

Constitution and Bylaws

- **Article I. General**
 - *Section 1. Name*
 - *Section 2. Purpose*
 - *Section 3. Headquarters Location*
 - *Section 4. Bonding of Officers*
- **Article II. Membership and Privileges**
 - *Section 1. Classes of Membership*
 - *Section 2. Departmental Memberships and Privileges*
 - *Section 3. Individual Members and Privileges*
 - *Section 4. Membership Continuation*
 - *Section 5. Corporate Sponsorships*
- **Article III. Officers and Officials**
 - *Section 1. Elected Officers*
 - *Section 2. Elected Officer Eligibility*
 - *Section 3. Vacancies and Resignations of Elected Officers*
 - *Section 4. Removal from Office of Elected Officials and Standing Committee Chairs*
 - *Section 5. Executive Director*
 - *Section 6. General Counsel*
 - *Section 7. Accountant*
 - *Section 8. Medical Director*
 - *Section 9. Chaplain*
- **Article IV. Duties of Officers and Officials**
 - *Section 1. Duties of the Elected Officers*
 - *Section 2. Duties of the Executive Director*
 - *Section 3. Duties of the General Counsel*
 - *Section 4. Duties of the Accountant*
 - *Section 5. Duties of the Medical Director*
 - *Section 6. Duties of the Chaplain*
- **Article V. Committees**
 - *Section 1. Executive Committee*
 - *Section 2. Standing Committees*
 - *Section 3. Special Committees*
 - *Section 4. State Supervisory Trustees*
 - *Section 5. Election Committee*
 - *Section 6. Other Committees*
- **Article VI. Meetings**
 - *Section 1. Annual Conference*
 - *Section 2. Special Meetings*
 - *Section 3. Quarterly Meetings*
 - *Section 4. Executive Committee Meetings*
 - *Section 5. Committee Meetings*

- *Section 6. Parliamentary Order for all Meetings*
- *Section 7. Quorum*
- **Article VII. Amendments to the Constitution**
 - *Section 1. Constitutional Amendments*
- **Article VII. Sections**
 - *Section 1. Definition*
 - *Section 2. Representation*
 - *Section 3. Creation of a Section*
 - *Section 4. Dues*
 - *Section 5. Section Budgets*
 - *Section 6. Dissolution of a Section*

By-laws

- **Section I. General**
 - *Subsection 1. Fiscal Year*
 - *Subsection 2. Resolutions*
 - *Subsection 3. Amendments to the By-laws*
 - *Subsection 4. Records*
 - *Subsection 5. Membership Applications*
- **Section II. Member Insurance Benefits**
 - *Subsection 1. Death and Disability Insurance*
 - *Subsection 2. Death or Disability of a Member*
 - *Subsection 3. Departmental and Individual Member Insurance Benefits*
- **Section III. Dues and Fees**
 - *Subsection 1. Annual Payment Period*
 - *Subsection 2. Operational Dues Set by the Delegates at the Annual Conference*
 - *Subsection 3. Training and Education Fee*
 - *Subsection 4. Member Benefits Premium*
 - *Subsection 5. Late Fee*
 - *Subsection 6. Reinstatement*
- **Section IV. Members**
 - *Subsection 1. Requirements to Remain in Good Standing*
 - *Subsection 2. Inspections Required to Remain in Good Standing*
 - *Subsection 3. Waive and Relinquish Association Membership*
 - *Subsection 4. Right of Appeal of Status*
 - *Subsection 5. Members in Multiple Fire Departments*
- **Section V. Funds**
 - *Subsection 1. Association One-Percent Funds*
 - *Subsection 2. Other Funds*
- **Section VI. Delegate Credentials and Seating**
 - *Subsection 1. Submission of Credentials*
 - *Subsection 2. Delegate Seating*
- **Section VII. Elections**
 - *Subsection 1. Candidates for Elected Office*
 - *Subsection 2. Election Committee*

- *Subsection 3. Unanimous Ballots*
- *Subsection 4. Voting of Delegates*
- *Subsection 5. Election Results*
- *Subsection 6. Election Disputes*
- ***Section VIII. Installation of Officers***
 - *Subsection 1. Installation of Vice Presidents and Immediate Past President*
 - *Subsection 2. Installation of the President*
 - *Subsection 3. President's Helmet*
 - *Subsection 4. Association Bible*
- ***Section IX. Memorial Service***
 - *Subsection 1. Location*
 - *Subsection 2. Fallen Firefighter's Memorial Bell*
 - *Subsection 3. Fallen Firefighter's Helmet*
 - *Subsection 4. Association Flag*
- ***Section X. Awards Ceremony***
 - *Subsection 1. Location*
 - *Subsection 2. Criteria and Selection for Awards*
- ***Section XI. Miscellaneous***
 - *Subsection 1. Copy of Constitution and By-laws*
 - *Subsection 2. State Statutes*

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I. General

Section 1. Name

This organization shall be known as the South Carolina State Firefighters' Association herein called the "Association."

Section 2. Purpose

The purpose of this Association is to provide local fire departments throughout South Carolina with information, education, services, benefits, and representation to enhance their professionalism and capabilities to mitigate incidents involving fire, rescue, hazardous materials, acts of terrorism, and natural disasters.

Section 3. Headquarters Location

The Association headquarters shall be located in the vicinity of the State Capital at a location selected by the Executive Committee.

Section 4. Bonding of Officers

The employees and officers authorized to receive and administer funds by the Executive Committee shall be bonded in an amount approved by the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE II. Membership and Privileges

TOP

Section 1. Classes of Membership

There shall be two classes of Departmental Membership. 1) Regularly Organized Fire Departments, 2) Private Fire Departments.

There shall be six (6) classes of Individual Membership in the Association 1) Regular Members, 2) Associate Members, 3) Past President Life Member, 4) Life Members, 5) Affiliate Members, and 6) Honorary Members.

Section 2. Departmental Memberships and Privileges

The Association shall have the following classes of departmental memberships:

A. Regularly Organized Fire Department Member

1. A Regularly Organized Fire Department composed of, paid or volunteer members, or a combination of both, which is located within any municipality, county, special purpose fire district, in the State of South Carolina (as defined by Section 23-9-310 and 390 South Carolina State Law), that is qualified to participate in the Firemen's Insurance and Inspection Fund, as evidenced by current certification from the State Fire Marshal shall be eligible for membership as Regularly Organized Fire Department member.

2. Each Regularly Organized Fire Department that is a member in good standing of this Association shall be entitled to two (2) delegates at the annual conference or any special meeting of the Association. One delegate shall be the Chief of the Member Department which they represent, or such other member of the department as the Chief may appoint to act in his stead. The second delegate shall be elected by the members of the department.

3. In addition to these two (2) delegates, each Regularly Organized Fire Department shall be entitled to one (1) additional delegate for every fifty (50) members carried on the Membership Roster submitted to the Association for the calendar year in which the annual conference or special meeting is held. These delegates shall also be elected by the members of the department.

4. Each Regularly Organized Fire Department shall be entitled to two (2) alternate delegates for such department in the event of the absence of a regular delegate, named and elected in the same manner as the original two (2) delegates.

5. Each delegate shall have one (1) vote.

B. Private Fire Department Member

1. Any privately owned and operated Fire Department chartered by the State of South Carolina shall be eligible for membership as a Private Fire Department Member. No privately owned and operated Fire Department shall be entitled to share, or participate, in any portion of the Firemen's Insurance and Inspection Fund.
2. Private Fire Department Members are not entitled to delegate representation.

Section 3. Individual Members and Privileges

The Association shall have the following classes of individual memberships:

A. Regular Member

1. All individual members listed on the personnel rosters of any Regularly Organized Fire Department and any employee of this Association shall be eligible for membership as a Regular Member upon payment of annual dues.
2. Regular Members are entitled to hold elective office, serve on the Executive Committee, participate as a member of appointed committees, and participate in the Association Insurance Benefits Program.
3. Regular Members shall be entitled to attend the annual conference and any special meeting with voice privileges, but voting privileges shall be reserved to the delegates of A Regularly Organized Fire Department.
4. Association employees shall not hold elective office or serve on the Executive Committee.

B. Associate Member

1. A person shall be eligible for membership as an Associate Member upon payment of annual dues and meeting any of the following criteria:

Any person who serves the citizens of South Carolina in a safety capacity that compliments the mission of the South Carolina State Firefighters' Association as determined by either the staff or executive committee of said association

2. Associate Members are not entitled to hold elective office or serve on the Executive Committee.

3. Associate Members may participate in the Association Insurance Benefits Program and participate as a member of appointed committees.

4. Associate Members shall be entitled to attend the annual conference and any special meeting with voice privileges, but voting privileges shall be reserved to the delegates of Regularly Organized Fire Department.

5. Dues for Associate Members shall be the same as for Regular Members.

C. Past President Life Member

1. Life membership shall be conferred upon all past Presidents of the Association with all the privileges of regular membership.

2. Past President Life members are not required to pay annual dues, but shall pay to participate in the Association Insurance Benefits Program.

3. Past President Life Members are entitled to hold elective office or serve on the Executive Committee.

D. Life Member

1. A Regular or Associate Member who resigns or retires from the fire service after serving cumulatively for twenty years as a member in good standing, shall be eligible to remain a member of the Association as a Life Member upon payment of annual dues.

2. Application for Life Membership shall be made to the Executive Director.

3. Life Membership shall not be conferred or continued for individuals who are eligible to be a Regular or Associate Member of the Association through their employment or involvement in the fire service.

4. Life Members are not required to pay dues, but shall pay to participate in the Association Insurance Benefits Program.

5. Life Members are entitled to hold elective office or serve on the Executive Committee.

6. Life Members may participate as a member of appointed committees.

7. Life Members shall be entitled to attend the annual conference and any special meeting with voice privileges, but voting privileges shall be reserved to the delegates of a Regularly Organized Fire Department.

E. Affiliate Member

1. A person who is interested in the affairs of the fire service or the Association and is not eligible as a Regular or Associate Member shall be eligible for membership as an Affiliate Member.

2. Affiliate Members shall be entitled to participate in the Association, except they are not allowed to hold elective office, serve on the Executive Committee, or be a member of any standing or permanent committee, or participate in the Association Insurance Benefits Program.

3. Affiliate Members may participate as a member of an Ad-hoc committee upon approval of the President.

4. Affiliate Members shall pay annual dues in an amount to be determined by the Executive Committee.

F. Honorary Member

1. The Executive Committee may from time to time, at its discretion, confer the designation of Honorary Member upon any person who has rendered conspicuous service to the Association, its aims and purposes. Honorary members shall be entitled to participate fully in the affairs of the Association except they are not eligible to hold elective office, participate in the Association Insurance Benefits Program, or serve on any committee.

2. Honorary Members shall not pay annual dues.

Section 4. Membership Continuation

All members shall continue as such so long as they remain qualified for their respective class of membership and otherwise comply with the Constitution and By-laws of this Association.

Section 5. Corporate Sponsorships

Corporate sponsorships status shall be available to persons and/or businesses engaged in the manufacture or sale of emergency apparatus, supplies, or service and/or persons or businesses otherwise interested in the field of fire or emergency services, upon payment of an annual fee which shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE III. Officers and Officials

TOP

Section 1. Elected Officers

The elected officers of this Association shall consist of a President, the First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, Third Vice-President and a Fourth Vice President, all of whom shall be elected at the annual conference for a term of one (1) year or until the next annual conference when their successors shall take office.

Section 2. Elected Officer Eligibility

Any member of the Association seeking election to any of the elective offices specified in Article III, Section 1 of the Constitution and By-laws shall:

- A. Be a Regular Member of the Association in good standing.
- B. Be a registered firefighter in the State of South Carolina.

Section 3. Vacancies and Resignations of Elected officers

- A. In the event of the resignation, death, disability or other vacancy of an elected officer position during their term of office, the individual officer shall be succeeded by the next elected officer in succession through the Fourth Vice President.
- B. Each elected officer shall then serve the balance of the unexpired term of office.
- C. A Fourth Vice President shall be appointed by the Executive Committee to serve the unexpired term until the next annual conference.
- D. The President shall not be eligible to succeed himself after the service of a full term, but may succeed himself after completing an unexpired term.

Section 4. Removal from Office of Elected and Standing Committee Chairs

- A. In the event an elected officer or Standing Committee Chair is convicted of a felony while holding office, the individual shall have deemed to forfeit their position as an elected officer or Committee Chair, and shall be removed from office.
- B. All members of the Executive Committee, including the First Vice-President, that have not attended seventy-five percent (75%) of all scheduled Executive Committee meetings, shall be ineligible for nomination to elected office for the following year or reappointed as a committee chair.

Section 5. Executive Director

A. The Executive Director shall be selected and employed full time by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

B. The Executive Director shall serve at the pleasure of the Executive Committee and shall be removed from office by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

Section 6. General Counsel

The Executive Committee shall appoint an attorney, who shall serve at the pleasure of the Executive Committee, as the General Counsel of the Association.

Section 7. Accountant

The Executive Committee shall appoint a certified public accountant, which shall serve at the pleasure of the Executive Committee.

Section 8. Medical Director

The Executive Committee shall appoint a licensed and certified medical doctor, who shall serve at the pleasure of the Executive Committee, as the Medical Director of the Association.

Section 9. Chaplain

The President shall appoint a Chaplain of the Association who shall serve at the pleasure of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE IV. Duties of Officers and Officials

TOP

Section 1. Duties of the Elected Officers

A. Duties of the President

1. Serves as the official representative of the Association.
2. Presides at all meetings of the Association and the Executive Committee.
3. Insures that all committees operate according to the Constitution and By-laws and the approved policies of the Association.

4. The President shall review the monthly account register.
5. Appoints all committees, committee chairs, and the chair of the State Supervisory Trustees.

B. Duties of the First Vice President

1. Assists the President in conducting the business and carrying out the policies of the Association.
2. Serves as the President-elect.
3. In the absence or disability of the President, assumes the responsibility of the President.
4. Perform such other duties as prescribed by the Executive Committee.

C. Duties of the Second Vice President

1. Assists the President and First Vice President in conducting the business and carrying out the policies of the Association.
2. In the absence or disability of the President and First Vice President, assumes the responsibility of the President.
3. Serves as Chair of the Legislative Committee.
4. Performs such other duties as prescribed by the Executive Committee.

D. Duties of the Third Vice President

1. Assists the President, First Vice President, and Second Vice President in conducting the business and carrying out the policies of the Association.
2. Serves as Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee.
3. Performs such other duties as prescribed by the Executive Committee.

E. Duties of the Fourth Vice President

1. Assists the President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, and Third Vice President in conducting the business and carrying out the policies of the Association.
2. Serves as Chair of the Advisory Committee.
3. Performs such other duties as prescribed by the Executive Committee.

Section 2. Duties of the Executive Director

A. The Executive Director shall be the chief executive officer of the Association and as such see that the policies and directives of the Executive Committee are carried out.

B. The Executive Director shall manage and conduct the affairs of the Association under the direction and supervision of the Executive Committee.

C. The Executive Director shall employ and supervise such staff as authorized by the Executive Committee.

D. The complete duties and responsibilities of the Executive Director shall be in a position description that is approved by the Executive Committee and a part of the Association Policies and Procedures Manual.

E. The Executive Director shall approve all expenditures before payment and the signature of the Executive Director shall appear on all checks.

Section 3. Duties of the General Counsel

A. The General Counsel shall render legal advice to the officers and Executive Director of the Association on such matters and at such times as he may deem it advisable and on all occasions where requested to do so.

B. The General Counsel shall participate in all litigation on behalf of the Association at the specific direction of the Executive Committee.

C. The General Counsel shall attend such meetings as requested by the President and the Executive Committee.

D. The General Counsel shall be available for such other services as may be desired.

Section 4. Duties of the Accountant

A. The Accountant shall perform an annual audit of the finances and financial management practices of the Association.

B. The Accountant shall provide copies of this audit directly to members of the Finance and Audit Committee and the President.

C. The completed audit shall be presented to the membership at a Quarterly meeting.

D. The Accountant shall also advise the Executive Committee and the Executive Director on other financial matters and fire department audits as requested.

Section 5. Duties of the Medical Director

A. The Medical Director shall advise the Executive Committee and the Health and Safety Committee on all medical issues regarding firefighter safety, physical examinations, rehabilitation, critical incident stress management, and related medical policies and procedures.

B. The Medical Director shall advise the EMS Committee on all medical and safety policies and procedures regarding first responder incidents.

Section 6. Duties of the Chaplain

A. The Chaplain shall attend the annual conference and any other meetings of the Association or the Executive Committee, or any regular meeting or any member department upon invitation, when requested and approved by the President.

B. The Chaplain shall advise on religious matters that may concern the Association and offer an invocation and benediction at all meetings.

C. The Chaplain shall coordinate the Memorial Service at the annual conference.

D. The Chaplain shall be reimbursed for any expense incurred while attending approved meetings.

ARTICLE V. Committees

TOP

Section 1. Executive Committee

A. The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, the First Vice President, the Second Vice President, the Third Vice President, the Fourth Vice President, and the immediate Past President.

B. In addition, the Committee Chairs of the Standing Committees and the Chair of the State Supervisory Trustees shall also be a member of the Executive Committee.

C. Each member of the Executive Committee shall have one vote with the President only voting in case of a tie vote or when the President must be included to insure a quorum.

D. The general supervision of the affairs of the Association, subject to the action of the delegates at the annual conference or any special meeting, shall be vested in the Executive Committee.

E. The Executive Committee shall employ an Executive Director.

F. The Executive Committee shall appoint the General Counsel, Accountant, Chaplain and Medical Director.

G. The Executive Committee shall approve, adopt, and amend the Association budget

and the annual conference budget upon recommendation of the Finance and Audit Committee.

H. The Executive Committee shall approve all member insurance premiums upon recommendation of the Member Benefits Committee.

I. The Executive Committee shall establish conference, training and education fees deemed necessary.

Section 2. Standing Committees

A. The Standing Committees of the Association shall consist of the following committees:

1. Training and Education – The function of the Training and Education Committee is to serve as the member developmental component of the Association in matters pertaining to cognitive and manipulative emergency response job duty performance.

2. Health and Safety – The function of the Health and Safety Committee is to serve as the advocate for and promoter of the physical and mental well being of the Association members.

3. Finance and Audit – The function of the Finance and Audit Committee is to serve as the fiscal oversight group of the Association finances and in Department Member's One Percent fund accounts.

4. Member Benefits – The function of the Member Benefits Committee shall be the oversight of the issues pertaining to the benefits derived to emergency responders through membership in the Association.

5. Strategic Planning Chaired by the Third Vice President – The function of the Strategic Planning Committee shall be the development and articulation of the forward vision of the Association and the development of long range goals and objectives.

6. Advisory Chaired by the Fourth Vice President – The function of the Advisory Committee shall be to offer comments and judgments on Association issued awards and recognitions and to rule on special functions as assigned by the President.

7. Legislative Chaired by the Second Vice President – The function of the Legislative Committee shall be to liaison on behalf of the Executive Committee with the Lobbyist and the Executive Director in the conduct of the lobbyist principle activities.

B. The Standing Committees shall consist of four (4) to six (6) members who shall serve for one year or until their successors have been qualified and appointed by the President.

C. In order that there may be continuity of action by the Committee, the President shall be required to reappoint no less than one-third of the membership of the committee for the following year.

D. The President shall act as an ex-officio member of all standing committees, and in the event of a tie vote, shall be permitted to vote on all issues.

Section 3. Special Committees

A. The President may elect to appoint the following special committees composed of four (4) to six (6) members who shall serve for one year or until their successors have been qualified and appointed by the President.

1. Emergency Medical Services – The function of the EMS Committee shall be to serve as the topical expert on matters that relate to the betterment and knowledge of fire departments in their response and skills associated with pre-hospital emergency medicine through subject matter training, education, and networking.

2. Emergency Management – The function of the Emergency Management Committee shall be to serve as the topical expert on matters that relate to the cooperation and communications with the emergency management community in the state.

3. Recruitment and Retention – The function of the Recruitment and Retention Committee shall be to research, develop, and promote the issues that reflect on the growth and improvement of the Association’s membership.

4. By-Laws – The function of the By-Laws Committee shall be to research and develop the necessary improvements and timely changes that should be brought in front of the membership.

B. In order that there may be continuity of action by the Committee, the President shall be required to reappoint no less than one-third of the membership of a committee for the following year.

C. The President shall act as an ex-officio member of all special committees, and in the event of a tie vote, shall be permitted to vote on all issues.

Section 4. State Supervisory Trustees

A. The Association shall have a Board of Supervising Trustees which shall be composed of three (3) members to be known as the State Supervising Trustees of the Association.

B. One member shall be appointed by the President for a three-year term, and shall serve for such period, or until their successors have been qualified and appointed by the President.

C. The President shall name the Chair of this board who shall serve for a period of one year and may be reappointed as such.

Section 5. Election Committee

A. An Election Committee consisting of four (4) to six (6) members shall be appointed by the President at each annual conference to supervise the nominations and election of officers.

Section 6. Other Committees

A. The President may elect to appoint Ad-hoc Committees and work groups as deemed necessary to accomplish the goals of the Association.

Section 1. Annual Conference

- A. The Association shall meet regularly once each year for the annual conference that shall be known as the South Carolina Fire-Rescue Conference.
- B. It shall be held at a location, date, and time determined and selected by the Executive Committee.
- C. All Regularly Organized Fire Departments shall be given not less than Thirty (30) days written notice regarding the issues to be brought before the delegates at the annual conference.
- D. Verbatim minutes shall be taken of all business meetings at the annual conference.

Section 2. Special Meetings

- A. Special meetings may be called by the President and shall be called on request of a majority of the Executive Committee.
- B. All Regularly Organized Fire Departments shall be given not less than Ten (10) days written notice regarding the issues to be brought before the delegates at any special meeting.
- C. Any or all Executive Committee members may participate in any regular or special meeting, or any Executive Committee meeting call by the President through the use of any means of communication by which all committee members participating may hear each other simultaneously during the meeting. An Executive Committee member participating in a meeting by this means is deemed to be present in person at the meeting.
- D. All Executive Committee meetings shall be recorded.

Section 3. Quarterly Meetings

A. The President shall call a quarterly meeting in October, January, and April for the purposes of communicating the status of Association matters to interested individual members and departmental members.

B. These quarterly meetings shall be known as the Fall Meeting, Winter Meeting, and Spring Meeting respectively.

Section 4. Executive Committee Meetings

A. The Executive Committee shall meet at the call of the President.

B. The agenda for the Executive Committee meetings shall be developed by the President.

C. All Executive Committee meetings shall be recorded.

Section 5. Committee Meetings

A. All committees shall meet at the call of the Chair.

B. Minutes shall be taken of all Association committee meetings.

Section 6. Parliamentary Order for All Meetings

A. The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, shall provide guidance for the Association in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with this Constitution and By-laws and any special rules of order that the Association may adopt.

Section 7. Quorum

A. At all committee meetings, a simple majority of the committee shall constitute a quorum and a majority of those committee members in attendance during the committee meeting shall determine all questions.

B. A majority of the delegates representing the Regularly Organized Fire Department in attendance at business meetings shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of business at the annual conference or any special meeting of the Association, and a majority of those in attendance at business meetings shall determine any issue or matter before the meeting.

Article VII. Amendments to the Constitution

TOP

Section 1. Constitutional Amendments

A. This Constitution may be amended at any annual conference of the Association or any special meeting thereof upon recommendation of the Executive Committee and seventy-five percent (75%) vote of all delegates in attendance of the business meeting, provided that the notice of such meeting shall be in writing and shall state the nature and purpose of the proposed amendment.

B. A copy of the proposed amendment shall accompany the notice of such meeting and shall be distributed at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting.

Article VIII. Sections

Section 1. Definition

To broaden the Association's focus and to ensure full consideration of the varied components of the fire service and emergency response community within our membership; the ability of having Sections is now created. A Section is an organized portion of the Association membership which will deal specifically with a topical concern which matches fully the overall mission and vision of the Association. The Section will serve as a more tactical organizational component within the structure that allows for more detailed vetting and consideration of technical aspects of the overall Association mission while coincidentally moving the interests of the larger organization in a concentric fashion.

Section 2. Representation

Each Section shall elect from within its own participants, a body of officials, as it desires, that would represent the Section at the regularly scheduled Executive Committee Meetings with voice but no vote. Each section will be placed on each Executive Committee agenda for a monthly report.

Section 3. Creation of the Section

- A. Any portion of the membership wishing to create a section shall contact the Executive Director to facilitate a proposed Sections meeting and from that meeting(s) create a mission and organizing framework.
- B. Each Section shall be allowed to create and adopt its own set of governing by-laws.
- C. The Section shall submit the proposed by-laws to the By-Laws Committee for review to ensure mission and organizational coherence with the larger Association policies, procedures, Constitution and By-Laws, and all other governing laws and principles.
- D. The By-Laws Committee will then forward findings, along with a recommendation, to the Executive Committee for action.
- E. If approved, the Executive Director will contact the Section Leadership and facilitate resource management for the new Section's operation.

Section 4. Dues

Each section shall be allowed to set and collect Section dues from interested participants. Dues billing, budgeting, and financial management shall be under the guidance and direction of the Executive Director and follow all Association policies. Billing and correspondence shall be done by the Association and will be done at costs on an hourly rate basis to ensure the Association is kept whole.

Section 5. Section Budgets

Each Section will be allowed to set the Section's budget as the Section's leadership deems appropriate and under the direction of the Section's by-laws. Section budgets will be dictated by dues and sponsorship fee collection and shall be fiscally sound and balanced. The Association will manage per policy the Sections finances. Administration of those finances will be done at cost on an hourly rate basis to ensure the Association is kept whole.

Section 6. Dissolution of a Section

Should a section's mission drift or participation decline below effective operational levels, the executive committee retains the ability to terminate any organized section.

Should a section leave the larger organization they will be entitled to the lesser of their initial capital investment or their current section balance. Any additional amount greater than the initial investment would revert to the larger organization.

BY-LAWS

Section I. General

TOP

Subsection 1. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the association shall be from October 1st to September 30th.

Subsection 2. Resolutions

The Association may adopt resolutions. Resolutions shall be submitted to the Advisory Committee sixty (60) days prior to the annual conference. The Advisory Committee shall review the resolution and make a recommendation in a report to the delegates assembled at the annual conference. The resolution shall be valid for three years. A copy of each resolution shall be retained for historical purposes.

Subsection 3. Amendments to the By-laws

Amendments to the By-laws shall be made consistent with Article VII of the Constitution.

Subsection 4. Records

All officers shall deliver all records of their office to their successors.

Subsection 5. Membership Applications

Application for departmental and life membership and corporate sponsorship shall be made to the Association through the Executive Director on forms provided by the Association. . All applications will first be reviewed by the Executive Director to make sure the application meets all requirements of the requested membership type. All Regular organized fire department applications will be presented to the membership at the next annual meeting. All Private Fire Departments and Honorary members will be presented to the Executive Committee for approval at the next regular executive committee meeting.

Section II. Member Insurance Benefits

TOP

Subsection 1. Death and Disability Insurance

Death and disability benefits shall be provided to Regular, Associate, and Life Members in good standing. These death and disability benefits shall be underwritten by an insurance company selected by the Executive Committee of the Association.

Subsection 2. Death or Disability of a Member

Upon the death or disability of a Regular, Associate, or Life Member in good standing, a report thereof shall be made to the Executive Director of the Association in writing not later than thirty (30) days after such death or disability.

Subsection 3. Departmental and Individual Member Insurance Benefits

Insurance benefits for any eligible member shall be determined by the Executive Committee. Any changes to the benefits will be provided in writing by the Executive Committee to the membership.

Section III. Dues and Fees

TOP

Subsection 1. Annual Payment Period

The operational dues, training and education fee, member benefits premiums, and any other outstanding fees of the Association shall be paid on an annual basis and shall cover the calendar year from January 1st to December 31st. The Association dues, fees, and premiums shall be billed for the upcoming year as per the membership roster on file at the Association Headquarters. Dues, fees, premiums, and any outstanding fees from prior years will be due and payable on January 1st of each year and will be deemed delinquent if not paid in full by January 31st.

Subsection 2. Operational Dues Set by the Delegates at the Annual Conference

Any changes in the annual operational dues of all membership classes shall be set by the Delegates at the annual conference. Annual operational dues are payable on the 1st day of January of each year, and are considered delinquent after January 31st of that year. All members shall be promptly notified in writing that their dues are delinquent and that they are no longer a member in good standing.

Subsection 3. Training and Education Fee

A training and education fee for each department shall be determined by the Executive Committee on an annual basis by utilizing a prorated amount. . A training and education fee for each private fire department shall be determined based on the number of members of the department and will be set by the executive committee on an annual basis. This fee shall be due and payable on the 1st day of January of each year, and are considered delinquent after January 31st of that year. All members shall be promptly notified in writing that their fees are delinquent and they are no longer a member in good standing.

Subsection 4. Member Benefits Premiums

A Member Benefits Premium for each department shall be determined by the Executive Committee on an annual basis by utilizing a prorated amount. This premium shall be due and payable on the 1st day of January of each year, and are considered delinquent after January 31st of that year. All members shall be promptly notified in writing that their premiums are delinquent and they are no longer in good standing.

Subsection 5. Late Fee

A late fee of \$100.00 shall be charged to all member departments that have not paid their dues or the training and education fee by January 31st. This late fee must be paid by April 15th or the department will no longer be a member in good standing and will need to re-apply for membership as outlined in the Constitution and By-laws. If the late fee is not paid by April 15th it will increase to \$250. If the late fee is not paid by July 1st it will increase to \$500. All late fees will be included in the Annual Payment bill for the following year.

Subsection 6. Reinstatement

The member department that fails to pay required dues, fees, and premiums to the Association by January 31st shall not be in good standing. All unpaid dues, fees, and premiums shall be paid to the Association before being eligible for reinstatement of the department membership.

Section IV. Members

TOP

Subsection 1. Requirements to Remain in Good Standing

All members of the Association shall be in good standing so long as (1) their respective qualifications are maintained as set forth in State law, (2) their dues, fees, and premiums are not delinquent, (3) they have submitted all required forms, and (4) they are in compliance with all laws and Association policy and procedures regarding the expenditure of One Percent funds, and (5) any membership in the SC State Firefighters' Association may be automatically revoked in the event that a member is found guilty of a felony in a court of law or is guilty of a crime of moral turpitude.

Subsection 2. Inspections Required to Remain in Good Standing

Should any Regularly Organized Fire Department fail in a timely manner to make or cause to be made inspections and/or to file reports required of them by State law, fail to comply with the provisions of State law regarding the expenditure of One Percent funds, or fail to comply with the policies and procedures of the Association adopted to supervise

the expenditure of the One Percent funds, they shall be determined not to be a member in good standing of the Association.

Subsection 3. Waive and Relinquish Association Membership

Any member department found not to be in good standing shall be deemed to have waived and relinquished its rights to Association membership and all benefits; including insurance, One-Percent funds, and ability to attend the annual conference and quarterly meetings until they are found to be in full compliance with By-Laws Section IV, Subsection 1 hereinabove, reapplied for membership, and been voted in at the next Annual Conference as outlined in the Constitution and By-Laws.

Subsection 4. Right of Appeal of Status

Any member department determined not to be in good standing shall have the right to appeal this determination to the Association's Executive Committee by filing with the Executive Director a written notice of intent to appeal within fifteen (15) days of receipt of written notice of the adverse determination. A hearing shall be held before the Executive Committee within thirty (30) days of receipt of the notice of intention to appeal. Decisions of the Executive Committee regarding this issue shall be made by a majority vote of those members attending the hearing. There shall be no less than seven (7) members of the Executive Committee in attendance at any appeals hearing. The Chairman of the Supervising Committee will not participate as a member of the Executive Committee for the purposes of an appeal hearing regarding any issue involving One Percent funds. The Executive Committee shall promulgate procedures for conducting appeals hearings and shall furnish a copy of those procedures to each member department.

Subsection 5. Members in Multiple Fire Departments

Any member who serves in two (2) or more Regularly Organized Fire Departments shall be entitled to equally participate in the Firemen's Inspection Fund of all departments.

Section V. Funds

TOP

Subsection 1. Association One-Percent Funds

The five (5%) percent portion of the Firemen's Insurance and Inspection Fund received by the Association shall be used solely for the purpose of accomplishing the goals of the Association. A complete record of these funds received by county shall be maintained at all times.

Subsection 2. Other Funds

All other funds of the Association shall be maintained as one and used for payment of operating expenses of the Association and such other purposes as may be determined by the Executive Committee as necessary and proper in effecting the purposes of the Association and the conduct of its affairs to that end.

Section VI. Delegate Credentials and Seating

TOP

Subsection 1. Submission of Credentials

Each delegate of a Regularly Organized Fire Department shall submit their credentials to the Executive Director no later than the opening day of the annual conference or any special meeting. Each delegate with approved credentials shall be seated by the Association as the first order of business at its meeting and shall be allowed to vote.

Subsection 2. Delegate Seating

All delegates with approved credentials shall be seated in a special area for delegates only during the business meeting.

Section VII. Elections

TOP

Subsection 1. Candidates for Elected Office

Each candidate for elected office shall submit a written statement of intentions to the Chair of the Elections Committee with the exception of the First Vice President who is designated as the President-elect.

Subsection 2. Election Committee

The Elections Committee, consistent with Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution, shall make a report at the first business meeting of the annual conference and shall report all names that were presented to them for each elective office, so that the delegates to the conference may select the person that will serve in each elective office for the ensuing year. The Elections Committee shall ensure that all nominees are in good standing and meet the membership criteria of the Association.

Subsection 3. Unanimous Ballots

For any office for which there is only one (1) nomination, the presiding officer shall instruct the chair of the elections committee, as the representative of the Association, to cast a ballot for such nominee and shall thereupon declare such nominee elected.

Subsection 4. Voting of Delegates

The voting for all offices where there are two (2) or more candidates shall be completed utilizing electronic ballot if available. Voting for all other issues before the delegates shall be at the call of the presiding officer.

Subsection 5. Election Results

The candidate who receives the highest number of votes shall be elected. In the event of a tie vote, a run-off election between the tied candidates will be held the next day. In the event of a second tie vote, the Executive Committee shall select the winner from the tied candidates.

Subsection 6. Election Disputes

The complete conduct of the elections and decisions in any matters of dispute that may arise during such elections shall be in the hands of the Elections Committee in consultation with the General Counsel of the Association.

Section VIII. Installation of Officers

TOP

Subsection 1. Installation of Vice Presidents and Immediate Past President

The installation of officers shall take place at the Transfer of Command Ceremony at the Annual Conference with appropriate ceremonies and officers shall swear to the following oath of office:

"Do you swear to support the Constitution and By-laws and at all times bear true allegiance to the goals and purposes of the South Carolina State Firefighters' Association, and do you further swear to perform the duties and responsibilities of your office to the best of your ability (So help you God?)"

The officers shall respond "I Do."

Subsection 2. Installation of the President

The President shall repeat the following oath of office with his right hand raised and his left hand placed on the Association Bible:

“I (name) hereby swear that I will support the Constitution and By-laws and at all times bear true allegiance to the goals and purposes of the South Carolina State Firefighters’ Association. I further swear to perform the duties and responsibilities of my office to the best of my ability (So help me God?)”

Subsection 3. President’s Helmet

The immediate Past President will pass to the President the President’s Helmet symbolizing the transfer of command. The President’s Helmet shall remain with the President during the term of office.

Subsection 4. Association Bible

The President shall sign and date the Association Bible upon installation.

Section IX. Memorial Service

TOP

Subsection 1. Location

An appropriate Memorial Service in honor of the current deceased Regular, Associate, and Life members shall be held at each annual conference.

Subsection 2. Fallen Firefighter’s Memorial Bell

The Executive Committee shall designate the official bell that shall be utilized at the Memorial Service and at the funeral of all members upon request. This bell shall be known as the Fallen Firefighter’s Memorial Bell.

Subsection 3. Fallen Firefighter’s Helmet

The Executive Committee shall designate the official helmet that shall be known as the Fallen Firefighter’s Helmet symbolizing all member firefighters who are deceased. This helmet shall be escorted and secured by a Guard of Honor when displayed publicly.

Subsection 4. Association Flag

The Executive Committee shall designate the official flag of the Association.

Section X. Awards Ceremony

TOP

Subsection 1. Location

An appropriate Awards Presentation shall be held at each Annual Conference.

Subsection 2. Criteria and Selection for Awards

The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the establishment of criteria and final selection of all awards.

Section XI. Miscellaneous

TOP

Subsection 1. Copy of Constitution and By-laws

A copy of this Constitution and By-Laws shall be furnished each member department for its permanent record.

Subsection 2. State Statutes

The statutes relating to the Fire Departments as printed in Code of Laws of South Carolina are made a part of these Constitution and By-Laws.

As Voted by the Delegates of the S.C. State Firefighters’ Association at the 2016 Conference.

Approved June 9, 2016
S.C. Fire-Rescue Conference

SIGNED

Jamie Caggiano
Chairman, By-Laws Committee

SIGNED

Tommy Norris
President, S.C. State Firefighters’ Association