

Constitution and Bylaws

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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. Department
52 membership will not be in good standing after January 1 until all voting members are
53 selected.

54 B. Private Fire Department Member

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

59 2. Private Fire Department Members are not entitled to delegate voting member
60 representation.

61 Section 3. Individual Members and Privileges

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

63 A. Regular Member

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

75 B. Associate Member

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

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

- 81 2. Associate Members are not entitled to hold elective office or serve on the Executive
82 Committee.
- 83 3. Associate Members may participate in the Association Insurance Benefits Program and
84 participate as a member of appointed committees.
- 85 4. Associate Members shall be entitled to attend the annual conference and any special
86 meeting with voice privileges but voting privileges shall be reserved to the delegates
87 voting members of Regularly Organized Fire Department.
- 88 5. Dues for Associate Members shall be the same as for Regular Members.

89 C. Past President Life Member

- 90 1. Life membership shall be conferred upon all past Presidents of the Association with all
91 the privileges of regular membership.
- 92 2. Past President Life members are not required to pay annual dues but shall pay to
93 participate in the Association Insurance Benefits Program.

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

96 D. Life Member

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

111 E. Affiliate Member

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

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

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

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

123 F. Honorary Member

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

131 **Section 4. Membership Continuation**

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

135 **Section 5. Corporate Sponsorships**

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

ARTICLE III. Officers and Officials

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140 **Section 1. Elected Officers**

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

145 **Section 2. Elected Officer Eligibility**

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

148 A. Be a Regular Member of the Association in good standing.

149

150 B. Be a registered firefighter in the State of South Carolina.

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

152 A. In the event of the resignation, death, disability or other vacancy of an elected officer
153 position during their term of office, the individual officer shall be succeeded by the next

- 154 elected officer in succession through the Fourth Vice President.
155 B. Each elected officer shall then serve the balance of the unexpired term of office.
156 C. A Fourth Vice President shall be appointed by the Executive Committee to serve the
157 unexpired term until the next annual conference.
158 D. The President shall not be eligible to succeed himself after the service of a full term
159 but may succeed himself after completing an unexpired term.

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

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

168 **Section 5. Executive Director**

- 169 A. The Executive Director shall be selected and employed full time by a majority vote of
170 the Executive Committee.
171 B. The Executive Director shall serve at the pleasure of the Executive Committee and
172 shall be removed from office by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

173 **Section 6. General Counsel**

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

176 **Section 7. Accountant**

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

179 **Section 8. Medical Director**

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

183 **Section 9. Chaplain**

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

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

187 A. Duties of the President

- 188 1. Serves as the official representative of the Association.
189 2. Presides at all meetings of the Association and the Executive Committee.
190 3. Ensures that all committees operate according to the Constitution and By-laws and the
191 approved policies of the Association.
192 4. The President shall review the monthly account register.
193 5. Appoints all committees, committee chairs, and the chair of the State Supervisory
194 Trustees.

195 B. Duties of the First Vice President

- 196 1. Assists the President in conducting the business and carrying out the policies of the
197 Association.
198 2. Serves as the President-elect.

199
200 3. In the absence or disability of the President, assumes the responsibility of the
201 President.
202 4. Perform such other duties as prescribed by the Executive Committee.

203 C. Duties of the Second Vice President

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

210 D. Duties of the Third Vice President

- 211 1. Assists the President, First Vice President, and Second Vice President in conducting
212 the business and carrying out the policies of the Association.

- 213 2. Serves as Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee.
214 3. Performs such other duties as prescribed by the Executive Committee.

215 E. Duties of the Fourth Vice President

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

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

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

224 2. Serves as Chair of the Advisory Committee. Assists the President, First Vice President,
225 Second Vice President, and Third Vice President in conducting the business and carrying
226 out the policies of the Association.

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

228 **Section 2. Duties of the Executive Director**

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

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

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

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

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

240 **Section 3. Duties of the General Counsel**

241 A. The General Counsel shall render legal advice to the officers and Executive Director
242 of the Association on such matters and at such times as he may deem it advisable and on

- 243 all occasions where requested to do so.
- 244 B. The General Counsel shall participate in all litigation on behalf of the Association at
245 the specific direction of the Executive Committee.
- 246 C. The General Counsel shall attend such meetings as requested by the President and the
247 Executive Committee.
- 248 D. The General Counsel shall be available for such other services as may be desired.

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

- 250 A. The Accountant shall perform an annual audit of the finances and financial
251 management practices of the Association.
- 252 B. The Accountant shall provide copies of this audit directly to members of the Finance
253 and Audit Committee and the President.
- 254 C. The completed audit shall be presented to the membership at a Quarterly meeting.
- 255 D. The Accountant shall also advise the Executive Committee and the Executive Director
256 on other financial matters and fire department audits as requested.

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

- 258 A. The Medical Director shall advise the Executive Committee and the Health and Safety
259 Committee on all medical issues regarding firefighter safety, physical examinations,
260 rehabilitation, critical incident stress management, and related medical policies and
261 procedures.
- 262 B. The Medical Director shall advise the EMS Committee on all medical and safety
263 policies and procedures regarding first responder incidents.

264 **Section 6. Duties of the Chaplain**

- 265 A. The Chaplain shall attend the annual conference and any other meetings of the
266 Association or the Executive Committee, or any regular meeting or any member
267 department upon invitation, when requested and approved by the President.
- 268 B. The Chaplain shall advise on religious matters that may concern the Association and
269 offer an invocation and benediction at all meetings.
- 270 C. The Chaplain shall coordinate the Memorial Service at the annual conference.
- 271 D. The Chaplain shall be reimbursed for any expense incurred while attending approved
272 meetings.

273 **Section 1. Executive Committee**

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

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

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

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

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

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

287 G. The Executive Committee shall approve, adopt, and amend the Association budget
288 and the annual conference budget upon recommendation of the Finance and Audit
289 Committee.

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

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

294 **Section 2. Standing Committees**

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

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

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

303 **3. Finance and Audit Chaired by the First Vice President** – The function of the Finance

304 and Audit Committee is to serve as the fiscal oversight group of the Association finances
305 and in Department Member's One Percent fund accounts.
306 4. Member Benefits – The function of the Member Benefits Committee shall be the
307 oversight of the issues pertaining to the benefits derived to emergency responders through
308 membership in the Association.
309 5. Strategic Planning Chaired by the Third Vice President – The function of the Strategic
310 Planning Committee shall be the development and articulation of the forward vision of
311 the Association and the development of long range goals and objectives.
312 6. Advisory Chaired by the Fourth Vice President – The function of the Advisory
313 Committee shall be to offer comments and judgments on Association issued awards and
314 recognitions and to rule on special functions as assigned by the President.
315 7. Legislative Chaired by the Second Vice President – The function of the Legislative
316 Committee shall be to liaison on behalf of the Executive Committee with the Lobbyist
317 and the Executive Director in the conduct of the lobbyist principle activities.

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

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

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

325 **Section 3. Special Committees**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

347 **Section 4. State Supervisory Trustees**

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

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

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

355 **Section 5. Election Committee**

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

359 **Section 6. Other Committees**

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

Article VI. Meetings

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362 **Section 1. Annual Conference**

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

371 **Section 2. Special Meetings**

- 372 A. Special meetings may be called by the President and shall be called on request of a
373 majority of the Executive Committee.
- 374
- 375 B. All Regularly Organized Fire Departments shall be given not less than Ten (10) days
376 written notice regarding the issues to be brought before the delegates voting members at
377 any special meeting.
- 378 C. Any or all Executive Committee members may participate in any regular or special
379 meeting, or any Executive Committee meeting call by the President through the use of
380 any means of communication by which all committee members participating may hear
381 each other simultaneously during the meeting. An Executive Committee member
382 participating in a meeting by this means is deemed to be present in person at the meeting.
- 383 D. All Executive Committee meetings shall be recorded.

384 **Section 3. Quarterly Meetings**

- 385 A. The President shall call a quarterly meeting in October, January, and April for the
386 purposes of communicating the status of Association matters to interested individual
387 members and departmental members.
- 388 B. These quarterly meetings shall be known as the Fall Meeting, Winter Meeting, and
389 Spring Meeting respectively.

390 **Section 4. Executive Committee Meetings**

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

- 392 B. The agenda for the Executive Committee meetings shall be developed by the
393 President.
394 C. All Executive Committee meetings shall be recorded.

395 **Section 5. Committee Meetings**

- 396 A. All committees shall meet at the call of the Chair.
397 B. Minutes shall be taken of all Association committee meetings.

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

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

403 **Section 7. Quorum**

- 404 A. At all committee meetings, a simple majority of the committee shall constitute a
405 quorum and a majority of those committee members in attendance during the committee
406 meeting shall determine all questions.
- 407 B. A majority of the **delegates voting members** representing the Regularly Organized Fire
408 Department in attendance at business meetings shall constitute a quorum for the conduct
409 of business at the annual conference or any special meeting of the Association, and a
410 majority of those in attendance at business meetings shall determine any issue or matter
411 before the meeting.

Article VII. Amendments to the Constitution

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412 **Section 1. Constitutional Amendments**

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

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

420 *Article VIII. Sections*

421 **Section 1. Definition**

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

431 **Section 2. Representation**

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

436 **Section 3. Creation of the Section**

- 437 A. Any portion of the membership wishing to create a section shall contact the
438 Executive Director to facilitate a proposed Sections meeting and from that
439 meeting(s) create a mission and organizing framework.
- 440 B. Each Section shall be allowed to create and adopt its own set of governing by-
441 laws.
- 442 C. The Section shall submit the proposed by-laws to the By-Laws Committee for
443 review to ensure mission and organizational coherence with the larger Association
444 policies, procedures, Constitution and By-Laws, and all other governing laws and
445 principles.

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

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

450 **Section 4. Dues**

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

456 **Section 5. Section Budgets**

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

463 **Section 6. Dissolution of a Section**

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

469

BY-LAWS

Section I. General

TOP

470 **Subsection 1. Fiscal Year**

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

472

473 **Subsection 2. Resolutions**

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

479

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

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

483 **Subsection 4. Records**

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

485 **Subsection 5. Membership Applications**

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

Section II. Member Insurance Benefits

TOP

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

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

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

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

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

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

504 Committee. Any changes to the benefits will be provided in writing by the Executive
505 Committee to the membership.

Section III. Dues and Fees

TOP

506 **Subsection 1. Annual Payment Period**

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

514 **Subsection 2. Operational Dues Set by the Delegates Voting Members at the Annual**
515 **Conference**

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

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

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

529 **Subsection 4. Member Benefits Premiums**

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

535 **Subsection 5. Late Fee**

536 A late fee of \$100.00 shall be charged to all member departments that have not paid their
537 dues or the training and education fee by January 31st. This late fee must be paid by April
538 15th or the department will no longer be a member in good standing and will need to re-
539 apply for membership as outlined in the Constitution and By-laws. If the late fee is not
540 paid by April 15th it will increase to \$250. If the late fee is not paid by July 1st it will
541 increase to \$500. All late fees will be included in the Annual Payment bill for the
542 following year.

543 **Subsection 6. Reinstatement**

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

Section IV. Members

TOP

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Section V. Funds

TOP

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

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

592 **Subsection 2. Other Funds**

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

Section VI. Delegate Voting Member Credentials and Seating

TOP

597 **Subsection 1. Submission of Credentials**

598 Each **delegate voting member** of a Regularly Organized Fire Department shall submit
599 their credentials to the Executive Director no later than the opening day of the annual
600 conference or any special meeting. Each **delegate voting member** with approved

601 credentials shall be seated by the Association as the first order of business at its meeting
602 and shall be allowed to vote.

603 **Subsection 2. Delegate Voting Member Seating**

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

Section VII. Elections

TOP

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

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

610 **Subsection 2. Election Committee**

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

617 **Subsection 3. Unanimous Ballots**

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

621 **Subsection 4. Voting of Delegates Voting Members**

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

625 **Subsection 5. Election Results**

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

630 **Subsection 6. Election Disputes**

631 The complete conduct of the elections and decisions in any matters of dispute that may

632 arise during such elections shall be in the hands of the Elections Committee in
633 consultation with the General Counsel of the Association.

Section VIII. Installation of Officers

TOP

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

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

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

642 The officers shall respond "I Do."

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

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

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

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

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

654 **Subsection 4. Association Bible**

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

Section IX. Memorial Service

TOP

656 **Subsection 1. Location**

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

659 **Subsection 2. Fallen Firefighter’s Memorial Bell**

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

663 **Subsection 3. Fallen Firefighter’s Helmet**

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

667 **Subsection 4. Association Flag**

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

Section X. Awards Ceremony

TOP

669 **Subsection 1. Location**

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

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

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

Section XI. Miscellaneous

TOP

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

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

677 **Subsection 2. State Statutes**

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

680 As Voted by the **Delegates Voting Members** of the S.C. State Firefighters’ Association at
681 the **2016** Conference.

682

683 **Approved June 9, 2016**

684 S.C. Fire-Rescue Conference

685

686 SIGNED _____

687 **Jamie Caggiano**

688 Chairman, By-Laws Committee
689
690 SIGNED
691 **Tommy Norris**
692 President, S.C. State Firefighters' Association