



# SUPPORTING THE INCIDENT COMMANDER AFTER A LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH

*Meeting Summary*

*June 19 – 20, 2019 • Denver, CO*

*November 2019*

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## Welcome and Introductions

Facilitator Ian Bennett opened the meeting, welcoming the group and thanking them for their participation.<sup>1</sup> He acknowledged the Department of Justice for providing the resources to host this event, and to begin to develop a support system for Incident Commanders (ICs) who have experienced the death of a firefighter under their command. Fire Chief Eric Tade was also on hand to welcome the group to Denver and discussed the city’s experiences with line-of-duty fatalities.

Chief Bennett began the introductions by noting his work with the Local Assistance State Team (LAST) program and the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation dating back to 2002. He remarked that support for incident commanders “is a piece that has been missing for a long time.” Each of the attendees then gave an overview of the line-of-duty death they were involved with and related their personal emotions and experiences in its aftermath.

### A Few Notable Quotes

*“In the wildland, the logistics are tough. Getting the firefighter home to their family is all-consuming.”*

*“I had a ton of questions...I wish I had thought to reach out after that.”*

*“No one I knew has walked this road. [Calls from chiefs who had experienced a LODD] really helped me.”*

*“It was a struggle for me and for my members.”*

*“This needed to be discussed in our agency.”*

*“Since the LODD report the department has been investing in people and established a resiliency center. Our mission since then has been to share [lessons learned].”*

*“The anniversaries are hard.”*

*“It’s taken a long time to get the department back on track – we had gone 118 years without a death.”*

*“ [We need to] have peer support in place.”*

*“I’m honored to be here. Looking around the room is mind-boggling.”*

<sup>1</sup> A complete list of attendees is on page 17 of this document.



# National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Overview

John Tippett, the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation’s (NFFF) Director of Fire Service Programs, welcomed the group on behalf of the NFFF, saying, “We are honored and humbled to have all of you here.” He also thanked the Department of Jus-

tice, Bureau of Justice Assistance for providing the resources to host the meeting, as well as Denver Fire Department for offering logistical support. He then provided a brief overview of the mission and work of the Foundation.<sup>2</sup>

*“This is the biggest thing I can be a part of.”*

*“[We need to] focus energy and resources... you used to kind of deal with it. This is an enormous opportunity to provide structure and support.”*

*“Just being around you guys is great medicine.”*

*“This is one of the most unique and powerful experiences I’ve had in 32 years.”*

*“The department had had no deaths since 1969. There was no one there to help. It had been a generation. I’m here because I want to be part of the solution.”*

*“I haven’t felt this way in a long time.”*

*“I didn’t have a lot of support. Not blaming the department – we just don’t tend to put that kind of thing out there.”*

*“We had few resources in place to deal with it.”*

*“Guys want to tell their stories. We want them to have a takeaway, support within our own ranks.”*

*“It was life changing.”*

<sup>2</sup> Chief Tippett’s PowerPoint® presentation is available at: <https://bit.ly/2mhXudc>



## Lessons from Three Departments

### FDNY

#### Stephen Raynis

Chief Raynis discussed his role as IC on the Deutsche Bank fire, as well as his broader experience as Chief Safety Officer for FDNY. Their department has 1,533 names on their memorial wall. As Chief Safety Officer, Raynis was involved in multiple investigations, as well as the compiling of fatality reports. FDNY's department policy is to strive for transparency, developing documents that can be used as learning tools. To avoid the appearance of being punitive they do not include names within the report, which once completed is distributed to every member of the department. All radio transmissions from the event are burned onto a CD which is included with each copy of the report.

On Saturday, August 18, 2007, while serving in the role of acting division chief, he was called to a fire at 5 World Trade Center, the Deutsche Bank building. The structure had been severely damaged during the 2001 terrorist attacks and, at the time of the fire, was undergoing demolition. Because of mold and asbestos, the building was a HazMat site, and workers were in the process of conducting asbestos removal. Unbeknownst to the firefighters, zero pressure fans were exhausting through HEPA filters, and standpipes and sprinklers were not functioning. Exits were out of service or blocked; the only access to the upper floors was the construction elevator on the outside of the build-

ing, being run by a construction worker. Fences blocked access to the building, and the interior was a maze of plastic and plywood.

Attempting to run the incident using standard SOPs, Raynis said, "We didn't know any of that." City regulations required that any building under demolition be inspected every 16 days, yet the requisite inspections had not been completed. The situation quickly became a nightmare when things started going wrong; in a short time, there were 14 maydays, and 17 urgent calls. Firefighters were bailing out onto the scaffolding. Tom Galvin, who assumed command from Raynis, said, "You get the fire, I got the maydays."

That day, 105 firefighters were injured, and two were killed. Raynis took the losses hard, noting that he had dinner the previous night with the two firefighters who died, "They were my friends, my colleagues, my co-workers." He was able to step away from Fire Operations soon after, when he was offered (and accepted) a position as Executive Officer for the Chief of Safety.

In his new role, Raynis didn't receive the details of the event until the report came out. The internal report was 190 pages, and following department policy, they went over the report with the family first, line by line. Then they went to the initial response companies and reviewed the report with them.





Not only was the experience intense and personally emotional, but as Chief of Safety it was a political nightmare. Mayor Bloomberg took the department to task for not inspecting the building. The company officer on the initial response committed suicide. Years later, the father of one of the deceased firefighters wrote a book called *The Fix is In*, claiming that the fire was no accident, but rather a calculated and complex conspiracy involving top government-

tal agencies, corporate leaders and organized crime figures.

During Chief Raynis' tenure with the FDNY, the department lost 68 firefighters (not including 9/11). He noted that while FDNY has significant resources, it is important for everyone present in Denver to get together to help each other, as well as those that follow. Figuring out what we can do proactively will not only "help ourselves, but others in the future."

## Worcester Fire Department Michael McNamee

Chief McNamee related his experiences during and after the December 3, 1999, Worcester Cold Storage Warehouse fire. That night, his department lost six firefighters, and though it's been 20 years, McNamee "can still tell you every smell, every detail of that night." He also noted that in emergency situations time expands and compresses. That night he felt it was just minutes that his firefighters had been lost, but in reality, they had been searching for 1.25 hours by the point he called off the search, evacuated the building, and went defensive on the fire.

In the immediate aftermath of the tragedy, there was denial, "This doesn't happen in Worcester." The recovery went on for eight days. Thousands of firefighters converged on the city to attend each funeral. Throughout this

time, Chief McNamee received tremendous support from his chief, mayor, city administration, and Worcester citizens – a fact that he feels made a huge difference to him, and to the department.

After the fire, there was a lot of emotion. McNamee made himself available to the families, and answered all their questions, saying the best policy is to, "Just tell them what happened." However, approximately three or four months later, anger and bitterness started to set in within the department. One house made a pact to not talk with anyone else about it. Some surviving firefighters isolated themselves from families and departments. McNamee noted that everyone is different, and we all respond differently to traumatic events, so the support needed will be different for every individual. Part of the challenge of what the group was to do in Denver will be to determine a blueprint for the program that takes this into account.



## Charleston Fire Department John B. Tippett, Jr.

Unlike Raynis and McNamee, Chief Tippett was not with Charleston Fire Department until well after the pivotal fire. On June 18, 2007, he was a battalion chief in Montgomery County, Maryland, where he vividly remembers his company gathering in his office to listen to news reports of the unfolding tragedy.

Upon arriving in Charleston, Tippett stepped into a department with a complex culture, characterized by insularity, and an entrenched mindset of some department members that traditional practices and procedures were all that was needed to fight fires because they had worked for decades. As is sometimes the case, complacency manifested itself as department pride, and an attitude that “tragedy can never happen here” was prevalent at various levels of the department.

However, the Super Sofa Store fire shook the department and the city to its core. Tom Carr,

who assumed the role of fire chief in 2008, joined forces with then-Mayor Joe Riley to rebuild the department based on an independent outside investigation of the fire. Mayor Riley’s direction to Chief Carr was, “We will adopt every one of these recommendations.”

That document, as well as the OSHA report, turned out to be the drivers behind change in Charleston. The prescribed 36-month timeline for implementation came with high financial costs that impacted the entire populace. Tax funds to support the improvements were redirected from other cost centers in the city. This resulted in other agencies having to place projects on hold to support the fire department.

There were long term emotional impacts of both the trauma and ensuing changes, as well. Not everyone managed the change well, but overall, the evolution of the department was managed and accepted by the key constituencies. Chief Tippett did note that one of the keys to making it more palatable was to use the term “progress” in lieu of “change.”



## Building the Tool Box

Each member of the focus group completed a pre-survey answering questions related to their experiences as an Incident Commander (IC) at the scene and immediately after the fatality, as well as longer-term personal and emotional outcomes from the event.<sup>3</sup> While each person's individual experiences varied, there were many commonalities that helped to guide the discussion regarding what was needed by ICs in similar circumstances.

So, what should this program look like? Facilitator Ian Bennett, as well as Chiefs Raynis and McNamee who served as breakout session leaders, helped the group define some key components of the IC support program. Overall, the concept is that of a “tool box” that is easily accessible, scalable, and applicable to all constituencies, be they from structural, wildland, federal, volunteer, career, or industrial agencies. It should be applicable to safety officers, company officers, and chief officers – literally any individual who finds themselves in the position of losing a firefighter while they are commanding an incident.

How will we define success of this effort? Clearly it will vary between individuals, as it will at different points in time following the incident. It was agreed though, that it is about moving forward,

## Timelines/Checklists

Having a roadmap in the way of a timeline with benchmarks will support post-traumatic recovery for the IC. It will also give a structural framework

not moving on; as one attendee stated, “Change is constant...it's the only thing we know for sure.” For some people, success is returning to firefighting, and continuing to have a fulfilling work life or volunteer experience. Others may choose to retire after the fatality, and for those people it may be having a long and happy post-career life. For all, though, quality interpersonal relationships will be a key metric, as is finding a “new normal.”

The tool box should include resources to prepare the IC and let them know what to expect if and when a LODD occurs. There will also be tools to help them regain confidence and help them pick up the pieces afterwards. All components need to be optional, allowing people to select into resources they need through a menu of available options.

The overall framework to organize the tool box was not settled on in Denver. It could take the form of a guide, or be housed on a specific webpage, or integrated into an app. This app could build on one currently in use such as Firestrong.org, which has taken off in the Western U.S., or be a stand-alone app developed by the NFFF. The specific tools to include are discussed in the following sections.

to the specific interventions available and help to contextualize the IC's reactions to a very unique emotional experience.

<sup>3</sup> A summary of the survey results have been compiled in a document that is available at: <https://bit.ly/2mn1U2x>



Below are some key points for the checklists, compiled with the assistance of Charles Ridgely of Howard County, Maryland.

### Key Points for Incident Commander Recovery Checklist

1. Leaving the scene after the event, including being relieved of command, and establishing the fireground as a crime scene.
2. Taking care of the rest of your personnel on the scene and in the days after.
3. What to expect within the first 24 hours, including when you leave the station and when you get home. These should include potential impacts on interactions with your own family, as well as interactions with the LODD family.
4. What you'll feel like waking up the next day, and the next – the days after may feel like Groundhog Day, as you face the same emotions and hard truths.
5. Once rested, may want to start writing down what you remember, however you remember it. Get it on paper before everyone else's opinions cloud your memory.
6. Plan your return to work, whether it is the next day, your next scheduled shift, or weeks later. Think ahead about how you will feel or react if you are asked to return to the scene.
7. Be prepared for a flood of emotions when you face the next working incident, or the next incident on the same street or in the same neighborhood. These triggers can catch you off guard.
8. Know that the first week will be busy, with nonstop planning, preparing for, and attending viewings, memorials, and the funeral.
9. Within the first week or so you are going to have to complete your incident report and other paperwork. Your personal notes will enable you to complete the documents accurately and thoroughly.
10. Prepare yourself emotionally for the investigations. There will be multiple interviews for the origin and cause investigation, the department's internal investigation, NIOSH, and potentially the state or other mutual aid jurisdiction reviews of the incident.





## Key Points for Incident Commander Recovery Checklist (Continued)

- 11.** Be conscious that the next year will be a series of ups and downs where you will achieve some levels of healing, but you will also experience events that “tear the scab off the wound.” Expect state and national memorials, anniversaries, the release of reports, etc., to be triggers. Know that this is normal, and that the surges of emotions generally become more manageable over time. Don’t be afraid to pick and choose which memorial events to attend and plan a coping mechanism and/or exit strategy in case you need it.
- 12.** Be aware that throughout your career, the memories and pain surrounding the LODD may resurface. Promotional processes, births of children, retirements, and other milestone events may all bring up memories; that doesn’t have to be a bad thing.
- 13.** Know that you are in fact part of a special group, and that you are not alone! There are other ICs who have experienced the loss of a firefighter. They care about you and are here for you, just as you may be able to support someone else in the future.
- 14.** Know that remembering is honoring, and that recovery and rebuilding your life after this experience will be different for everyone.
- 15.** While your emotions can be a catalyst for help and healing, be mindful of and seek help if you experience:
  - Feelings of guilt and doubt
  - A loss of confidence
  - Changes in sleep habits
  - Increased anger
  - Loss of interest in hobbies
  - Changes in alcohol/drug consumption
  - Suicidal ideation
  - Visions you can’t dismiss
  - Sights, sounds, smells are associated with the incident
- 16.** Most importantly, remember to breathe. When all else is overwhelming, focus on breathing, one breath at a time.



## Pre-LODD Training

The Denver group agreed that a training was needed to prepare ICs for what to do and what resources are available in the event a firefighter is killed on their watch. New ICs should understand that literally every time they take command, there is the chance of a LODD, and they must be alert to the dangers of complacency. Content should include what the IC may experience in the immediate and longer-term aftermath of the incident and be applicable across the range of fire service organizations.

Many in Denver thought it would be beneficial to walk the IC through the experience, possibly by using a scenario-based training. They also noted a loss of confidence after the fatality, and recommended including that topic in the training, perhaps through personal testimonials. An After Action Review should be emphasized as a tool to be used after every incident, to establish a norm of open and honest discussion related to the inci-

dent. The course should also cover self-care, and potential pitfalls to be alert for, such as self-medication, onset of depression, suicidality, and other destructive behaviors.

Rather than relying on traditional course pedagogy, the training could be delivered in ways that engage the contemporary learner, such as through video, interactive modules, or podcasts. It was agreed that the training should be a prerequisite to the IC ever taking command. To ensure its use, it should be disseminated in a variety of different ways, including:

- Integrating it to 300-400 level training
- Building it into state fire school programs
- Including it into Battalion Chief or Incident Command task books
- Requesting its addition to NFPA Standard 1561 as part of the next revision

## Peer Support

Peer support is clearly going to be a key component of this effort. Jenny Woodall, Grief Counselor for the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, provided an overview of the Fire Hero Family Peer Support programs. She described peers as people who “just get it” – they have the backstory that enables them to connect with others in similar circumstances. A peer doesn’t have to be a constant presence, but rather someone to touch base with when you need it.

Fire Hero Family peers attend a seven-hour interactive training, which is usually held the day before the Wellness Conference. Screening is a critical step, because the peer candidate must have moved forward in their personal journey; the needs of the person who needs help supersede everything else. Jenny provided the group with copies of a checklist used by individuals in her program to self-assess for readiness to train as a peer. She also stressed self-care, managing expectations, establishing healthy boundaries and



clearly delineated rules for the peers, and having an exit strategy in place, if needed.

During the follow up discussion, the group agreed that peer support is the most critical piece of this effort and should be put into place first. There were multiple questions about the matching process. In Family Programs, Jenny does the matching. She looks for areas of connection, including circumstances of death, whether or not the families received benefits, and personal preferences. However, she also acknowledged that matching peers is not an exact science – the best matches

are sometimes based on a conversation. Points of connection for ICs might include department size and/or type, region of the country, or circumstances of death (wildland, warehouse, high-rise, single family home). If the case is being litigated, it would be helpful for the IC to be matched with a peer who has previously been through the process.

It was proposed by the group that the NFFF could also have a list of trained IC peers available online. Jenny said that while it may work for some people to self-assign, she strongly recommends that the NFFF maintain some sort of control of the process.

## Clinical Support

Dave Wiklanski, an active duty firefighter, behavioral health clinician, and consultant for the NFFF, began his overview of the world of behavioral health by saying that dark humor is the way most firefighters cope with trauma, but it only goes so far. Sometimes clinical support is needed to build the resilience required not only for firefighting, but also to cope with the ups and downs of life.<sup>4</sup>

Post-traumatic injury is a common response to an event such as the loss of a firefighter. It is important to remember that when a person is stuck in a traumatic event, they are experiencing that trauma in the present, and not in the past. Wiklanski noted that a structural injury in the brain has been identified in relation to PTSD and discussed specific therapies that have demonstrated efficacy in treating the condition.<sup>5</sup> These include use of a Stellate Ganglion Block to ease the physiological

response to traumatic memories, and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), which “relinks” the emotion from the traumatic memory.

For a person suffering from emotional trauma, finding the right clinician is key. The general sentiment among the group is that EAP providers who have not previously worked with firefighters are not ideal. It is critical to find a clinician who “speaks the common language,” usually from having experience working with the military or first responder populations. Beyond having the necessary academic credentials and licensures, therapists who work with firefighters must be trauma-informed and clinically and culturally competent. And remember – the time to look for a clinician is BEFORE people are in crisis.

<sup>4</sup> A copy of Wiklanski’s PowerPoint® presentation is available at: <https://bit.ly/2kpyZKC>

<sup>5</sup> A PDF of these treatment options is available at: <https://bit.ly/2m3YIOs>



Overall, though, the “fit” is the most important thing. When seeking help, you are hiring someone to provide a service, and it should be someone you are comfortable enough with to share your most vulnerable self. Wiklanski also noted that:

- It is always easier to go to someone that you have already established a connection with.
- The person who does fitness-for-duty screenings is NEVER to provide therapy for your agency.
- Departments should develop a screening questionnaire for clinicians, which includes questions about insurance.
- If necessary, NFFF can help to find a clinician to provide screening.
- There is a need to create a directory of providers.
- The key is to get the information about clinical support out there, and to reduce the shame and stigma connected with seeking help.

The question was raised of whether or not clinical screening should be mandatory after a LODD. Steve Raynis explained that FDNY provides all key personnel with two weeks of medical leave after such an event. Because, though, the response to trauma and the ability to recover will vary from person to person, for some people getting back to work may be the healthiest thing. For these firefighters, talking around the kitchen table may be the best form of therapy.

One attendee related their department’s experience after a multiple fatality incident. Groups of clinicians came in, built the trust of the affected firefighters, then left, and the cycle repeated itself. Wiklanski stressed that when there is trauma, care needs to be bridged in order to provide a continuum of care. Lastly, he reminded the group that the current suicide rate among firefighters is three times that of the LODDs, and that suicide screening and intervention and prevention strategies need to be integrated into both peer and clinical support strategies.

## Memorial Weekend Group Sessions

In its current form, the Fire Chief Group Session is a three-hour round table discussion, held on the Saturday morning of the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend. The group is for fire chiefs who have experienced a LODD and is facilitated by a behavioral health clinician and a chief who experienced a line-of-duty death. Chief John McGrath of Raleigh previously led the group, and Chief Scott Burnette of Asheville, North Carolina, took over in 2018.

One of Chief McGrath’s recurring themes was, “You’ve got to forgive yourself.” Though only two members of the Denver cohort had previously attended the sessions, both agreed it was a positive experience. One described the session as, “The best thing I ever did...it was the turning point for me.”



These sessions have not been historically well-attended, and most of the Denver group was not aware they were held in the year their firefighter was honored. Clearly, there have been challenges in reaching out to let departments know about the sessions and getting the information to the audience that would most benefit from participating.

The group felt the NFFF should prioritize hosting an Incident Commander Group Session this October. It can follow the same format as the Chiefs

## Other Events

The group stated the networking experienced over these two days will be essential to the program, and that ICs should have additional similar opportunities to reconnect on a regular basis. They recommended 20-24 participants as an ideal size to create the interaction and connection they experienced in Denver.

However, as the program grows over time and additional ICs are added to the network, there is a possibility that it will need to be divided into multiple events to keep them a manageable, concentrated experience. The group proposed that if they needed to be broken down, the NFFF should consider hosting them regionally. It was the consensus of all present the strength of the experience in Denver was enriched by the diversity of attendees. In the future, it will be essential to keep these groups mixed: volunteer and career, structural and wildland, urban, suburban, and rural, and that events should include both ICs who recently had a fatality, as well as those who are returning.

There was discussion about including spouses in these events. At least initially, though, they agreed

session, but be led by incident commanders that experienced a LODD. To get the information out about it, the Denver attendees suggested using multiple communication strategies, including:

- Outreach to each department's fire chief.
- Having the LAST teams provide information to their contacts in the departments.
- Marketing it as part of the Memorial Weekend social media and email outreach.

it should be ICs only. It was also determined they should be kept separate from similar events for fire chiefs.

Ideally, the event would take place over a weekend in early April. The venue should move around from year to year. Possible sessions include:

- Plenty of time to tell their stories and relate their experiences.
- Breakout sessions combining ICs who recently experienced a fatality with those who had more time under their belt, in order to discuss the "road ahead."
- Peer training.
- Behavioral health information sessions, such as "How trauma affects the brain."
- External social activities, such as tours, fishing trips, etc.
- Sharing inspirational success stories.
- Ways to build support within your own organization, such as how to find funding for behavioral health programs.





## Marketing the Program

It was clear to all in Denver that the NFFF will need to use different strategies to connect with the different audiences we hope to reach. To build general awareness, we should begin with a general fire service outreach. Once the specific tools have been developed, there will be a need to be a catch-up effort trying to reach ICs that are out there and are hurting and haven't had the support they need to move forward.

Social media will be an important component of the marketing plan. The Denver group agreed that outreach through both the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation and Everyone Goes Home® social media sites was needed, as was connecting with fire service influencers. Content placed on these sites should be targeted toward those who rely heavily on social media for news and education, especially the younger generations of firefighters. Using brief (<2 minute) video clips and personalizing the message by relying on testimonials – as in “putting a face on the program” – were also emphasized.

Proposed strategies to begin to cast a broad net and raise awareness within the fire service include:

- Develop a presentation and get on the agenda at the major trade shows.
  - Create a speakers' bureau of qualified individuals.
  - Develop materials (such as a flyer) that could be integrated into annual insurance packets by California Casualty, VFIS, and other fire service insurers.
  - Conduct educational outreach through National Fire Academy classes and state fire schools.
  - Write articles for fire service magazines and online journals and other media sources such as the Daily Dispatch and the Secret List.
  - Develop or provide content to podcasts including National Fire Radio Podcasts and those produced by the NFFF.
  - Conduct targeted outreach to partnering organizations, including IAFF, IAFC, NVFC, WFF, FDSOA, and retiree groups.
  - Use LAST members and Everyone Goes Home® Advocates in order to provide educational outreach at state and local trade shows.
  - Develop materials that emergency management systems could use to get the word out.
- Beyond general awareness, how do we connect directly with the individual ICs to make them aware of the resources available after a fatality? A few of the methods proposed include:
- Through the LAST team, integrating outreach to the IC into their checklist.
  - Provide direct outreach from the NFFF.
  - Direct personal outreach from ICs in the same geographical region.
  - Establish a resource page on firehero.org.
  - Through National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend materials.
  - Working with NIOSH to provide resources during investigations.
  - Targeted and specific educational programming to organizations that have a strong connection to ICs, such as FDSOA.



## Next Steps

The NFFF has received funding from the Department of Justice – Bureau of Justice Assistance to begin to build the component programs of the Incident Commander’s toolbox.

### Incident Commander’s Toolbox Project Timeline July 1, 2019 – September 30, 2020

#### Memorial Weekend Sessions 2019

*October 2019*

This October, the NFFF will host the inaugural National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend small group session for incident commanders who have experienced the fatality of a firefighter under their command. As with those of chiefs and co-workers, these sessions will be open to commanders of those being honored in the previous calendar year. However, in 2019 only, the NFFF will make this session available to attendees at the June 2019 *Supporting the Incident Commander After a Line-of-Duty Meeting* in Denver.

#### IC to IC Peer-to Peer Training

*December 2019*

The NFFF will oversee an adaptation of current best practices in peer support for use by incident commanders, to support others who have experienced the death of a firefighter under their command. The initial delivery/beta testing of the program will be delivered at the retreat described below.

#### IC to IC Next Steps Workshop

*December 2019*

The NFFF will host a two-day workshop as a follow-up to the Denver meeting. It will be held in Tampa, Florida, December 2-4, 2019. A draft agenda follows:

- Day 1 – Travel day, group dinner.
- Day 2 – Peer training, off site dinner.
- Day 3 – Training development workshop, to review online training and draft an outline for an instructor led course.

#### Online Training for ICs

*January 2020*

An initial treatment for a one-hour online training for current and aspiring incident commanders was developed by Stonehouse Media and has been reviewed by a group of ICs from the Denver cohort. The recommended changes are being incorporated; the next step is for Stonehouse to develop an outline for the training, which will be hosted on the Fire Hero Learning Network.

#### Online Peer Training

*January 2020*

The NFFF, again in conjunction with Stonehouse Media, is developing an online training course that will be applicable to both Fire Hero Family and IC peers.



## Attendees

The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation would like to thank each of the following members of the Denver group for their courage and honesty in relating their own experiences, in order to help define ways to support those who follow in their footsteps:

### Chris Budzinski

*Deputy Fire Chief*

Asheville (NC) Fire Department

### Skip DiPaula, Jr.

*Division Chief*

Baltimore County (MD)  
Fire Department

### Charles Drennan

*Division Chief of Operations*

Denver (CO) Fire Department

### Jim Forgo

*Assistant Chief*

Prince William County (VA)  
Department of Fire and Rescue

### Donald Fregulia

*District Fire Management Officer*

USDA Forest Service

### Michael Gerin

*Fire Chief*

Pineville (NC) Fire Department

### Chris Griffen

*Battalion Chief*

City of Westland (MI)  
Fire Department

### Phillip Hendrick

*Fire Chief*

City of Conway (SC)  
Fire Department

### Eric Kriwer

*Deputy Chief*

Arizona Fire & Medical Authority

### Samuel LeNeave

*Deputy Chief of Florida Operations*

Florida Forest Service

### Ralph Lucas

*Battalion Chief*

Prescott (AZ) Fire Department

### Michael McNamee

*District Chief (Retired)*

Worcester (MA) Fire Department

### Joe Ondrasek

*Assistant Fire Chief*

Bryan (TX) Fire Department

### James Price

*Deputy Chief*

Toledo (OH) Fire & Rescue  
Department

### Stephen Raynis

*Assistant Chief (Retired)*

Fire Department of New York

### Charles Ridgely

*Battalion Chief (Retired)*

Howard County (MD) Department  
of Fire and Rescue Services

### Steven Shaffer

*Deputy Chief*

Boston (MA) Fire Department

### Darrell Stamper

*Battalion Chief*

Westland (MI) Fire Department

### Doreen Strickland

*President*

Abbott (TX) Volunteer Fire Department

### Adam Thiel

*Fire Commissioner*

Philadelphia (PA) Fire Department

### Anson Turley

*Assistant Fire Chief*

Cincinnati (OH) Fire Department

### Michael Washington

*District Fire Chief*

City of Cincinnati (OH)  
Fire/EMS Department

### Rob Wilkins

*Assistant Chief*

Philadelphia (PA) Fire Department

### Jason Withrow

*Deputy Forest Fire*

USDA Forest Service  
Tahoe National Forest  
Management Officer



## NFFF Staff and Consultants

### **Ian Bennett**

*Fire Chief*

City of Harrisonburg (VA) Fire Department  
LAST Co-Coordinator  
National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

### **Tricia Sanborn**

*Consultant*

National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

### **John B. Tippett, Jr.**

*Director of Fire Service Programs*

National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

### **David Wiklanski**

*Firefighter/EMT*

New Brunswick (NJ) Fire Department  
Everyone Goes Home® State Advocate

### **Jenny Woodall**

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National Fallen Firefighters Foundation





## NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS FOUNDATION

[WWW.FIREHERO.ORG](http://WWW.FIREHERO.ORG)

### EMMITSBURG

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EMMITSBURG, MD 21727  
301-447-1365  
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### CROFTON

2130 PRIEST BRIDGE DRIVE, SUITE 6  
CROFTON, MD 21114  
410-721-6212  
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#### ON SOCIAL MEDIA



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Our mission is to honor and remember America's fallen fire heroes, to provide resources to assist their families in rebuilding their lives, and to reduce firefighter deaths and injuries.