

Resolution No. 33

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT: Occupational Health & Safety

Re: NIOSH

1 WHEREAS, the NIOSH Fire Fighter Fatality
2 Investigation and Prevention Program (FFFIPP) is a
3 major improvement over what we have had in the
4 past, and the program has led to improvements and
5 fire fighter lives being saved; and

6 WHEREAS, at the IAFF Convention in San
7 Diego (2010), Local 718 submitted a resolution with
8 recommendations for the NIOSH Fire Fighter
9 Fatality Investigation and Prevention Program
10 (FFFIPP) to make it more effective and receptive to a
11 local's concerns after a LODD; and

12 WHEREAS, NIOSH has implemented many of
13 those recommendations which has led to more
14 effective investigations; and

15 WHEREAS, the mission of the FFFIPP is divided
16 between two teams: one to investigate cardiovascular
17 and medically related fatalities and the other to
18 investigate traumatic fatalities; and

19 WHEREAS, the FFFIPP cardiovascular fatality
20 team has the appropriate skills and qualifications to
21 analyze deaths resulting from heart attacks and other
22 medical conditions; and

23 WHEREAS, the FFFIPP traumatic fatality team is
24 based in Morgantown and it has limited resources
25 given the complex circumstances and varied
26 scenarios that result in traumatic firefighter deaths;
27 and

28 WHEREAS, due to the limited resources, many

29 investigations take over a year; and

30 WHEREAS, the FFFIPP traumatic fatality team
31 needs to be enhanced to include fire service subject
32 matter experts (SMEs); and

33 WHEREAS, these SMEs should be involved at all
34 levels of an investigation to include initial
35 investigation and interview of witnesses, examination
36 of physical evidence, analysis and review of findings,
37 and development of the investigation report; and

38 WHEREAS, the presence of fire service SMEs in
39 the NIOSH investigative effort would improve
40 communication between professional NIOSH
41 investigators and local fire department members,
42 provide context information for the NIOSH
43 investigators, and lend additional credibility to the
44 NIOSH team; and

45 WHEREAS, the SMEs can “speak” the fire
46 fighter language and act as a facilitative interpreter
47 between the parties; and

48 WHEREAS, after a LODD, many local
49 departments focus the attention onto the actions of
50 members on the fireground as opposed to the actions
51 of department managers that may have created
52 conditions that increased the probability of a LODD;
53 and

54 WHEREAS, a systemic root cause analysis is
55 recommended by OSHA when conducting an
56 accident investigation; and

57 WHEREAS, important lessons can be learned by
58 near miss incidents, not investigated by NIOSH, as
59 we as LODDs; therefore be it

60 RESOLVED, That the IAFF propose and support
61 the mandate that every NIOSH FFFIPP traumatic

62 fatality team include SMEs with extensive
63 experience in firefighting; and be it further

64 RESOLVED, That these SMEs should have
65 experience on a department of a similar size with
66 similar characteristics (including region of country)
67 to the one being investigated; and be it further

68 RESOLVED, That these SMEs should
69 accompany NIOSH investigators to the department
70 where the fatality occurred; and be it further

71 RESOLVED, That the IAFF propose and support
72 that the budget for the FFFIPP be expanded to
73 provide the financial resources to shorten the time for
74 reports to be finished and to allow for NIOSH to
75 include SMEs in all phases of the investigation; and
76 be it further

77 RESOLVED, That the IAFF provide SMEs,
78 funded by the IAFF, to support the local involved in
79 the LODD; and be it further

80 RESOLVED, That these SMEs should have
81 expertise in root cause analysis and systemic accident
82 investigation, so that the investigation goes beyond
83 the immediate actions that occurred on the
84 fireground; and be it further

85 RESOLVED, That the IAFF provide SMEs,
86 funded by the IAFF, to support the local involved in
87 the major incidents and/or near misses; and be it
88 further

89 RESOLVED, That these SMEs should have
90 expertise in root cause analysis and systemic accident
91 investigation; and be it further

92 RESOLVED, That the SMEs will cooperate with
93 the local Department, or if necessary, without the
94 local department, to develop a report with

95 recommendations to improve safety.

Submitted by: IAFF Local 718, Boston

Cost Estimate:

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

CONVENTION ACTION: