

IAFC Safety, Health & Survival Section Board of Directors Teleconference

WEDNESDAY - SEPTEMBER 26, 2007 (1100 ET)

Call to Order - Chief Billy Goldfeder, Chair

Roll Call - Chief Goldfeder, Chief Gaumont, Chief Kerwood, Chief Daniels, Chief Anderson (ret), Chief Bowman, Chief Dubé, Chief Ham, Chief Kistner, Chief Morris, Chief Nied, Chief Padgett, Chief Routley (ret), Chief Tobia, Mr. Steve Austin, Mr. Tim Merinar, and Ms. Lee were in attendance. Chief Bobby Halton of Fire Engineering and Mr. Frank Ricci, of the Connecticut Council on Occupational Safety and Health, were in attendance as guests.

Not available - Chief Brockman, Chief Cash, Chief Gillespie, Chief Chovan, and Mr. Duffy.

- **Command - Chief Goldfeder**

- **Last Chance Rescue Filter:** Chief Goldfeder introduced the two guests in attendance and thanked them for taking their time to join us. He advised the Board that everyone, including our guests, had been sent a copy of the draft letter on this subject and that he has received positive comments. Chief Goldfeder stated the Section's goal in this matter is to focus on any opportunity to help firefighters get out of an IDLH environment alive; however, this filter device has raised some concerns about its alignment with recommended air management practices. Mr. Frank Ricci then spoke to the Board and shared his insight on the device.

Mr. Ricci comment highlights:

1. Best device integrated into SCBA but manufacturers would not certify.
2. Device intended for one time use only.
3. Currently only a prototype; the manufacturer is marketing, but not selling the product.
4. Although he has a financial interest in this product, it is intended for firefighter safety and survival
5. Yale is conducting a medical study this week.
6. Device has no NFPA, NIOSH, or OSHA approval.
7. Must be part of a department's air management program.
8. Focus of this week's study is to document proper use and ensure it works with the help of major US fire departments before the "train the trainer" training begins so that a safer product results.
9. Contrary to what Board members have heard, SCBA manufacturers are supporting certification of this product.
10. The device is not intended to extend unsafe time in a fire.
11. Spoke about the actual testing and safety measures that would be followed during the medical study.
12. Not marketed for the RIT team.
13. Device has a shelf life of 5.5 years.

14. The device is a starting point for a built-in device (similar to the way PASS alarm technology progressed).
15. Chief Goldfeder reiterated that the Section wants to support efforts to assist fire fighters getting out alive. The Section envisions a device to act like an emergency parachute to supplement the primary system. It must be tied into an alarm and should activate the Mayday process.
16. Chief Daniels expressed concern about the culture we have in the fire service and the impact of culture on the use of this product.
17. Chief Gaumont asked if there might be issues with presumptive diseases for firefighters taking part in the study.
18. Chief Kistner asked if there was an NFPA equivalency this product met. Mr. Ricci confirmed the study had been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board.
19. Chief Anderson wanted to know the objective of the medical study. What would be validated? Mr. Ricci stated that they wanted to validate that filter technology causes no additional harm and works at low and high levels of contaminants. He stated that if one individual shows elevated levels of CO or other toxic gases, the study would be terminated.
20. Chief Routley expressed a concern about use of human subjects in testing.
21. Mr. Merinar advised that the product go through the NIOSH-NPPTL testing and certification process.
22. Chief Dubé asked if NFPA 1403 would be followed and was told no. They would be burning room and contents (including furniture)
23. Chief Padgett asked about CO testing and use of pulse oximeters. Mr. Ricci advised that they would be using breathalyzers, as pulse oximeters can be unreliable.
24. Chief Tobia expressed doubt that the study was valid as it may not accurately reflect a fire environment (firefighter positioning); suggested use of manikins to simulate breathing.
25. Chief Ham agreed with Chief Tobia - if test participants are only breathing at floor level, testing could give a false sense of security.
26. Chief Kerwood expressed his belief that the Section needs to look at safety and health in industry for guidance. The fire service has fought long and hard to eliminate negative pressure devices, such as air purifying respirators, with positive pressure units. Chief Kerwood believes any last chance escape device must be pack integrated with positive pressure; the fire service should not be regressing to negative pressure devices.
27. Chief Goldfeder assigned Chief Dubé to be the Board's liaison with Mr. Ricci and keep the Board informed. Mr. Ricci stated he would provide all test information to the Board.

Chief Bobby Halton expressed a number of final comments:

1. Oxygen deficient environment related to FDNY incident.
2. Current standard is European Standard 430, which is very weak.
3. Supports positive pressure aspect.
4. Should also consider such a device for overhaul operations.
5. Need a device to protect fire fighters from carcinogens during overhaul and fire investigations.

6. Also advocate for strong departmental air management policies.
7. Suggests positive pressure for escape, filter for overhaul to prevent false sense of security.
8. Concern about reverse engineering.

- **Planning - Chief Gaumont**

- Strategic Planning: Chief Gaumont advised the SHS Section Board that Director Fonseca intends to provide a draft of the Section's strategic plan this weekend and it will be distributed to Board members for comment.
- Newsletter: Chief Gaumont stated that contact has been made with Ms. Christina Baxter and she will be once again the editor of the newsletter from her new location.

- **International Director - Chief Daniels**

- Corporate sponsorship was not discussed at the recent IAFC Board meeting
- The Section continues to see a lot of support for everything we are doing.
- The IAFC Board is focusing on governance and delegating projects to staff and committees/sections.

- **For the Good of the Order**

- Winter Meeting: Planning continues for the Feb. 4, 2008 San Diego meeting.
- NIOSH Meeting: The NIOSH meeting will not occur in San Diego - it will tentatively take place in November at the Fire Rescue show instead. It will be an "invitation only" meeting; however, SHS Section members who are attending the Fire Rescue conference are invited to observe.
- SHS at FRI: Health and safety has been a mainstay on the FRI floor for the last 20 years. The Section, under the direction of Chief Kerwood, would like to make a big statement this year by being highly visible. Chief Morris recommended including an announcement of this anniversary in the FRI brochure and suggested writing an *On Scene* article showcasing the history of health and safety in the IAFC. Chief Kerwood will write the article. Chief Goldfeder asked Chief Kerwood to select people in staging to assist with planning for FRI, and suggested the Section do an IAFC-wide email blast.
- *Fire Rescue* articles: Ms. Lee will email the 2008 editorial calendar to all Board members.
- Safety Stand Down: Chief Morris recommended retitling the notification to "Firefighter Priority Survival Notification."