sources of training, what is not working well?

- Little if any help from the state
- SFM personnel have missed classes
- Training requirements have a significant impact on volunteer time
- No mandatory Firefighter certification
- The Academy should develop and manage the longer courses
- Training costs are solely the responsibility of districts, even with little financial resource
- SFM office has turned a deaf ear to volunteers
- SFM instructors and staff are no longer major players in the fire schools
- SFM office is not proactive with training or information

3. What types of training are important to your department?

- Full spectrum of training since small departments must handle everything
- Structural collapse
- Officer training
- Basis strategy and tactics
- Rapid intervention team training
- Most popular courses at the regional schools are:
  - Self contained breathing apparatus
  - Extrication
  - Vehicle fires
  - New technology

4. **How can your training needs best be met?**
  - State academy hands on training
  - Regional facilities for broad scope of training
  - Utilize existing facilities
  - More SFM Office instructors
  - Eliminate the politics vs. needs at the SFM Office
  - Assist with trainees' costs
  - Schedule courses to meet the needs of volunteers
  - De-regulate the mil levy cap on fire districts
5. **How can the DFPES address your training needs?**
  - Increase funding for training directly to the departments
  - Provide or help pay for instructors for upper level courses
  - Provide assistance with grant writing
  - What are the SFM staff members doing?
    - Stuff has come to an abrupt stop
    - Lack of follow through with commitments
    - There is no historical perspective on fire training programs
    - Little accessibility to the Fire Marshal
6. **Are personnel in your department available for training throughout the year?**
  - Summer, hunting and fishing seasons are a problem
  - Wildland season is a problem (May-October)
  - Farming can impact availability
7. **What general comments do you have regarding fire service training in Wyoming?**
  - Used to get auditor services and legal advise through the SFM, but no longer
  - Rarely see anyone from SFM office
  - SFM Office not sensitive to the needs of the volunteer fire service and appears to be heavily influenced by the career fire service and in particular Cheyenne
  - Organize a central purchasing operation for fire equipment
  - Help fire service coordinate with Homeland Security efforts
  - Do not develop the Cheyenne training facility as a state fire academy

REGIONAL MEETING SUMMARY

Gillette

MAY 13, 2005

Agencies represented:

- Campbell County Fire Department
- Big Horn Volunteer Fire Department
- Buffalo Volunteer Fire Department
- Crook County Firefighters
- Johnson County District 1

Responses to Questions:

1. **Considering all sources of training, what is working well?**
  - Fire schools at Cody, Riverton, Wheatland and Buffalo
  - The NFA classes offered by the State at the fire schools
  - State Forestry classes at local departments
2. **Considering all sources of training, what is not working well?**
  - Repetition of basic classes at regional fire schools
  - Difficulty in safely teaching and testing firefighter practical skills
  - Class time is insufficient to effectively teach basic skills
  - Multi day classes impact volunteers and shift workers
3. **What types of training are important to your department?**
  - Basic firefighter classes
  - Fire investigation
  - Intermediate and advanced wildland classes
  - Coal mine rescue
  - Railroad rescue
  - Urban interface
  - Officer development classes
  - Instructor development
  - Trench and confined space rescue
  - Training for dealing with methamphetamine labs
  - Emergency vehicle operations
4. **How can your training needs best be met?**
  - Flexible class schedules
  - Shared facilities
  - Special skill instructors
  - Inter-agency training
  - Training facility near the Sheridan area
  - More instructors
  - Financial assistance for student materials

5. How can the DFPES address your training needs?
  - Additional SFM instructors
  - Assistance in funding participation in other than NFA classes
  - Communication such as hard copy and electronic newsletters on a regular basis with training information (timely)
  - Support of local departments with training materials, guidance and lists of resources
  - State level funded training academies
6. Are personnel in your department available for training throughout the year?
  - January through May is the best time
  - Wildland season is bad
  - Hunting season is bad
  - The Christmas/New Years season is bad
7. What general comments do you have regarding fire service training in Wyoming?
  - Incentives for teaching must be worthwhile
  - Bring back the State Instructors Association with SFM support
  - Timely information is needed about future programs
  - Better communications from SFM Office
  - Higher visibility from the SFM Office
  - Help with grant writing
  - Help with training props
  - Incentives to participate
  - Help with volunteer recruitment and retention
  - Cards and certificates for certification levels
  - Develop and enforce continuing education requirements
  - SFM office should be a clearing house for training and materials
  - Facilitate lots of classes

REGIONAL MEETING SUMMARY  
GREEN RIVER  
JUNE 4, 2005

Agencies represented:

- Sweetwater County Fire Department
- Sweetwater County District 1
- Rock Springs Fire Department
- Mountain View Fire Department
- Uinta County
- Green River Fire Department

Responses to Questions:

1. **Considering all sources of training, what is working well?**
  - SFM office instructors
  - Forrest Service instructors
  - Outside instructors
  - NFA direct deliveries
  - In house training
  - Interdepartmental training
  - Fire Schools at Cody, Riverton and Wheatland
2. **Considering all sources of training, what is not working well?**
  - Lack of facilities
  - Lack of standardized training among departments
  - Use of different training materials and content from department to department
  - Certification system not in place and lack of reciprocity
  - Broad range of skill levels from department to department
  - Instructor training is lacking
  - SFM office is not supporting the Wyoming weekends at NFA
  - Many departments are not aware of resources available
  - Poor communications from the SFM office
  - Time constraints on volunteers and shift workers
3. **What types of training are important to your department?**
  - Safety
  - FF I and II basic skills
  - Drive operator
  - Hazardous materials operations and technician level
  - Meth lab training
  - Extrication technician level
  - All technical rescue levels

- Wildland training that meets State and Federal requirements
  - Fire prevention and inspection
  - Instructor development
  - Fire officer development
4. How can your training needs best be met?
- Talking to each other and sharing resources
  - Instructor conferences would help
  - Networking at all levels
  - Facilitation from the State level
  - Improved communications
5. How can the DFPEs address your training needs?
- Vastly improved communications with the fire service
  - Be accountable for their actions
  - Provide for uniformity in training
  - Establish minimum standards for training and certification
  - Provide standard curriculum
  - Facilitate instructor development
  - Provide leadership for the fire service at the State level
  - Provide recognition in the form of certificates and patches
  - Provide a regular and useful newsletter and E Mail
  - Assist fire departments in developing a training program internally
  - Provide officer development classes regularly and consistent with volunteer schedules
  - Provide courses for fire prevention and inspection
  - Assist fire departments with public education efforts and materials
  - Provide requirements and classes for continuing education
  - Provide classes in technical rescue and hazardous materials at all levels
  - Provide a roster of trained instructors throughout the State and surrounding States.
  - Provide compensation for instructors
  - Provide training resources and a catalog of same
6. Are personnel in your department available for training throughout the year?
- Yes
  - Hunting season has an impact
  - Wildland season is difficult
  - Fire prevention week is a bad time
  - June 1 through October 31 is probably not cost effective

7. What general comments do you have regarding fire service training in Wyoming?

- We need a southwest fire school
- Designate a regional training center in all regions
- Coordinate training at all regional sites and set safety standards
- 150 mile radius is reasonable for regional sites
- Focus in the SFM office has shifted away from fire to other things
- SFM office should facilitate the direction of fire service training in the State
- We should have a State Fire Academy that is like the Law Enforcement Academy with facilities, personnel and equipment, all State funded
- SFM office does not seem to be seeing the big picture
- SFM office does not attend the fire schools and has little interaction with the fire service
- Regular and high quality communications are needed from the SFM office including success stories, Statewide issues, and an information exchange

REGIONAL MEETING SUMMARY  
JACKSON  
MAY 21, 2005

Agencies represented:

- Afton Fire Department
- Thayne Fire Department

Responses to Questions:

1. **Considering all sources of training, what is working well?**
  - Hands on training
  - Fire Schools at Cody, Riverton and Newcastle
  - SFM office classes
  - SFM office distributed skills booklet
  - Forest Service classes
2. **Considering all sources of training, what is not working well?**
  - Certification program is not in place or even clear in its intention
  - Not clear what a certificate from one of the schools means
  - Training facilities are lacking
  - SFM office classes are infrequent
3. **What types of training are important to your department?**
  - Safety
  - Incident command
  - National Incident Management System
  - Post incident analysis
  - Basic firefighting practices
  - Wildland
  - EMS annual requirements
  - Officer training
4. **How can your training needs best be met?**
  - Funding in support of fire training
  - Regional facilities
  - Training materials for trainees and trainers
5. **How can the DFPEs address your training needs?**
  - More training programs
  - Better information and timely information
  - Guidelines for certain situations
  - Communications in all manner of speaking
  - Record keeping
  - Website, but without a chat room

6. Are personnel in your department available for training throughout the year?

- Winter and early Spring are OK
- Summer is limited
- Farming/ranching can have an impact
- Hunting season is a problem

7. What general comments do you have regarding fire service training in Wyoming?

- Riverton fire school is really good
- There is a need for reciprocity with other States for fire training certification classes
- The new certification system should be more user friendly than before
- SFM should maintain a variety of training programs
- SFM should provide training program and material catalogs
- SFM should update their web site daily
- A lending library for instructional materials and equipment is needed
- We should be able to do knowledge based training via the web
- Proctors should be available for all program levels

REGIONAL MEETING SUMMARY  
RAWLINS  
JUNE 4, 2005

Agencies represented:

- Elk Mountain Fire Department
- Carbon County
- Rawlins Fire Department

Responses to Questions:

1. **Considering all sources of training, what is working well?**
  - In house training
  - Hands on training
  - Annual fire schools at Cody, Riverton, Wheatland and Buffalo
  - SFM office staff instructors
  - Interagency training
  - Classes from local industry
  - Outside instructors
  - NFA courses
2. **Considering all sources of training, what is not working well?**
  - The direction that the SFM office is taking
  - There is no course for the required recertification of hazardous materials training
  - Time commitment for NFA and wildland classes
  - Lack of qualified instructors
  - Small departments have very limited resources for training
  - Most departments do not have access to NFPA standards
3. **What types of training are important to your department?**
  - Basic FF I and II
  - Instructor certification
  - Fire officer training
  - Hazardous materials at all levels
  - Technical rescue
  - Wildland firefighting

4. How can your training needs best be met?
  - Wise spending of available funds at all levels
  - Broader options for fire training
  - Computer based training
  - Better communications from training providers
  - Good training web sites
  - National accreditation and reciprocity
5. How can the DFPEs address your training needs?
  - Work for the fire service
  - Better communications
  - Updated web site
  - Support the state instructors organization
  - Provide a training resource data base
  - Stop trying to move everything to Cheyenne
  - Provide regional training sites so that no one has to travel more than 120 miles
6. Are personnel in your department available for training throughout the year?
  - Summers are a problem
  - Taking summers off reduces burn out of personnel
  - Wildland season is a problem
  - Hunting season can be a problem
  - Calving season is a problem for a few volunteers
7. What general comments do you have regarding fire service training in Wyoming?
  - Emphasis is being placed on the new Cheyenne facility
  - Resources are being relocated to Cheyenne
  - SFM office has a poor attitude toward volunteers and volunteer organizations
  - State agencies impacting the fire service do not seem to communicate well with each other, including SFM office, State Forestry, and Public Health
  - Financial backing should be in place for the Wyoming Fire Academy
  - The SFM office should manage the Fire Academy
  - The State should be providing resources so that local fire departments can help themselves
  - SFM does try to do the right thing

REGIONAL MEETING SUMMARY  
RIVERTON  
MAY 20, 2005

Agencies represented:

- Fremont County
- Thermopolis
- Riverton
- Lander

Responses to Questions:

1. **Considering all sources of training, what is working well?**
  - SFM training on technical subjects
  - In house training
  - Riverton academy
  - Hands on training
  - Stipends for classes
2. **Considering all sources of training, what is not working well?**
  - Wyoming certificates are not recognized nationally
  - SFM trainers allow differing skill levels for the same certification
  - Some classes are rarely available within easy distance
  - SFM office has cut back the number of instructors
  - SFM office is top heavy
  - Available time
  - Support for the State Fire Academy is lacking in terms of funding and personnel
3. **What types of training are important to your department?**
  - Hands on
  - Officer development
  - Basic firefighter certification
  - Wildland and interface training
  - Leadership
  - Technical rescue
  - Oil field
4. **How can your training needs best be met?**
  - More trainers, centrally located
  - More funding
  - Full time Fire Academy coordinator and full time staff
  - Training materials for trainees and instructors or funding for same
  - Scholarship program to help volunteers

5. How can the DFPES address your training needs?
  - More instructors, centrally located
  - Funding from the State for fire training
  - Pay local instructors and contract trainers
  - Reduce the “top heavy” organization
6. Are personnel in your department available for training throughout the year?
  - Wildland fire season is a problem
  - Farming can interfere
  - Hunting season is a problem
7. What general comments do you have regarding fire service training in Wyoming?
  - Support is lacking from the SFM office
  - Communications could be much better
  - Cheyenne is not the only fire department in the State
  - The State and Federal government keep sending out unfunded mandates
  - Certification program is not yet complete
  - Certification program committee participation should be State funded
  - Proctors for certification testing should be State funded

STAKE HOLDER MEETING SUMMARY  
WYOMING FIRE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
AND  
WYOMING STATE FIRE ACADEMY FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
RIVERTON  
APRIL 2, 2005

A meeting was held with the above referenced governing boards at the Wyoming Fire Academy during the afternoon of April 2, 2005. Attendance was not recorded. State Fire Marshal Jim Narva was present for the discussion. No specific questions were asked, but a free flowing discussion occurred. The following points were noted during the discussion:

- The Academy Board had adopted a business plan and is in the process of implementing it.
- Some form of affiliation between the Academy and State government might be possible and positive.
- There is quite a bit of diversity of thought in the fire service regarding mandatory training, mandatory certification and recertification.
- The Boards are interested in what types of training are desired and what steps/processes/incentives does it take to get people to the academy. Traveling to the Academy seems to be contingent on the ability of the fire department to obtain the specific training locally. Departments that have their own facilities are not likely to travel to the Academy.
- They are also interested in the need for regional training centers.
- It was noted that the National Fire Academy (NFA) regional deliveries are sometimes well attend and sometimes not well attended.
- The Boards noted that timely communications about training offerings are lacking.
- Training efforts in summer seem to be poorly attended.
- Scheduling of training is always an issue with both career and volunteer services.
- The Boards are interested in obtaining specific information from all departments including whether or not they have a designated training officer, if they can handle certain types of incidents, if they follow National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards and if they are involved in any interagency training.

**APPENDIX B**  
**SUPPORT DATA**  
**FOR**  
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following information is referenced to the main body of the report and provides the technical basis and/or calculations for the recommendations.

- a. Salary (\$16,200), benefits (\$5,400) equipment and supplies (\$1,000) for .5 FTE administrative position with desktop publishing skills and quality communication skills.  
Total = \$22,600 per year.
- b. Eight page newsletter for 150 addressees, 12 times per year @ \$.75 per copy for paper, printing, mailing and postage.  
Total = \$1,360
- c. IFSTA Firefighter I and II Curriculum Package = \$820  
IFSTA Driver/Operator Curriculum Package = \$299  
IFSTA Fire Officer I and II Curriculum Package = \$299  
IFSTA Fire Service Instructor Curriculum Package = \$149  
IFSTA Hazardous Materials Awareness and Ops = \$250  
Total Curricula  $\$1,817 \times 8 = \$14,536$   
Action Training Firefighter I and II DVDs = \$3,879  
IFSTA Driver/Operator DVD = \$35  
IFSTA Fire Officer I and II DVD = \$35  
IFSTA Fire Instructor I and II DVD = \$35  
Action Training Hazardous Materials DVD's = \$690  
Total Audio/Visual  $\$4,674 \times 8 = \$37,392$
- d. Salary (\$36,000), benefits (\$12,000) equipment and supplies (\$1,000) for one full time field instructor.  
Total personnel costs = \$49,000 per year.  
Sport Utility Vehicle for instructor (not amortized) \$29,400  
Office rent and utilities \$10,200 per year
- e. Contract instructors at @\$30 per hour for 30 firefighter I courses at 80 contact hours each, plus 8 firefighter II courses at 30 contact hours each. Ten hours of course preparation time and 8 hours of administrative time per course.
- f. Assumes 15 sessions per firefighter I course and 5 sessions per firefighter II course, or 450 trips for firefighter I courses and 40 trips for firefighter II courses. The average round trip is assumed to be 80 miles and the IRS mileage rate is \$.405.
- g. \$3,150 for a site visit (every 5 yrs), and \$2,000 annual fee.

- h. \$500 application fee, \$4,000 for a site visit (every 5 yrs) and \$2,000 annual fee.
- i. Based on the experience of the State of Oklahoma's regional training sites. Includes \$250 per month for utilities and \$2,000 per year for building and grounds maintenance. Does not include any cumulative funds or one time expenditures for major repairs or capital improvements. Those items are negotiated at the time of need.
- j. Construction cost figures are based on the 2005 edition of A.M. Best Estimating Guide with corroboration using on line tools from UDA Associates. Although the information is adjusted for 2005 dollars in the Wyoming market, it is likely that costs may vary slightly from locality to locality. The costs for all facilities are based upon high quality metal buildings or basic masonry construction. All costs are finished cost including utilities, design and construction.

Restroom/Rehab Facility: Two toilet/two urinal/two sink male restroom, two toilet/two sink female restroom both ADA accessible with 240 square feet @ \$160 = \$38,400. Enclosed rehab space with vending area, counter, sink and benches with 250 square feet @ \$70 = \$17,500. Utility and maintenance space 50 square feet @ \$50 = \$2,500. Total with a 10% contingency = \$64,240

Single Classroom Building: Classroom for seating of up to 30 people at non fixed tables and chairs with 500 square feet plus 200 square feet for storage and preparation space and 70 square feet for utility and maintenance space for a total of 770 square feet @ \$100 = \$77,000. Furniture, fixtures and equipment (includes Audio visual) = \$9,500. Total with a 10% contingency = \$95,150

Additional Classroom: Same as the single classroom excluding the storage, preparation and mechanical space, with 500 square feet @ \$100 = \$50,000. Furniture, fixtures and equipment = \$9,500. Total with a 10% contingency = \$65,450

Skills/Burn/Tower Building: This building is based upon the estimates of WHP Training Towers, Inc. The recommended structure a 2 story residential simulator with attic, measuring roughly 22 feet by 46 feet by 24 feet high. Included is ½ gabled roof with 2 chop out panels and ½ flat roof with parapet walls, interior and exterior 2 story stairs, ladder from the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor to the attic, confined space simulator, movable breathing apparatus maze and two burn rooms with temperature monitoring. Materials, freight and labor to erect = \$267,287. Site preparation = \$15,000. Total with 10% Contingency = \$310,516

- k. The existing facility at Rock Springs is very functional except that the temporary burn rooms need to be removed and the original burn rooms evaluated by a structural engineer and properly relined with high temperature resistant materials. Our best estimate for this work would be approximately \$80,000.

**APPENDIX C**  
**REFERENCE NOTES**  
**AND**  
**EXPLANATORY INFORMATION**

Reference notes:

1. Fire Service Directory, Wyoming Department of Fire Prevention and Electrical Safety, Cheyenne, 2004.
2. Wyoming Fire Academy Business Plan, Wyoming Fire Academy Foundation Board of Directors, Riverton, 2004.
3. Records of Participation, Northern Colorado/Southern Wyoming Fire Training Consortium, Greeley, Colorado, 2005.
4. NFPA 1403, Standard on Live Fire Training Evolutions, National Fire Protection Association, Quincy, Massachusetts, 2001.
5. NFPA 1402, Guide for Building Fire Service Training Centers, National Fire Protection Association, Quincy, Massachusetts, 2002.
6. Qualified instructors should be able to be certified to levels I and II of NFPA 1041, Standard for Fire Service Instructor Professional Qualifications, National Fire Protection Association, Quincy, Massachusetts, 2004.
7. Reestablished in the mid 1990's, as a not for profit corporation by the National Fire Protection Association, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the International Association of Arson Investigators, National Association of State Fire Marshals, and the North American Fire Training Directors. It is governed by a self perpetuating Board with representatives from each sponsor agency and some users.
8. The International Fire Service Accreditation Congress is a self supporting agency under the umbrella of the College of Engineering, Architecture, and Technology at Oklahoma State University. It is governed by a competitively elected Board of Governors elected by and from its accredited user base. In addition to accrediting state level fire service certification systems, IFSAC also accredits college based, fire related degree granting programs.
9. NFPA 1001, Standard for Firefighter Professional Qualification, National Fire Protection Association, Quincy, Massachusetts, 2002.
10. A Needs Assessment of the U.S. Fire Service: A Cooperative Study Authorized by U.S. Public Law 106-398, National Fire Protection Association, Quincy, Massachusetts; Federal Emergency Management Agency, Washington, D.C., 2002.

11. Personal conversations with fire service training officials at Oklahoma State University Fire Service Training, the Arkansas Fire Academy at Camden, the Illinois Fire Service Institute at Champaign, and the New Mexico Fire Academy at Socorro.