

# COMMITTEE REPORT

3/21/75

HOUSE

Mr. Speaker:

Date 4/19/75

The Committee on FINANCE has had HCR 33

under consideration. A Majority of the members of the Committee

recommends it DO PASS

recommends it DO NOT PASS

recommends it DO PASS WITH ATTACHED AMENDMENT(S)

recommends it BE REPLACED WITH CS FOR \_\_\_\_\_ AND THAT

CS FOR \_\_\_\_\_ DO PASS

"and" recommends it BE REFERRED TO THE \_\_\_\_\_

COMMITTEE

reports it back WITHOUT RECOMMENDATION

"other"

Members signing the Majority report:

<u>[Signature]</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>	_____
<u>[Signature]</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>	_____
<u>[Signature]</u>	_____	_____
<u>[Signature]</u>	_____	_____

Members NOT concurring in the Majority report:

\_\_\_\_\_ recommends:

\_\_\_\_\_ recommends:

\_\_\_\_\_ recommends:

\_\_\_\_\_ recommends:

\_\_\_\_\_ recommends:

[Signature] Chairman

Introduced: 3/7/75  
Referred: State Affairs and  
Finance

BY PARR, BOWMAN, BRADLEY, BROWN,  
COTTEN, COWPER, DUNCAN, FISCHER,  
FREEMAN, GUY, MCKINNON, MALONE,  
MILLER AND NAUGHTON

1 IN THE HOUSE

2 HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 33

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 NINTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5 Relating to a joint state-federal fire-  
6 fighting program.

7 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

8 WHEREAS many homes in rural Alaska are located in areas that are com-  
9 pletely lacking any kind of fire protection and many others are located beyond  
10 the effective range of standard fire equipment; and

11 WHEREAS the winter months constitute the period of greatest danger to  
12 homes located beyond help in case of fire; and

13 WHEREAS the Bureau of Land Management has developed highly sophisticated  
14 techniques for fighting fires in remote areas, including the use of heli-  
15 copters, smoke jumpers, and fire retardants; and

16 WHEREAS the Bureau of Land Management conducts its fire-fighting activi-  
17 ties during the summer months only; and

18 WHEREAS the loss of life and property is by far the highest in home  
19 fires;

20 BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska State Legislature that it respectfully  
21 requests the Governor to seek federal cooperation in a pilot project to test  
22 the applicability of Bureau of Land Management techniques to fight home fires  
23 in rural areas during times when the Bureau of Land Management is not engaged  
24 in fighting forest fires; and be it

25 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor advise the Ninth Legislature - Second  
26 Session of the results of his efforts in this regard.

27

28

29

The Legislature of the State of Alaska  
FISCAL NOTE

First Session - Ninth Legislature

I. REQUEST

Bill No. HCR #33  
 Title: Relating to a joint State-Federal Firefighting Program  
 Requested by: House Finance Committee Date: 3-25-75  
 Return Date Requested: ASAP  
 Agency: Education Program: Fire Training

II. FISCAL DETAIL

Budget Request Unit(s) Affected: \_\_\_\_\_

A. EXPENDITURES: (Thousands of dollars)

OBJECT	FY 75	FY 76	FY 77	FY 78	FY 79	FY 80
100 PERSONAL SERVICES						
200 TRAVEL						
300 CONTRACTUAL						
400 COMMODITIES						
500 EQUIPMENT						
600 LAND & STRUCTURES						
700 GRANTS, CLAIMS, ETC.						
TOTAL	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

B. FUNDING: (Thousands of dollars)

GENERAL FUND	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						

C. POSITIONS:

PERMANENT/TEMPORARY	/	/	/	/	/	/
MAN MONTHS (P./T.)	/	/	/	/	/	/

III. ANALYSIS (See Fiscal Note Preparation Instructions, Section III)

IV. ATTACHMENTS

V. DATE: 3/25/75 PREPARED BY: William D. Thomas

Original: Legislative Finance  
 cc: Budget and Management  
 Prime Sponsor (First Legislator Named)

# STATE OF ALASKA

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

JAY S. HAMMOND, Governor

POUCH F - ALASKA OFFICE BUILDING  
JUNEAU 99801

March 25, 1975

### HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 33 Relating to a joint State-Federal Firefighting Program

House concurrent resolution no. 33 addresses itself to one of Alaska's most serious fire protection problems, that of providing fire suppression capability for the many rural communities in the State. The approach toward solving the problem, as offered in the resolution, is not feasible nor is it needed. A brief analysis of the problem will indicate the truth of this as well as reasons why it has not been implemented, except in rare cases.

1. The techniques of fighting structural fires are well established and have been for many years. Neither these procedures, nor the equipment used in carrying them out, is compatible with procedures and equipment used by the Bureau of Land Management in wildlands fire suppression.
2. The means to provide fire suppression equipment for rural villages already exists through the State Aid to Local Government Program (Revenue Sharing). Senate bill no. 40 is presently before the legislature as a means of increasing the fire protection fund from \$5.00 per capita to \$15.00. The law, as it presently reads, does not require a community to expend revenue sharing funds in the category within which they were awarded. The only exception to this are funds received for operation and maintenance of hospitals and health facilities (sec. 43,18,050, (a) ).

It follows then that if the community places fire protection on a low priority, little if any money will be spent for this purpose.

Senate bill no. 43 attempts to rectify this situation by placing fire protection funds on the same specific expenditure basis as the aforementioned hospital and health services funds. For various reasons this bill is given little chance of passage.

3. The nature of structural fires requires immediate response by well-equipped and trained persons if the fire is to be controlled and extinguished while the involved building is still in viable condition. This precludes the time consuming operational procedures that wildlands suppression crews must go through to get mobilized for an attack. A brush fire will be there waiting for them. A fire involved structure will be long gone.
4. One technique used in wildlands fire suppression is of value to rural communities. That is the use of an equipment cache strategically located in the village. Such a cache would consist of a transportable container with fire extinguishers, axes, hose, portable pumps, etc. ready for immediate service. Inquiries have been made and it has been established that such cache could be assembled for approximately \$2500, well within the capability of most communities if State revenue sharing funds were used.

March 25, 1975

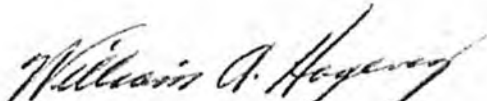
Page 2

5. To provide overall fire protection for rural villages requires a two-fold approach. The first, and most important, is a community wide fire prevention program. The second is a group of well-equipped and well trained citizens who will handle those fires which inevitably occur on an immediate and local basis. The means for training local firefighters exists through the State Fire Service Training Program. The means for developing a viable community fire prevention program is available through the State Fire Marshal's office.

6. If the intent of House Concurrent Resolution No. 33 is to determine the feasibility of utilizing BLM resources for village protection during the winter months it will likely prove impractical. BLM is trying to reduce its commitment in Alaska. This was the primary reason for a bond issue providing fire suppression capability in the Department of Natural Resources, which the voters approved in 1974.

SUMMARY: Traditionally fire protection has been considered a local responsibility. In many instances the beginnings of formal government in an embryo community has been the establishment of organized fire protection. What is needed is recognition of the problem and the resolve and dedication to solve it.

The means is already available, at least to a degree. It requires only community concern and interest to implement it.

  
William A. Hagevig, Supervisor  
Fire Service Training Program

WAH:wg

FIRE SERVICE TRAINING  
THE CASE FOR FIRE SERVICE REGIONAL TRAINING CENTERS

OVERVIEW: The success or failure of a fire department depends on its training program, since no other one factor has as much effect on fire fighting procedures. Some fire department operations occur so frequently that they can be standardized and the firefighters, through training and repetition, become thoroughly skilled in their performance. Other operations occur so seldom that a continuous training process is necessary to assure efficient operations. It is generally ingrained in all fire department officers that the efficiency of fire fighting operations is directly proportional to the effectiveness of the training program. Regardless of how good a fire department training program may be it will be handicapped unless adequate training grounds, buildings, and fixed installations are provided for training purposes.

BACKGROUND: Traditionally responsibility for training firefighters has rested with local municipal and fire service authorities. This concept dates to a time when local rights and responsibilities were more jealously guarded than they are today.

The modern fire chief is faced with the fact that unless his fire department is of a size that employs hundreds, or even thousands of men the cost of training facilities is prohibitive and difficult to justify and local communities can not or will not fund such installations. In some instances several fire departments will join together to build "joint use" facilities. These however, are not numerous and none exist in Alaska. With the exception of three fire departments in our largest communities all of our fire fighting organizations are small part-paid or volunteer groups and none has the capability of providing full service training facilities for fire-

fighting personnel. Nor will they ever.

In nearly every other state the problem has been dealt with by the establishment of State supported facilities. These range from highly sophisticated centers, such as the Delaware Fire School and Florida State Fire College, to smaller schools and academies associated with Universities, Vocational-Technical Centers, and District or Regional Centers operated by various other agencies.

The various training centers are usually located so as to be readily accessible to firefighters from all parts of the State. For the most part weekend schools and seminars are within easy driving distance from even the remotest fire department and all utilize the centers on a more or less regular basis. It is interesting to note, however, that the State Fire College at Texas A&M University is to be augmented by several district or regional training centers because, "some of our firefighters must drive up to 500 miles to reach the fire school at Texas A&M."

CURRENT THINKING: The accepted view held by members of the fire service in Alaska is that the State Fire School or Academy will not effectively serve their needs because it would not be readily accessible to a large segment of the user group. Further, such a comprehensive single facility would require full-time staffing to maintain and operate it even though it might be years before it would be a full service, fully operational institution. If the State of Texas has found that driving 500 miles to the State Fire School is not feasible, one can readily imagine the difficulties inherent to traveling thousands of miles by air to reach such a facility in Alaska.

To be effective as a training center, in addition to regular fire training operations, they should be equipped to train in specialized area or local problems unique to the several geographical divisions of the State. For example, firefighters in S.E. Alaska need training in shipboard fire-fighting. Props for this type of training have been designed and can easily be included at a training center. The difficulty is accessibility, wherein personnel can be trained in sufficient numbers to be of benefit to the local fire department, particularly with the view toward upgrading department-wide proficiency levels to an acceptable degree. A case in point has been the Oil Fire Control School in Kenai. The Ketchikan Fire Department regularly enrolled two to four men in this school annually. The turn-over among volunteer firefighters in Ketchikan exceeds that figure considerably. When the school was regionalized and a site was set up in Skagway the Ketchikan department was able to send twelve men in 1973, a fourth of the department, and ten men in 1974, two of which were able to function as instructors, based on previous training. Greater accessibility with resultant lower travel costs enabled the Ketchikan department to realize the benefits of having a greater percentage of personnel receive instruction for the same training dollar.

For program planning purposes the State Fire Service Training Program has divided the State into five regions or districts. The geographical boundaries of these regions are based on fire service population, fire protection characteristics, etc. Long range training requirements will one day include a training center, of varying degrees of sophistication, in each of these regions. For the immediate future centers are a must in the Southeastern, South Central and Interior regions.

If preliminary planning is well conceived it will not be necessary to build full service facilities in each region. Where existing classrooms, dormitories, cafeterias, etc. are presently available for incorporation into the system on a contract, or other basis, these need not be duplicated. Where certain types of fire service training facilities might already be available in the communities selected for centers, these can also become part of the system. The design of training structures such as fire buildings and towers can be standardized so that cost factors can be reduced.

The design of such training centers is well established and it is not necessary for Alaska to re-invent the wheel. The state can, rather, utilize what is of immediate value to each region and incorporate other desirable features as the need arises or as the development of our fire service dictates. Implementing the proposed Alaska Fire Fighter Training Center Commission can be the first step in the systematic development of this program.

Ultimately through a system of Regional Training Centers old and new techniques can be practiced uniformly and effectively throughout the State and mistakes can be made on the training ground rather than under the eye of the public at an actual fire where there may be loss of life and property because of inadequate training.

Submitted for the record by: William A. Hagevig, Supervisor,  
Fire Service Training Program  
Division of Educational Program Support  
Alaska Department of Education  
Pouch F, State Office Building  
Juneau, Alaska 99811

FIRE SERVICE POPULATION CENSUS' BY REGION

AREA	NO. FIREFIGHTERS	NO. DEPARTMENTS
1	644	27
2	1129	53
3	701	55
4	616	31
5	452	26
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Totals:	3542	192

744 Paid Firefighters  
2798 Volunteer Firefighters.

Area 1: Southeastern Alaska

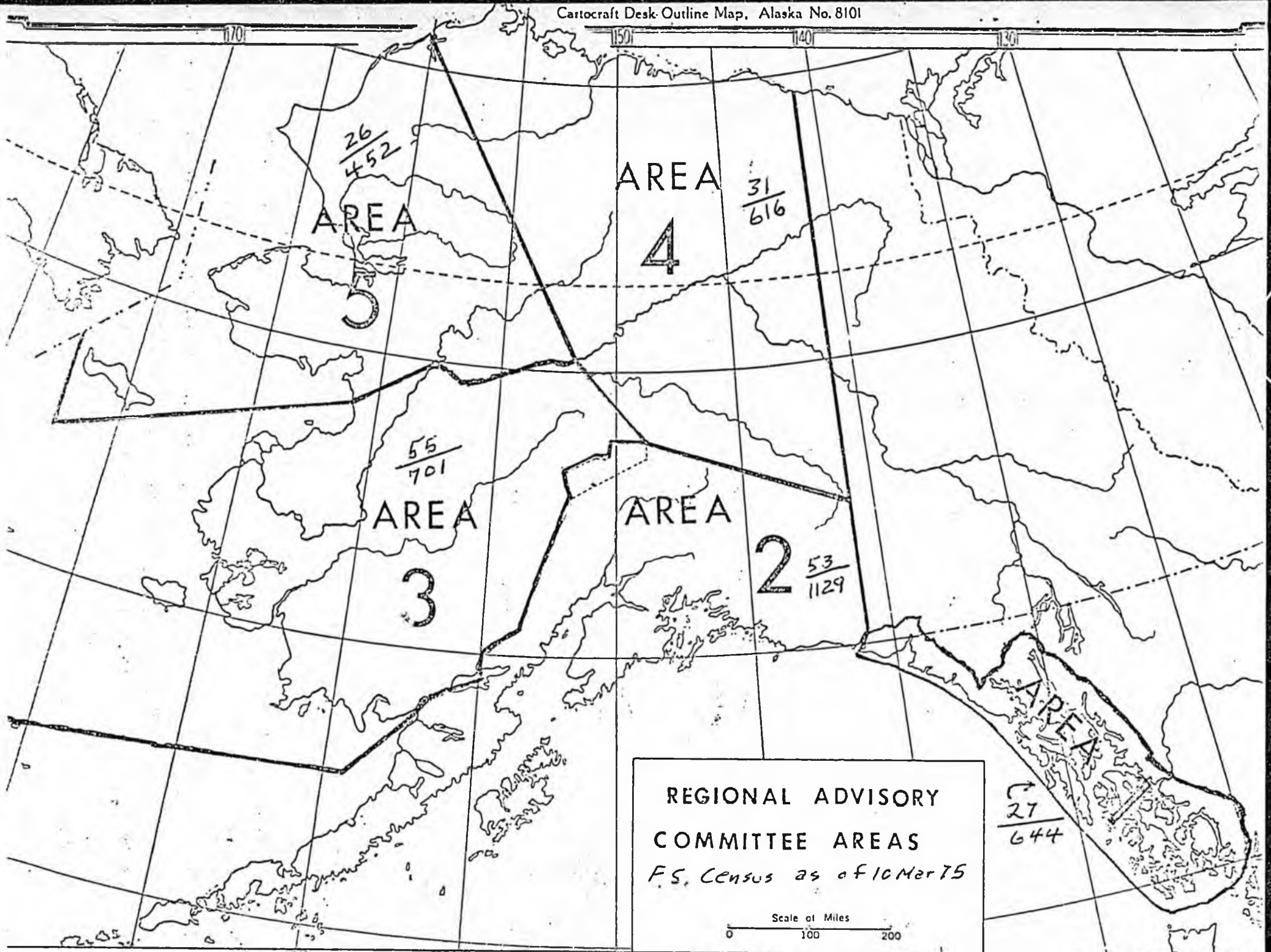
Area 2: Southcentral Alaska (includes Aleutian Chain & Kodiak)

Area 3: Western Alaska

Area 4: Central Alaska

Area 5: Northwestern Alaska

NOTE: Statistics obtained form State Fire Marshal's Office and State Fire Service Training Office.



REGIONAL ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE AREAS  
*FS, Census as of 10 Mar 75*

Scale of Miles  
0 100 200