

# Mission Statement



It shall be the purpose of the Massachusetts Call/Volunteer Firefighters' Association to do any and all acts and deeds designed to promote the ideals and goals of the Call/Volunteer Firefighters of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Furthermore, it is the intent of this organization to represent the interests of the member Cities, Towns, Districts, Fire Companies or Associations at the Great and General Court of the Commonwealth and to act as liaison between the Call and Volunteer Firefighters of the Commonwealth and interact with the various state agencies whose function is the preservation of lives and property; and to do any and all acts and things designed to better serve and protect the lives and property of the residence of this Commonwealth thus fostering good will from the community at large while engendering fellowship among members of the fire service. The primary objective of this organization is to promote the Welfare of Call and Volunteer Fire Companies and their members by rendering assistance of every type and nature whenever possible.

## History & Purpose

On February 26, 1990 a group of 40 Call/Volunteer Firefighters representing 14 Southeastern Massachusetts fire departments met in Carver to discuss the concept of starting a statewide Call/Volunteer firefighters Association. This meeting was organized by the Carver Firefighters Association and the Carver Fire Chief, Dana Harriman.

The meeting produced some lively and colorful discussions but one base theme kept coming to the forefront: The Call/Volunteers in this state were headed in the wrong direction. In late 1987 Call/Volunteer Firefighters were excluded from previously enjoyed death and disability benefits under the state retirement law. In 1989 Call/Volunteers were excluded from being members of district Haz-Mat teams in conjunction with the state funded Haz-Mat vehicles.

It became apparent from this meeting that the Call/Volunteers lacked organization and adequate representation in matters concerning them or county and state levels. It was unanimously voted to set up a Steering Committee to report back to the group on April 23, 1990 with recommendations. On April 23, 1990 the Steering Committee Report was presented and unanimously accepted with a couple of minor modifications.

On April 30, 1990 this group met again and decided to do a mailing to survey the cities and towns across the state in an effort to solicit representation that would make this a true, Massachusetts Call/Volunteer Firefighters Association.

The Steering Committee met many times that spring and summer, and the surveys came rolling in.

After much preparation, our first State Meeting was held in West Boylston October 14, 1990. This meeting formalized a working set

of bylaws and the basic constitution for this organization. From the original 14 departments we have grown to approximately 5,000 members representing 200 fire departments.

One of the most important goals was not to widen any existing gaps between Call/Volunteers and Career Firefighters. We have slowly but surely become a force within the fire service of this Commonwealth. We have accomplished the following:

- Introduced legislative bills for our members' benefit.
- Publish a quarterly magazine called "SMOKE SHOWIN'."
- Done a basic training survey for our members.
- We are the recognized state association with voting rights to the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) which represents approximately 800,000 thousand volunteer firefighters nationwide.
- Have sent members to state and national seminars and meetings with regard to the volunteer problems.

It has not been an easy task. For many years the Call/Volunteer was a fact of life. When the town fathers were in a bind at two in the morning, ring the bells, call on the old red telephone network, blow the horns, trip the pagers and when the emergency was over give them an "atta boy" and next week cut their dwindling budget.

One of our major goals is to sit down with the chiefs' association management, the union firefighters management and some of our management and work on the approximately 85% of the problems that plague the Massachusetts Fire Service that are common ground to all three groups.