

## Constitution and Bylaws

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*TOP*

# CONSTITUTION

## *ARTICLE I. General*

### 4 **Section 1. Name**

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

### 7 **Section 2. Purpose**

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

### 12 **Section 3. Headquarters Location**

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

### 15 **Section 4. Bonding of Officers**

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

## *ARTICLE II. Membership and Privileges*

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### 18 **Section 1. Classes of Membership**

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

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

### 24 **Section 2. Departmental Memberships and Privileges**

25 The Association shall have the following classes of departmental memberships:

#### 26 A. Regularly Organized Fire Department Member

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

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

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

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

48 5. Each delegate voting member shall have one (1) vote.

49 6. Each voting member shall be selected to serve a period of one calendar year beginning  
50 October 1 and ending September 30.

51 7. Voting members shall be selected each year not later than January 1 and  
52 communicated to the Association. Department membership will not be in good standing  
53 after January 1 until all voting members are selected. Departments that have not selected  
54 voting members by January 31 shall be removed from membership.

55  
56 8. Needed changes to identified Voting Members must be made and communicated to the  
57 Association seven (7) days prior to the voting period opening.

#### 58 B. Private Fire Department Member

59 1. Any privately owned and operated Fire Department chartered by the State of South  
60 Carolina shall be eligible for membership as a Private Fire Department Member. No  
61 privately owned and operated Fire Department shall be entitled to share, or participate, in  
62 any portion of the Firemen's Insurance and Inspection Fund.

63 2. Private Fire Department Members are not entitled to delegate voting member  
64 representation.

### 65 Section 3. Individual Members and Privileges

66 The Association shall have the following classes of individual memberships:

67 A. Regular Member

68 1. All individual members listed on the personnel rosters of any Regularly Organized Fire  
69 Department and any employee of this Association shall be eligible for membership as a  
70 Regular Member upon payment of annual dues.

71 2. Regular Members are entitled to hold elective office, serve on the Executive  
72 Committee, participate as a member of appointed committees, and participate in the  
73 Association Insurance Benefits Program.

74 3. Regular Members shall be entitled to attend the annual conference and any special  
75 meeting with voice privileges but voting privileges shall be reserved to the delegates  
76 voting members of A Regularly Organized Fire Department.

77 4. Association employees shall not hold elective office or serve on the Executive  
78 Committee.

79 B. Associate Member

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

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

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

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

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

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

93 C. Past President Life Member

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

96 2. Past President Life members are not required to pay annual dues but shall pay to

97 participate in the Association Insurance Benefits Program.  
98 3. Past President Life Members are entitled to hold elective office or serve on the  
99 Executive Committee.

100 D. Life Member

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

115 E. Affiliate Member

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

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

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

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

127 F. Honorary Member

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

135 **Section 4. Membership Continuation**

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

139 **Section 5. Corporate Sponsorships**

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

*ARTICLE III. Officers and Officials*

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144 **Section 1. Elected Officers**

145 The elected officers of this Association shall consist of a President, the First Vice-  
146 President, Second Vice-President, Third Vice-President, Fourth Vice President, and a  
147 Past president and will serve a term of one year. The 4<sup>th</sup> Vice president, and any other  
148 elected office vacancy created by resignation, death, disability or other means, shall be  
149 elected during the annual conference and will ascend through each of the elected  
150 positions. shall be elected at the annual conference for a term of one (1) year or until the  
151 next annual conference when their successors shall take office.

152 **Section 2. Elected Officer Eligibility**

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

- 155 A. Be a Regular Member of the Association in good standing.  
156  
157 B. Be a registered firefighter in the State of South Carolina.

158 **Section 3. Vacancies and Resignations of Elected officers**

- 159 A. In the event of the resignation, death, disability or other vacancy of  
160 an elected officer position during their term of office, the President  
161 shall make a recommendation for appointment to the Executive  
162 Committee for approval to serve the remainder of the unexpired  
163 term. ~~the individual officer shall be succeeded by the next elected~~  
164 ~~officer in succession through the Fourth Vice President.~~ The First-  
165 Vice President is considered the President-elect and would fill any  
166 vacancy in Presidents office.
- 167 B. Each elected officer shall then serve the balance of the unexpired  
168 term of office.
- 169 C. ~~A Fourth Vice President shall be appointed by the Executive~~  
170 ~~Committee to serve the unexpired term until the next annual~~  
171 ~~conference.~~ Should there be multiple elected office vacancies, 4<sup>th</sup>  
172 Vice President and any other currently vacant positions will be  
173 elected during the annual conference.
- 174 D. Should there be a vacancy in the Past President office, the President  
175 shall make a recommendation for appointment to the Executive  
176 Committee for approval. Only previous Presidents are eligible for  
177 appointment to this position.
- 178 E. ~~The President shall not~~ No elected officers shall be eligible to  
179 succeed himself after the service of a full term but may succeed  
180 himself after completing an unexpired term.

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

- 182 A. In the event an elected officer or Standing Committee Chair is no  
183 longer a member in good standing or is ~~convicted~~ charged with a  
184 felony or crime of moral turpitude while holding office, individual  
185 may be suspended until such time the charges are adjudicated. The  
186 Executive Committee will consider the disposition of the alleged  
187 charges to reverse the suspension or proceed with removal from office  
188 at the appropriate time. Upon suspension, the President will  
189 recommend to the Executive Committee for approval an interim  
190 officer or standing committee chair. ~~the individual shall have deemed~~  
191 ~~to forfeit their position as an elected officer or Committee Chair and~~  
192 ~~shall be removed from office.~~

193 B. All members of the Executive Committee, including the First Vice-  
194 President, that have not attended seventy-five percent (75%) of all  
195 scheduled Executive Committee meetings, shall be ineligible for  
196 nomination to elected office for the following year or reappointed as a  
197 committee chair.

198 **Section 5. Executive Director**

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

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

203 **Section 6. General Counsel**

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

206 **Section 7. Accountant**

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

209 ~~**Section 8. Medical Director**~~

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

213 **Section 8. Chaplain**

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

*ARTICLE IV. Duties of Officers and Officials*

*TOP*

216 **Section 1. Duties of the Elected Officers**

217 A. Duties of the President

- 218 1. Serves as the official representative of the Association.  
219 2. Presides at all meetings of the Association and the Executive Committee.  
220 3. Ensures that all committees operate according to the Constitution and By-laws and the  
221 approved policies of the Association.  
222 4. The President shall review the monthly account register.

223 5. Appoints all committees, committee chairs, and the chair of the State Supervisory  
224 Trustees.

225 B. Duties of the First Vice President

226 1. Assists the President in conducting the business and carrying out the policies of the  
227 Association.

228 2. Serves as the President-elect.

229  
230 3. In the absence or disability of the President, assumes the responsibility of the  
231 President.

232 4. Serves as Chairman of the Finance & Audit Committee.

233  
234 5. Perform such other duties as prescribed by the Executive Committee.

235 C. Duties of the Second Vice President

236 1. Assists the President and First Vice President in conducting the business and carrying  
237 out the policies of the Association.

238 2. In the absence or disability of the President and First Vice President, assumes the  
239 responsibility of the President.

240 3. Serves as Chair of the Legislative Committee.

241 4. Performs such other duties as prescribed by the Executive Committee.

242 D. Duties of the Third Vice President

243 1. Assists the President, First Vice President, and Second Vice President in conducting  
244 the business and carrying out the policies of the Association.

245 2. Serves as Chair of the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee.

246 3. Performs such other duties as prescribed by the Executive Committee.

247 E. Duties of the Fourth Vice President

248 1. The Fourth Vice President shall rotate through committees on a three-month schedule,  
249 in the below listed order:

250 July-September: Finance & Audit Committee, October-December: Training & Education,  
251 January-March: Legislative and April-June: assist as needed with Fire-Rescue  
252 conference. The Fourth Vice President will be an ex-officio member of these  
253 committees.

254 2. The Fourth Vice President is highly encouraged to attend any/all committee meetings  
255 with the intent to serve in a learning capacity.

256 ~~2. Serves as Chair of the Advisory Committee.~~ Assists the President, First Vice President,  
257 Second Vice President, and Third Vice President in conducting the business and carrying  
258 out the policies of the Association.

259 3. Performs such other duties as prescribed by the Executive Committee.

## 260 **Section 2. Duties of the Executive Director**

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

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

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

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

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

## 272 **Section 3. Duties of the General Counsel**

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

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

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

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

281 **Section 4. Duties of the Accountant**

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

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

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

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

289 **Section 5. Duties of the Medical Director**

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

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

296 **Section 5. Duties of the Chaplain**

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

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

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

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

305 **Section 6.**

306 ~~The Executive Committee may elect to appoint other subject matter experts and/or~~  
307 ~~consultants as necessary to accomplish the goals of the Association.~~

308

309 **Section 1. Executive Committee**

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

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

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

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

320 E. The Executive Committee shall employ an Executive Director.

321 F. The Executive Committee shall appoint the General Counsel, Accountant and  
322 Chaplain.

323 G. The Executive Committee shall approve, adopt, and amend the Association budget  
324 and the annual conference budget upon recommendation of the Finance and Audit  
325 Committee.

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

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

330 **Section 2. Standing Committees**

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

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

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

339 **3. Finance and Audit Chaired by the First Vice President** – The function of the Finance  
340 and Audit Committee is to serve as the fiscal oversight group of the Association finances

341 and in Department Member's One Percent fund accounts.  
342 4. Member Benefits – The function of the Member Benefits Committee shall be the  
343 oversight of the issues pertaining to the benefits derived to emergency responders through  
344 membership in the Association.  
345 5. Strategic Planning ~~Chaired by the Third Vice President~~ – The function of the Strategic  
346 Planning Committee shall be the development and articulation of the forward vision of  
347 the Association and the development of long-range goals and objectives. ~~The Chairman is~~  
348 ~~appointed to a three-year term. The Chair appointment will be made by a~~  
349 ~~recommendation of the President and confirmation of the Executive Committee.~~  
350 6. Advisory ~~Chaired by the Fourth Vice President~~ ~~Third Vice President~~– The function of  
351 the Advisory Committee shall be to offer comments and judgments on Association issued  
352 awards and recognitions and to rule on special functions as assigned by the President.  
353 7. Legislative ~~Chaired by the Second Vice President~~ – The function of the Legislative  
354 Committee shall be to liaison on behalf of the Executive Committee with the Lobbyist  
355 and the Executive Director in the conduct of the lobbyist ~~principal~~ activities.

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

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

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

### 363 **Section 3. Special Committees**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

385 **Section 4. State Supervisory Trustees**

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

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

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

393 **Section 5. Election Committee**

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

397 **Section 6. Other Committees**

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

***Article VI. Meetings***

*TOP*

400 **Section 1. Annual Conference**

401 A. The Association shall meet regularly once each year for the annual conference that  
402 shall be known as the South Carolina Fire-Rescue Conference.

403 B. It shall be held at a location, date, and time determined and selected by the Executive  
404 Committee.

405 C. All Regularly Organized Fire Departments shall be given not less than Thirty (30)  
406 days ~~written~~ notice regarding the issues to be brought before the ~~delegates voting~~  
407 ~~members~~ at the annual conference. ~~Submission must be to Executive director for~~  
408 ~~production and delivery no less than forty (40) days prior to start of the annual~~  
409 ~~conference.~~

410 D. ~~Verbatim~~ ~~Video and/or audio recordings~~ shall be taken of all business meetings at the  
411 annual conference ~~to be utilized as minutes and permanent record.~~

## 412 **Section 2. Special Meetings**

413 A. Special meetings may be called by the President and shall be called on request of a  
414 majority of the Executive Committee.

415

416 B. All Regularly Organized Fire Departments shall be given not less than Ten (10) days  
417 ~~written~~ notice regarding the issues to be brought before the ~~delegates voting members~~ at  
418 any special meeting.

419 C. Any or all Executive Committee members may participate in any regular or special  
420 meeting, or any Executive Committee meeting call by the President through the use of  
421 any means of communication by which all committee members participating may hear  
422 each other simultaneously during the meeting. An Executive Committee member  
423 participating in a meeting by this means is deemed to be present in person at the meeting.

424 D. All Executive Committee meetings shall be recorded.

## 425 **Section 3. Quarterly Meetings**

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

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

## 431 **Section 4. Executive Committee Meetings**

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

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

435 C. All Executive Committee meetings shall be recorded.

436 **Section 5. Committee Meetings**

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

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

439 **Section 6. Parliamentary Order for All Meetings**

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

444 **Section 7. Quorum**

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

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

**Article VII. Amendments to the Constitution**

*TOP*

453 **Section 1. Constitutional Amendments**

454 A. This Constitution may be amended at any annual conference of the Association or any  
455 special meeting thereof upon recommendation of the Executive Committee and seventy-  
456 five percent (75%) **of all votes returned via electronic and/or in-person means. provided**  
457 **that the notice of such meeting shall be in writing and shall state the nature and purpose**  
458 **of the proposed amendment.**

459 B. A copy of the proposed amendment shall accompany the notice of such meeting and  
460 shall be distributed at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting. This notice shall include  
461 the specifics on which voting method(s) will be used.

462 *Article VIII. Sections*

463 **Section 1. Definition**

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

473 **Section 2. Representation**

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

478 **Section 3. Creation of the Section**

- 479 A. Any portion of the membership wishing to create a section shall contact the  
480 Executive Director to facilitate a proposed Sections meeting and from that  
481 meeting(s) create a mission and organizing framework.
- 482 B. Each Section shall be allowed to create and adopt its own set of governing by-  
483 laws.
- 484 C. The Section shall submit the proposed by-laws to the By-Laws Committee for  
485 review to ensure mission and organizational coherence with the larger Association  
486 policies, procedures, Constitution and By-Laws, and all other governing laws and  
487 principles.

488 D. The By-Laws Committee will then forward findings, along with a  
489 recommendation, to the Executive Committee for action.

490 E. If approved, the Executive Director will contact the Section Leadership and  
491 facilitate resource management for the new Section's operation.

492 **Section 4. Dues**

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

498 **Section 5. Section Budgets**

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

505 **Section 6. Dissolution of a Section**

506 Should a section's mission drift or participation decline below effective operational  
507 levels, the executive committee retains the ability to terminate any organized section.  
508 Should a section leave the larger organization they will be entitled to the lesser of their  
509 initial capital investment or their current section balance. Any additional amount greater  
510 than the initial investment would revert to the larger organization.

511

**BY-LAWS**

*Section I. General*

*TOP*

512 **Subsection 1. Fiscal Year**

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

514

515 **Subsection 2. Resolutions**

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

521

522 **Subsection 3. Amendments to the By-laws**

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

525 **Subsection 4. Records**

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

527 **Subsection 5. Membership Applications**

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

*Section II. Member Insurance Benefits*

*TOP*

536 **Subsection 1. Death and Disability Insurance**

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

540 **Subsection 2. Death or Disability of a Member**

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

544 **Subsection 3. Departmental and Individual Member Insurance Benefits**

545 Insurance benefits for any eligible member shall be determined by the Executive

546 Committee. Any changes to the benefits will be provided in writing by the Executive  
547 Committee to the membership.

*Section III. Dues and Fees*

*TOP*

548 **Subsection 1. Annual Payment Period**

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

556 **Subsection 2. Operational Dues Set by the Delegates Voting Members at the Annual**  
557 **Conference**

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

563 **Subsection 3. Training and Education Fee**

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

571 **Subsection 4. Member Benefits Premiums**

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

577 **Subsection 5. Late Fee**

578 A late fee of \$100.00 shall be charged to all member departments that have not paid their  
579 dues or the training and education fee by January 31st. This late fee must be paid by April  
580 15<sup>th</sup> or the department will no longer be a member in good standing and will need to re-  
581 apply for membership as outlined in the Constitution and By-laws. If the late fee is not  
582 paid by April 15<sup>th</sup> it will increase to \$250. If the late fee is not paid by July 1<sup>st</sup> it will  
583 increase to \$500. All late fees will be included in the Annual Payment bill for the  
584 following year.

585 **Subsection 6. Reinstatement**

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

*Section IV. Members*

*TOP*

590 **Subsection 1. Requirements to Remain in Good Standing**

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

598 **Subsection 2. Inspections Required to Remain in Good Standing**

599 Should any Regularly Organized Fire Department fail in a timely manner to make or  
600 cause to be made inspections and/or to file reports required of them by State law, fail to  
601 comply with the provisions of State law regarding the expenditure of One Percent funds,  
602 or fail to comply with the policies and procedures of the Association adopted to supervise  
603 the expenditure of the One Percent funds, they shall be determined not to be a member in  
604 good standing of the Association.

605 **Subsection 3. Waive and Relinquish Association Membership**

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

612 **Subsection 4. Right of Appeal of Status**

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

626 **Subsection 5. Members in Multiple Fire Departments**

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

*Section V. Funds*

*TOP*

629 **Subsection 1. Association One-Percent Funds**

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

634 **Subsection 2. Other Funds**

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

*Section VI. Delegate Voting Member Credentials and Seating*

*TOP*

639

640 **Subsection 1. Voting Member Identification and Seating**

641 **Voting members shall be checked in by the Association and vetted for voting**  
642 If utilizing in-person voting, each **delegate voting member** of a Regularly Organized Fire  
643 Department **shall submit their credentials to the Executive Director no later than the**  
644 **opening day of the annual conference or any special meeting. Each delegate voting**  
645 **member with approved credentials** shall be seated by the Association as the first order of  
646 business at its meeting and shall be allowed to vote.

647 **Subsection 2. ~~Delegate Voting Member Seating~~**

648 All **delegates voting members** with approved credentials shall be seated in a special area  
649 for **delegates voting members** only during the business meeting.

*Section VII. Elections*

*TOP*

650 **Subsection 1. Candidates for Elected Office**

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

654 **Subsection 2. Election Committee**

655 The Elections Committee, consistent with Article V, Section 5 of the Constitution, shall  
656 make a report at the first business meeting of the annual conference and shall report all  
657 names that were presented to them for each elective office, so that the **delegates voting**  
658 **members** to the conference may select the person that will serve in each elective office  
659 for the ensuing year. The Elections Committee shall ensure that all nominees are in good  
660 standing and meet the membership criteria of the Association.

661 **Subsection 3. Unanimous Ballots**

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

665 **Subsection 4. ~~Voting of Delegates Voting Members~~**

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

669 **Subsection 5. Election Results**

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

673 candidates.

674 **Subsection 6. Election Disputes**

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

*Section VIII. Installation of Officers*

*TOP*

678 **Subsection 1. Installation of Vice Presidents and Immediate Past President**

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

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

686 The officers shall respond "I Do."

687 **Subsection 2. Installation of the President**

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

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

694 **Subsection 3. President's Helmet**

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

698 **Subsection 4. Association Bible**

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

*Section IX. Memorial Service*

*TOP*

700 **Subsection 1. Location**

701 An appropriate Memorial Service in honor of the current deceased Regular, Associate,  
702 and Life members shall be held at annually at a date, time and location set by the  
703 Executive Committee ~~each annual conference~~.

704 **Subsection 2. Fallen Firefighter's Memorial Bell**

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

708 **Subsection 3. Fallen Firefighter's Helmet**

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

712 **Subsection 4. Association Flag**

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

*Section X. Awards Ceremony*

*TOP*

714 **Subsection 1. Location**

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

716 **Subsection 2. Criteria and Selection for Awards**

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

*Section XI. Miscellaneous*

*TOP*

719 **Subsection 1. Copy of Constitution and By-laws**

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

722 **Subsection 2. State Statutes**

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

725 As Voted by the Delegates Voting Members of the S.C. State Firefighters' Association at  
726 the 2016 Conference.

727

728 **Approved June 9, 2016**

729 S.C. Fire-Rescue Conference

730

731