



Pro Board Progress

National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications

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Pro Board

With an all time record attendance, this year's Accreditation Conference and Advisory Committee meeting on January 25-26 in Tampa was a grand success. With over 95 attendees and 45 of the 48 accredited entities represented (94%), this was the largest Pro Board conference attendance ever. This Newsletter features this Conference, highlights of the January 24th Committee on Accreditation meeting and other recent Pro Board events

Perhaps the following from Steve Martin, Delaware State Fire College sums up the good feedback we have received on the Tampa Conference *"Fred, Dave and Amy ... you three did a great job of organizing and conducting the Conference. It was well worth the time of the attendees. Thank you for your hard work"*.

Special thanks to George Luther who recorded our Tampa Conference on film!

Articles for the next Pro Board Progress are being planned now.

Contact the Pro Board newsletter at editor@theproboard.org with information about your agency activities that we can highlight in a future issue of the newsletter.



Chairman Jim Estep opened this year's Accreditation Conference with some special introductions including one participant in particular, Justin Kim, who had traveled from Seoul, Korea, to represent that city's Fire Academy at the Conference. Chairman Estep welcomed participants with the report that this year's conference attendance has broken previous attendance records with 45 out of 48 Accredited Entities being represented (that's 94%) and 98 attendees!

Chairman Estep reminded attendees that their Board of Directors rolled out a Long Range Strategic Plan that will guide the Pro Board through the next decade and a half to the year 2020. A copy of the Strategic Plan Framework was provided to all attendees and Chairman Estep encouraged them to review the document again, as there were several panel discussions that bear on the Plan's Goals during the Conference.

Some key points of the Strategic Plan include Key Trends for Fire Safety Professionals, means of achieving goals set out in the plan, obstacles to meeting the goals, and how the Pro Board might go about overcoming these obstacles.

Estep also outlined other Board Initiatives that took place in 2007 including increasing the Committee on Accreditation from 12 to 16 members to better serve accredited entities. Included in this increase was the recent appointment of Dr. Jane Duncan, Dean of the Calgary, Alberta Fire Academy. Committed to expanding the liaison with Canada, the Pro Board now has three Canadians on the COA with Dr. Duncan's appointment.

Chairman Estep concluded his opening remarks with good news - the Pro Board is in very strong financial condition. As a result, last July fees on entities which register all of their qualified individuals electronically in the the Pro Board certification Registry were lowered again. This automatic registration plan represents the fastest growing segment of the Pro Board system and over 60% of the certificate volume. Currently, there are over 325,000 certificates in the Pro Board registry, all of which are accessible confidentially on the Pro Board web site. Chairman Estep thanked Fred Piechota and Dave Trebisacci for organizing this excellent Conference and Amy Sturtevant for her daily efforts on behalf of the Pro Board.

At its Accreditation Conference in Tampa, the Pro Board recognized the Accreditation of four (4) new entities into the Pro Board system:

- North Carolina Fire Rescue Commission,
- Minnesota Fire Service Certification Board,
- Safety and Technical Rescue Association
- Vancouver Island Emergency Response Academy.

This brings to 48 the number of Accredited Entities in the Pro Board system. *"We congratulate these new participants in the Pro Board system. With accreditation, these agencies demonstrate their commitment to improving life safety for their citizens and emergency personnel"* commented Jim Estep, Chairman of the Pro Board *"through accreditation, these agencies can provide official Pro Board certificates to fire service members who have demonstrated a competency with professional qualification standards".*



Pictured left to right: F. Piechota, S. Austin, W. Bailey, J. Estep, A. O'Neill, S. Weedon, T. Sturtevant

Chairman Jim Estep and Pro Board Directors present the Accreditation Certificate to Wayne Bailey, representing the North Carolina Fire Rescue Commission.

In addition, the following eight (8) entities were recognized with Certificates of Re-accreditation:

- Connecticut Commission on Fire Prevention and Control
- Delaware State Fire School
- District of North Vancouver Fire Rescue, British Columbia
- Maryland Fire Service Personnel Qualifications Board
- Pennsylvania State Fire Academy
- Utah Fire Academy
- Virginia Department of Fire Programs
- West Virginia University Fire Service Extension

Every five years after initial accreditation, Pro Board Accredited Entities must undergo a critical re-assessment of their ability to continue to meet the 13 point accreditation criteria that has become the hallmark of integrity for the Pro Board system.



Chairman Estep and Pro Board Directors present re-accreditation Certificate to Tracie Young-Brungard and Edward Mann, State Fire Commissioner (left) Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The quarterly meeting of the Committee on Accreditation was held on January 24th in Tampa the day before the Accreditation Conference. The Committee approved new Accreditations for North Carolina and Minnesota as well as Re-accreditations for Pennsylvania and Utah. In addition, the COA approved extensions of accreditation for TEEEX Emergency Services Training Institute, Massachusetts Fire Training Council and Vancouver Island Emergency Response Academy. Finally, the Committee agreed to revisions to the Self Study Guide document COA 3 in the areas of prerequisite verification and examination development. Should you have any questions about COA activities, please contact Fred Piechota, COA Chair.

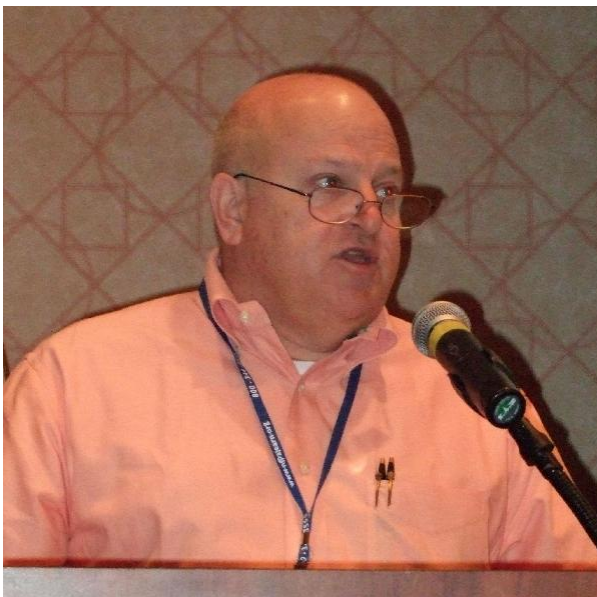


Committee on Accreditation team meets with North Carolina staff during recent site visit leading to Pro Board Accreditation (Wayne Bailey representing North Carolina with Fred Piechota pictured at head of the table)



Dr. Jane Duncan, Dean of the Calgary (Alberta, Canada) Fire Department's Fire Training Academy was appointed to the Pro Board's COA on December 11, 2007. With this appointment by the Board of Director's, the COA is now at full strength with 16 members. Dr. Duncan has over 20 years experience developing, implementing and analyzing responsive training programs designed to reach adult learners. She currently leads the vision and direction of the Calgary Training Academy and its staff of over 30 full time specialists and over 60 field trainers.

Dr. Jane Duncan at the Tampa Accreditation Conference



Billy Shelton, Director, Virginia Department of Fire Programs was reelected for a full three year term on the Committee on Accreditation by his Advisory Committee peers on Saturday, January 25th. Congratulations to Billy!

Shelton pictured at the Tampa Conference



Dave Trebisacci, Program Manager, reported 324,270 certificates dating back to 1983 reside in the Pro Board Certification Registry as of December 31, 2007. This includes an additional 43,838 since 2006.



- Composition of the Registry is Fire Fighter (36%), Hazmat (23%), Fire Instructor (10%), Fire Officer (9%), Fire Inspector (7%), and "all others" (15%)
 - Entities using electronic submissions (\$5.50 plan) are urged to submit "batches" as frequently as possible to keep the Registry up to date for their constituents and to reduce the number of questions coming to the Program Office from individuals who are unable to locate their records in the Pro Board web site.
 - Dave and Amy do their part by updating the web-site "look up" feature daily.
 - For those agencies using the individual application process, please use the new form that includes the credit card option.
 - COA-2 Annual Re-accreditation Forms are due; it's important to have "up to date" signatory authorities for the Program Office's verification process.
 - The web site is updated daily and has had 28,000 visitors to date.
 - To access, go to www.theproboard.org and click on "Certification Search".
- Any questions should be directed to either Amy Sturtevant, Certification Coordinator, at asturtevant@nfpa.org or Dave Trebisacci, Program Manager, at dtrebisacci@nfpa.org.



Coming half way around the world to represent the Seoul Metropolitan Government Fire Academy, Justin Kim was warmly received by all of the Tampa Conference attendees. Mr. Kim presented an overview of the Seoul, Korea metropolitan Fire Rescue services including a stirring video presentation of one of the most modern cities in Asia. The metro Fire/Rescue Department proudly protects ten million citizens and is determined to become the "First Accreditation in the Asia Fire Service" according to Justin.

Special thanks to Ed Wurster and Bob Grunmeier of Bucks County, PA for introducing the Seoul Metro Fire Academy to the Pro Board.

Chairman Jim Estopp of the Pro Board welcomes Justin Kim, representative of the Seoul, Korea Fire Academy to the Tampa Accreditation Conference.

Jerry Laughlin, Alabama Fire College reported on his research on "Distance Testing" and where it led him, namely to research "cheating" in the classroom and at remote locations. Jerry's Power Point presentation is a "must see" for all of our Pro Board Accredited Agencies as he describes how to make distance learning more secure from cheating through his 8 point "On Line Cheating Prevention Kit". If you did not take the CD home with you, please contact Jerry for a copy at jlaughlin@alabamafirecollege.org.

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