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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The MFRI 2025 Strategic Plan continued to drive our programs and initiatives during FY 2016. Goals and objectives were established by each section of the Institute, with the direction and focus of the Strategic Plan at the forefront. These goals represent areas in which we will move forward to a more productive and successful future for our students, staff and other partners. The desired outcome is always student success and integrating a culture of safety throughout all aspects of MFRI operations.

Our student success is paramount, and we utilize a number of tools on a regular basis to monitor and improve our programs. A traditional tool is the student/instructor evaluation form, which is used to gather important feedback. However, that's not the only option for students to provide input. Students may now participate in the student councils established in each MFRI region. Each council will meet on a regular basis to exchange feedback and ideas that will further enhance their training experience.

Student success in EMT courses was challenged by changes in the testing of EMT students via the National Registry. MFRI made a number of program and testing enhancements to improve student performance and prepare students for the testing process. Curriculum revisions, including on-line components through MyBradyLab as an adjunct to traditional course materials, as well as a more streamlined testing process, allow for more instructional time without adding more hours to the program overall.

MFRI has implemented new test management software to provide generalized feedback without compromising the test data bank. These significant changes to programs are a result of student and instructor feedback received via regional instructor meetings, work groups, and the evaluation process.
The health and safety of our students and instructors is priority one. We know from the research and studies, and unfortunately from personal experience, the inherent dangers of firefighting, including exposure to various carcinogens and other forms of occupational diseases. MFRI takes this very seriously and has addressed this challenge on several fronts; first, with the adoption of a policy to provide guidance on the proper wearing and cleaning of PPE for instructors. Each MFRI regional office now has washers/gear extractors for proper PPE maintenance, and thanks to a significant award through the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program, MFRI was able to purchase self-contained breathing apparatus and personal protective equipment to replace and supplement existing inventory. Secondly, we expect our instructors to model safe behaviors for our students to drive home the point. The new policy will ensure that our students and instructors are properly protected and that our students understand the risks associated with firefighting activities.

No doubt, the key to successfully achieving our goals continues to rest with our outstanding faculty, staff, students, instructors and partner organizations. Their enthusiasm and support have been the catalyst for our continued pursuit of excellence.
This is the first implementation year of the MFRI 2025 Strategic Plan and we have made substantial progress in the following areas of improvement:

- Adjusting student minimums for class starts
- Adjusting examination retest policy
- Implementing MFRI Student Councils
- Implementing PAR system for student/instructor feedback
- Planning for a new Learning Management System
- Providing electronic tablets for student use in each region
FIRE ACT GRANT

For the third year in a row, MFRI has been awarded a $500,000 Fire Act Grant, which will fund the following purchases:

- 40 Sets of instructor PPE
- 70 SCBA
- 2 Propane car props for UESRTC and WMRTC
- 7 Smoke generator machines
- 12 Dry suits for swift water instructors
- 6 Forcible entry props
  (1 per region)

PARSYSTEM TESTING FEEDBACK TOOLS

MFRI purchased a new test management software called ParSystem that allows for the provision of generalized feedback on performance without compromising the integrity of the test banks. In addition to receiving their exam score, students also receive a “mastery report.” This report will show them where they scored in relation to the class average and will provide a breakdown of their individual performance based on the course objectives. Students will receive a snapshot of their strengths and weaknesses by specific content area. This same report is available to instructors so that they can identify performance trends in their classes and see how their classes compare to other similar classes.

This long-awaited improvement has resulted in better content learning and a heightened awareness of student and instructor performance throughout the Institute.
Students in the High School Cadet Program at MFRI’s Southern Maryland Regional Training Center practice racking attack lines utilizing their new hose cart prop.

NEW PROPS AND TECHNOLOGY

All MFRI training centers now utilize new thermal imaging cameras purchased under the Assistance to Firefighters Grant. These new state-of-the-art, high-definition cameras were manufactured by Bullard and have a new ergonomic design as well as excellent picture quality.

In addition, all regional training centers will receive a custom-built hose cart prop. Currently, this prop is being piloted at MFRI’s Southern Maryland Regional Training Center and Headquarters. Prop construction for all other training centers is scheduled to follow. An inexpensive and simple prop to construct, it allows students to practice various hose loading techniques for both attack and supply lines. It also allows for an unlimited amount of training without borrowing fire apparatus.
MFRI PARTNERSHIPS

IAFF

In conjunction with the Prince George’s County Fire/EMS Department and IAFF Local 1619, MFRI hosted the IAFF Fire Ops 101 course that allowed federal and local government officials to “feel the heat” as firefighters. Members of Congress, county council members, and state delegates put on full firefighting PPE and participated in four rotations of training. Before the activities began, all 28 participants went through medical screenings and PPE fittings. Each group had the opportunity to participate in a live-fire scenario in the burn building, an EMS drill including a “Mega Code” CPR scenario, the search maze, and a vehicle extrication drill.

FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS

MFRI worked with the Maryland Fire-Rescue Services Memorial Foundation on a project to improve the recognition of the Maryland Fire-Rescue Services Memorial. Gene Worthington and Peg Mooney of the Maryland Fire-Rescue Services Memorial Foundation worked closely with MFRI to create a LODD print of the memorial and all the names of those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. We proudly display this print at our Headquarters facility and all six of our regional training centers. It serves as a symbol for firefighters to be better prepared and perform their duties in a safe manner and is the focus at the fire/rescue training academy level.

NATIONAL FIRE ACADEMY

MFRI transportation vehicles traveled 2,300 miles to provide support to 47 families of fallen firefighters.

As always, this transportation effort reflected a partnership between MFRI, the State Fire Marshal’s Office, Criswell Chevrolet and the Maryland Fire Chiefs Association. Again, as it does every year, MFRI’s Logistical Support Section provided outstanding support.
MFRI STUDENT AND INSTRUCTOR SAFETY POLICY

Safety in the workplace is paramount to the success of any organization. This is especially true in the fire service where safety awareness and safety practices have been employed to help reduce the number of injuries and deaths associated with our profession. Like firefighters operating on an emergency scene, fire instructors frequently work in smoke-filled atmospheres that contain carcinogens, and exposure to these carcinogens can put them at a higher risk than that of the general public for contracting certain types of cancers.

Armed with an awareness regarding occupational exposures and disease, MFRI has developed and issued a new policy/procedure, Selection, Care, and Maintenance of Protective Ensembles for Structural Firefighting. The new policy addresses 1) what ensembles and ensemble elements are appropriate for use at MFRI; 2) how ensembles and ensemble elements will be maintained; and 3) when an ensemble or ensemble element should be reconditioned, repaired or retired.

Under the new policy, information about all protective ensembles will be maintained in a database; all pertinent information about the gear can be tracked including who the gear was issued to, the age of the particular ensemble or ensemble item, manufacturer information, date of advance inspections/cleanings, and a record of repairs. MFRI continues to work towards reducing cancer risk through the appropriate use of personal protective equipment and work practice controls such as regular gear cleaning to remove carcinogens that we would otherwise be hazardous upon contact.
UPDATED FIRE OFFICER SERIES

The Fire Officer I, II and III programs all now incorporate the use of the MFRI Simulation Incident Command Center into the curriculum. The use of the Simulation Center provides hands-on experiences that students can take with them into the field. Through the direction of the regional coordinators, instructors will schedule time for their classes to either visit MFRI Headquarters or be provided a portable simulation lab to complete lessons that involve simulations.

The Simulation Center is incorporated into five lessons of Fire Officer I. The focus is to strengthen a student’s communication skills as a fire officer while honing in on aspects of fire officer duties such as incident size-up, conducting an initial report, and describing an incident action plan for a simulated scenario.

The Simulation Center is incorporated into two lessons of Fire Officer II. The focus here is to strengthen the officer’s ability to effectively mitigate an emergency incident requiring a multi-unit response, as well as further refine the skills necessary to produce an incident action plan. These skills are also practiced in one lesson of Fire Officer III.

MFRI PROVIDES CLASSROOM TABLETS

MFRI is offering an increasing number of courses with online components. Although the majority of students have Internet access, there may be some who do not have a computer or other device to access the online content of our courses.

To address this issue and ensure that all MFRI students have a device to access online content, we have purchased Samsung Galaxy Tab E tablets that can be borrowed by any student in a class with integrated online content. The devices are being loaned to the student for class use only and must be returned upon completion of the course.
Our basic premise regarding EMT courses is to do “more teaching and less testing.” MFRI has recently started five EMT pilot classes using the newly redesigned syllabus that is expected to enhance the learning environment and better prepare the student for the National Registry examination and ultimately to serve their communities as EMTs.

The EMT course enhancements include:

- *My Brady Lab Version 2.0 (MBL)*
- Updated content organization
- Revised in-class testing schedule
- Additional time for instruction
- *EMT Computer Adaptive Practice Tests*

Students who successfully complete the MFRI EMT course will be provided with access to EMSCAT. This access, funded by MFRI, provides students with an opportunity to take unlimited computer adaptive practice examinations during a one-year period. These tailored exams are constructed in real-time based on the test-taker’s responses, just as the National Registry examination is currently. All of the questions in the test bank are correlated to the National Registry EMT Practice Analysis and are consistent with the current Educational Standards and AHA Guidelines.
REGIONAL TRAINING CENTERS

1. WMRTC CRESAPTCOWN
2. NCRTC MOUNT AIRY
3. MFRI HQ COLLEGE PARK
4. SMRTC LA PLATA
5. NERTC EDGEWOOD
6. UESRTC CENTREVILLE
7. LESRTC PRINCESS ANNE
### CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS

The following courses were developed or revised this year:

- Aerial Apparatus Driver/Operator
- Emergency Medical Responder
- Emergency Medical Technician
- EMR Refresher
- EMT Refresher
- Emergency Vehicle Operator Refresher
- Fire Investigator
- Fire Officer IV
- Hazardous Materials Awareness
- Hazardous Materials Operations
- Pumping Apparatus Driver/Operator
- Rescue Technician: Trench Rescue
- Study Skills and Test Taking Strategies

### STATISTICS FISCAL YEAR 2016

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SPECIAL THANKS
and gratitude is extended to the University of Maryland and the emergency services organizations and individuals throughout the state that we work with on a daily basis to conduct MFRI training programs.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
1-800-ASK-MFRI
WWW.MFRI.ORG

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