SB

210

COMMITTEE REPORT

SENATE

FURTHER: FINANCE

3/4/85

Date 4/2/85

Mr. President

The Committee on STATE AFFAIRS considered SB 210

special appropriation to the Office of the Governor for the Alaska State Fire Commission; efd.

and (a majority of the committee) (the committee) reports it back with the following recommendations:

[ ] do pass

[ ] do pass with attached amendment(s)

[ ] replace with/or adopt CS for ____________
[ ] new title
[ ] same title and recommends ____________

[ ] and attached a "LETTER OF INTENT" [ ] NEW FISCAL NOTE

[X] reports it back without recommendation

[ ] recommends referral to ____________ Committee

MEMBERS SIGNING DO PASS	MEMBERS HAVING OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS
	Edna DeVries No Recom.
	No Rec
	Tim Kelly - Do Not Pass

Chairman

Chairman recommendation

City of Valdez

VALDEZ FIRE DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF
March 13, 1985

The Honorable Mitchell Abood
The Senate of Alaska
State Affairs Committee
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Abood:

I am writing in support of Senate Bill No. 209 and Senate Bill No. 210 which establishes and funds the Alaska State Fire Commission.

I believe that through this commission all areas of fire safety can be pulled together and we can reduce the terrible loss of life and injuries that Alaska experiences every year.

Your support of these bills is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Thomas W. McAlister

Thomas W. McAlister
Fire Chief

TWM/lmw

RECEIVED
MAR - 9 1985

P. O. BOX 307 . . . VALDEZ, ALASKA 99686 . . . TELEPHONE (907) 835-4313

Juneau Volunteer Fire Department

820 GLACIER AVENUE JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801
PHONES: 586-3300 — 586-3571

13 March 1985

Senator Mitchell Abood
Chairman
Senate State Affairs Comm.

Mr. Chairman;

This Letter is to vioce my support for Senate Bill 209 and 210. Having been a firefighter in the State of Alaska for the last ten years, I can see a need for a State Fire Commission. During my time in the fire service I have served both as a voluteer and a paid member in both rural and urban Alaska. During these times I have seen both lose of life and property due to poor building codes and lack of public awarness.

I feel that by creating a State Fire Commission these problems can be abolished with time, to make all of Alaska safe from fire. Your support is needed to make this possible. Thank you for your time and energy in making this state of ours a safe and prosperous place to live.

Sincerly; Thomas N Henning IV
Thomas n.Henning
Lieutenant, JVFD

Juneau Volunteer Fire Department

820 GLACIER AVENUE JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801
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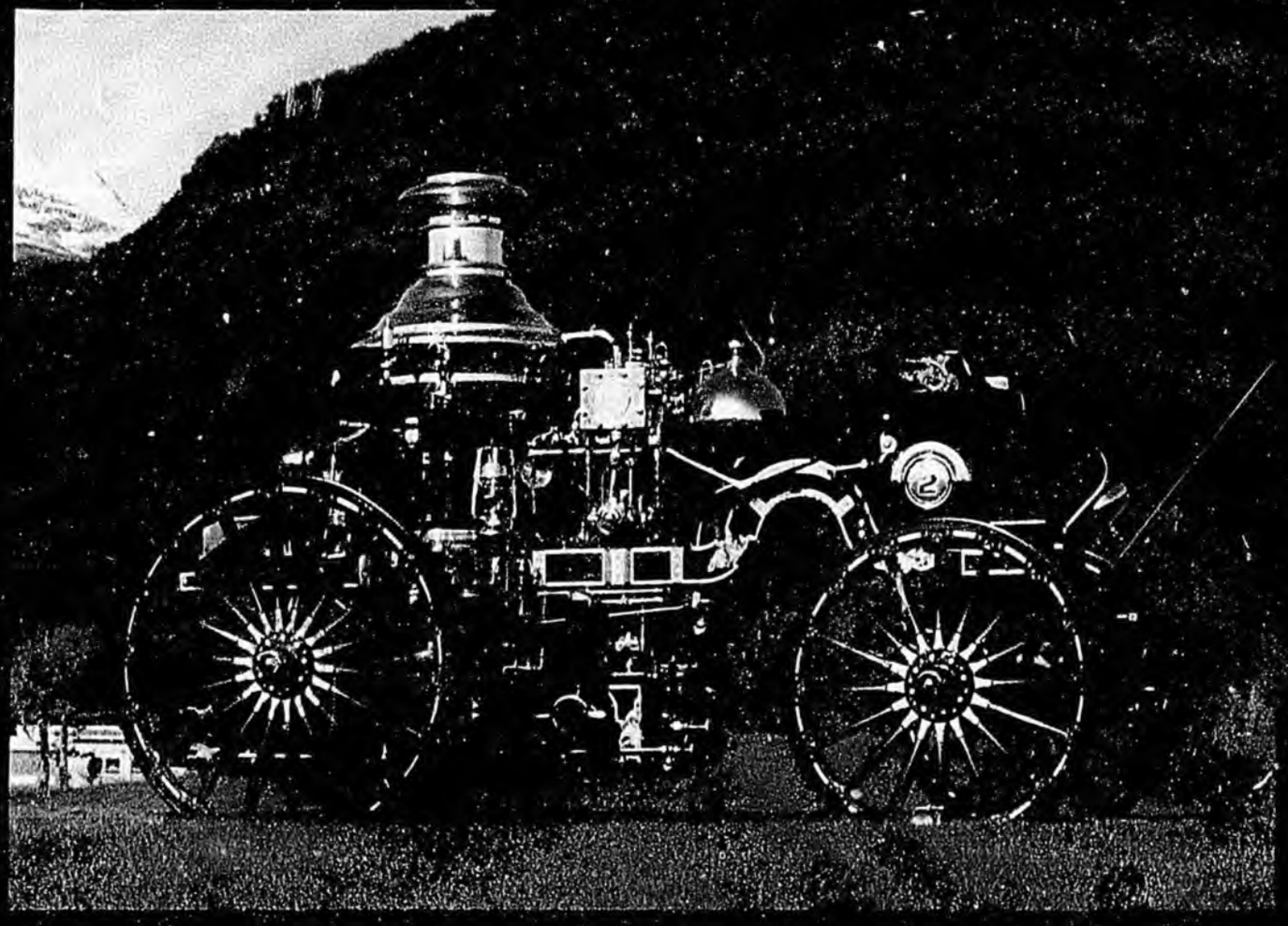
Lieutenant,JVFD

FIRE

Alaska's Public Safety Crisis



Cover Photo — Courtesy of Tom Take

The cover photo shows the now restored 1907 Ahreus Continental steam-powered fire engine which began service in Valdez in October 1907. Retired in 1935, the steamer deteriorated over the years. Chief Tom McAllister and Andy Swift of the Valdez Fire Department began restoration efforts in 1980. A horse drawn unit, the steamer was rated to pump 700 gallons per minute which compares well to modern firefighting equipment. This beautifully restored steam pumper — one of only five known in existence — now, almost completely operational, may be seen at the Heritage Center Museum in Valdez.

F I R E

A L A S K A ' S P U B L I C S A F E T Y

C R I S I S

Report of the
Second Task Force on Fire Prevention and Control

Task Force Members

Ms. Sandra Borbridge
Office of the Governor, Chairman
Mr. Sam Neal
State Fire Marshal
Mr. William Hagevig, Supervisor
State Fire Service Training
Mr. Jonathan P. Cecil
Dept. of Community & Regional Affairs
Mr. Kenneth A. Judson
Fire Chiefs/Firefighters Associations
Mr. William Basham
Dept. of Labor
Mr. Marlo Miller
Emergency Medical Services

Editor
Mr. James Messick
Department of Public Safety

Secretarial Assistance
Ms. Betty J. Neill
State Fire Marshal's Office
Ms. Beverly Barger
Office of the Governor
Ms. Louise Mundell
Office of the Governor

December, 1984

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Task Force report represents the efforts of many people. Without their assistance, the report would not be nearly as complete at it is, nor would it reflect the broad scope of the recommendations that it contains. Although the Task Force members provided the scope of the work and the bulk of the recommendations, there were many additional people who provided data, specific information, and support services that together made this report possible.

In addition to Task Force members, special thanks is due the fire chiefs from throughout the state who graciously and constructively provided additional ideas, and reviewed draft concepts at the Valdez meeting of both professional Fire Service organizations, the later teleconference review of the initial draft involving the Executive Committee of both organizations, and finally their review of the final draft of the entire report.

Specific information of great value was provided by many people. Gordon Brunton of the Fire Marshal's Office in Juneau provided fire loss data and graphs. Jack Wilcock and Scott Wolfe of the Department of Natural Resources provided data and developed the recommendations pertaining to wildlands fires. Mark Johnson in the Department of Health and Social Services in Juneau provided information about the statewide Emergency Medical Services program. Chief Ron Coleman of San Clemente, California, provided specific experience-based data about home sprinklers through Task Force member Chief Al Judson of Juneau. Jason Elson of Kenai provided information about the Association of Fire and Arson Investigators. Tom Take, Program Coordinator at the Anchorage Fire Training Center, provided specific information about several program aspects and provided the cover photograph. Leigh Gallagher, of the State Fire Service Training Program, Juneau, provided specific information about that program and the training centers statewide. Substantial time and effort came from Jim Messick, the Department of Public Safety, who was the editor and brought together all the information that resulted in this report.

Throughout its many meetings and planning sessions, the Task Force was ably co-chaired by Mr. Sam Neal, the State Fire Marshal.

Finally, special thanks to Beverly Barger in the Governor's Office in Juneau, and Betty Neill, State Fire Marshal's Office in Anchorage, who undertook the task of typing this report, in addition to their normal duties, and to Ms. Louise Mundell, of the Governor's Office in Juneau who provided a thorough proofreading prior to final typing and printing.

Sandra Borbridge
Task Force Chairman

INTRODUCTION

This report represents the results of three months of intensive effort by the Alaska Fire Prevention and Control Task Force.

The Task Force was created by the 1984 Legislature, to finish the work of the first Task Force of the same name, that was not funded for its third year. Nevertheless the group published the now well known "Alaska on Fire," an excellent publication which was the first definitive effort to analyze Alaska's fire problem and propose corrective measures. The group's final report never was published due to lack of legislative funding for their third and final year.

The second Task Force was created by the 1984 Legislature to finish the work of the initial Task Force, and was given 120 days - to the end of October 1984 - to complete its work.

Task Force members represent a wide spectrum of agencies with fire safety responsibilities including the two major fire service organizations in Alaska, the State Fire Service Training Program, the State Fire Marshal, the Department of Community and Regional Affairs, Department of Labor, the Governor's Office, and the Emergency Medical Services, which are often reflected in the responsibilities of local fire departments.

The Task Force has attempted to look at the entire fire problem in the state -- structural, marine, aircraft, and wildlands fires, but the extremely short time involved precluded extensive treatment of other than structural fires. Analysis of marine, aircraft, and to a large extent, wildlands fires, awaits further effort. Similarly, a description of federal agencies in Alaska with fire service responsibilities which would have been included in Section II, was not included because of time constraints.

The legislation creating the Task Force required it to complete the work of the first Task Force which was to:

* Provide a detailed account of the fire loss problem in Alaska;
* Identify and define the roles and relationships of agencies in the state that have fire protection programs and responsibilities; and,
* Recommend organizational modifications to improve fire protection.

In addition, the new Task Force is to:

* Request and review information concerning the causes and nature of fire losses in the state;

* Study the activities of the various fire protection agencies in the state; and,

* Submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature making recommendations to improve fire prevention and control in the state, identify methods to implement the recommendations, and to review the progress of the implementation, and propose legislation for recommendations needing legislative action.

To meet these legislative objectives, the report has been divided into seven sections. The first examines the fire problem in Alaska in terms of where fires, deaths and injuries occur, fire occurrence in urban vs rural areas, comparisons with the rest of the country, and finally on an international level.

The second section responds to the enabling legislation by describing the agencies in Alaska with fire-related responsibilities. Although the intent of the Task Force was to include federal, state, and local agencies, time constraints precluded describing federal agencies, as well as a complete examination of wildlands fire agencies.

The Goals and Objectives Section -- the focus of the report -- sets forth numerous "Approaches" whereby the fire problem can be reduced. The intent has been to include the most important aspects, but inevitably some desirable actions may not have been included due to the short time span available to the Task Force. Each "Approach" has been underlined for emphasis.

The next section sets forth a timetable and cost estimates for the implementation of the Approaches. Both aspects must be viewed as estimates, subject to later refinement, as the various recommendations are adopted.

Parts five and six recap the proposals requiring Legislative and Executive Action, followed by the last section which proposes a means "to review the progress of the implementation" as required by the enabling legislation.

The Alaska Fire Prevention and Control Task Force hopes this report is instrumental and useful in reducing fire losses throughout the state.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPENDIX

I.

THE FIRE PROBLEM IN ALASKA

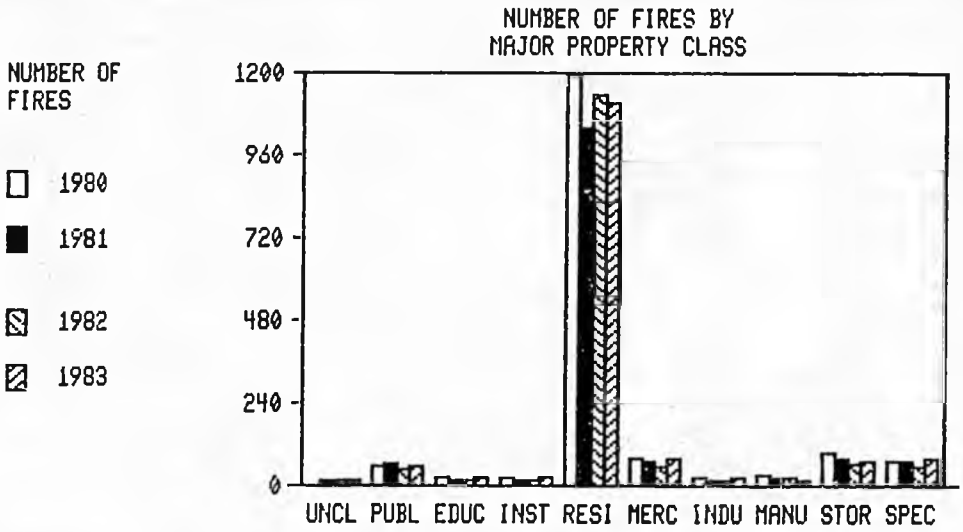
THE FIRE PROBLEM IN ALASKA

A. Structural Fire

Any overview of Alaska's fire protection program must include some analysis of the problem that it seeks to solve. This report, which is intended to complete the work of the first Task Force, does not wish to duplicate the work and the findings of the earlier report in terms of the details of the fire problem. However, a brief capsulized review is appropriate, particularly in view of the availability of the most recent data.[1]

The following graphs are intended to pictorialize various aspects of fire incidence, location, and several views of fire losses. In addition to the raw data portrayed, there is an effort to interpret what the data seems to be indicating. Accuracy of the data is good, although not perfect, given the sporadic reporting of some of the smaller departments, and the inherent difficulties in relating the circumstances of a given fire to a standardized data format. However, the extent of inaccurate or incomplete data is not expected to be statistically significant.

CHART 1



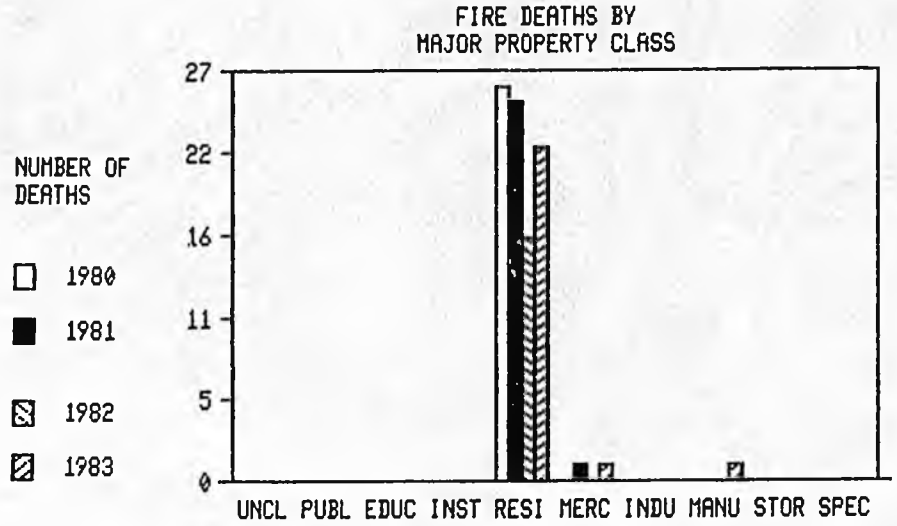
The largest number of fires by property classification occurred in residential structures. No other property class comes even close.

---

[1] Information and the computer generated graphs were prepared by Gordon Brunton, Assistant State Fire Marshal in Juneau, using Alaska National Fire Incident Reporting System (ANFIRS) data. Abbreviations used are as follow:

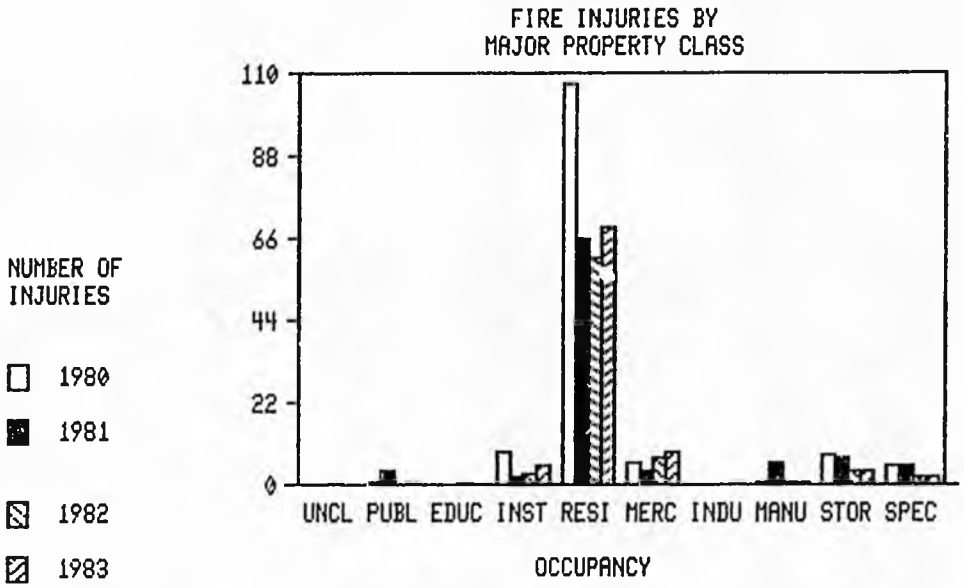
UNCL - Unclassified
PUBL - Public Assembly
EDUC - Educational
INST - Institutional
RESI - Residential
MERC - Mercantile (Stores/Offices)
INDU - Industrial
MANU - Manufacturing
STOR - Storage
SPEC - Special

CHART 2



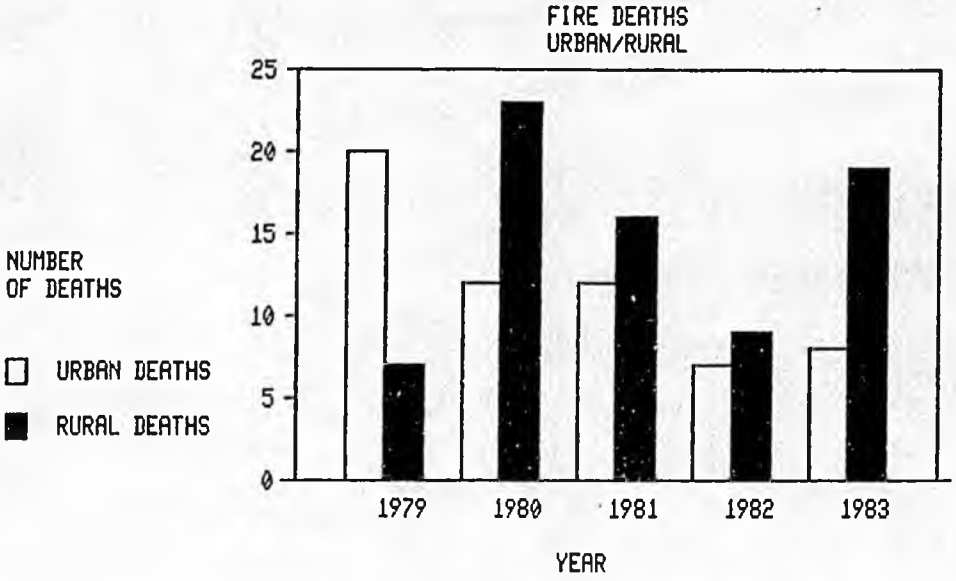
The type of structural property in which the overwhelming number of lives are lost is residential in nature. No other type structure comes even close.

CHART 3



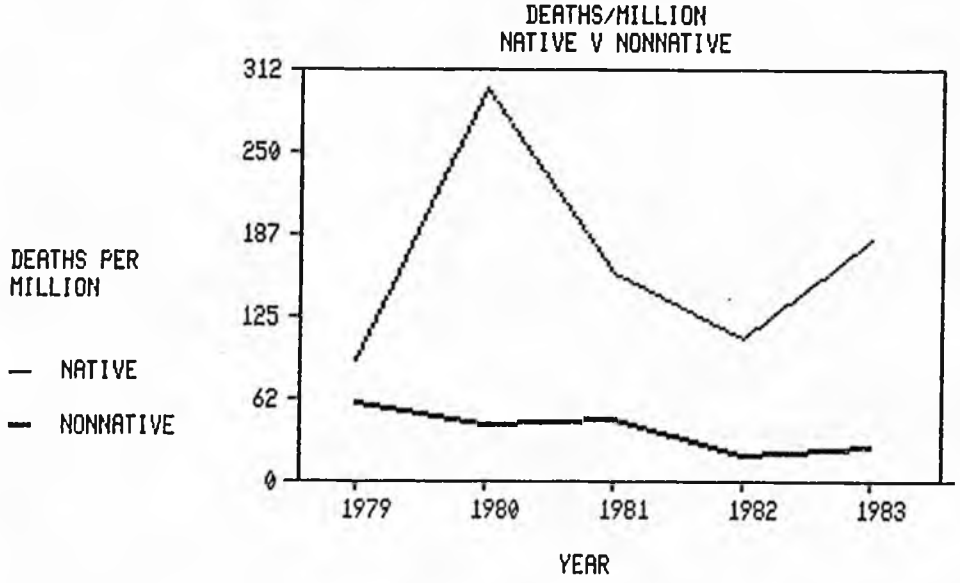
The type of property in which the overwhelming number of fire related injuries occur is residential. Although all other types of structures record very minor numbers, no other type of structure comes even close to the number of fire related injuries that occur in residential structures.

CHART 4



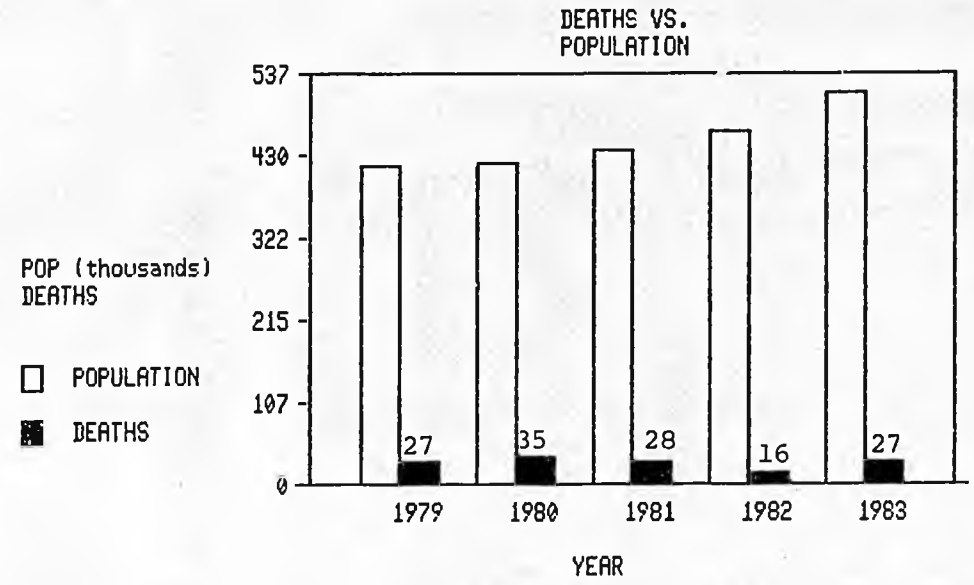
Analyzing Alaska's fire deaths in urban and rural locations shows that in four of the last five years, significantly more deaths have occurred in rural than in urban areas, despite the fact that far fewer people reside in rural areas.

CHART 5



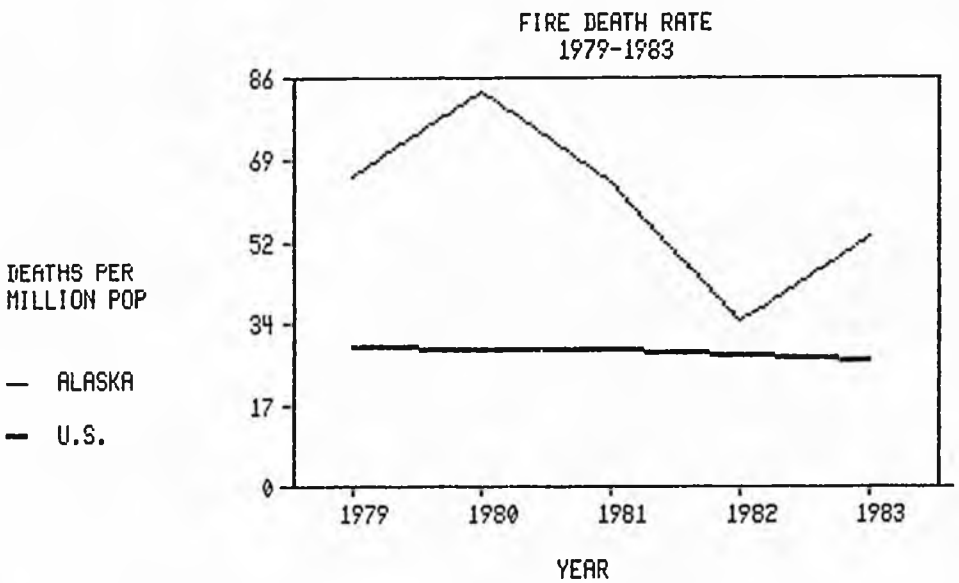
Although the Native deaths per million population fluctuate dramatically, their death rate has always exceeded that of non-natives during the last five years. The non-native death rate shows a slight trend downward over the past five years, and is closely comparable to the average U.S. fatality rate for 1982 and 1983.

CHART 6



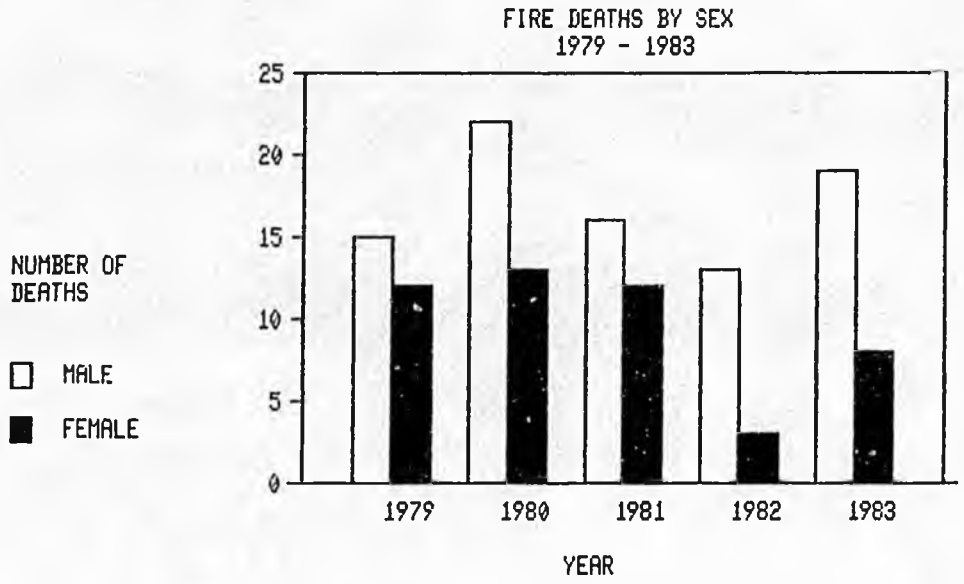
Fire deaths per se, in Alaska present no clear-cut trends, but since population is increasing, the number of fire deaths viewed as a percentage of total population appears to be decreasing.

CHART 7



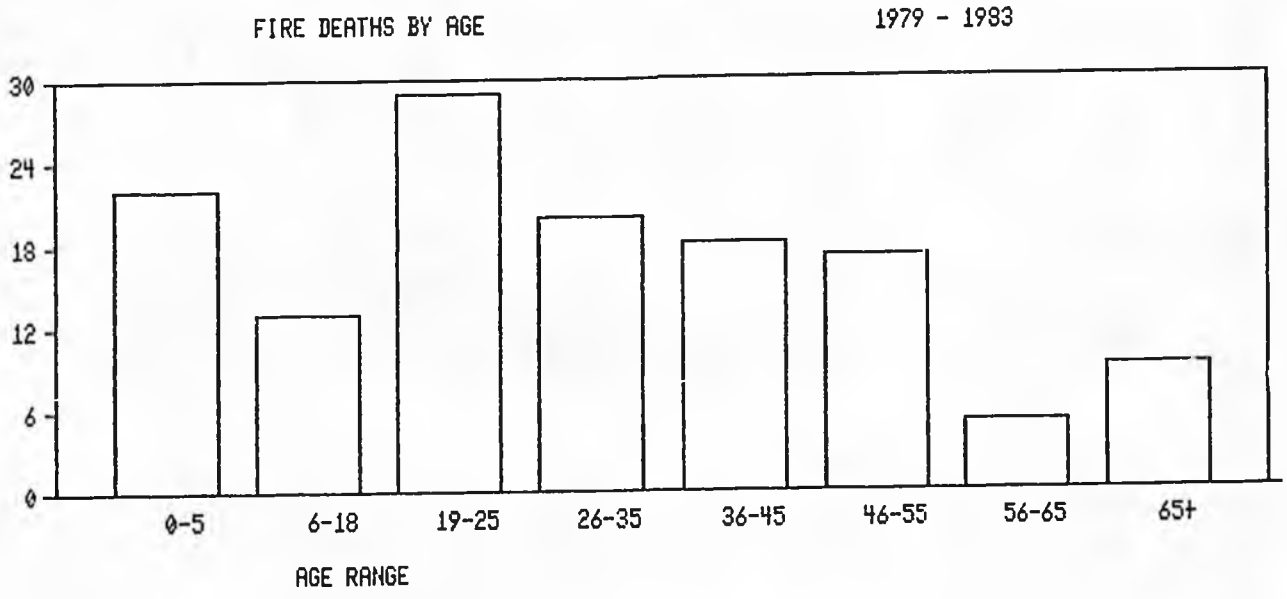
The rate of deaths due to fire in Alaska has consistently exceeded the rate of the rest of the country. The large variations in Alaska's rate is due to a relatively small data base, while the large data base of the U.S. tends to even out the fluctuations. Note that the death rate of the U.S. is decreasing only very slowly.

CHART 8



The data from the five year period very definitely portray the fact that males are at higher risk in terms of fire deaths than females. The exact reasons for this phenomenon have not been researched, but occupational hazards, such as working with flammable liquids may contribute to the higher male deaths due to fire.

CHART 9

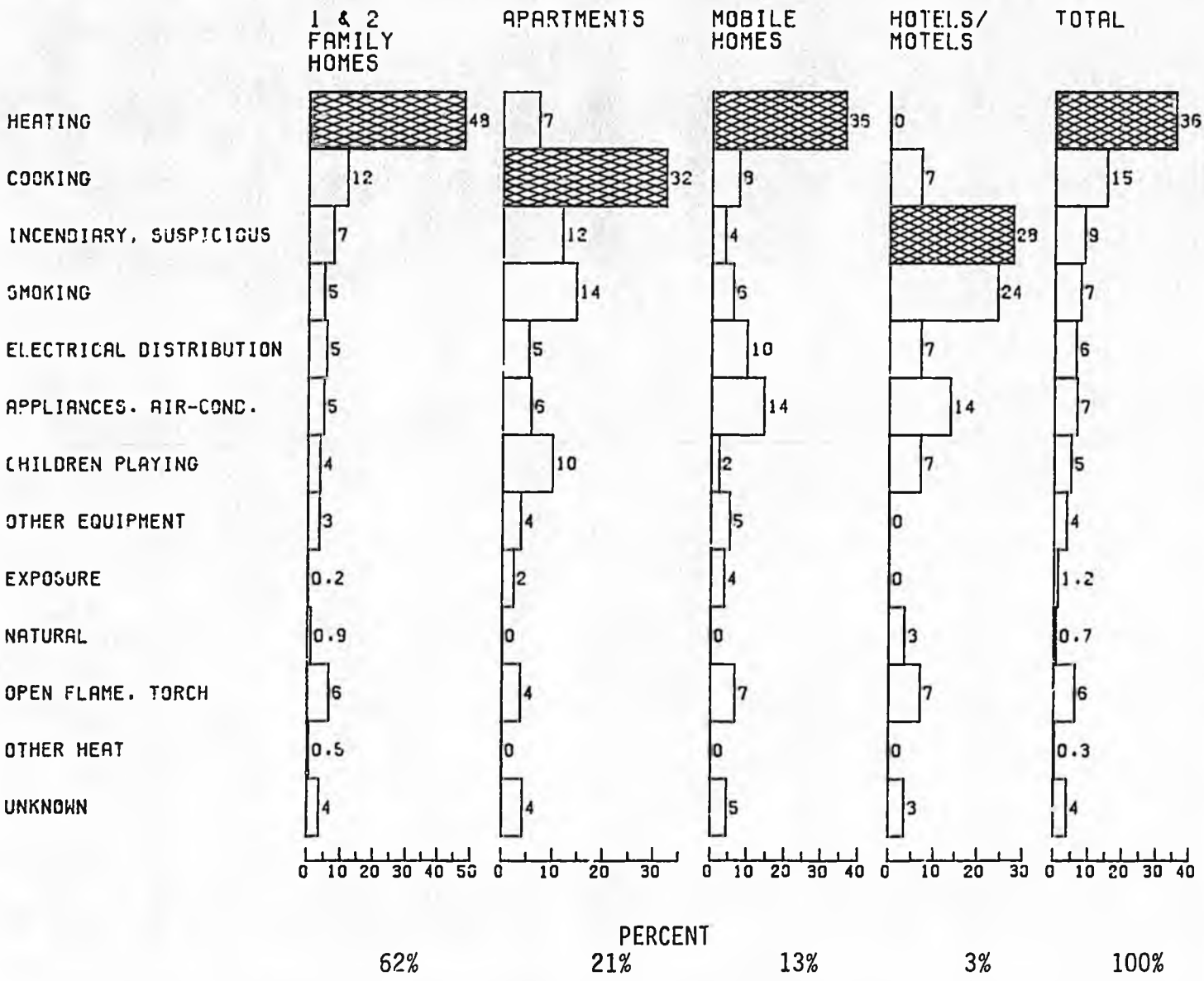


The five year compilation of fire deaths as a function of age cohorts clearly shows that the 19-25 years age group is the greatest at risk. The second highest -- the 0-5 year age cohort -- is more easily understood since babies and small children have greater difficulty fleeing a burning home.

CAUSES OF RESIDENTIAL FIRES

CHART 10 [2]

TOTAL NFIRS FOR STATE OF ALASKA
BASED ON 83 DEPARTMENTS



The data above shows causes of fire for selected types of residential structures. Heating caused almost half the fires in single family and duplex homes which accounted for 62% of the fires, and slightly less than that in mobile homes, which comprised only 13% of the fires, while cooking was the primary cause in apartment houses. Most fires in hotels and motels were determined to be incendiary and suspicious causes.

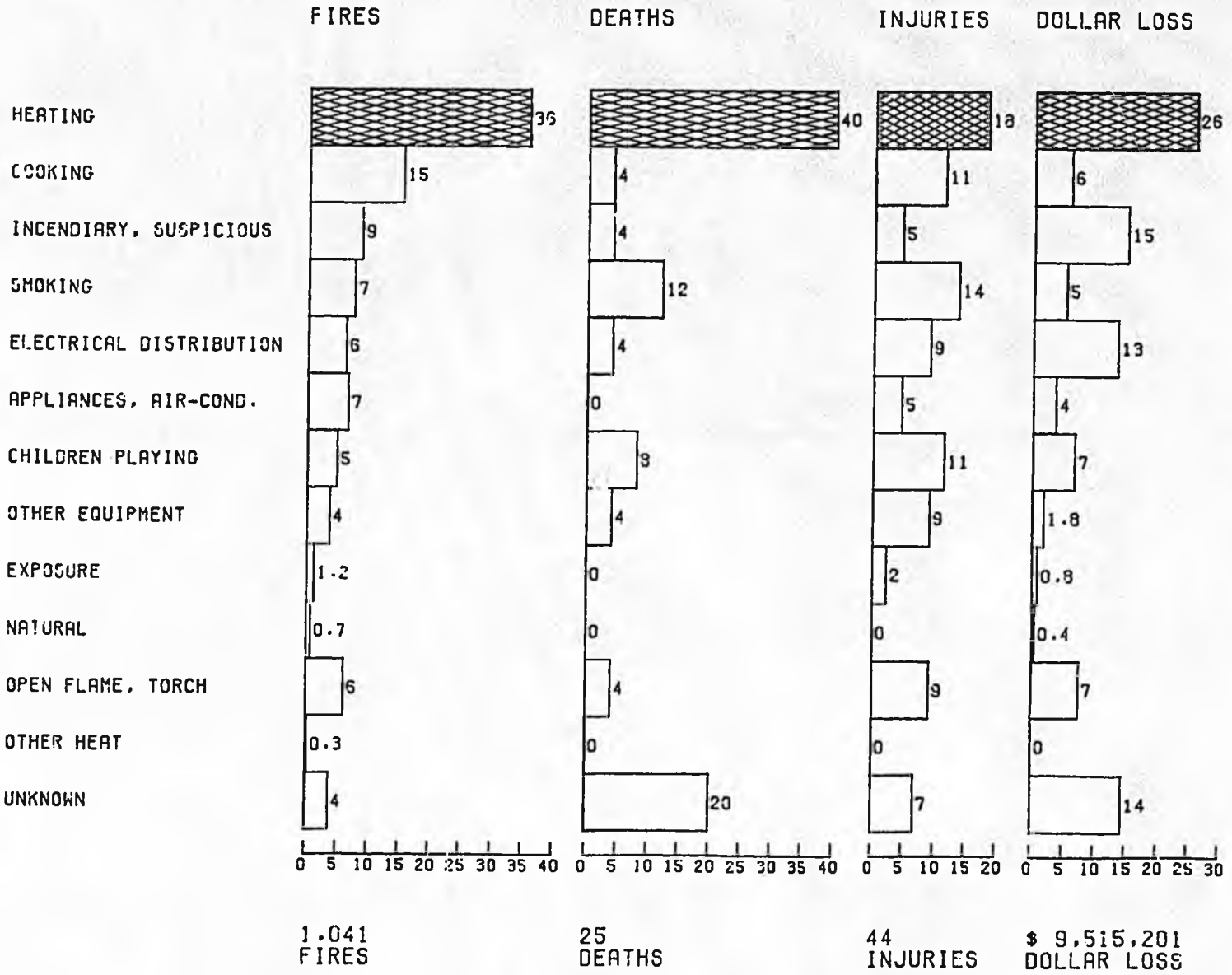
---

2 Source: ANFIRS 1981 data, prepared by the National Fire Data Center, USFA, FEMA.

CAUSES OF RESIDENTIAL FIRES

CHART 11 [3]

TOTAL NFIRS FOR STATE OF ALASKA
BASED ON 83 DEPARTMENTS



1,041
FIRES

25
DEATHS

44
INJURIES

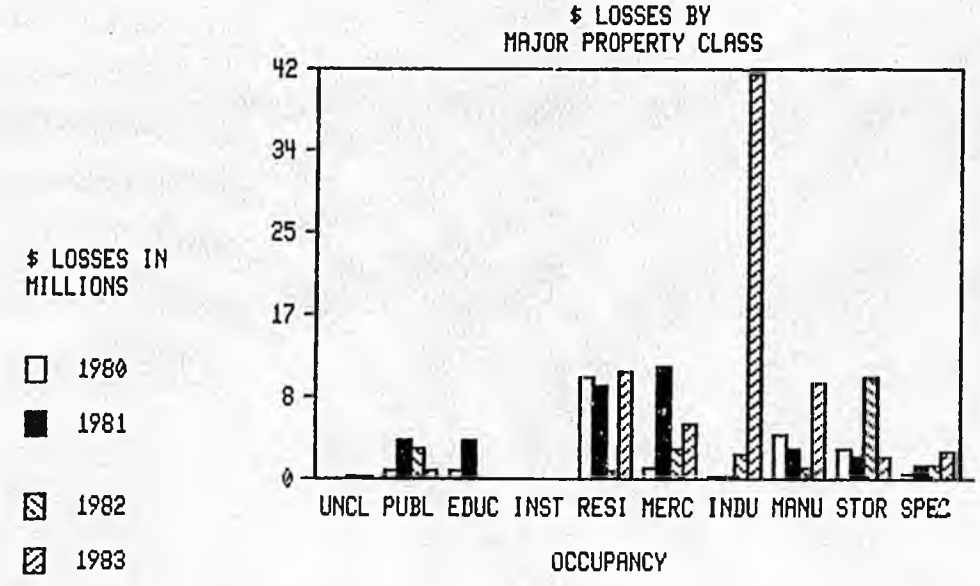
$ 9,515,201
DOLLAR LOSS

When considering all residential fires in 1981 for Alaska, the greatest cause of the fires, fire deaths and injuries, and dollar loss related to heating.

---

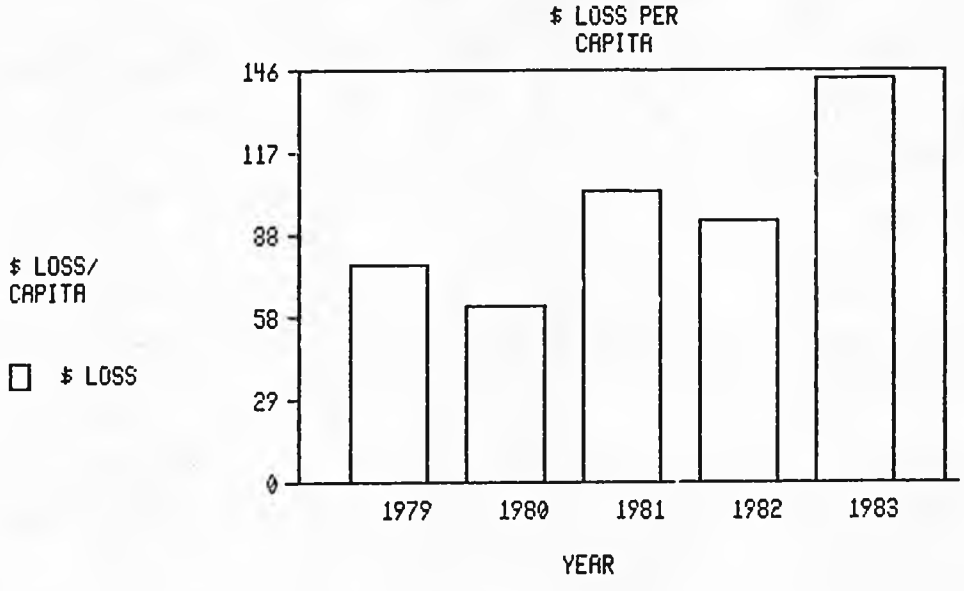
3 ibid.

CHART 12



Property losses resulting from fire are rather widely spread among the several types of property classes. The large industrial loss in 1983 was the gas compression plant in Prudhoe Bay which approached $40 million . As dollar loss estimation is very subjective, the losses should be reviewed for the trends, rather than for actual values.

CHART 13



Property losses per capita seem to display a rather consistent cyclic pattern. The 1983 loss undoubtedly occurred as the result of the large gas compression plant fire in Prudhoe, and barring a similar major fire in 1984, the 1984 per capita loss due to fire should be less than 1983. Despite a "high-low" cycle emerging over the six-year period, the "lows" continue to get higher, as do the "highs," which tends to support the conclusion that per capita fire loss is increasing, in spite of increasing population.

"SCOREBOARD" FOR THE STATE OF ALASKA 1982

CHART 14

	DEATH RATE PER MILLION POPULATION [4]
ALASKA ACTUAL COUNT	38.83
NFPA SURVEY NATIONAL ESTIMATE	26.68

There were 16 fire deaths reported in Alaska in 1982.

	Deaths Per 1000 Fires	Injuries Per 1000 Fires	Dollar Loss Per Fire	Res. Deaths Per 1000 Res. Fires
Alaska/NFIRS Figures	5.13	28.6	$4,088	17.09
NFIRS National Figures	2.97	32.7	$3,744	8.6

Alaska's fire death rate is one of the highest in the country. The death rate per 1000 fires, average dollar loss per fire, and rate of residential fire deaths per 1000 residential fires, are considerably higher than the average for the United States. Although high prices in Alaska may contribute to the high estimate of dollar loss per fire, the stark reality of fire deaths cannot be similarly rationalized.

[4] Data from an unpublished report by the U. S. Fire Administration, FEMA, concerning Alaska's participation in the federally sponsored, Community-based Fire Prevention Program in 1984.

FIRE LOSS IN THE UNITED STATES DURING 1983

The following is a very brief summary of fire loss estimates in the United States during 1983, primarily to discern loss trends, and to permit some very general comparisons with Alaska's losses.[5]

> The estimated 1983 civilian fire death toll in the United States was a decrease of 1.7 per cent, from the 1982 figure. Fires in the home (one- and two-family dwellings and apartments) decreased by 3.1 per cent from the 1982 figure. These reductions continue the downward trend of recent years and represent a 22 per cent cumulative decrease since 1978 in home fire fatalities. Although changes in statistical methodology make it difficult to compare rates over time, it appears that the 1983 figures may represent a new low for home fire fatalities. However, fire deaths in the home still accounted for about 79 per cent of all fire deaths in 1983, and home fire safety education and prevention activities must continue.
>
> Fire fatalities due to incendiary or suspicious fires failed to follow the overall trend and were up 6.6 per cent. In all other respects, however, America's arson problem improved. The number of structure fires of incendiary or suspicious origin dropped 5.4 per cent to a level not seen since the early or mid-1970s. Property loss from these fires dropped even more, by 11.4 per cent.
>
> Property loss from all reported fires was up slightly, by 2.6 per cent. Property loss from structure fires also was up slightly, by 1.7 per cent. Both of these totals represented much larger increases in property loss per fire -- 11.9 and 10.7 per cent, respectively -- but the loss per fire adjusted for inflation remained fairly steady, as it has over the past five years.
>
> The number of fires reported to fire departments dropped a significant 8.3 per cent continuing a recent trend that has produced a cumulative 22 per cent reduction since 1980. The number of reported fires in structures had a similar 8.2 per cent decline.
>
> Other noteworthy findings of the 1983 NFPA survey are as follows:

---

5 All estimates are based on data reported to the NFPA by fire departments that responded to the 1983 National Fire Experience Survey, as excerpted from the article that appeared in the September 1984 issue of Fire Journal, p. 49 (Karter, Michael J. and Joan L. Gancarski).

* Civilian injuries due to reported fires increased 2.5 %. Underreporting is known to be much higher for fire injuries -- even for some serious injuries -- than for fire fatalities.

* The average loss per fire was $2,534 in 1983. The average loss per structure fire was $6,708.

* The South leads the nation in civilian fire fatalities per million population and property loss due to fire per capita. The Northeast leads the country in fire incidents per thousand population and civilian fire injuries per million population. These patterns have remained constant for many years.

* The largest communities (at least 250,000 population) and the smallest communities (less than 5,000 population) have the highest fire incidents and fire fatality rates.

* Fire fatalities in all types of residential properties declined 2.4 %, but continued to account for the largest share (81.4 %) of all fire deaths.

* The remaining fire fatalities occurred in nonresidential structures (4.6 %), vehicles (12.2 %), and outside areas (1.8 %).

* Line-of-duty fire-fighter fatalities declined 9.4 per cent.

ANALYSIS

From the much larger data base available thru the ANFIRS, the foregoing charts were chosen because they seem to portray the most significant data elements needed to obtain a broad overview of the structural fire problem in Alaska. From these data, it appears possible to draw some broad conclusions, and perhaps even a "profile" of Alaska's fire problem.

The number of fire deaths during the last five years has stayed rather consistent -- about 27 to 28 per year. Viewed in terms of deaths per million population, Alaska's death rate is substantially higher than the average for the United States.

The greatest causes of residential fires are heating and cooking. Heating itself caused the greatest number of fires, the most deaths, the most injuries, and the highest dollar loss of any of the other fire causes.

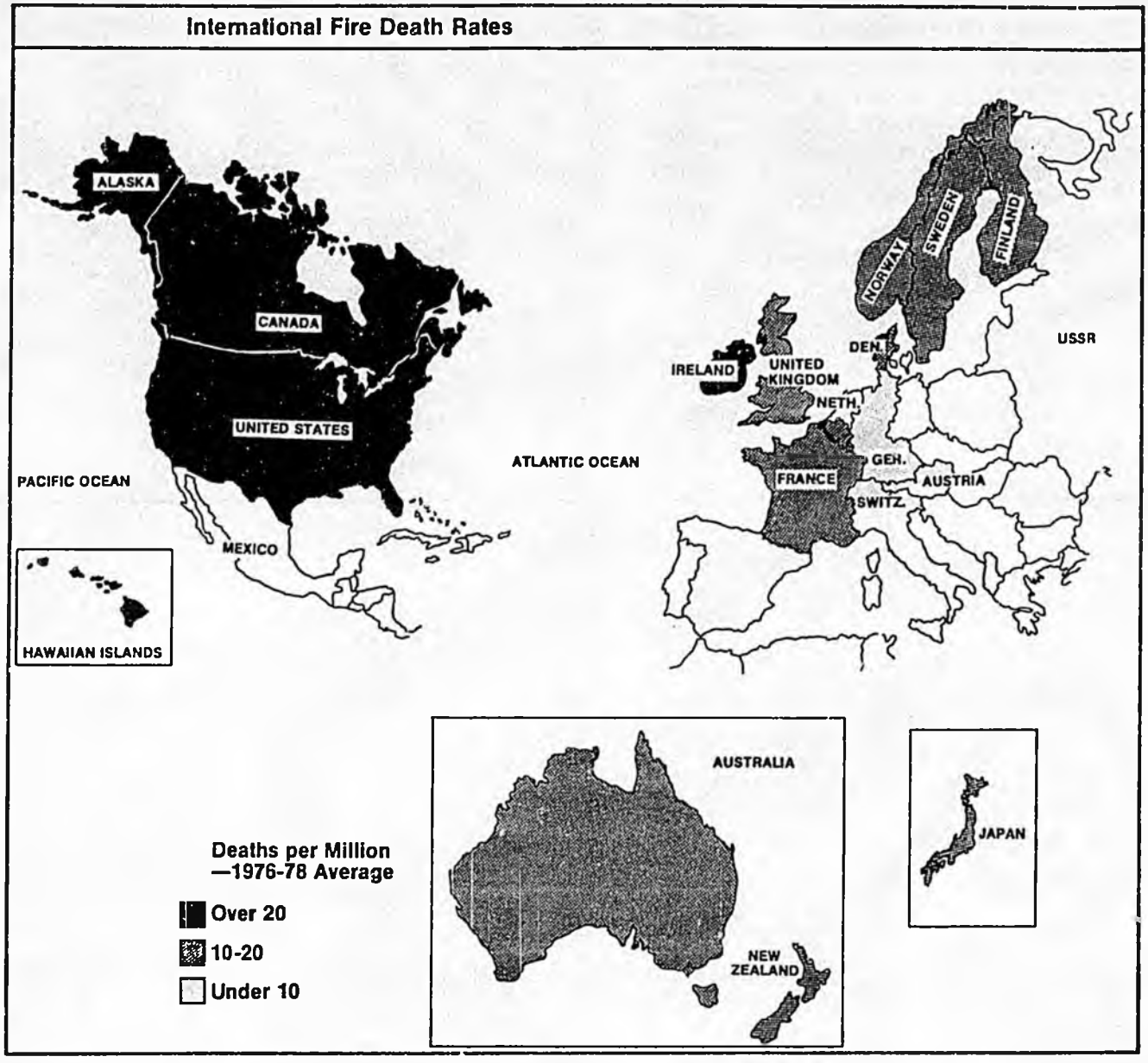
Fire-related property losses are about evenly divided among residential, mercantile, manufacturing, and storage buildings. When viewed as the loss per capita, Alaska property losses fluctuate, but are unmistakably climbing higher.

From this broad overview of the fire problem in Alaska lie the specific elements of information that can be presented as part of a fire prevention program designed to have the greatest potential for reduction of fire losses.

From the foregoing, Alaska's fire problem might be profiled as follows:

FIRE OCCURS MOST FREQUENTLY IN RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES; ALMOST ALL DEATHS AND MOST INJURIES OCCUR AS THE RESULT OF RESIDENTIAL FIRES; FIRE DEATHS IN RURAL AREAS EASILY EXCEED THOSE IN URBAN AREAS; THE FIRE DEATH RATE FOR NATIVES SUBSTANTIALLY EXCEEDS THE FIRE DEATH RATE OF NON-NATIVES, AND PERSONS AGED 19-25 AND MALES ARE THE GROUPS AT HIGHEST RISK OF DEATH DUE TO FIRE.

CHART 15 [6]



This Chart portrays the fire death rates in broad terms for the United States, Canada, and Alaska, in relationship to most of the other Western countries. The North American continent has significantly greater fire death rates than the European and Scandinavian countries.

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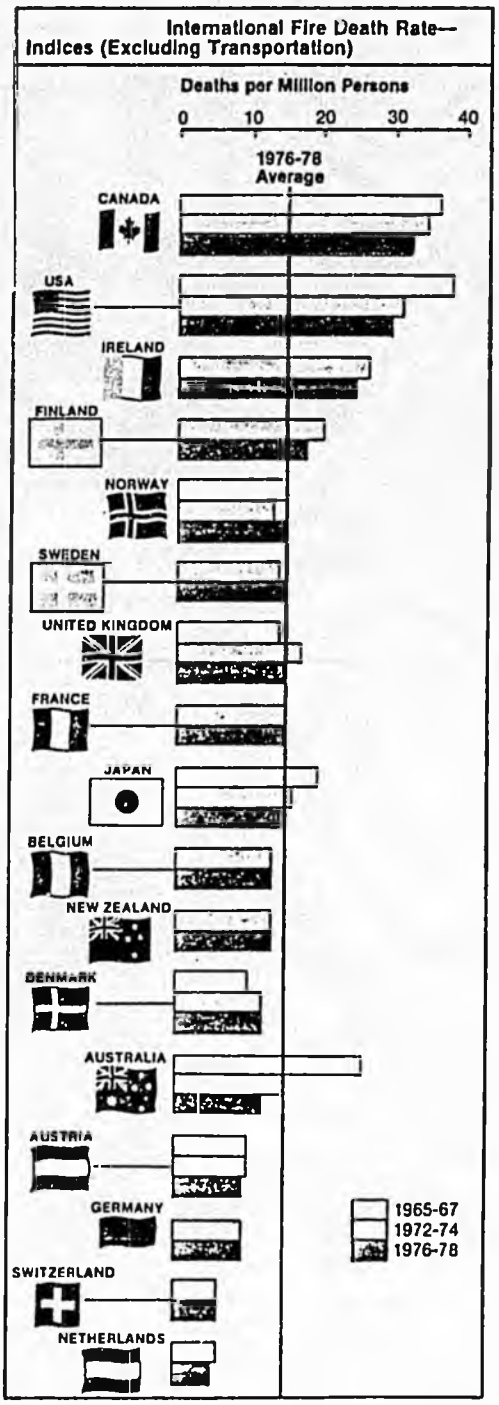
[6] Federal Emergency Management Agency, "Fire in the United States," July, 1982, p. 23.

CHART 16 [7]



This chart portrays the international fire death rates of the major western countries. Since the 1976-1978 data is the latest information available through the federal government (Federal Emergency Management Agency), direct comparisons with Alaska's 1980-1983 data cannot be made. However, from the international data, it is clear that the U.S. fire death rate from 1965 to 1978 has consistently been higher than in all other countries shown, except Canada. By extension, it is reasonable to assume the death rates in the U.S. and Canada, although falling, are still the highest in the western world.

Alaska's death rate for 1983 was computed at almost 62 per million population (See Chart 7), which is more than double the 1976-1978 U.S. death rate (about 30 per million) and the Canadian death rate (about 33 per million) as shown on the Chart to the left, which is the latest international data available.

All these statistics and trends confer upon Alaska the shocking distinction of having the highest (or worst) death rate due to fire in the entire western world.[8]

---

[7] Ibid, p. 22.

[8] This fact was confirmed by a telephone call by Gordon Brunton, Office of the State Fire Marshal in Juneau, to John Ottoson, Federal Emergency Management Agency, November 20, 1984.

CHART 17

B. Wildlands Fire Data [9]

1981 - 1984

YEAR	ACRES PROTECTED (million)	# OF FIRES	CAUSE		ACRES BURNED	URBAN AREA FIRES		
			Lightning	Manmade		Mat-Su/Anch	Kenai	% of Total
1981	57	287	14%	86%	295,000	58	65	42%
1982	57	261	4%	96%	1,295	28	31	22%
1983	60	397	8%	92%	32,276	90	105	49%
1984	67	453	6%	94%	7,894	159	108	58%

Analysis:

Wildlands fires are substantially affected by weather. Dry fire seasons produce numerous fires, whereas cold, wet fire seasons reduce the incidence of fires. The total acreage protected by the state has, and will continue to increase largely as the result of land transfers to private ownership pursuant to the terms of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971. The cause of most wildlands fires is consistently the result of man and his endeavors, and thus many fires occur in the urbanized southcentral part of the state. The urban areas are also the location of most of the local fire departments which represent significant potential for the control of wildlands fires in Alaska.

[9] Data from Division of Forestry, Department of Natural Resources, Anchorage.

II.

AGENCIES WITH FIRE-RELATED PROGRAMS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. STATE AGENCIES WITH FIRE PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROGRAMS

1. DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Within the department, the Division of Municipal and Regional Assistance administers several programs related directly or indirectly to development and/or improvement of local fire protection services, as follow:[10]

a. State Revenue Sharing

Municipalities, unincorporated communities in the unorganized borough, and volunteer fire departments outside cities and boroughs are eligible to apply annually for financial aid under the State Revenue Sharing Program. Entitlements for municipalities are computed according to a formula that considers the applicant's population, taxable wealth, and tax effort. Additionally, payments are made for certain municipal services (roads, health facilities, hospitals). The equalization formula is intended to benefit those municipalities with the greatest need for revenue sharing funds, i.e., those with a relatively low tax base. All municipalities are entitled to a minimum of $25,000 plus adjustment for regional cost of living allowances. Entitlements of unincorporated communities are $25,000 each. Volunteer fire departments in the unorganized borough are entitled to $10 for each person served.

b. Legislative Grant Program

Many of the grants awarded by the Legislature to unincorporated communities and nonprofit corporations are administered by the Division. Typical grant projects include the purchase of equipment, (which could include fire suppression apparatus), construction of community facilities (which could include a local fire hall), and community and regional planning projects.

c. Bulk Fuel Storage Facility Grants

Grants of up to $100,000 are available to communities to construct facilities for storage of bulk fuel. The principal objective of this program is to provide bulk fuel storage capabilities in communities, thereby ensuring adequate fuel supplies and also lowering the cost of home heating fuel. A supply of adequate fuel oil for warm storage of fire suppression apparatus is a major concern in rural areas. Communities must assume responsibility for operation and maintenance of the facility once construction is completed.

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[10] State of Alaska, "Alaska Department of Community and Regional Affairs, 1984, p. 13, 20, and 21.

d. Rural Development Assistance Grants

Grants of up to $100,000 are available to rural communities for projects that will increase employment or promote economic development. The grants have been used to plan and construct such facilities as health clinics, city offices, harbormaster facilities, a fire hall, fire suppression equipment, libraries, day care centers, and electrical generation and distribution systems. Communities must show the ability and the commitment to provide for operation and maintenance of the facility or equipment once completed.

e. Community Development Block Grants

The Division of Community Development operates this federally funded program to meet the special capital project and planning needs of cities. Capital projects grants of up to $105,000 are available for projects of a fixed nature or long life that provide new or additional public facilities or services (which could include fire suppression equipment.) Also available are planning/feasibility projects grants designed to assess the viability and impact of potential capital, economic development, and comprehensive planning needs.

2. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

The Department of Public Safety, one of two State agencies with the greatest involvement for fire safety, has legislatively--mandated responsibilities and is the State's focal point in certain matters relating to structural fire prevention and fire suppression.

a. The Division of Fire Prevention

The Division of Fire Prevention, more popularly known as the State Fire Marshal's Office, provides fire prevention services including building plan review, code compliance inspections, and fire prevention education programs for the public and the fire service as well as conducts fire investigations in communities across the state. It also has the responsibility for maintaining the State's fire reporting system, ANFIRS. The division has offices in Juneau (one Deputy Fire Marshal and an Assistant Fire Marshal), plus the Director's Office in Anchorage (three Deputy Fire Marshals and an Assistant Fire Marshal), and Fairbanks (three Deputy Fire Marshals and an Assistant Fire Marshal). These offices serve the entire state.

Some communities have adopted their own fire codes, which must be at least as strict as the State's. A community administrator can request exemption from the State's review, but the Municipality of Anchorage, the City and Borough of Juneau, and the City of Fairbanks are the only communities to have received waivers. In most cases, when a municipality has adopted a fire code, both the municipality and the State inspect the structures. While fire protection is generally viewed as being a function of local government, many communities seem content to let the State retain fire prevention authority. This is perceived to absolve the municipality of responsibility in cases where a code violation

contributes to a fire and also removes the local governing body from the repercussions of taking an unpopular code enforcement position.

The State Fire Marshal's office provides public fire prevention education throughout the state using their Public Education Specialist and the Deputy Fire Marshals. They also provide fire prevention education programs for the Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) Program and community fire departments.

b. Division of Alaska State Troopers

Since State Troopers are stationed virtually throughout the state, they are often the first agency to respond to any emergency situation, which includes fires. This is particularly true in certain rural areas that have no fire or local police protection. State troopers are certified EMT's. Troopers also work with the State Fire Marshals in the investigation of suspicious fires. Certain rural Troopers perform the oversight function for the Village Public Safety Officers in their area.

The Village Public Safety Officers program, which is incorporated into the Division of the Alaska State Troopers, trains officers from rural villages to assist their communities in emergency situations. They receive formal training and refresher courses in emergency medical services, fire prevention and suppression, law enforcement, search and rescue, and water safety . Where there is an operating local fire department, the Village Public Safety Officer functions in a support role. Part of the VPSO program includes provision for the participating villages to obtain fire extinguishers, smoke alarms, portable pumps, and other basic fire detection and suppression equipment.

3. DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS

There are two agencies within the Department of Military Affairs with some level of fire-protection-related responsibilities. These are:

a. Division of Emergency Services

The division assists communities impacted by fire of disastrous proportions, such as the Cordova conflagration in 1962. The agency coordinates emergency planning at the State level and with local communities. In times of disaster, they are the State focus for coordination of response efforts and financial assistance including the State's Disaster Relief Fund. The division also acts as the Governor's designee in situations of fire impact caused by wildfire in grass or forest land as defined by Public Law 93-288, Section 417. In major fire situations, the Director, the Deputy Director, and the Director of Forestry, of the Department of Natural Resources, are the only individuals who can request federal assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

b. Alaska Air National Guard

The Kulis Air National Guard Base, in addition to suppression capabilities to protect their own aircraft, has a Mutual Aid Agreement with the Anchorage International Airport to support their crash-fire rescue work.

By contrast, the Army National Guard has no suppression capabilities at their four battalion headquarters in Nome, Bethel, Kotzebue, and Juneau, or at Bryant Army Airfield at Ft. Richardson. Their facilities and Twin Otter and one or two helicopters at each of these locations are protected by local fire departments and the Army at Ft. Richardson.

4. DEPARTMENT OF LAW

The Department of Law is only peripherally involved with fire protection in that the Criminal Division prosecutes all cases of arson and code violations that go to trial. The Civil Section assists the State Fire Marchal's Office in review of new code provisions, their ultimate promulgation, and other matters requiring legal advice.

5. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

In 1969, the State Department of Education initiated the Fire Service Training Program which is essentially the only statewide fire training program in State government, although it has no specific enabling legislation. Rather, the program operates under the general mandate of improving fire protection to the citizens of Alaska by providing fire suppression training to local fire departments and communities. Some direct training programs are sponsored by the program itself, while financial support is extended by means of a grant program to assist local fire departments in developing their own training programs and regional seminars.

The program provides direct instruction by various means:

- Fire Protection Management courses are directed to senior fire officers in both municipal and rural areas. Course curriculum was developed cooperatively by the Alaska Fire Chiefs Association, the Municipal League, and the Fire Service Training Program to meet the specific needs of local fire departments, both operationally and administratively.

- The Firefighter I course is sponsored both directly and indirectly at the various regional fire training centers. A 160-hour certificated course is offered at the Anchorage Regional Fire Training Center, while financial assistance is rendered to the Bethel and Kotzebue Regional Fire Training Centers to provide 92-hour Rural Firefighter I courses.

- The Itinerant Instructor Program, which was begun in 1971, places fire department instructors under short-term contracts to travel to primarily rural communities in order to provide fire protection training. These instructors are certificated by the Department of Education to teach specific fire protection topics. Instructors may visit 25-30 communities each year, and conduct training that ranges from a few hours to several days. This program remains a stable one hampered only by the availability of instructors whose full-time occupation may be other than fire service, and by a limited budget.

- Technical Assistance Teams are comprised mainly of senior fire officers who visit the local community at the request of local officials. These

teams evaluate existing fire protection systems and make recommendations for improvement or more efficient operation. Technical assistance teams are formed only at the request of a local fire department or community and are subject to the same kinds of limitations as the Itinerant Instructor program.

Services supported by the Fire Service Training Program include several kinds of certification at both the firefighter and instructor levels.

- Firefighter I - Basic level certification is awarded following extensive training and testing on manipulative skills. Certification meets or exceeds National Fire Protection Association Standard 1001 for entry level firefighters. There are two means of training available for individuals to the Firefighter 1 level: through local fire department accredited training programs, and through training sponsored by the Fire Service Training Program at the Anchorage Regional Fire Training Center. Both kinds of training programs are accredited through the Department of Education.

- Instructor I - qualifies an instructor to teach the manipulative skills mentioned above. Three criteria for certification include a three-year time-in-service requirement, testing on 20 basic skill areas, and the completion of an approved 40-hour Methods of Instruction course. Applicants are tested biannually and have three years in which to meet the testing and methods course criteria. Instructor I qualification is a prerequisite for the Instructor II and Master certification.

- Instructor II - qualifies an instructor to teach 10 additional firefighting topics which correspond to Firefighter II and III requirements. The applicant for this certification must be tested on the 10 topics and take an additional advanced level Methods of Instruction course. The three-year limitation to meet the criteria also applies.

- Master Instructor - qualifies an instructor to teach any fire suppression topic through the fire science courses at the community colleges. Master Instructors usually are qualified at the Instructor I and II levels, although some are recognized for their expertise and experience.

- Special Instructor - recognizes the expertise of those who either have no fire service experience, or do not otherwise qualify for other levels of certification. Special Instructors include those who teach regularly in industry, Native instructors who teach in their own language, and out-of-state instructors. Of variable duration, this certificate is issued at the discretion of the Supervisor of the Fire Service Training Program.

The grant program was begun in 1976, and has proved to be an extremely practical and popular way of providing local fire departments with financial assistance in their training needs. There are two kinds of grants, both of which are administered on a reimbursable basis. Grants are not issued to State or federal agencies.

- Local grant - This is a small (under $1,500) grant which may be used by the local fire department to purchase audio-visual aids or equipment, supplies to be used in training, or to cover travel costs when sending fire department personnel outside the local community for training. The only limitation placed on this grant is that it may be spent only for training, not for equipment to be used for firefighting purposes.

- Regional grant - Presently this grant is limited to $3,500, and is intended to assist local fire departments or fire-related organizations and agencies in conducting regional schools, seminars, and workshops. The only limitation placed on this grant is that the training provided be regional or statewide in nature, serving personnel in areas other than just the sponsoring department. Training provided under this type of grant includes specialized areas such as marine firefighting, plastics seminars, and flammable liquids training.

Other services provided by the Fire Service Training Program include sponsorship of the Methods of Instruction courses required for instructor certification and the firefighter training component of the Village Public Safety Officer program in the Department of Public Safety. The latter program provides two ninety-hour courses for VPSOs as well as a three-day orientation course for oversight troopers. Additional services include State sponsorship of National Fire Academy field training programs.

A number of manuals are published by the Fire Service Training Program, including the following:

- Model Training Guide, Firefighter I Level - for use in both regional fire training centers and local fire departments for basic level training.

- Model Training Guide, Rural Firefighter I Level - for similar use as above, but excluding the requirements which have little or no application in the rural community, such as aerial ladders, sprinkler systems, and most hydrant systems.

- Fire Protection for Rural Communities - originally published in 1975 and recently updated, this manual discusses the various types of firefighting equipment recommended for village use. It provides a list of reliable dealers, describes the various State and federal agencies which might be of assistance to a rural community in developing fire protection, and gives a number of procedures for structural firefighting which might be of value to a small fire department with limited equipment and training. This manual has been distributed widely throughout the state.

- Fire Service Training and Education System - used in conjunction with Model Training Guides to assist local fire department and regional fire training centers in developing their own training programs.

- Fire Instructor Certification Standards - developed to specify the criteria necessary for certification at the various levels.

6. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

The Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT/PF) has the firefighting responsibilities for the 26 State-owned, FAA-certified airports. Only a few airports in Alaska are owned by local governments. FAA-certified airports, under Part 139 of the Federal Aviation Regulations, are those airports serving aircraft with 30 or more passenger seats.

State fire protection began in 1972, and has evolved into a system of volunteers from tenant agencies at the airports along with State employees of DOT&PF. The FAA requires that there be trained firefighters and that they be postured to be able to meet the response-time criteria as set forth by the FAA.

The combination volunteer/paid firefighter approach has worked out reasonably well. Volunteers supplement the paid personnel, and the volunteers can respond to aircraft fires when State employees are not immediately available. The one potential disadvantage is expecting too much of the volunteers. It is estimated that there are some 250-300 State employees, and from 300-500 volunteers statewide.

DOT&PF firefighting personnel are divided into three regions for administrative purposes - Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau. There is no statewide coordinated training program for DOT&PF personnel and their volunteer firefighters, although there has been a statewide Training Coordinator in the past; rather, each region pursues fire training on their own. Each region has its own Airport Safety and Security Officer to monitor compliance to FAA requirements concerning crash-fire rescue.

Each of the 26 FAA-certified airports has a Mutual Aid Agreement with the local community fire department, although they do not conduct extensive training together for a variety of reasons, including overtime for State employees.

Apparatus at the state airports varies to conform to FAA regulations that primarily relate to the amount of water available for foam production.

7. THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Within the Division of Labor Standards and Safety is the Safety Compliance Section. This section enforces occupational safety and health standards that prescribe requirements for safe and healthful working conditions for all employment, including State and local government employment, and the requirements are to be at least as effective as those requirements promulgated by the U. S. Secretary of Labor under Public Law 91-596.

The Alaska Department of Labor has promulgated and adopted fire protection standards for general industry, Article 13, Subchapter 01 - Alaska General Safety Code. The Safety Compliance Section is charged with the enforcement aspects of those standards in addition to other safety and health standards adopted by the Alaska Department of Labor. Article 13 contains requirements for fire brigades, all portable and fixed fire suppression equipment, fire detection systems, and fire or employee alarm systems installed to meet the fire protection requirements of general industry.

Additionally the section enforces other vertical industry standards such as petroleum, construction, explosives, sawmills, and pulp and paper mills. Those standards also contain fire protection/prevention requirements which are subject to Department of Labor sanctions for non-compliance.

8. UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA

Fire Science Program

In 1976 a uniform fire science curriculum for Alaska was adopted by fire service representatives and approved by the University of Alaska. The program culminates in the award of an Associate Degree with majors in Structural Fire Technology and Wildland Fire Technology.

Nearly 100 degrees have been awarded since the program's inception. At present, however, only Anchorage Community College and Tanana Valley Community College in Fairbanks have active programs.

For the past several years, there has been a shortage of qualified fire science instructors in the smaller communities and no professional requirements or local incentives for degrees in local fire departments.

Recently, however, there has been renewed interest in implementing dormant fire science programs in community colleges and rural learning centers. With the addition of professional development and suitable local incentives, this program can realize its potential and ultimately be advanced to a four-year baccalaureate program.

9. THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES [11]

During the past few years, the Division of Public Health in the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, has expanded its involvement in emergency medical services system development, and has taken on responsibility of certifying Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), EMT Instructors, and Emergency Medical Services (i.e., ambulance services) in Alaska.

Enabling Legislation and Regulations

In 1977, the Alaska Legislature passed AS 18.08.010 which designated the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) as having responsibility for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) systems development, established an eleven-member Advisory Council on EMS appointed by the Governor, and gave the department authority to award EMS systems development grants. The following year, in 1978, the Legislature passed AS 18.08.080, which gave DHSS the authority to adopt regulations for certification of basic and advanced level EMTs, EMT Instructors, and prehospital Emergency Medical Services (i.e., ambulance services).

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[11] Johnson, Mark S., et.al. "Alaska's Emergency Medical Services Program." Alaska Medicine. Oct/Nov/Dec. 1983, p. 112.

Since passage of these two pieces of legislation, DHSS has developed grant application regulations for EMS systems development and has developed a computerized certification system for EMTs, EMT Instructors, and ambulance services. All facets of the DHSS EMS program have been developed with assistance and consultation from the Advisory Council on EMS.

Grant Applications and Funding

Each year, Regional EMS Councils or Native regional health entities submit grant applications to the State EMS Office for funding for the following fiscal year. These grant applications must address the major acute health status problems in the region and should outline specific objectives toward improving the region's EMS system. In fiscal year 1983, the EMS Section gave out grants to regions totaling $1,376,000 for operating expenses (including $2500 mini-grants to 59 volunteer ambulance services), plus $923,000 for EMS equipment. Additionally, the Alaska Areas Native Health Service (AANHS) made available $1.3 million to Native Regional Health Corporations for EMS programs. Although the criteria for use of the AANHS funds have been more loosely defined than for use of state EMS grant funds, DHSS & AANHS try to coordinate funding sources as closely as possible.

When developing grant applications, the Regional EMS Grantees assess EMS problems and needs and solicit requests for funding, training, or technical assistance from local communities, ambulance and rescue services, clinics, and hospitals.

Priority attention is given to the needs of the numerous volunteer services serving the smaller communities and rural areas. Each request for funding must be approved by at least one physician sponsor, then must be reviewed and approved by the Regional EMS Council and staff, and finally must undergo review and approval from the State EMS Office and the State Advisory Council on EMS. Whenever possible, local matching funds or inkind services are encouraged to ensure that local entities do not become too dependent on State funding.

Planning and Development

To assist local communities and regions in planning for EMS system improvements, the EMS Section of the Department of Health and Social Services has developed "Alaska EMS Goals: A Guide for Planning Alaska's Emergency Medical Services System." This planning guide uses the "levels of care" concept adapted from Alaska's State Health Plan which identifies four levels of communities in Alaska, including: Level I - Villages; Level II - Subregional Centers; Level III - Regional Centers; and Level IV - Urban Centers (Anchorage and Fairbanks). Although Alaska does not currently have a Level V - Metropolis, the planning guide recognizes Seattle, Washington, as the nearest Level V community. For each level of community, the EMS Goals document outlines specific goals and objectives appropriate for that size of community, including administration, evaluation, manpower and training, communications, patient transportation, equipment and facilities, critical care, public information and education, disaster planning, and mutual aid. Appropriately, these recommendations are much more basic for Level I Villages than for Level IV Urban Centers. In addition, the EMS Goals document includes recommendations for emergency medical services on highways, in schools, in

high-risk occupation sites, and in communities with 25 people or less. This planning guide provides a tool for communities to evaluate their local EMS services and thereby pinpoint areas needing attention; it also helps State and Regional EMS programs to best utilize staff time and funding resources.

State and Regional EMS Programs

Each regional EMS program employs a full-time staff of administrators, clerical support, and EMS instructors. Currently, there are five EMS regions funded by the State, including North Slope, NANA (Kotzebue), the interior, southern and southeast regions. For fiscal year 1984, the Norton Sound Region has applied for a grant as a separate region. The three largest regional EMS Councils based in Fairbanks, Anchorage, and Sitka also employ clinical coordinators to assist in developing and sponsoring continuing education programs for nurses, mid-level practitioners, and physicians. The activities supported by regional EMS Councils include CPR and First Aid training, Emergency Trauma Training (ETT), basic and advanced Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training, EMT Instructor workshops, Ambulance Service Development workshops, Medivac workshops, Advanced Cardiac Life Support, sponsored by the American Heart Association, Advanced Trauma Life Support, sponsored by the American College of Surgeons, and a variety of other seminars on specialized medical topics.

Additionally, each year in November, the State EMS Office and the Regional EMS Councils co-sponsor an EMS symposium in Anchorage. In 1982, this symposium was attended by over 500 EMS responders from throughout the state.

History of Prehospital EMS Training and Certification in Alaska

Organized training of prehospital emergency care providers in Alaska has been in progress for more than a decade. Pioneering efforts in this training were initiated by the Alaska Department of Public Safety in 1970, with the first Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training course at the Public Safety Academy in Sitka.

In 1973, the Emergency Trauma Technician, or ETT course, was developed by the Department of Public Safety to provide an appropriate level of training for individuals working or living in environments where risk of accidents is great, such as logging camps or fishing boats. This course, once predominant only in southeastern Alaska, has undergone significant refinement during the past few years and is currently a valuable course for teaching basic emergency care to first responders throughout the state. The outline of each certified class now is reviewed by the Southeast Region EMS Council, Inc., in Sitka to ensure compliance with approved instructional goals. In an attempt to ensure maximum coverage of prehospital EMS responders throughout the state, different strategies were developed by the Department of Public Safety and Regional EMS Councils.

One method used by the Department of Public Safety from 1970 until 1981 was to bring ambulance service personnel to the Public Safety Academy in Sitka for training, with funds provided to individuals to fly from their home communities for either EMT-Basic or EMT-Instructor training. As time passed, increasingly more certified EMT instructors, trained in this manner, were based in communities throughout Alaska.

During this period, the Department of Public Safety trained and certified approximately 2500 basic EMTs and 120 EMT Instructors.

In the mid-1970s, the newly formed Regional EMS Councils began hiring full-time, itinerant instructors, who could provide on-site training in remote communities which did not have locally based instructors. There were several advantages to this method of training. These full-time instructors became more experienced in putting on classes, and EMS responders could be trained in the use of their own equipment, learning to function as teams with other members of their ambulance or rescue service. EMTs also were taught the necessity of preplanning emergency care, the need for mutual aid agreements, and identification of local medical resources.

Although increasingly more communities have their own EMT Instructors residing locally, itinerant Instructors continue to teach a major portion of EMT courses in Alaska.

Development of EMT Certification

On December 31, 1981, the Department of Health and Social Services EMT and EMT Instructor certification regulations went into effect. These regulations, administered by the State EMS Section, were developed by a Manpower and Training Task Force, appointed by the State Advisory Council on EMS. These regulations provide for three levels of certified EMTs, including EMT-I (basic), EMT-II (intermediate), and EMT-III (intermediate plus some advanced cardiac skills).

Under the Alaska Medical Practice Act, Mobile Intensive Care Paramedics (MICPs), the most advanced level of prehospital EMS responders, are licensed by the State Medical Board. Therefore, the Emergency Medical Services Section of the Department of Health and Social Services has developed a Memorandum of Agreement with the State Medical Board. Under this agreement, the State Medical Board reviews and approves EMT and EMT Instructor certification regulations developed by DHSS, and the EMS Office assists in determining eligibility of applicants for licensure as MICPs.

The EMT regulations were developed in order to standardize training, certification, and recertification for Emergency Medical Technicians throughout the state. Until 1981 there were two recognized certifications at the Emergency Medical Technician I level. The first was a certification from the Department of Public Safety, the second, a current certification from the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians. The latter was the method of certification used by some of the Regional EMS Councils. During the six months immdiately following the implementation of the new DHSS regulations, persons with either type of certification could apply to the Department of Health and Social Services for State certification under a grandfathering clause. All individuals requesting EMT II or EMT III certification had to demonstrate a need for this level of certification as well as provide a letter from their sponsoring physician endorsing the EMTs skills, and accepting sponsorship. EMT III applicants also had to pass a State certification examination before becoming certified.

EMT Regulations

The Emergency Medical Technician I (or EMT Basic) course dates back to the late 1960s, when the Department of Transportation established and standardized the training for ambulance personnel in the United States. It is at least 81 hours in length and teaches the basics of prehospital emergency care, including CPR, hemorrhage control, splinting, bandaging, basic pathophysiology, and treatment of shock (including Military Anti-Shock Trousers - MAST pants in recent years) and medical emergencies, as well as specialized extrication and patient removal techniques for victims who are trapped in automobiles or light aircraft. The course outline, student study guide, and instructor's lesson plans are currently undergoing revision by the U.S. Department of Transportation, and it is anticipated that the Basic EMT-I course will soon be lengthened to 100 hours.

As emergency medical services became more sophisticated, trauma and cardiac arrest were identified as the areas in which advanced training, the EMT-II and EMT-III levels, should concentrate. The EMT-II and EMT-III programs rely on the concept that much of emergency care is based on the use of treatment protocols implemented in the prehospital environment by physicians' standing orders. The 50-hour EMT-II course teaches the use of esophageal intubation devices, application of rotating tourniquets, performing peripheral venipunctures, and the use of 5% dextrose in water, crystalloid volume replacement solutions, sodium bicarbonate, 50% glucose, and naloxone hydrochloride (NARCAN).

In some areas, more emphasis is being placed now on advanced management of the emergent cardiac patient. EMTs-III are allowed, under physician authorization, to use EMT-II skills, plus apply electrodes and monitor cardiac activity; countershock life threatening arrhythmias (v-tach, v-fib, and asystole); use lidocaine; use morphine in severe pain secondary to extremity trauma; and use epinephrine 1:1000 for anaphylaxis.

The EMT-II and EMT-III courses rely heavily on the support of physician medical sponsors who participate in the writing of treatment protocols, in the instruction of the material, and in the subsequent direct and indirect supervision of the Emergency Medical Technician's performance in the field. Under the State EMT Certification regulations, all EMTs-II and EMTs-III must have a physician sponsor who either directly (by voice contact) or indirectly (by standing orders) authorizes advanced life support medical procedures.

EMS physician sponsors also should provide ongoing supervision of the medical care provided by EMTs and ambulance services, approve and periodically review standing orders consistent with treatment protocols and the level of EMT training, ensure that an approved EMS report form is completed for each patient, review these report forms to make sure appropriate treatment was provided, and, wherever possible, make quarterly on-site supervisory visits of all prehospital emergency medical services.

EMTs at all levels must take and pass an approved training course and must be recertified every two years. Recertification requires 48 hours of continuing medical education, current CPR certification, and passing written and practical examinations for recertification.

These EMT regulations further state that "nothing is intended to prohibit a physician from authorizing a drug or procedure in an emergency situation which is not specifically covered by the certification of EMTs-I, II, or III."

Paramedic Regulations

Under regulations developed by the State Medical Board (12 AAC 40.300 - 12 AAC 40.390), Mobile Intensive Care Paramedics may perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation and defibrillation; initiate and maintain intravenous routes using intravenous techniques and solutions approved by the medical sponsor; perform pulmonary ventilation by approved methods; perform gastric suction by intubation; obtain blood for laboratory analysis; apply rotating tourniquets; administer parenterally, orally, or topically any approved agents or solutions; and perform other emergency procedures authorized by a physician. The average number of hours of training for Mobile Intensive Care Paramedics is approximately 800 and is followed by a six-month intership.

Emergency Medical Services Certification

In early 1983, Emergency Medical Service (i.e., ambulance service) certification regulations were approved. These regulations provide for certification of Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Life Support (ALS) prehospital Emergency Medical Services.

BLS service certification is voluntary, and services which choose to be certified must meet the following criteria:

* List available EMTs-I and ensure that at least one EMT-I, plus one other person to act as driver when using a surface transportation vehicle, will be able to respond to emergency calls 24 hours/day;

* Have a sponsoring physician;

* Have direct communications capability with a physician, hospital, or mid-level practitioner, unless the Department (Health and Social Services) grants a waiver due to technical communications problems;

* Have appropriate equipment to perform basic life support medical procedures; and

* Have a program of continuing education which will enable certified EMS personnel to meet recertification requirements.

All ALS service must be certified by meeting the above requirements, plus:

* List available EMTs-II, EMTs-III, mobile intensive care paramedics, or other personnel such as R.N.s or M.D.s who may respond to medical emergencies on a regular basis;

* Ensure that an EMT-II, EMT-III, Mobile Intensive Care Paramedic, or other advanced life support-medical personnel, plus at least one other person trained to at least the Basic EMT-I level to act as driver when using a surface transportation vehicle, will be available to respond to emergency calls 24 hours/day; and

* Have appropriate equipment to perform basic and advanced life- support medical procedures within the skill levels of available certified personnel.

Additionally, all certified emergency medical services must use an approved EMS report form which documents vital signs and medical treatment of each patient, send a copy with the patient to the appropriate treatment facility, and keep at least one other copy as a permanent record.

These regulations specifically do not prohibit noncertified persons from responding to a medical emergency when no certified personnel or services are available, or when there are too many victims for available certified personnel to handle, such as in a mass casualty situation.

Certified personnel of an EMS service also are authorized to accompany patients on medivacs, when this is the most suitable means of transporting the patient.

Medical Control

As prehospital emergency medical services become more sophisticated, the concept of "medical control" becomes increasingly more important. According to a position paper adopted by the American College of Emergency Physicians in April 1982:

> All aspects of the organization and provision of emergency medical services require the active involvement and participation of physicians. These aspects should incorporate design of the EMS system prior to its implementation, continued revision of the system, and operation of the system from initial access to prehosptial contact with the patient, through stabilization in the emergency department. All prehospital medical care may be considered to have been provided by one or more agents of the physician who controls the prehospital system, for this physician has assumed responsibilities for such care.
>
> Physician control of prehospital emergency care may be accomplished through direct voice communications with prehospital emergency medical personnel (direct control) or through provision of care in accordance with patient care protocols developed and promulgated by physicians (indirect control). All training of emergency prehospital personnel, including course design, supervision of training, retraining, continuing education, ongoing performance evaluation through audit, review and critique sessions, and other appropriate components, must be made under the direction of a physician.
>
> To optimize medical control of all prehospital emergency medical services, these services should be managed by physicians who meet the following requirements:
>
> 1) Familiarity with the design and operation of prehospital EMS systems;
>
> 2) Experience in prehospital emergency care of the acutely ill or injured patient;

3) Routine participation in base-station radio control of prehospital emergency units;

4) Experience in emergency department management of the acutely ill or injured patient;

5) Routine active participation in emergency department management of the acutely ill or injured patient;

6) Active involvement in the training of basic and advanced life-support prehospital personnel;

7) Active involvement in the medical audit, review, and critique of basic life-support and advanced life-support prehosptial personnel; and

8) Participation in the administrative and legislative process affecting the regional and/or State prehospital EMS system.

Clearly, in Alaska, medical control is complicated by the fact that many remote communities do not have physicians residing locally. This underscores the need to have expanded, reliable communications between remote communities or highways, and physician staffed clinics and hospitals.

Alaska is fortunate to have many dedicated physicians who are willing to provide medical control and direction to prehospital EMS personnel who may, in many instances, live hundreds of miles away. By providing medical direction to dedicated EMS responders, most of whom are volunteers, these physicians are making a very valuable contribution toward developing a high quality EMS system.

Future of EMS in Alaska

In little more than a decade, prehospital emergency medical services have been vastly improved in most communities in Alaska. With continued commitment and support from the State, local towns and villages, and the medical community, every community in Alaska should be able to be up to the appropriate EMS standards recommended for its size and location.

10. DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The Division of Forestry in the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is by statute (AS 41.15.010) the agency responsible for wildlands fire protection, commensurate with the resource values at risk, for the natural resources and watersheds on land that is owned privately, by the State, or by a municipality. Initially, the State contracted for wildlands fire protection with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), but in 1973 the division began building a fire management organization that by 1985 will be protecting about 137 million acres of State, private, municipal, borough, and federal lands.

As more federal lands are being transferred to state ownership, the Division has either assumed the job of fire protection or has entered into agreements with the BLM and the Forest Service whereby each protects inholdings of the other. By 1985, the division will be providing fire protection on all lands

within the southern half of the state except for national forest and urbanized lands. This protection includes certain lands served by rural fire service areas, although some fire service areas do not provide wildlands fire protection.

The division has nine area offices throughout the state. Some 150 or so personnel are considered full-time fire suppression personnel during the fire season, which is May 1 - September 30. An additional 100 or so temporary personnel are hired as needed each year. Presently, the division has five T-28 aircraft for reconnaissance, with one aircraft providing infrared photography capabilities. Additionally, the division has two Beaver aircraft and a twin engine aircraft. Helicopters are usually contracted for each season.

The fire problem occurs primarily along the highway net, and the overwhelming number of fires are man-caused. Natural fires occur by lightning, primarily in the interior parts of the state, and although far fewer in number, they tend to consume larger areas due to the time required for suppression activities to occur, and the logistical problems attendant to the suppression efforts, including accessibility.

B. LOCAL AGENCIES WITH FIRE PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROGRAMS

1. LOCAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS

There are 249 fire departments in Alaska registered with the State Fire Marshal. Not all of these are a function of local government, since some exist in unincorporated villages outside any organized borough or city. Although there are more than 200 fire departments for purposes of eligibility to receive shared revenue, perhaps only half or less can be thought of as viable organizations, in terms of having training sessions, fire suppression equipment, reporting fires, etc. Many of the balance exist more on paper than in fact. Some 30 volunteer fire departments received State Revenue Sharing in FY84, totalling slightly more than $90,000.[12]

There are many variations within local fire departments in their composition and relationship to local government. Some are comprised of fully paid staffs that operate as a department of their local municipality. Others are municipal departments that have part paid staff and part volunteers. In a few instances, the fire department is a branch of the municipal public safety departments. There is at least one subscription fire department. People who pay the fee receive fire protection, while those who do not, do not receive fire protection. In smaller communities, where local governments may or may not exist, local fire departments tend to be associations of citizens volunteering their efforts to provide protection against a common problem.

In the larger communities, the firefighters are members of unions -- the International Association of Firefighters, and to a lesser extent the Inland Boatmens Union.

The recently formed Alaska Association of Fire and Arson Investigators has a statewide membership of fire and police personnel and others.

Local fire departments are often the first responder in emergency situations -- earthquake, national disaster, hazardous material spills, etc. In many communities in Alaska, the fire department also provides the emergency medical and ambulance services.

Just as the population of the communities varies, so do the firefighting capabilities and personnel training, ranging from the highly sophisticated Anchorage Fire Department with highly organized training and their own regional training center, to the small predominantly Native village that must depend upon an organized response with portable fire extinguishers.

Various attempts have been made in the past to address the problem of fire protection for rural communities, which actually means protection for homes.

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[12] Jon Cecil, Department of Community & Regional Affairs.

Fire loss data show homes to be the location of most fires, and these fires result in the greatest number of injuries and death.

As early as 1972 and 1973, the Fire Chiefs Association developed a village fire extinguisher program which ultimately purchased more than 2000 extinguishers at a cost of some $37,000.[13] The effectiveness of the effort was almost doomed to be temporary, because of the lack of any follow-up activities. The concept of portable fire extinguishers being used for residential fires was conclusively demonstrated by a series of tests at the University of Alaska in 1971, which showed that a coordinated attack by extinguishers would reduce a fire in a dwelling to the extent that rescue of trapped persons would be possible.

Other bits and pieces of a local fire protection program came along in the following years. The State Fire Service Training Program published a manual, Fire Protection for Rural Communities in 1975 which dealt with numerous aspects of village fire safety. The same program had earlier created the Itinerant Instructor concept for fire protection training. A major thrust of this program was, and remains, to provide on-site instructors in the small communities that have no other means of obtaining training.[14] Also, from time to time, the Legislature has appropriated funds to buy fire trucks for certain communities, through the well-intended efforts of individual legislators. Often, however, purchase of vehicles do not represent the most effective means to obtain fire protection. Most significantly, and most recently, has been the development of the Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) program in the Department of Public Safety. Recognizing the extremely high losses due to fire, drownings, and law enforcement problems in Alaska's bush areas, the State Troopers launched the VPSO program in 1980, whereby village men would be trained in the broad field of public safety, so that they could respond to virtually any emergency situation that occurred. The fire protection includes classroom and fireground training and refresher work. However, since the majority of VPSO-related work pertains to law enforcement, there is the continuing concern that they become too law enforcement oriented, to the detriment of their other public-safety-related responsibilities.

2. REGIONAL FIRE TRAINING CENTERS

The Regional Fire Training Center Program is the outgrowth of deliberations within the Alaska State Firefighter's Association in the early 1970s and brought into being through passage of a $7 million general obligation bond issue in 1976.

The first center completed was the Anchorage Regional Fire Training Center, in 1979. Since that time four similar centers in Juneau, Fairbanks, Bethel, and Kotzebue have been substantially completed. All five centers are maintained

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[13] "Applicability of Wildlands Fire Fighting Techniques for Structural Fires," Alaska Department of Education, July 1977, p. 31.

[14] Organizational Design of Fire Service Training and Educational Resources in Alaska, Alaska Department of Education, July 1978, p. 38.

and operated by the host communities for training of fire services and other emergency services personnel with title to the grounds and facilities being retained by the State for a period of ten years, after which title reverts to the cities, with the single provision that the centers remain dedicated in perpetuity to the continued use for training of emergency services personnel.

Some centers have dormitory facilities which are extremely helpful when housing firefighter training. Each training center has a variety of props to assist with actual "hands-on training." The local community may assess a "use fee" to the trainees or their sponsoring agency to help offset overhead costs involved.

The Anchorage facility, alone, is currently operating with a satisfactory degree of success. This is generally attributed to the large population of firefighters and other emergency personnel in the area, and the fact that the Municipality of Anchorage has shown constant support for the program since its inception.

Delays in construction, coupled with changes in the local political structure, has had an adverse effect on the other four training centers. A further adverse effect has been caused by the inability of the State Fire Service Training Program to generate enough funding within the Department of Education to support continuing and varied training programs within the various centers. An example is the marine fire training capabilities built into the Juneau Regional Fire Training Center. There has never been sufficient funding generated to conduct a single marine fire school since the facility was completed in 1982.

3. EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Many local fire departments in Alaska also provide varying degrees of emergency medical services (EMS). While a growing number of departments are providing increasingly professional services, none experiences more calls for assistance than the Anchorage Fire Department (AFD),[15] which has, as a result, developed perhaps the best EMS program in the state.

Anchorage EMS lists national registration as a prerequisite to application and competition for hire. Testing for the hire list normally occurs annually and consists initially of equally weighted written medical and general oral exams, and a pass/fail physical ability test. Top candidates then proceed to a medical oral board, with failure at any step up to this point resulting in failure to qualify for that year's eligibility list. An interview with the EMS Chief is the final step.

Municipal regulation requires a thorough physical examination by a physician, at the time of the actual job offer, prior to beginning work. Alaska grants licenses only upon completion of a supervised six-month internship, and AFD

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[15] Much of the information in this section is from the "Emergency Medical Service" booklet prepared by the Anchorage Fire Department.

maintains new employees in a probationary status to the end of 12 months. No age restrictions exist beyond the National Registry's minimum of 18 years.

Following probation, new paramedics enter a career ladder consisting of three basic ranks below the administrative level. Paramedic I and Paramedic II personnel staff ambulances, with the latter designated as lead technician, and the shift supervisor is a Paramedic Lieutenant. Advancement follows a competitive testing system similar to hiring procedures. Promotion to Lieutenant is by appointment of the EMS Chief, as is the position of Paramedic Captain, who is the training officer and the other administrator in the EMS Division, directly below the Chief in the command chain. Anchorage's Fire Chief appoints the EMS Chief, who is an Assistant Chief in the AFD hierarchy.

Anchorage paramedics complete a minimum of 72 hours of continuing education annually to maintain local certification by the Medical Advisory Board (60 are required for state license renewal). Didactic and clinical categories receive equal emphasis, and training consists of both on-duty and several mandatory, paid, off-duty sessions each year.

The Anchorage Fire Department does not cross-train EMS personnel in fire suppression; EMS personnel function as paramedics only. Medics rotate fire station assignments regularly and participate in station duties and recreation with fireline crews as call volume permits.

Emergency responders work a 56-hour week on a "Kelly" schedule, rotating 24-hour tours of duty among three shifts of personnel. Salaries start at approximately $26,000/year and rise to about $40,000 at the end of the first full year off probation (two years total).

Presently, 80% of the Anchorage Fire Department's 300 full-time paid employees are emergency personnel assigned to 11 bowl-area stations and one in a near suburb. Twelve engine companies cross-function as nontransport Basic Life Support (BLS) units in layered response situations, assisting the EMS Division's five primary paramedic-manned Advanced Life Support (ALS) crews and single shift supervisor. An auxiliary force of 50 volunteers, working out of three additional stations, answers fire and EMS alarms in the less populated areas.

This configuration, coordinated by central dispatch, allows both early BLS care and three paramedics on most critical incidents. Private services are limited to pre-assessed routine transports and do not engage in field response or transport.

Paramedics deliver patients to four local hospitals: two private, one military, and one operated by the Indian Health Service. Total annual call volume first exceeded 10,000 in 1981 and grows by 5%-6% each year. Alarms per unit per 24-hour shift average eight, but vary considerably with season and location. Thirty percent of all runs involve ALS assessment or treatment skills.

A Medical Advisory Board consisting of physicians, nurses, and a paramedic representative oversees medical treatment and review. The board has backed gradually increasing levels of ALS practice by written standing orders, which currently encompass numerous invasive techniques and over 20 medications.

Discretion to use these therapies without direct verbal permission lies with the paramedics on location for all but one medication. This degree of physician trust, and the conditions that have permitted the Anchorage system to develop unhampered by many of the political problems common in other locales, contributes to an out-of-hospital save rate in medical cardiac arrest patients that has consistently rivaled other EMS services nationwide.

C. PROFESSIONAL FIRE SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

1. ALASKA FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

Organized in 1969, the Alaska Fire Chiefs Association has continued to promote the development of the Fire Service through progressive programs of education/public relations and research.

A major activity of this association is political at the state level. The rapid growth of Alaska and the impact of oil revenues on the Fire Service mandate constant changes to the delivery services.

The Fire Chiefs and Firefighters associations jointly employ a lobbyist at the State Capitol. There are 249 fire departments registered with the State Fire Marshal. It is estimated that 120 to 130 of these departments are actually active and more than a paper department. Sixty fire departments, about 50% of the active departments, now belong to the Alaska Fire Chiefs Association. The current officers of the Alaska Fire Chiefs Association are elected for a two-year term and are:

President - Chief Alan Judson, Juneau Fire Department
1st Vice President - Chief Dewey Whetsell, Cordova Volunteer Fire Dept.
2nd Vice President - Chief William Shechter, U of A Fire Dept.

An annual conference is held each year concurrent with the firefighters' conference.

2. ALASKA STATE FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

Organized in 1962, the Alaska State Firefighters Association continues to unite and bring together, at least annually, the firefighters of Alaska to promote the latest improvements in the Fire Service and to enhance communications between departments across the state. The association is politically active, promoting the Fire Service in Alaska, and jointly employs a lobbyist with the Alaska Fire Chiefs Association.

Of the 120 to 130 active fire departments in Alaska, with an estimated 3,500 to 4,000 firefighters, 1,000 are currently members of the association.

The officers of the association serve two-year terms (same as the fire chiefs) and currently are:

President - Jason Elson, Kenai Fire Department
1st Vice President - Robert Purcell, Homer Fire Department
2nd Vice President - Curtis Jones, Glacier Fire Department

3. UNION FIREFIGHTERS

The International Association of Firefighters (I.A.F.F.) represents three fire departments in Alaska: Anchorage with 300+ firefighters, Fairbanks with 70+ firefighters, and Ketchikan with 15 firefighters. The I.A.F.F. maintains its own lobbyist and represents its members on political issues.

The strongest community involvement of the union is support of Muscular Dystrophy fund raising.

4. INLAND BOATMANS UNION

The Inland Boatmans Union of Alaska presently represents the 36 paid firefighters of the Juneau Fire Department. This union currently encourages activity with the Alaska State Firefighters Association and the Alaska Fire Chiefs Association.

5. THE ALASKA ASSOCIATION OF FIRE AND ARSON INVESTIGATORS

The AAFAI was formed in January 1984, with the specific intent to bring together those persons interested in fire and arson investigation so as to provide a uniform force to combat the problem. To date, the association is comprised of more than 125 members including those individuals representing fire departments (volunteer and paid), municipal police, Alaska State Troopers, private investigative agencies, the State Fire Marshal's Offices, law firms, and federal agencies (i.e., treasury department, consumer protection, etc.).

The association promotes a bond of friendship, understanding and cooperation between those individuals and agencies through yearly fire investigation training seminars and meetings.

The association is looking toward a statewide "Arson Information Reward Fund" including participation in a statewide Crime Stoppers Program. Also anticipated is its involvement in a mini grant fund designed to assist fire investigation personnel to obtain the necessary equipment to more adequately investigate arson.

Governing the association's activities is a nine-member board of directors and four officers.

Further information can be obtained by contacting any of the following officers:

President - Vern Long, Box 598, Kenai, Alaska 99611, 456-4002
Vice President - David Burnett, Box 598, Kenai, Alaska 99611, 283-7666
Secretary - Roy C. Isenberg, Box 598, Kenai, Alaska 99611, 269-5604
Treasurer - Jason Elson, Box 598, Kenai, Alaska 99611, 283-7666

III.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL A - FIRE EDUCATION AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

Inform the people of Alaska of all aspects of fire prevention, protection, and control.

OBJECTIVE 1

The State will substantially expand its fire prevention and education efforts generally, with particular emphasis upon preventing fires in all buildings, particularly in dwellings, which are both the most common place of fire occurrence and fire deaths, and the least affected by governmental efforts to ensure fire and life safety.

The occurrence of most, but not all, fires may generally be traced to a failure of fire prevention. Prevention is highly stressed by all agencies in the Fire Service, but to a large extent prevention hasn't occurred, and to the extent it has, it cannot be proven. The idea of prevention is also, to some extent, at odds with the goal of fire departments, whose personnel are described as firefighters. Although success in prevention can be measured, funding for it may be more difficult than suppression, which is more visible.

Given these inherent difficulties, state government agencies with fire protection responsibilities must assume a leadership role, and in cooperation with local governments and other allied agencies, initiate prevention efforts, particularly in the home, where the greatest number of fires occur.

The following approaches are intended to be illustrative of fire prevention efforts, but are not limited to other initiatives.

APPROACH (a)

In consultation with the fire insurance industry, local fire departments, regional housing authorities, and others, the State Fire Marshal's Office will initiate and coordinate a program of reduction of fires in dwellings by determining the feasibility of installing sprinkler systems in homes and the rate reduction in fire insurance premiums some insurance companies have for installation of home sprinkler systems, placement of smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, dead bolts, voluntarily initiated home inspections through the local fire departments, and such other actions as deemed appropriate.

RATIONALE

The Alaska Division of Insurance, which regulates the premium rates used by the insurance industry, is in agreement with home sprinklers, providing installation is done in accordance with approved standards. Those standards will be included in the 1985 Uniform Building Code which is now in the process of review at the national level.

San Clemente, California, is an example of the benefits that can occur following sprinkler installation in dwellings, which is required by local ordinance. The mandatory installation of residential sprinklers in San Clemente allowed a multifaceted savings to

the homeowner and the local government. California law requires a 15% reduction to the homeowner who sprinklers his home, although most companies are giving 25%. This is a direct savings to the homeowner. The City of San Clemente is saving $3.5 million, projected over 10 years, in just the fire department, for direct personnel and equipment costs due to the reduction in required response. The savings in response personnel are utilized in the public fire-education programs creating further savings. With the sprinkler requirements, the City allows tradeoffs such as increased housing density. Water mains of one size can be extended further due to reduced fire-flow requirements. Dead-end mains are allowed in some areas, reducing costs again as a loop is not required. They have further required any structure over 35 feet to the roof or top of the parapet, or with a calculated needed fire flow in excess of 3500 gpm, to be sprinklered. San Clemente allows the installation of iron, steel, copper, or plastic piping for the sprinklers and is presently operating with its own codes addressing plastic. The Uniform Codes have yet to address this issue.

APPROACH (b)

If sprinklers prove economically feasible, legislation should be coordinated through the State Fire Marshal's Office and supported by all elements of the Fire Service community, to establish low-interest loans to homeowners for installation of sprinklers in a similar manner to existing low-interest energy conservation loans within the Department of Community and Regional Affairs.

RATIONALE

The Department of Community and Regional Affairs now has numerous low-interest loans for such home improvements as weatherization, building material loans, housing rehabilitation, home purchase assistance and so on. Low-interest loans for home sprinkler systems would appear to be a reasonable extension of existing programs.

APPROACH (c)

Upon determining that home sprinklers are feasible, the State Fire Marshal, in cooperation with the professional Fire Service organizations, and individual firefighters in Alaska will seek legislation that mandates lower fire insurance rates for homes with sprinkler systems.

RATIONALE

Upon adoption of sprinkler requirements in Alaska's codes, legislation can be sought requiring a specified percentage reduction in fire insurance premiums, similar to the situation in California.

APPROACH (d)

The Fire Marshal's Office, in cooperation with local fire departments, will initiate educational programs for bankers, architects, and builders

concerning potential cost savings of insurance premiums to the homeowner as the result of sprinklers in new home construction.

RATIONALE

Several approaches merit attention. The prospective homeowner is usually not aware of ways to reduce home fire insurance premiums. Rather than attempt to broadly educate the public in this area, efforts should be made to apprise bankers, builders, and architects of potential cost-saving devices in new homes to pass along to the new homeowner and to stimulate voluntary home inspections, as requested by the homeowner.

APPROACH (e)

The State Fire Marshal and the State Fire Service Training Program, in cooperation with the State Troopers, will review the Village Public Safety Officer program to determine how existing training and equipment acquisition can be expanded to address the high rate of structural fires in rural Alaska, and similar efforts among Public Health Aides, Sanitarians, and educators, since the incidence of fire death is most acute in rural areas.

RATIONALE

The existing Village Public Safety Officer program in the Department of Public Safety is, for some rural communities, the only existing delivery system for public safety services, including fire protection. To increase fire protection in these areas means to increase the fire protection portion of the VPSO responsibilities, which are now largely law enforcement oriented. The VPSO program has the advantages of overcoming language and cultural barriers, and if properly supported, also includes community involvement. Similar fire safety efforts should be undertaken among rural Sanitarians, Public Health Nurses and Teachers.

APPROACH (f)

Through the Governor's Office, the State Fire Marshal will seek to expand the Alaska Safety and Health Advisory Council to include a permanent member of the Fire Service in Alaska to represent their interests and contribute to the Council.

RATIONALE

Someone from the Fire Service becoming a member of the Alaska Safety and Health Advisory Council should have the effect of expanding the scope of the Council in activities to include fire safety.

APPROACH (g)

The State Fire Marshal and the State Fire Service Training Program will establish regional resource centers (perhaps at Community Colleges and Regional Fire Training Centers) of audio and visual materials appropriate

(GOAL A - Continued)

to prevention-oriented efforts by local fire departments, government agencies at all levels, Native regional nonprofit corporations, and others with fire protection programs and responsibilities. Copying facilities would also be helpful at these resource centers.

RATIONALE

Development of regional resource centers with appropriate audio-visual equipment should enable local fire departments, Native regional corporations, safety councils, government agencies, etc., which have fire safety responsibilities to increase and broaden existing fire safety programs and stimulate development of new initiatives. The state's media resources should be directed to cooperate with appropriate fire safety and fire prevention programs and agencies, and present their programs thru "Learn Alaska," the PBS stations and other media capabilities. The fire training centers could be the repository of the A-V materials appropriate to their region, assuming operational problems can be overcome, as more completely explained in Goal B, following.

APPROACH (h)

The State Fire Marshal's Office, in cooperation with all agencies of the Fire Service Community will initiate an on-going dialogue to address the tremendous disparity between where Alaska's fire deaths occur -- in the homes -- and where prevention-oriented efforts exist -- the larger public buildings, where fire fatalities rarely occur.

RATIONALE

From all statistical evidence practically all fire deaths and fire injuries in Alaska occur in dwellings. However, prevention activities such as plans review, code compliance aspects, on-site field inspections, and so on, are directed towards large structures with greater exposure to the public such as schools, churches, meeting halls, industrial facilities, and related structures that experience few if any fire deaths and injuries. In a very real sense, prevention efforts do not appear to be directed to the fire problem areas -- residential units and dwellings.

The targets of existing prevention efforts may have a good fire safety record precisely because of existing prevention efforts, and to that extent, the prevention efforts should be continued. However, it seems clear that prevention efforts should also be directed to where the greatest fire losses occur.

OBJECTIVE 2

The state will actively support and promote fire safety training in the public school systems in Alaska.

APPROACH (a)

In cooperation with various professional educational organizations, the State Fire Marshal's Office will attempt to institute the "Learn Not To

(GOAL A - Continued)

Burn" curriculum in the public school system in Alaska and provide for financial assistance to offset program costs, through the Department of Education or the Legislature.

RATIONALE

The key to improved fire safety over the long term is through education of our children about hazards relating to fire and how they may be abated. One has only to consider the success of the anti-cigarette smoking campaign in the school system and how school children carry home the health hazards of smoking cigarettes to realize that education of the children will be the most effective means to reduce fire losses in the future.

To educate the children means to work within the educational establishment. The State Board of Education has already passed a resolution concerning the need for fire safety education, but the resolution is only advisory in nature to the 52 school districts within the state. Since each school district is largely autonomous, contacts must be made individually with each. The Fire Marshal will work with such organizations as the Governor's Safety and Health Advisory Council, the several professional educational organizations, the Municipal League, the Conference of Mayors, Native regional corporations, the fire insurance industry, Fire Chiefs and Firefighters Associations, local fire departments, and local school boards and administrators to institute the LNTB program.

The local fire departments, as the on-scene agency with the greatest interest in developing the LNTB program in the schools should be the key agency at the local level. Their involvement is crucial to the success or failure of the program.

Fire prevention authorities, in cooperation with professional organizations, will prepare legislation to provide the financial assistance required to offset the costs of implementing this program.

GOAL B - FIRE SERVICE TRAINING

Improve the level of fire protection by assisting in the development of Fire Service personnel to their maximum performance potential.

OBJECTIVE 1

The state will assist local governments and other agencies with fire protection responsibilities to develop and maintain a comprehensive Fire Service training program to provide instructional and related services to the Fire Service community and other emergency services personnel.

APPROACH (a)

Relocate the State Fire Service Training Program to the State Fire Marshal's Office, by the request of the Governor.

(GOAL B - Continued)

RATIONALE

The Fire Service Training Program (SFSTP) has no specific statutory authority for the services it provides. The program's current existence is based on tenuous legislative intent. Lack of specific authority, and programmatic guidelines have made long-range master planning for program development and implementation virtually impossible. Constant budget problems based on the difficulty of justification without well-defined guidelines has resulted in frequent program reduction and equally frequent program cancellations as late as FY85. The State Fire Marshal (SFM) has the necessary statutory authority under which specific programmatic guidelines would be established once the proposed transfer is completed.

The relocation should occur with a minimum of disruption. The existing staff, two Education Specialists I and an Education Specialist II and the present use of the equivalent of one full-time clerical support person by the SFSTP should accompany the relocation to the SFM office. Training resources and equipment can easily be transferred to the SFM. At the Governor's direction, the conditions of transfer can be negotiated by the departments.

This move centralizes what has previously been separate and often disparate training, resulting now in the need to contact only one agency (SFM) rather than two.

The organizational structure of the expanded staff of the SFM should be decided by the SFM.

The experience of the State of Oregon, which made a similar transfer, may be of value to the proposed move for Alaska's State Fire Service Training Program.

APPROACH (b)

The State Fire Service Training Program will continue to expand upon existing fire service training programs to ensure professional development courses for all ranks of personnel within the fire service.

RATIONALE

Continuing and expanding existing SFSTP courses is needed to provide resources not readily available at the local level, in terms of obtaining training expertise for courses in the community and funding for travel and expenses associated with attending training elsewhere.

APPROACH (c)

The State Fire Service Training Program will reestablish the Technical Assistance Teams, trainee travel funds, and continue with the Itinerant Fire Instructor program.

(GOAL B - Continued)

RATIONALE

The need for the Technical Assistance Teams (TAT) to assist local fire departments and governments at all levels and community leaders with a broad range of fire-related problems was first suggested by the Alaska Municipal League three years ago. To be comprised of peer group fire officers who have solved similar problems, three TATs were formed last year. The results, which are advisory in nature to the local department or the city, were very successful. However, funding for the TATs was deleted entirely from the SFSTP's budget. Funding should be restored to provide this technical assistance.

The Itinerant Instructor program is perhaps the best known of the SFSTP various programs, providing instructors and all training materials to the typically smaller departments throughout the state. It has been in effect for many years and is of proven value. In many cases, the only training provided to many smaller departments has been through the Itinerant Instructor program. The program should be continued and expanded as required to meet the demand.

APPROACH (d)

The State Fire Service Training Program will develop new curriculum and training resources based upon state and national professional standards.

RATIONALE

Developing new curriculum and training resources based upon state and national standards is also needed. Two examples should suffice: The Firefighter I, II, and III courses have been developed nationally, but Alaska has developed only the Firefighter I course. Additional resources are necessary to develop Firefighter II and III, which are more complex. Fire and arson investigation related curriculums also need to be developed, as noted elsewhere in this report.

APPROACH (e)

The State Fire Service Training Program will establish training and education standards for Fire Service personnel, in all fire service activities.

RATIONALE

Establishment of training and education standards is another desirable effort. Such standards permit the determination of competency in a uniform manner, and provide incentives for personal advancement. Standardization of training also enhances multi-departmental response by ensuring that firefighters all employ the same procedures. Also, OSHA requires standardization of training and education.

(GOAL B - Continued)

APPROACH (f)

The State Fire Service Training Program continues to administer an adequate grant award program to support local and regional training programs.

RATIONALE

The grant award program by the state provides resources to local fire departments for training, both to employ instructors from outside the community, travel costs to receive specialized training elsewhere, and to support and enhance local training capabilities such as the purchase of a movie projector, etc. Grants are limited to $1,500 or less to one department, and $3,500 for regional use involving several departments. Some 35-40 grants have been made each year. However, the appropriation does not fund the total of all grant requests, and as a result, these maximum figures have been reduced so that each grantee receives some assistance, although less than needed.

OBJECTIVE 2

The state will maintain and encourage expansion of a comprehensive Fire Science Technology program within the community college system.

APPROACH (a)

Through the professional fire service organizations and the State Fire Marshal's Office, the State Fire Service Training Program will coordinate efforts with the University of Alaska, and the community colleges to support and further develop the Fire Science Technology programs, including exploring the nonresident extension program as a delivery system. In addition, although present circumstances do not support a four-year degree program in Alaska, information should be compiled about how a four-year degree in the Fire Science field could be attained through a combination of existing opportunities in the community college/University of Alaska system, and other universities in other states, such as Oregon, and this information should be made available to the personnel in the Fire Services.

RATIONALE

Presently, only two community colleges (Anchorage and Fairbanks) offer fire science programs, due to a combination of insufficient numbers of students (minimum of eight is required), lack of instructors, and the cost of presenting the course. One approach to surmount these problems is course presentation by video, via the "Learn Alaska" and the "Rural Learning Centers." Another approach is to carefully review personnel in local fire departments as potential instructors. Finally, the community colleges must work closely with local departments to obtain a quality program.

(GOAL B - Continued)

OBJECTIVE 3

Encourage and support financial assistance to the five Regional Fire Training Centers to enhance regional training capabilities.

APPROACH (a)

The State Fire Marshal's Office, in conjunction with the State Fire Service Training Program will seek an appropriation of $200,000 for a two-year period for an urban and a rural regional fire training center to enable each to support training program development, course costs, student travel, training coordinators, and related administrative costs.

RATIONALE

At present, all the training centers, with the exception of Anchorage, are not being used to capacity. As a result, they are not cost effective in terms of training benefits received from the $7.1 million required for their construction. They are not being used to capacity because of lack of funds to support student travel expenses, program and course development and delivery, and the lack of someone to coordinate the numerous aspects of making a training center function in an efficient and effective manner. Although these training centers are for local use, some local governments question spending local funds to manage the centers.

Certainly, the need for training exists. There are many times more firefighters in Alaska than, for example, police officers. The Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, which provides fire protection at certain state-owned airports, estimates their fire activities involve some 700 full-time state employees and volunteers from tenant agencies at the airports, and DOT&PF is not usually thought of as a major firefighting organization. Marine firefighting training has barely occurred in Alaska. The wildlands firefighting training adds another entire dimension to training of firefighters. In addition, since the legislation creating the training center provided for the training of all emergency services personnel, the training centers can be used for emergency medical training, rescue groups, and law enforcement agencies, in addition to the Fire Service. The need for the training centers to be fully operational, in terms of personnel to be trained, should not be in doubt.

An appropriation of $100,000 for each of the two years to the State Fire Marshal's Office for sub-granting to fund one urban and one rural training center is proposed. A match by the local government of perhaps 25% would ensure local effort. Criteria could be set to determine which urban and which rural training centers would receive the funding.

Such appropriation would result in cost effective training centers and better-trained Fire Service personnel. Upon proven effectiveness, the funding should become part of the annual budget of the State Fire Marshal.

Because of the inactivity at present in the Regional Training Centers, there is increasing interest in some communities in developing their own training facility. These would probably not be as effective as a well-functioning regional facility, such as Anchorage has been able to develop, and would certainly be duplicative of already-existing training facilities that lack only the financial resources to offer training in standardized courses for all Fire Service and other emergency services personnel throughout the state.

GOAL C - CAPITAL PROJECTS

The state will support capital projects for fire and life safety on a cooperative basis with local government.

OBJECTIVE 1

The state will attempt to enhance the understanding of local government officials, concerning sources of revenue, the states capital budget process as it relates to fire protection projects and the responsibilities local governments assume when such projects are approved.

APPROACH (a)

In cooperation with the Department of Community and Regional Affairs, appropriate sections of future editions of the "Rural Capital Improvements Guidebook" and its counterpart, the "Urban Capital Improvements Guidebook," will be expanded to include a section pertaining to Objective 1. Other initiatives within the department may also be appropriate.

RATIONALE

The Department of Community and Regional Affairs continues to develop planning and other expertise about government at the local level, and has a staff of 14 Local Government Specialists located in six places throughout the state to provide on-site assistance to local governments in their respective areas. These employees are the logical delivery system through which local officials can become aware of the means to obtain capital projects pertaining to fire and life safety and the implications and responsibilities that such projects carry for local government upon award of the funding.

In addition, a representative of the Fire Marshal's Office could present seminars about meeting Objective 1 to the Local Government Specialists during their periodic conferences, and other opportunities as appropriate.

APPROACH (b)

Revenue sharing funds, derived from the existence of fire protection capabilities, should be considered by local governments for the enhancement of fire protection services.

(GOAL C - Continued)

RATIONALE

Revenue sharing funds, with the exception of funds for health services, hospitals, and road maintenance which involve federal matching, cannot be earmarked for specific purposes. Determination of the use of revenue sharing funds is recognized as a proper function of local government.

However, local fire chiefs who are not now closely associated with local government are urged to do so, particularly as involves attending public hearings concerning spending of shared revenues as required by law (Title 29). Similarly, while respecting the prerogatives of local government decisions concerning shared revenues, local officials are urged to carefully review the needs of their fire department and extend every consideration to requests by the fire chief for funds to improve fire protection services.

OBJECTIVE 2

A project review mechanism is needed to ensure that communities have both the necessary information about the most appropriate facility, and/or fire protection equipment for their community, and an understanding of the specific responsibilities that must be assumed by the community.

APPROACH (a)

A directory of various kinds of fire and life safety apparatus appropriate to the smaller communities should be developed by the State Fire Marshal's Office as a guide for local communities that wish to institute or upgrade existing fire and life safety capabilities.

RATIONALE

The past is replete with examples of inappropriate fire protection equipment being purchased by and for smaller communities that are ill-equipped to deal with it upon its arrival in the community. Lack of security, lack of warm storage, lack of trained personnel, and other problems all combine to result in poor utilization of state funds, and create an illusion of fire protection, when in fact little or no fire protection may actually exist. Local officials are often at the mercy of fire equipment salesmen, who often may not know of winter village conditions, including the lack of roads, and whose objective seems to be to make a sale, rather than to ensure the best possible fire protection equipment for available money.

The State Fire Marshal's Office, in conjunction with Fire Service professionals knowledgeable about rural, arctic firefighting conditions and requirements, should meet to develop the best firefighting response capabilities in rural Alaska. Rural areas may be categorized according to weather conditions, existence of roads, hydrants and water systems, local topography, existing fire apparatus, population, and other criteria that will, in the aggregate, produce selection criteria for fire protection equipment best suited to the several categories of communities that emerge from such

efforts. Substantial information now exists with the Department of Community and Regional Affairs, the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, and from the first Task Force. This information should be reviewed, changed as needed, printed, and made available to local governments, members of the state Legislature who often fund local requests for fire equipment, the Governor's Office, which often receives requests for fire protection funding, the Department of Community and Regional Affairs, and others.

APPROACH (b)

In accordance with AS 18.70.080-085, the revenue requests for capital projects and equipment destined for communities without a well-developed fire service should be reviewed by the State Fire Marshal's Office.

RATIONALE

Closely allied to Approach A, relating to a directory of selection criteria for fire apparatus and equipment, relevant to local conditions, is the ongoing need to assist local governments and fire departments, upon their request, in reviewing the choices they have made to ensure the desired items best meet the needs of the community and that those items in fact have been received. The directory can provide only selection criteria of equipment relative to community circumstances. Consultation with the State Fire Marshal's Office will ensure that the available dollars will be spent in the wisest manner.

Requests for equipment are received by the Department of Community and Regional Affairs and the Governor's Office from both communities and legislators. The State Fire Marshal's Office, with possible assistance from the Technical Assistance Teams, will be able to advise legislators and local officials on the long-term impact of equipment requests. The advisory assessment may include training needs, storage and security needs of equipment, recurring maintenance and operating costs, warranty coverage for major repairs, and related aspects.

Members of the legislature should be advised of these services as a means to insure that their constituents receive the greatest possible benefit from legislative appropriations.

GOAL D - ARSON

Reduce the impact and incidence of arson fires in Alaska.

OBJECTIVE 1

Coordinate the efforts and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the various agencies that deal with the crime of arson, including but not limited to Fire Service, law enforcement, prosecutors, the insurance industry, business owners, and the public.

(GOAL D - Continued)

APPROACH (a)

Training curriculum and certification be developed by the State Fire Service Training Program for Fire Service personnel involved in investigation of fire cause and origin.

RATIONALE

Training standards and certification have been developed by the State Fire Service Training Program and are now in existence for line firefighters, officers, and instructors. These national standards in use now in Alaska are used to certify the knowledge and proficiency of individuals against known minimum standards. Local jurisdictions may add to these minimum standards as appropriate.

No similar standards have yet been developed and adopted for the purpose of state certification for individuals investigating possible arson fires in Alaska. The Alaska Association of Fire and Arson Investigators is an obvious resource agency to assist in curriculum development and certification. Fire investigators in the State Fire Marshal's Office and in the larger departments are reasonably well trained by having attended various workshops and courses both in Alaska and other states, but their expertise varies with the amount of formal training and "hands on experience;" thus, each individual fire investigator must present his own credentials in court in order to be accepted as an expert witness. Standards and certification for fire investigators would improve the proficiency of individuals to a nationally accepted level, help establish credentials as a state recognized and certified fire investigator, and generally improve the capability of the state and its political subdivisions to address the crime of arson.

APPROACH (b)

The State Fire Service Training Program will develop and offer fire and arson investigation training courses for local fire departments.

RATIONALE

The key to success in reducing arson is to initially determine, or at least highly suspect, that in fact an arson fire occurred, or probably occurred. The danger remains that evidence of arson will unwittingly be destroyed by local firefighters, particularly in the smaller communities, who may not be attentive to possible arson fires. Firefighters are certainly the first persons on the scene of a fire and must be aware of what to look for to determine possible arson. Once the cause and origin of the fire has been determined, and evidence of arson has been found, the experts in fire and arson investigation can be called in.

The Alaska Association of Fire and Arson Investigators might sponsor such training through a grant from the State Fire Service Training Program.

(GOAL D - Continued)

APPROACH (c)

In coordination with the Alaska Association of Fire and Arson Investigators, the Commissioner of Public Safety and the Attorney General shall jointly develop and maintain a special arson team of persons with the needed expertise and background in the fields of fire cause and origin, criminal investigation, and prosecution that can be called upon, at no cost, to respond to requests for assistance anywhere in the state.

RATIONALE

Historically, arson has been a crime that falls somewhere between the Fire Service and law enforcement since successful investigation requires the expertise of the Fire Investigator to initially determine the cause and origin of a fire and the expertise of the law enforcement investigator to successfully apprehend the perpetrator. Rarely has there been a single individual competent in both fields. In addition, the enmity that from time to time occurs between the Fire Service and law enforcement personnel has acted to separate the two emergency services, rather than drawing them together. Successful arson investigation, which requires both fields of expertise, has predictably suffered. As the result of relatively few arson cases being prosecuted, even with arson being formally recognized as a Part One crime by the FBI, the District Attorneys tend to not be experienced in, or knowledgeable about, arson prosecution, and may be reluctant to accept arson cases. Law enforcement personnel who in the past have attended specialized arson training courses and who were viewed as the "arson investigators" have often been transferred or reassigned to other duties. In short, the necessity for dual expertise, the resulting question of responsibility toward arson investigation, and the unfamiliarity with the crime by prosecutors, have all led to arson's being a difficult crime to detect and prove in court.

Needed is a team of capable, well-trained, experienced, and knowledgeable specialists in arson investigation from law enforcement, the Statewide Crime Lab, the fire insurance industry, and the prosecutor's office. It should be developed jointly by the department heads in state government responsible for arson investigations, law enforcement agencies, the forensic sciences, and the prosecutors. The Association of Fire and Arson Investigators can provide expert consultation in the development of the team. The team is not intended to be a "Strike Force," but rather should be comprised of individuals with long-term assignment to the team, who receive specialized training, can work well with local arson investigation personnel, and who can respond quickly upon request from the local level to suspected arson fires anywhere in the state.

APPROACH (d)

The State Fire Marshal's Office, in conjunction with the Alaska Association of Fire and Arson Investigators will explore the establishment of a statewide, toll-free arson hot line in the State Fire Marshal's Office, and the availability of private funds for an award program.

(GOAL D - Continued)

RATIONALE

The Crime Stoppers program in several Alaskan communities has proven to be a successful means to stimulate citizen involvement in crime deterrence and apprehension of suspects. A similar program is being explored now on a statewide basis for information about arson fires by the Association of Fire and Arson Investigators. The arson hot line could possibly complement Crime Stoppers in the communities in which Crime Stoppers is located, and Crime Stoppers could complement the Arson hot line in the communities in which it is located. The insurance companies could be contacted for money to use as rewards, which may be financially attractive to them.

Washington State has an ongoing, and apparently a successful arson hot line program. The Municipality of Anchorage had an arson hot line, but no longer has it, and Kodiak combines an arson line with their Crime Stoppers. These and other authorities should be contacted to study the approaches used, and the reasons why success or failure occurred, with the possibility of adopting the best of all experiences for a statewide arson hot line.

APPROACH (e)

Part of the fire education program within the State Fire Marshal's Office will contain information about arson prevention.

RATIONALE

Part of the emphasis on improved arson detection and investigation is a better understanding of the crime by the public. The impact of an arson crime extends beyond the exact item burned. Several buildings may ultimately be involved as well as the economic loss to a community.

In addition, arson losses tend to increase both the cost of insurance premiums and fire suppression. A more alert public helps to remove the mystique from the crime of arson and results in a greater willingness to come forth with possible information about the crime. All of these aspects tend to adversely impact the person contemplating arson and to increase apprehension if arson has been committed. Special award incentives have proven their effectiveness in drastically reducing the overall property loss and increasing prosecution efforts.

GOAL E - CODE ENFORCEMENT

Ensure that at least minimum fire and life safety codes are adopted in a timely manner and enforced at the state and/or local government levels.

OBJECTIVE 1

The state shall promote a uniform interagency system for building and safety code enforcement to encompass all aspects of construction and building

maintenance, including but not limited to fire, electrical, structural, plumbing, sanitation, energy, handicapped and accident safety, and the provision of incentives for local jurisdictions to administer their own programs.

APPROACH (a)

The State Fire Marshal's Office will conduct semi-annual interagency workshops involving all agencies charged with code enforcement to resolve interpretational differences, overlapping authority and related problems, and to establish consistent enforcement procedures.

RATIONALE

Presently, interpretational differences by various enforcement agencies can result in one agency's approving a certain feature and another disapproving the same feature, and the granting of variances to existing codes resulting in frustrations and delays to architects, builders, and ultimately the public.

Enforcement procedures likewise suffer from similar lack of consistency. Both areas would be improved by broad agreements amongst participating agencies.

APPROACH (b)

Through the State Fire Marshal's Office, all state agencies charged with code enforcement should mutually explore the establishment of professional standards for all personnel involved in code enforcement, to ensure creditable service to the citizens of Alaska.

RATIONALE

Professionalization of personnel involved in code enforcement will lead to better service to the citizens of the state, in a similar manner to ironing out and agreeing upon code interpretation. Presently, code enforcement personnel at the state and local levels have varying backgrounds and experience in their field. As an example: The Department of Health and Social Services may request that the State Fire Marshal's Office conduct a fire inspection at the ABC Kiddy Drop in a certain community. Since the State Fire Marshal may not have a representative in the community, he will often call or write the chief of the local fire department, asking him to perform the inspection. The local department's personnel vary in their knowledge, experience, and on-site perceptions concerning code violations.

Development of professional standards could be a working subcommittee of the semi-annual interagency workshops proposed in approach A, above.

APPROACH (c)

Through the Division of Governmental Coordination in the Office of Management and Budget, all state agencies charged with fire and life

safety code enforcement should review their respective new safety standards as quickly as possible after they become available, and should prepare them as a package for review to the Department of Law, leading to their adoption or rejection, within six months of their publishing date.

RATIONALE

To ensure the safety of a building, various codes are issued every three years, such as the Uniform Building Code and Uniform Fire Code, Mechanical Code, Electrical Code, etc. Revisions are issued annually, and in some cases, quarterly "Applications and Interpretations" manuals are issued. These codes and their revisions and interpretations are used by the State Fire Marshal, the State Department of Labor, and various municipalities as the minimum standards that are used for plan reviews and on-site inspections.

Obvious problems occur when inspectors do not all use the most recent codes. For example, the cities of Anchorage, Kodiak, Juneau, Soldotna, Kenai, Valdez, and perhaps others are now using the latest Uniform Building and Fire Code (1982), but the State Fire Marshal's Office is using the 1979 edition, while the Electrical Inspectors in the Department of Labor are using the 1984 edition of the National Electrical Code.

State agencies with code enforcement responsibilities should review new codes expeditiously and request priority review of them by the Department of Law, on the basis that they relate to the safety and well-being of the state's residents. Rather than proceeding individually, the agencies should form a group through the efforts of the Division of Governmental Coordination and present their new regulations to the Department of Law. If substantially backlogged, the Department of Law is urged to have the review of the regulations contracted to a private law firm. To further reduce delay, the state agencies involved are asked to have developed a working draft of the regulations they want to have promulgated.

APPROACH (d)

The State Fire Marshal's Office and the Department of Labor, Division of Labor Standards and Safety, will explore the concept of state and local code enforcement and plans review personnel being located together, while retaining individual agency identification, thereby creating a one-stop shopping center for architects and others seeking building safety approval and to explore the concept of code compliance for both new construction and remodeling done to the single-family dwelling, where not performed by local building officials.

RATIONALE

Presently, there are no fewer than nine state departments that perform a variety of building regulatory functions, ranging from AHFC inspections to waste disposal permits. Within this broad group, two agencies - the Department of Labor and the State Fire Marshal's Office - are involved in building-fire and life-safety

concerns. Additionally, there may be federal and local agencies also involved in building and life safety, depending upon area and the specific project.

Grouping the building safety code and plans review people from state agencies is desirable, as well as including federal and local personnel with similar responsibilities, to the extent possible. By grouping, conflicts in interpretation can be resolved on the spot, saving time for all involved. Additionally, as each individual travels in the area, he can note deficiencies and hazards for one of the other specialists in the combined office. Each may also be able to offer assistance to the other when traveling by checking to determine that previous requirements by another inspector in a different specialty have been complied with, thereby making each other's job more efficient.

Although not now being done, and admittedly an extremely big step, and one fraught with difficulty, the concept of code compliance being extended to the single-family dwelling (from the present four-plex building or larger) in both new construction and remodeling should also be explored. Homes are by far the single greatest location of fires in Alaska, and until aggressive action is initiated, the fire loss in Alaska will remain high.

APPROACH (e)

Legislation should be developed by the State Fire Marshal's Office providing for more substantial sanctions against anyone who knowingly changes approved building plans and specifications relating to new construction without obtaining prior approval by the SFM, and anyone who circumvents life-safety codes thereby endangering the life and safety of future building occupants.

RATIONALE

The vast majority of architects design, and builders build, their buildings in compliance with the fire and life safety code. Some, however, do not, for a variety of reasons including economy in construction. At present, the existing statutes provide for a $500 fine for architects not designing to code. This amount can be described as an operating expense, and is not any measure of deterrence. The sanctions should be increased and include suspension of license of the contractor and/or architect.

APPROACH (f)

In cooperation with appropriate federal agencies, the State Fire Marshal's Office, the state and its political subdivisions should explore the adoption of NFPA 101 standards and/or the state should impose its own standards for health care facilities in coordination with federal authorities.

(GOAL E - Continued)

RATIONALE

A part of the responsibilities involved with the acceptance of federal funds is the application of the NFPA 101 standards for fire and life safety in health care facilities. NFPA 101 standards differ from those of the state, and in some cases, are less stringent than provided by state regulations. This conflict could be resolved by the S.F.M.'s using a combination of NFPA 101 regulations and state regulations.

This proposal also has disadvantages -- primarily the upgrading to state code that will have to be done, and the cost to do it, when these health care facilities are turned over to the state and/or local governments.

The Task Force recognizes the inherent problems with both the status quo and the idea of adopting NFPA 101 Standards, and makes no firm recommendation at this time, other than to identify the problem, and the need to deal with it.

APPROACH (g)

Through the State Fire Marshal's Office, local governments will be encouraged to undertake fire and life safety code enforcement, consistent with their desires and long-term objectives in fire prevention. In support of local code enforcement, legislation will be prepared by the State Fire Marshal and the Department of Community and Regional Affairs for funds to provide for the cost of the first two years' efforts by three local governments for plans review and subsequent building inspection. Provisions will be made for State Fire Marshal's Office to visit these communities periodically to support local code enforcement.

RATIONALE

Presently, only Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, and Valdez provide fire and life safety code compliance. Other communities rely upon the State Fire Marshal's Office for plans review and site inspections, and of course the State Fire Marshal's Office also provides those services for areas outside organized cities and boroughs.

Fire chiefs in many cities want to perform these services, recognizing the limitations upon the State Fire Marshal's Office, and the need locally for code compliance, but local politics all but prohibit them doing so. It is far more difficult for the local fire chief to close down an unsafe structure that houses one of the few local businesses in town or for him to note deficiencies in buildings owned by community leaders, than to have a representative from the state to do so. In addition, the State has historically performed this function.

Notwithstanding the difficulties involved, and they vary in extent from one community to another, it is nonetheless desirable to have local governments assume greater fire protection responsibilities.

(GOAL E - Continued)

A financial incentive to defray the initial costs involved could be structured and awarded to those communities that undertake fire and life safety code compliance.

The issue of local government's performing code enforcement functions necessarily opens the question of the scope of fire protection responsibilities of local governments. Historically, fire protection in the United States has been a local responsibility. Code enforcement appears to be a reasonable extension of this responsibility. Coupled with a state grant to defray the first two years' costs, after which time the fees charged for plans review should offset in part future costs, enforcement of codes by local government can be a significant means to reduce fire losses in Alaska.

GOAL F - EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

The overall goal of the Alaska Emergency Medical Services (EMS) program is to establish a comprehensive, coordinated system of emergency medical services to the citizens of Alaska.[16]

OBJECTIVE 1

Ensure that citizens and visitors gain easy access to Emergency Medical Services; that initial response is expeditious; that appropriate lifesaving and stabilization measures are rendered at the scene; and that patients are transported or transferred in a timely and efficient manner to facilities capable of effecting maximum recovery and rehabilitation.

APPROACH (a)

Emergency Medical Services Section, within the Department of Health and Social Services, should continue to coordinate federal, state, and regional official and volunteer agencies involved in Alaska EMS system by providing overall medical direction for statewide EMS system development.

RATIONALE

Numerous governmental and private agencies at the federal, state, and local levels provide some aspect of emergency medical services which collectively make up the statewide EMS system. These organizations include, but are not limited to, the U.S. military, such as the Military Assistance to Safety and Traffic (MAST) program at Ft. Wainwright, the U.S. Coast Guard, the U.S. D.O.T. through development of training curricula and standards, the Alaska State Troopers, the Alaska Division of Emergency Services (Disaster Office), the EMS Section in the Department of Health and Social Services, local hospitals and medical clinics, local fire

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[16] This section has been excerpted from the State EMS Plan, Department of Health and Social Services.

departments, local ambulance services, air ambulance and medivac services, Regional EMS Councils and other EMS training agencies, the Alaska Area Native Health Service, Native Regional Health Corporations, and local governments. Under AS 18.08.010, the EMS Section within the Department of Health and Social Services is responsible for "coordinating public and private agencies engaged in the planning and delivery of emergency medical services to plan an EMS system," and to "assist public and private agencies to deliver emergency medical services through the award of grants in aid."

As the levels of EMS training and equipment become more sophisticated, the concept of medical control becomes increasingly important. Under this concept, physicians from the various medical specialities (e.g., emergency medicine, surgery, pediatrics, toxicology, etc.) assume responsibilities for training, continuing medical education, and development of treatment guidelines for categories of medical emergencies. At the local level, all pre-hospital emergency medical services must have physician sponsors or medical advisory boards to oversee the quality of medical care provided to patients in the field. This includes medical communications between physicians or hospitals, and EMTs or paramedics in the field.

This concept of medical control is part of the entire EMS system including certification requirements, planning, approval of medical equipment, development of treatment guidelines, development of communications systems, training programs, and evaluation.

The State EMS Section has routinely solicited and received assistance from the medical community to help develop a statewide, medically accountable EMS system. To assist with this effort, the EMS Section has an emergency medicine physician on contract as State EMS Medical Director, and works with a Governor-appointed Advisory Council on EMS which has four physician members.

APPROACH (b)

Certify emergency medical personnel and services according to state statutes and regulations to ensure certain minimum standards of emergency medical care.

RATIONALE

As pre-hospital emergency medical services become more sophisticated, more advanced medical care is provided in the field. In recent years, pre-hospital EMS personnel have learned such skills as the use of pneumatic anti-shock garments, intravenous therapy, esophageal obturator airways or endotracheal intubation, drug therapy, and cardiac defibrillation. Basic and advanced life support services must be proficient in applying cervical collars and backboards, using oxygen, suction, traction splints, CPR, and a wide variety of other skills.

Numerous national studies have shown that EMTs and paramedics lose these skills after certain periods of time unless they receive continuing medical education and refresher training. There also is a need for standardized curricula and qualifications for approved instructors. For these reasons, AS 18.08.080 was passed in 1978 making the Department of Health and Social Services responsible for adopting regulations establishing standards and procedures for issuance, renewal reissuance, revocation, and suspension of certificates for EMTs, EMT Instructors, and ambulance services.

These regulations have been adopted, and currently there are over 2,900 state-certified EMTs and EMT Instructors in Alaska and approximately 75 state-certified ambulance services.

In 1984, the State EMS Section, with assistance from EMT Instructors, developed state examinations and a computerized scoring system which provides the statistical reliability of questions. Using this system, the State EMS Section can provide ongoing evaluation and updating of the certification examinations.

In the future, changes in requirements or skill levels of EMS personnel should be made according to results of medical studies of EMS services and skills.

APPROACH (c)

The Regional EMS Councils should continue to provide and administer financial assistance for Regional EMS development, provide technical assistance to regional and local EMS agencies, and educate the public about appropriate action in emergencies and emergency procedures.

RATIONALE

Regional EMS Councils were formed throughout Alaska in the mid to late 1970s. These agencies, which initially received federal grants, now receive state grant funds from the state EMS Section for operating and capital equipment expenses. These regional councils provide training, continuing medical education, technical assistance, planning assistance, equipment purchase, communications system development assistance, public information and education, and testing for certified EMS personnel. With the assistance from Regional EMS Councils and state funding, there is a growing number of EMTs and trained first responders, and three times as many organized ambulance services exist in Alaska as did ten years ago. The Regional EMS Councils also provide training and continuing medical education to doctors, nurses, and mid-level practitioners (nurse practitioners), especially those working in rural areas.

As the number of organized EMS services and trained EMS responders continue to grow, there is a need for increased funding to support widespread training activities. According to needs assessments by the Regional EMS Councils, there still are significant needs for EMS training and equipment in many small rural and bush communities throughout Alaska.

(GOAL F - Continued)

APPROACH (d)

Seek improved emergency medical services through legislative action, by monitoring and evaluating EMS system development throughout the state, and by planning and prioritizing continued program development based on systematic needs assessment and epidemiological research.

RATIONALE

The EMS Section and EMS Regions have developed a planning guide entitled "Alaska EMS Goals: A Guide for Planning Alaska's Emergency Medical Services System." This planning guide uses the State Health Planning approach to planning for services by level of community (e.g., small village - Level I, subregional center - Level II, regional center - Level III, and urban center - Level IV). This planning guide also lists goals for rural highways, high-risk occupation sites, and communities with less than 25 people. Using this planning guide, the EMS regions complete community checklists on each community every year, to determine where there are EMS deficiencies and to help determine priorities for funding and technical assistance. Also, ambulance services are required to complete annual surveys which include types of services and numbers of runs by category, and the EMS Section analyzes other available sources of data, such as vital statistics to help determine the overall effectiveness of the statewide EMS system.

For FY86, the state EMS Section and EMS Regions have established priority needs for more training and medical equipment in Level I and II communities and completion of a statewide EMS communications system. The communications system includes completion of the microwave backbone along all major highways, and emergency radios (VHF or HF-SSB) for those remote villages which have reported recent communications problems with existing phones or radios. The microwave backbone on major highways provides EMS radio channels, as well as radio channels for the State Troopers, Alaska Division of Emergency Services (Disaster Office), Department of Natural Resources, Divisions of Parks and Forestry (including radio coverage for wildland fire fighting), and DOT&PF highway maintenance crews. Completion of this communications system is a high priority for the Department of Health and Social Services, EMS Section, as well as other agencies which will use this system. The Division of Telecommunications Operations has responsibility for implementation and maintenance of the system.

In future years, the State Epidemiologist should provide epidemiological research assistance to help determine specific causes and intervention strategies to reduce the high rates of deaths and injuries resulting from accidents in Alaska.

GOAL G - WILDLANDS FIRE PROTECTION

Improve the system of fire protection for both wildlands and structures in all areas of Alaska.

(GOAL G - Continued)

OBJECTIVE 1

Better utilize and increase existing fire protection capabilities of the state and local level through a closer working relationship of wildlands and structural fire fighting resources.

APPROACH (a)

The Department of Natural Resources will propose a special an appropriation of $100,000 for the Division of Forestry for each of two years to expand the presently funded, Rural Community Fire Protection Program that provides $64,000 annually, which has been administered by the Department since 1976.

RATIONALE

The federal program has remained at $64,000 annually for many years, while the acreage the state is responsible for protecting increases almost every year. A key element in the strategy of the Department is to involve local fire departments to provide the initial response to accessible wildlands fires. Local response is advantageous to the state because local forces may succeed in extinguishing the blaze, and if not, will at least retard the spread, and thereby limit the damage. To assist local departments, whose primary objective is structural fire suppression, to be better equipped to fight all rural fires requires more than the existing federal and state aid currently available. An appropriation of $100,000 for each of two years will substantially meet existing needs without any major staff additions in the department. Subsequent-year funding will be incorporated into the Department's budget request to the Governor and the legislature.

APPROACH (b)

The Division of Foretry will transfer or make loan of wildlands fire prevention and suppression apparatus, equipment and tools from the Division of Forestry to rural firefighting agencies, primarily during the non-fire season.

RATIONALE

The wildlands fire season extends from spring until fall, but during the late fall, winter and early spring, wildlands firefighting capabilities are largely in storage, and only skeleton crews are available. The Department is willing to loan certain items of equipment that are not being used during the non-fire season to local fire departments to improve their response capabilities. The cost of maintenance must be borne by local departments. The state may experience a more frequent replacement period and the cost of increased property records and accountability.

(GOAL G - Continued)

APPROACH (c)

The Division of Forestry will expand the existing level of training of local fire departments in the techniques of wildlands fire prevention and suppression.

RATIONALE

The present training of personnel in local fire departments is on a time-available basis, which is inadequate. Additional training would be available on a scheduled basis by extending the employment period of a few seasonal employees of the Department and providing some travel funds and training aids. Annual cost is estimated at $50,000.

APPROACH (d)

In coordination with the State Fire Marshal, the Division of Forestry will provide technical assistance to groups interested in forming a volunteer fire department where none now exists, and develop agreements with local fire departments concerning their assistance in wildlands firefighting.

RATIONALE

Assisting local groups of interested citizens who wish to form a fire department will provide not only local structural fire protection, but also holds the potential for additional local suppression forces for wildlands fires. Agreements would provide for local departments making the initial attack on accessible wildlands fires. Coordination with the State Fire Marshal is essential in organizing new departments. This phase could be accomplished by $15,000 for travel expenses for existing forestry staff.

APPROACH (e)

The Division of Emergency Services within the Alaska Department of Military Affairs, the Division of Forestry within the Department of Natural Resources, and the State Fire Marshal's Office within the Department of Public Safety should plan for and implement a program that will provide the trained and organized manpower and the suppression equipment that will be needed to meet the demand of rural fire disasters that could occur within the state because of the increase in urban-rural interface.

RATIONALE

The federal government has recognized for many years that expanding rural populations create the potential for disaster fires that spread in a vegetative ground cover to involve improvements such as homes, schools, industries, businesses, farms, crops, recreation residences and many other types of developments. These fires threaten human lives as well as heavy property loss. Such fires may originate from many causes, including related disasters such as earthquake or explosions.

The federal government has set up a program under the Disaster Relief Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-288) to provide assistance to states when a disaster reaches certain proportions and relief has been requested by the Governor of the state. This program requires that the Federal Emergency Management Agency review the potential impact of a fire before assistance is granted. The State of Alaska has requested assistance for fire disasters under this program several times in the past but has received assistance on very few occasions mainly because of the delays imposed by the number of agencies and people involved.

The State of Alaska needs a disaster relief program that can be implemented in a shorter time frame than is now possible under the federal program. This program should be capable of being implemented before a fire reaches the proportions of a federal disaster.

A statewide fire disaster preparedness plan and the resources to cope with such a disaster could and should be implemented by the Division of Emergency Services, the State Fire Marshal, and the State Forester prior to the fire disaster that will occur because of the presently occurring urban-wildlands interface.

APPROACH (f)

Structural and wildlands firefighting agencies should provide mutual assistance to each other in matters requiring legislative action.

RATIONALE

Historically, wildlands and structural firefighting agencies have independently pursued their legislative objectives with little or no coordination between themselves. The Fire Chiefs Association and Firefighters Association have jointly hired a lobbyist to represent them. The Department of Natural Resources has pursued its legislative needs through the executive budget process of state government. Recognizing that both structural and wildlands firefighters are part of the fire protection community, coordination of their respective objectives would present a stronger case in the Legislature and generally enhance the protection afforded to the citizenry of the state.

GOAL H - INTERAGENCY PLANNING, COORDINATION, AND CONSOLIDATION

The Governor shall require interagency planning and coordination by all state agencies having fire safety responsibilities.

OBJECTIVE 1

Increase the accuracy, timeliness, and scope of all fire-related data in Alaska.

(GOAL H - Continued)

APPROACH (a)

Expedite final approvals by Department of Administration and Department of Public Safety, to implement the micro-computer project involving long fire departments and the State Fire Marshal's Office.

RATIONALE

The computer project involves $100,000 for the purchase of micro-computers and associated terminals. The equipment is slated for installation in the 10 local fire departments with the greatest volume of fire incidents. This will enable local departments to input their ANFIRS information directly, rather than for later entry by the Fire Marshal's Office, and for obtaining information from the data base for a number of reasons, such as for budgeting purposes, public information programs, etc. The system also allows the local departments to keep records about vehicle maintenance, training records, etc.

APPROACH (b)

The State Fire Marshal's Office and the Department of Natural Resources should jointly explore whether the ANFIRS data base can be expanded to include wildlands fire data also, thereby creating a single point for compilation of all fire-related data in Alaska.

RATIONALE

Currently, state wildlands fire data is gathered and analyzed by the state Department of Natural Resources, and fire data from local fire departments is gathered and analyzed by the State Fire Marshal. Some degree of duplication of effort and possibly computer resources must occur. Although, historically, wildlands firefighting and structural firefighting have been thought of as essentially separate elements, the increasing state wildlands fire responsibility, the build-up of structures in semi-rural settings, and the proposed increase in coordination between these two fire-related functions all seem to argue convincingly that the data-gathering resources of both agencies might be combined, with a broader scope and higher-quality data output as the result. A combined data function would also serve to further coordinate the activities of both agencies.

APPROACH (c)

The State Fire Marshal, in conjunction with the state's forensic pathologists will determine how to improve the reporting data concerning fires and fire fatalities, caused directly or indirectly by alcohol abuse.

RATIONALE

Existing statistics about causes of fires often indicate the cause as "wood stove," "cigarette," or similar causal factor. Unavailable is any reliable data that show the extent to which, if any, alcohol

abuse contributes to these fires. The fire caused by a "woodstove," may in fact have occurred as the result of an intoxicated person throwing a flammable liquid on the fire to get it burning a bit better. The "cigarette," in itself a difficult way to start a fire, may have dropped onto the bed, when the intoxicated person passed out, and who several hours later died from smoke inhalation from a smoldering mattress. Other, almost unlimited examples are known to fire service personnel through out the state.

The extent of alcohol abuse as the basic cause of the fire must be known if Alaska is to have any significant success with its fire prevention efforts, since the thrust of the prevention effort must be directed to the true cause of the fire. The cause of the fatality on the smoldering couch was, in strict medical terms asphyxiation, but in practical terms was alcohol abuse.

To the extent alcohol abuse can be shown to be a major cause of fire, then prevention efforts should be expanded to include work with alcohol abuse agencies and through them, to stress the fire-related hazards of alcohol abuse.

OBJECTIVE 2

The state will perform Master Fire Planning as a cooperative venture with related agencies at the federal, state, regional and local levels.

APPROACH (a)

In cooperation with the Department of Law and the several borough governments, the State Fire Marshal will research whether future Fire Service areas at the local level will, to the extent possible, be developed in such a manner as to preclude creation of islands with no fire protection services, and whether existing islands with no fire protection services will, to the extent possible, be incorporated into one or more of the existing Fire Service areas.

RATIONALE

The problem created in the wake of newly emerging fire service districts is that certain areas do not elect to provide fire protection for themselves and, as a result, form islands surrounded by Fire Service districts. Fires occur within these islands with no fire fighting capabilities, and from time to time result in substantial loss of property and even life. The most recent of a long series of incidents that could be quoted occurred in the Fairbanks area in which two single family dwellings were completely destroyed by fire. One resulted in a fatality, and the other an injury. Such incidents cause considerable anguish to neighboring firefighters, and always result in substantial media coverage. This problem, and the closely allied one of fires occurring next to a Fire Service district, have plagued the Fire Service since before statehood. The fact that the problem still exists is an indication of the difficulties encountered when attempting to solve it.

Although some may say that the residents didn't vote for fire protection and thus were not part of a Fire Service area, and therefore deserve no protection, the fact remains that the minority who did vote for fire protection have been denied it by the majority who, for their own reasons, voted the issue down. There is also the humanitarian aspect of firefighters who hear anguished cries for help, as a person literally burns to death, as occurred in the Fairbanks example, but who cannot respond to those cries for help because the house is not in a Fire Service area.

The issue has defied resolution for many years, and cannot be solved by a three-month effort by the Task Force. However, the problem is recognized here as one of the most pressing issues within the Fire Service community, and deserves continuing analysis and work toward solving it.

Several approaches merit further research:

(1) When new areas are proposed for creation of a new Fire Service area, boroughs may be able to require that such efforts cannot result in islands of unprotected territory. Thus, the lines of the proposed Fire Service district would have to be redrawn to ensure that no unprotected pockets occur.

(2) Seek legal opinion, and possibly legislative action authorizing the State Fire Marshal to request a fire department to respond to a fire outside their area, although without adversely affecting protection resources within the area.

(3) Legislative authorization to charge the homeowners in the unprotected areas for liability insurance, use of equipment and personnel time of the responding department.

None of the foregoing are without disadvantages, and as a result, this report recommends no specific action at this time, other than the extreme necessity of further analysis and research of the matter, with the hope of leading to a resolution of the problem.

APPROACH (b)

The state will establish by legislation a State Fire Commission, as a part of state government, to function as a central focal point for all fire-protection-related projects and programs.

RATIONALE

At present, there are only two agencies within state government with significant responsibilities for fire protection -- the Department of Natural Resources, with authority for wildlands firefighting, and the Division of Fire Prevention within the Department of Public Safety. The Division, popularly referred to as the Fire Marshal's Office, has only 13 professionals and four support personnel in the entire state. This agency never has been able to meet all of its statutory responsibilities, due to inadequate staffing. The

Department of Natural Resources has only recently assumed major wildlands firefighting programs, having earlier relied on federal agencies. The agency assumes steadily increasing amounts of acreages resulting from transfers of lands to private ownership through the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act and other programs, and consequently, there is need to increase its fire suppression capabilities.

When the Task Force first met, the idea of a State Fire Commission as a broad policy making body to determine what is in the best interests of the state as concerns fire protection was initially discussed, but was deferred pending completion of all the Goals, Objectives, and Programs the Task Force knew they had to consider. As the Goals and Objectives part of the Task Force report developed, the key to implementation of the various "Approaches" was, in almost every case, action by the state. As the process continued, it became clear that a very substantial increase in personnel would have to occur in the State Fire Marshal's Office, if the recommendations in the "Approach" sections would have any chance of success. A cursory review of all the "Approaches" in the preceding goals will bear out the overwhelming work load being proposed for the State Fire Marshal. However, even if adequately staffed, the Fire Marshal is not involved in all aspects of fire protection in the state, such as industrial fire safety and fire insurance in the private sector, local fire departments, aviation firefighting, or fire service training. Similarly the Division of Forestry is involved only in wildlands fires. Thus neither is able to act as a focal point for all fire related programs in the state, both public and private.

When the report was finished, Task Force members felt they had identified most, if not all, of the serious and pressing issues facing the Fire Service community in Alaska, and had proposed reasonable ways to address the issues, but they were not satisfied with having identified the means whereby their recommendations could be successfully carried out. Few members are optimistic about being able to obtain the additional employees needed in the Fire Marshal's Office, which since statehood has been subservient to the primary concerns of the Department of Public Safety which is law enforcement. Even if the prospect of obtaining additional employees is bright, the State Fire Marshal's Office could not offer the perspective and flexibility that could be obtained from a relatively autonomous, broadly conceived, policy and advisory group to the Chief Executive for dealing with the broad range of issues of concern to the entire fire service community at all levels of government, as well as the private sector.

The idea of a State Fire Commission was again considered in the context of a means to implement the actions recommended by the Task Force. Envisioned is a body similar to the State Board of Education, or the Board of Fisheries, the Board of Game, or the Liquor Control Board. Each is a policy-setting body within their respective fields. The State Board of Education for example, sets policy regarding education in grades K-12, but doesn't administer the Department of Education, nor do the Fish and Game Boards administer

the Department of Fish and Game. In similar manner, the State Fire Commission would set policy for state agencies with fire protection responsibilities, would not administer the Fire Marshal's Office, or any other agency with program resposibilities. The Fire Commission could not, of course set policy for local departments, federal agencies or private industry, but could make recommendations to them.

The need for a policy setting body within the fire service at the state level can be well illustrated. One group of needs concerns decision-making by state fire program administrators. Fire Service training at the state level for example is now determined by one person -- the program supervisor. Due to fiscal constraints he has determined that his program would not become involved in training industrial fire brigades. With no overall policy setting group, private industry can only take their concerns to a local legislator, write the Governor or do nothing. Similarly, other officials make decisions about aviation fire safety, fire code enforcement, plans review, wildlands firefighting, etc. All hope their decisions are in the best interest of the state, but at the moment are made in the context of their own agency programs and goals because they are without a mechanism to determine how their decisions impact other state, local, or federal agency fire-related efforts, i.e. there is no overall policy setting group to indicate otherwise, and thus no system of checks and balances with or coordination among state-level fire-related activities.

Another reason for a policy group is to determine what activities the state, local governments and private industry are <u>not</u> performing that should be performed in order to reduce the toll of fire deaths to provide focus or programmatic guidelines. This information would be in the form of recommendations to the Governor for state actions, to the professional fire associations and the Municipal League as concerns local actions, to individual federal agencies appropriate to the recommendations, etc. In short a Fire Commission is seen as providing the broad base of reference or perspective not now available but seen needed to address the wide array of problems and issues facing the Fire Service, and to coordinate a largely diverse group of agencies with fire service programs and responsibilities at all levels of government, and in private industry.

The concept of a Commission has substantial precedence in the other emergency services fields. The law enforcement field is represented by the Police Standards Council whose function is not as broad as that forseen for the Fire Commission. The Emergency Medical Services has a State Advisory Council on Emergency Medical Services comprised of an eleven-member, Governor-appointed board which advises the Department of Health and Social Services on a wide array of planning policies and priorities. Of the three emergency services, only the Fire Service has no broad, relatively autonomous, policy-setting group of the nature of a Council or Commission.

Envisioned by the Task Force is a legislatively-created State Fire Commission, with clearly defined duties, that would in effect

provide for overall coordination and balance within the state's fire prevention and control program, and develop and oversee the actual implementation of the state's Fire Service program. Fortunately, certain other states have well-functioning Fire Commissions, and the U. S. Fire Administration has written extensively about a "model" Fire Commission. The Task Force has borrowed from both, after having previously and independently arrived at the conclusion that a Fire Commission could best address Alaska's fire protection needs.

Both the federal model, and the commissions in more than 20 other states the Task Force has information about, have membership that strongly reflects the fire service and affected groups which provides the mechanism for balancing the various views, and represents a true focal point for all fire prevention and control activities.

The State Fire Commission concept being recommended by the Task Force would have members broadly representative of the Fire Service in the state, both in terms of functional specialty and geographic representation, with staggered terms to ensure continuity. Members would be chosen by the Governor. Functional specialties should include code enforcement, wildlands fire protection, structural fire protection in both urban and rural areas, aviation fire protection, marine fire protection, arson investigation, fire insurance, industrial fire protection, fire prevention, public fire education and training for the fire service. Agencies representing these specialties, and others deemed desirable for agency representation include:

- Fire Insurance Industry
- Department of Labor (codes)
- Fire Marshal (codes, fire prevention and public education)
- The technical building professions (codes)
- Department of Natural Resources (wildlands fires)
- Urban Fire Departments (structural fires)
- Association of Fire and Arson Investigators (arson)
- The Legislature
- Rural Fire Departments (structural and wildlands fires)
- Alaska Fire Chiefs/Firefighters Association (fire officers and firefighters)
- Coast Guard (marine firefighting)
- Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (aviation firefighting)
- Supervisor, State Fire Service Training Program (training and education)
- Alaska Municipal League (local government)
- Department of Community & Regional Affairs (fire-related projects with local government)

The proposed State Fire Commission would be located within the Governor's Office and would be administratively tied to either the Governor's Office or to the Department of Public Safety through the Fire Marshal's Office.

The members of the Commission would elect a chairman from their membership. The Commission would also hire an executive director who would serve at the pleasure of the Commission. A two- or three-person staff, (similar to the staff of the Police Standards Council and the EMS Council), and a secretary to accomplish the staff work as directed by the Commission would be needed. The director and staff should be co-located with the State Fire Marshal for maximum coordination of activities and access to information and technical assistance. This location would also permit close liaison with the Division of Forestry and the State Forester for wildlands-fires-related information and technical assistance, and to the Department of Transportation with their aviation fire safety responsibilities.

The State Fire Commission members would serve without compensation, except for travel and per diem, which would be paid by the state at the prevailing rates. The Commission should meet monthly during its formative period during the first year, then reduce the frequency to every other month, or quarterly meetings thereafter.

Specific Responsibilities of the Commission would include:

* Obtain, study, and analyze data, statistics, and other information concerning fire causes and prevention in Alaska, and develop recommendations leading toward increased fire safety in the state.

* Exercise policy making authority and establish operational guidelines for all state agencies with fire protection responsibilities and make recommendations to private industry, local governments and federal agencies having fire protection programs.

* Develop and maintain a liaison with all fire protection agencies within the state, both public and private, in the furtherance of Commission activities.

* Foster research and inquire into both the unique causes of fire related to the arctic environment and methodologies of successful fire prevention and control under arctic conditions, including an informational exchange program with other nations similarly situated within the Arctic Rim.

* Recommend legislative and executive actions that will result in more effective and efficient fire prevention and suppression.

* Recommend information and actions designed to resolve conflicts among agencies with overlapping fire-related programs and responsibilities.

* Act as a focal point for all federal assistance and program liaison between the State of Alaska and federal agencies pertaining to fire prevention and control.

* Develop and submit an annual report to the Governor, the Legislature, and the Fire Service community on the activities, recommendations, and accomplishments of the Commission during the preceeding fiscal year.

* Develop a statewide Master Fire Plan, in cooperation with all agencies in the fire service community.

* Take such other actions as may be deemed necessary or appropriate to carry out its mandate of reducing fire losses in Alaska.

* * *

There appear to be three options available to the Governor and the Legislature in order that Alaska's fire losses -- the worst in the western world -- can be effectively reduced.

A. Maintain the Status Quo.

This option, in the view of the Task Force, is not a viable one, since it would perpetuate the fractured, diverse, and uncoordinated Fire Service effort that presently exists, and that undoubtedly contributes to Alaska's fire-loss record being the worst in the United States and the industrialized world. Nonetheless, it is a choice.

B. Substantially increase the capabilities of the State Fire Marshal's Office, through additional staff.

This option would improve the overall situation, but would not provide the broad base of support, perspective, and involvement that a State Fire Commission offers.

C. Create a State Fire Commission.

A State Fire Commission, for all the reasons previously described, offers the best way to address the wide array of fire protection issues and needs for Alaska.

The Task Force earnestly asks the support of the Governor and the Legislature to create the Alaska State Fire Commission, so that the recommendations of both the first Task Force and the second Task Force can be implemented, the fire loss record in Alaska be reduced, and improve the safety and well-being of the residents of Alaska.

IV.

ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

GOAL A - FIRE EDUCATION AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

Inform the people of Alaska of all aspects of fire prevention, protection, and control.

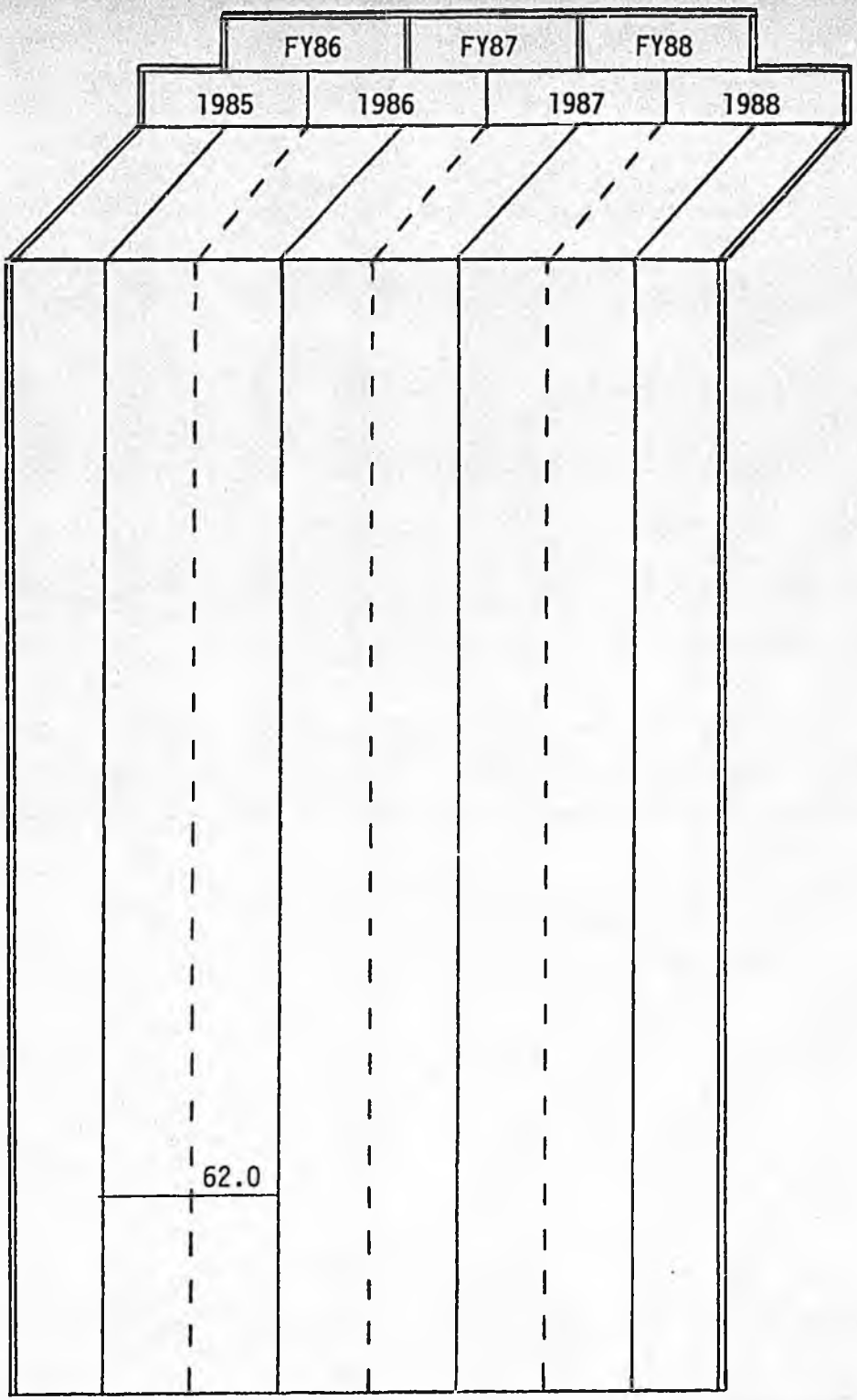
OBJECTIVE 1

The State will substantially expand its fire prevention and education efforts generally, with particular emphasis upon preventing fires in all buildings, particularly in dwellings which are both the most common places of fire occurrence and fire deaths, and the least affected by governmental efforts to ensure fire and life safety.

The following approaches are intended to be illustrative of fire prevention efforts, but are not limited to other initiatives.

APPROACH (a)

In consultation with the fire insurance industry, local fire departments, regional housing authorities, and others, the State Fire Marshal's Office will initiate and coordinate a program of reduction of fires in dwellings by determining the feasibility of installing sprinkler systems in homes and the rate reduction in fire insurance premiums some insurance companies have for installation of home sprinkler systems, placement of smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, dead bolts, voluntarily-initiated home inspections through the local fire departments, and such other actions as deemed appropriate. (One year feasibility effort includes hiring a full time Education Specialist)



(GOAL A - FIRE EDUCATION & PUBLIC AWARENESS, Continued)

APPROACH (b)

If sprinklers prove economically feasible, legislation should be coordinated through the State Fire Marshal by all elements of the Fire Service community to establish low- interest loans to homeowners for installation of sprinklers in a similar manner to existing low-interest energy conservation loans within the Department of Community and Regional Affairs.

APPROACH (c)

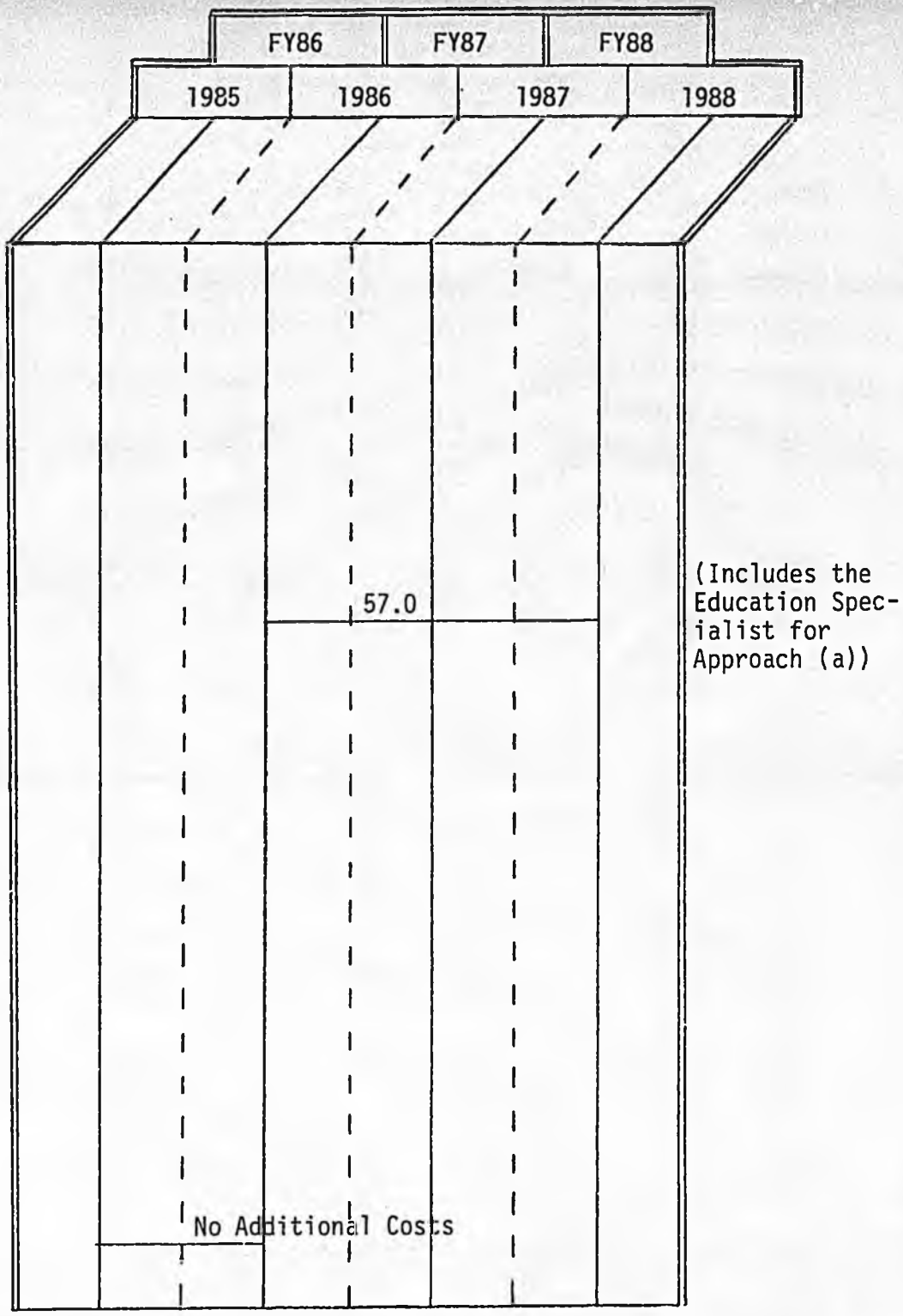
Upon determining that home sprinklers are feasible, the State Fire Marshal, in cooperation with the professional Fire Service organizations and individual firefighters in Alaska, will seek legislation that mandates lower fire insurance rates for homes with sprinkler systems.

APPROACH (d)

The Fire Marshal's Office, in cooperation with local fire departments, will initiate educational programs for bankers, architects, and builders concerning potential cost savings of insurance premiums to the homeowner as the result of sprinklers in new home construction.

APPROACH (e)

The State Fire Marshal and the State Fire Service Training Program, in cooperation with the State Troopers, will review the Village Public Safety Officer program to determine how existing training and equipment acquisition can be expanded to address the high rate of structural fires in rural Alaska.



(GOAL A - FIRE EDUCATION & PUBLIC AWARENESS, Continued)

APPROACH (f)

Through the Governor's Office, the State Fire Marshal will seek to expand the Alaska Safety and Health Advisory Council to include a permanent member of the Fire Service in Alaska to represent their interests and to contribute to the Council.

APPROACH (g)

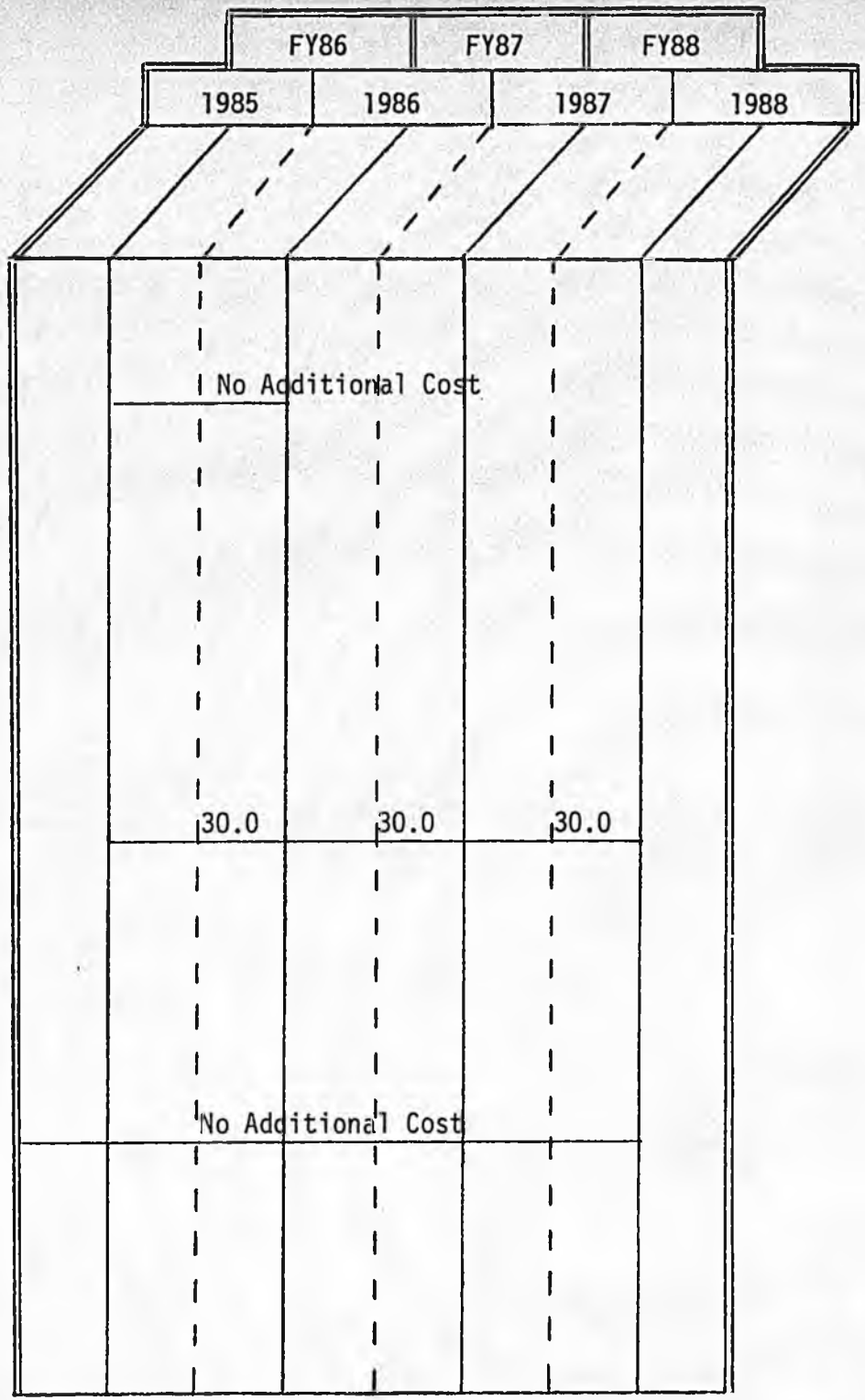
The State Fire Marshal and the State Fire Service Training Program will establish regional resource centers - (perhaps at community colleges and Regional Fire Training Centers) - of audio and visual materials appropriate to prevention-oriented efforts by local fire departments, government agencies at all levels, Native regional nonprofit corporations, and others with fire protection programs and responsibilities. Copying facilities would also be helpful at these resource centers.

APPROACH (h)

The State Fire Marshal, in cooperation with all agencies of the Fire Service community will initiate an on-going dialogue to address the tremendous disparity between where Alaska's fire deaths occur--in the home, and where prevention-oriented efforts exist--in the larger buildings where fire deaths rarely occur.

OBJECTIVE 2

The state will actively support and promote fire safety training in the public school systems in the state.



(GOAL A - FIRE EDUCATION & PUBLIC AWARENESS, Continued)

APPROACH (a)

In cooperation with various professional educational organizations, the State Fire Marshal's Office will attempt to institute the "Learn Not To Burn" curriculum in the public school system in Alaska and provide for financial assistance to offset program costs, through the Department of Education or the Legislature.

GOAL B - FIRE SERVICE TRAINING

Improve the level of fire protection by assisting in the development of Fire Service personnel to their maximum performance potential.

OBJECTIVE 1

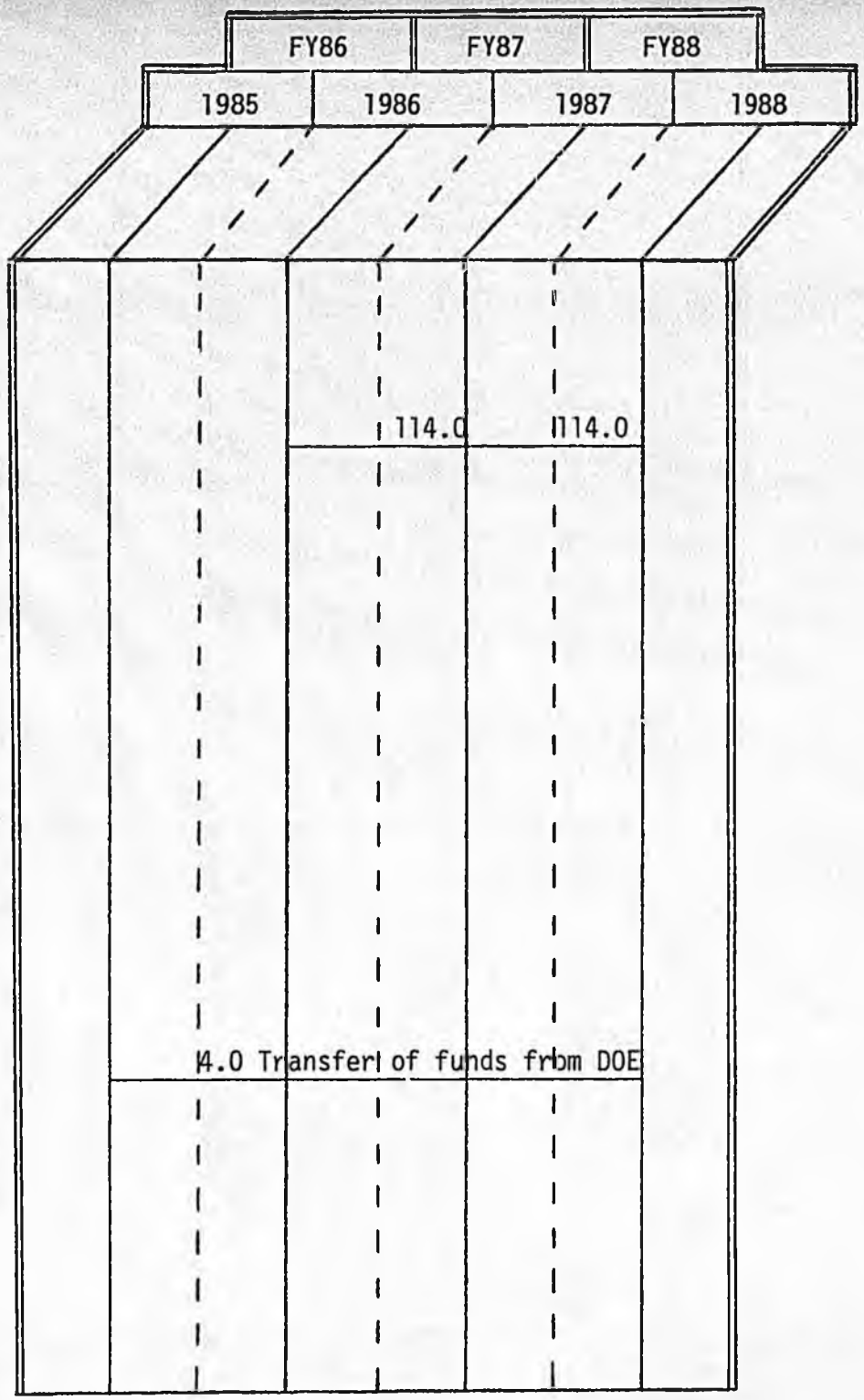
The state will assist local governments and other agencies with fire protection responsibilities to develop and maintain a comprehensive Fire Service Training Program to provide instructional and related services to the Fire Service community and other emergency services personnel.

APPROACH (a)

Relocate the State Fire Service Training Program to the State Fire Marshal's Office, by request of the Governor.

APPROACH (b)

The State Fire Service Training Program will continue to expand upon existing Fire Service Training Programs to ensure professional development courses for all ranks of personnel within the Fire Service. (See Following Page)



(GOAL B - FIRE SERVICE TRAINING, Continued)

APPROACH (c)

The State Fire Service Training Program will reestablish the Technical Assistance Teams, trainee travel funds, and continue with the Itinerant Fire Instructor program.

APPROACH (d)

The State Fire Service Training Program will develop new curriculum and training resources based upon state and national professional standards.

APPROACH (e)

The State Fire Service Training Program will expand training and education standards for Fire Service personnel in all fire service activities.

APPROACH (f)

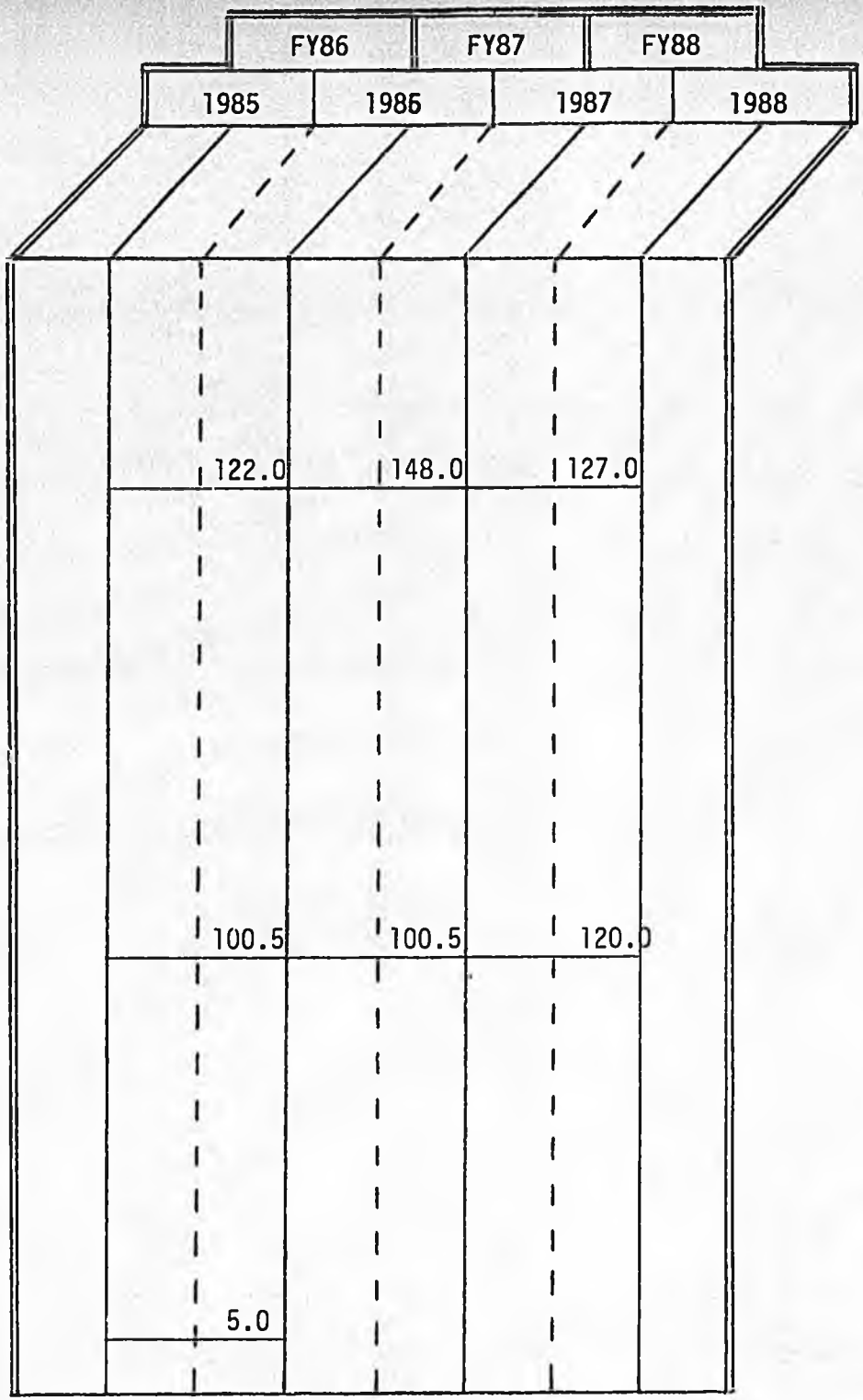
The State Fire Service Training Program will continue to administer an adequate grant award program to support local and regional training programs.

OBJECTIVE 2

The state will maintain and encourage expansion of a comprehensive Fire Science Technology program within the community college system.

APPROACH (a)

Through the professional Fire Service organizations and the State Fire Marshal's Office, the State Fire Service Training Program, will coordinate efforts with the University of Alaska, and the community colleges



to support and further develop the Fire Science Technology programs, including exploring the nonresident extension program as a delivery system. In addition, although present circumstances do not support a four-year degree program in Alaska, information should be compiled about how a four-year degree in the Fire Science field could be attained through a combination of existing opportunities in the community college/University of Alaska system, and other universities in other states, such as Oregon, and make this information available to the personnel in the Fire Services.

OBJECTIVE 3 -

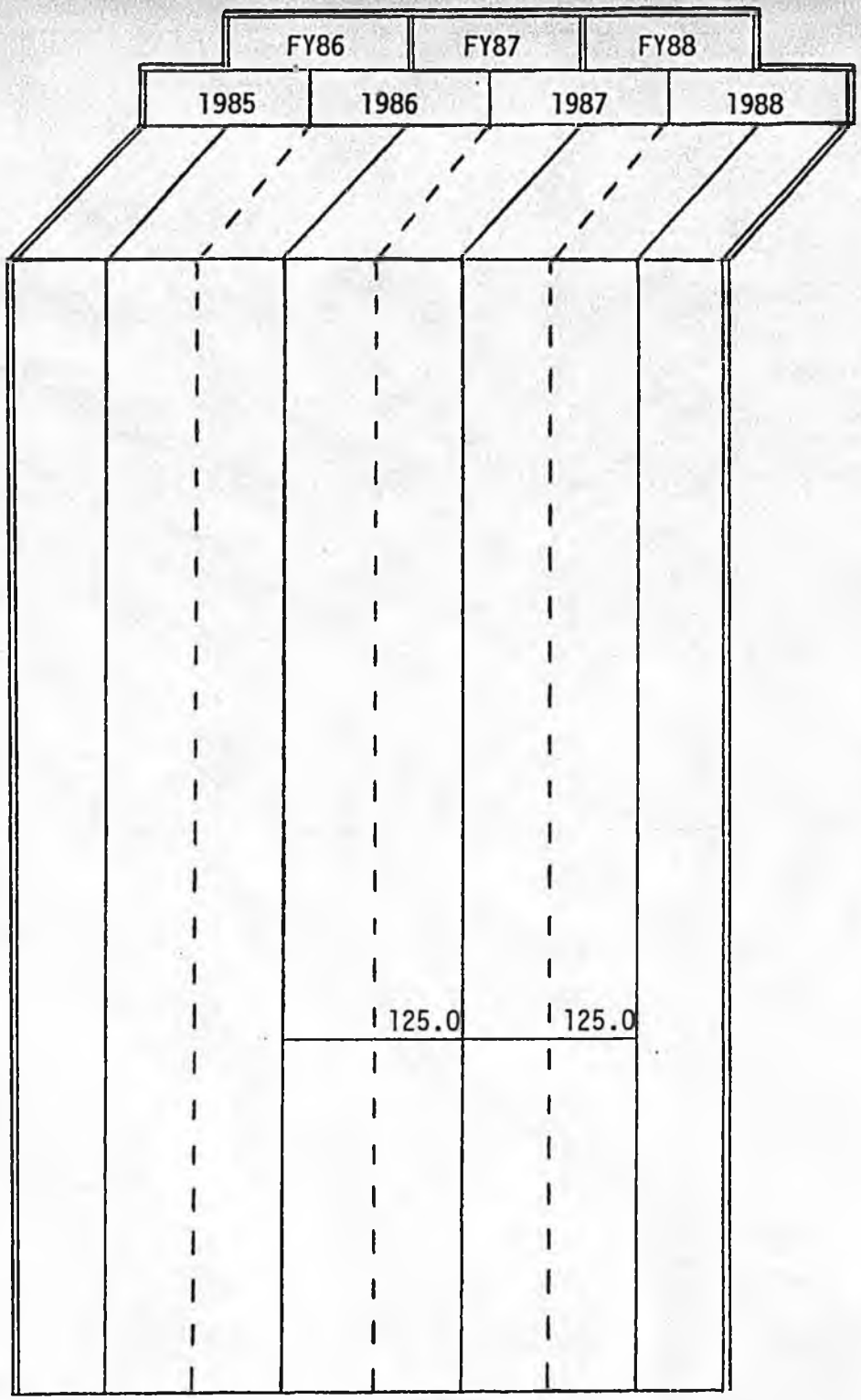
Encourage and support financial assistance to the five Regional Fire Training Centers to enhance regional training capabilities.

APPROACH (a)

The State Fire Marshal's Office, in conjunction with the State Fire Service Training Program will seek an appropriation of $250,000 for a two-year period for an urban and a rural regional fire training center to enable each to support raining program development, course costs, student travel, training coordinators, and related administrative costs.

GOAL C - CAPITAL PROJECTS

The state will support capital projects for fire and life safety on a cooperative basis with local government.



(GOAL C - CAPITAL PROJECTS, Continued)

OBJECTIVE 1

The state will attempt to enhance the understanding of local government officials concerning sources of revenue and the state's capital budget process as it relates to fire protection projects and the responsibilities local governments assume when such projects are approved.

APPROACH (a)

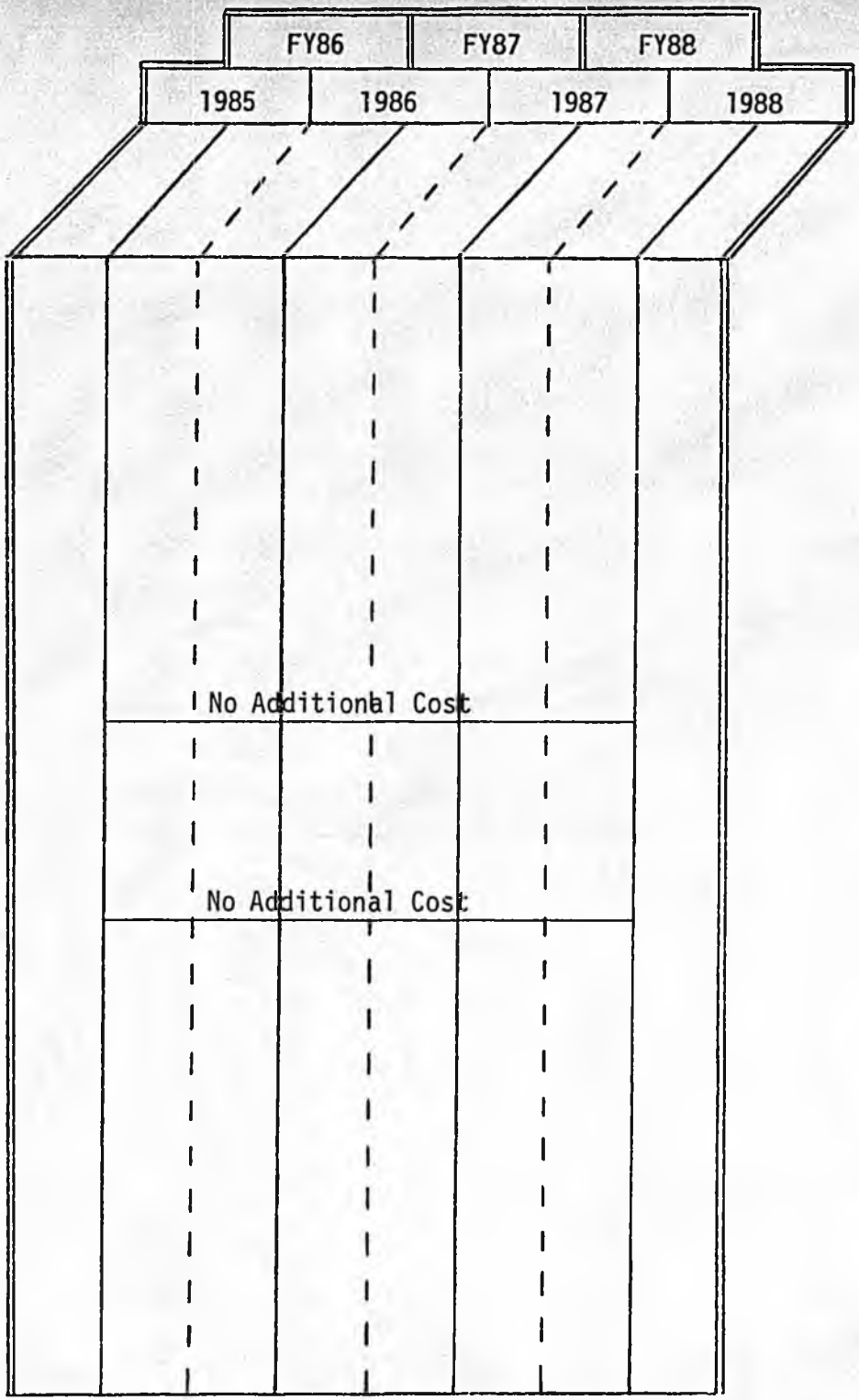
In cooperation with the Department of Community and Regional Affairs, appropriate sections of future editions of the "Rural Capital Improvements Guidebook," and its counterpart, the "Urban Capital Improvements Guidebook," will be expanded to include a section pertaining to Objective 1. Other initiatives within the Department may also be appropriate.

APPROACH (b)

Revenue sharing funds, derived from the existence of fire protection capabilities, should be considered by local governments for the enhancement of fire protection services.

OBJECTIVE 2

A project review mechanism is needed to ensure that communities have both the necessary information about the most appropriate facility and/or fire protection equipment for their community, and an understanding of the specific responsibilities that must be assumed by the community.



(GOAL C - CAPITAL PROJECTS, Continued)

APPROACH (a)

A directory of various kinds of fire and life safety apparatus appropriate to the smaller communities should be developed by the State Fire Marshal's Office as a guide for local communities that wish to institute or upgrade existing fire and life safety capabilities.

APPROACH (b)

In accordance with AS 18.70.080-085, the revenue requests for capital projects and equipment destined for communities without a well- developed Fire Service should be reviewed by the State Fire Marshal's Office.

GOAL D - ARSON

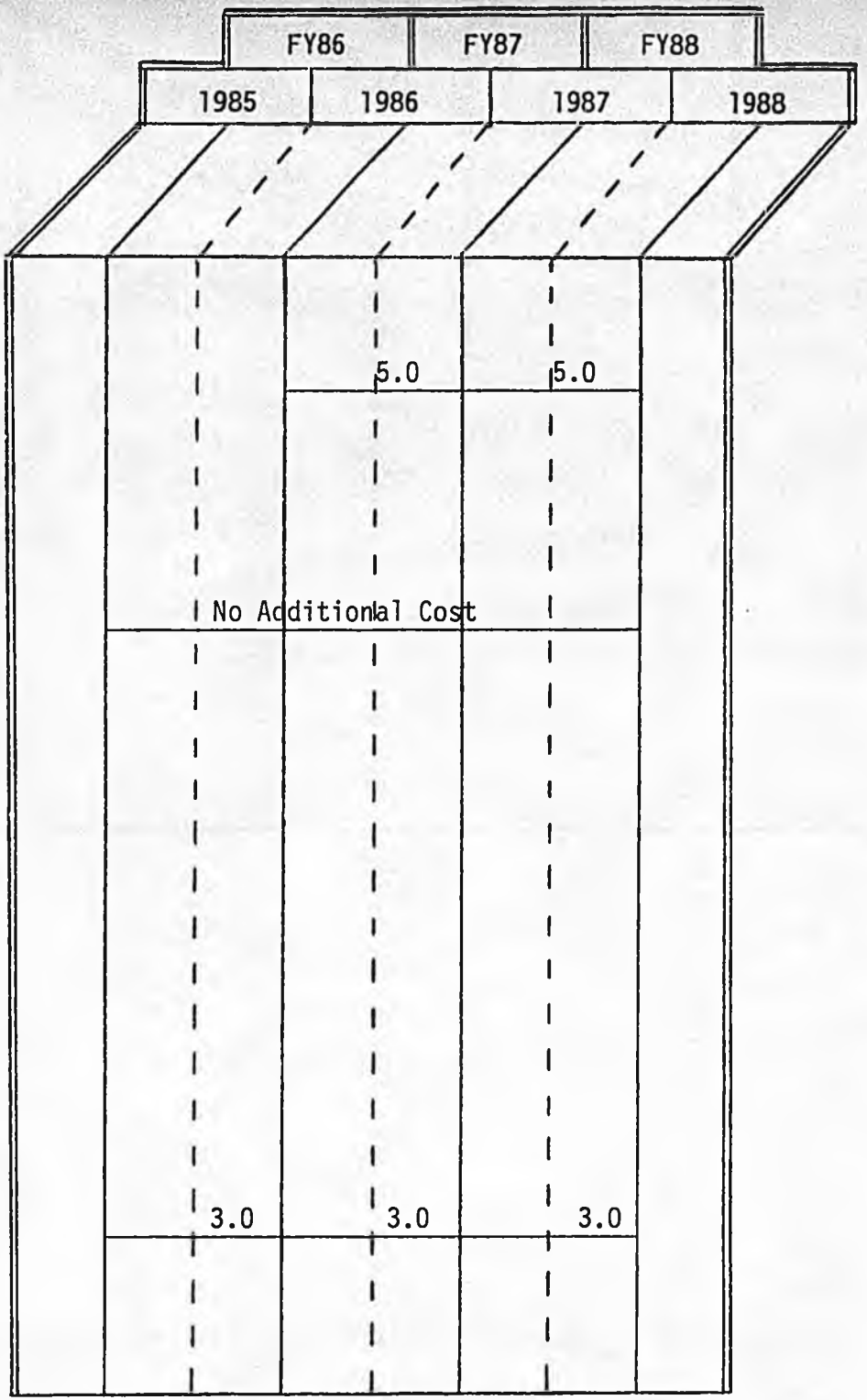
Reduce the impact and incidence of arson fires in Alaska.

OBJECTIVE 1

Coordinate the efforts and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the various agencies that deal with the crime of arson, including but not limited to Fire Service, law enforcement, prosecutors, the insurance industry, business owners, and the public.

APPROACH (a)

Training curriculum and certification be developed by the State Fire Service Training Program for emergency services personnel involved in investigation of fire cause and origin.



(GOAL D - ARSON, Continued)

APPROACH (b)

The State Fire Service Training Program will develop and offer arson training courses for local fire departments.

APPROACH (c)

In coordination with the Alaska Association of Fire and Arson Investigators, the Commissioner of Public Safety and the Attorney General shall jointly develop and maintain a special fire investigation team of persons with the needed expertise and background in the fields of fire cause and origin, criminal investigation, and prosecution who can be called upon, at no cost, to respond to requests for assistance at no cost anywhere in the state.

APPROACH (d)

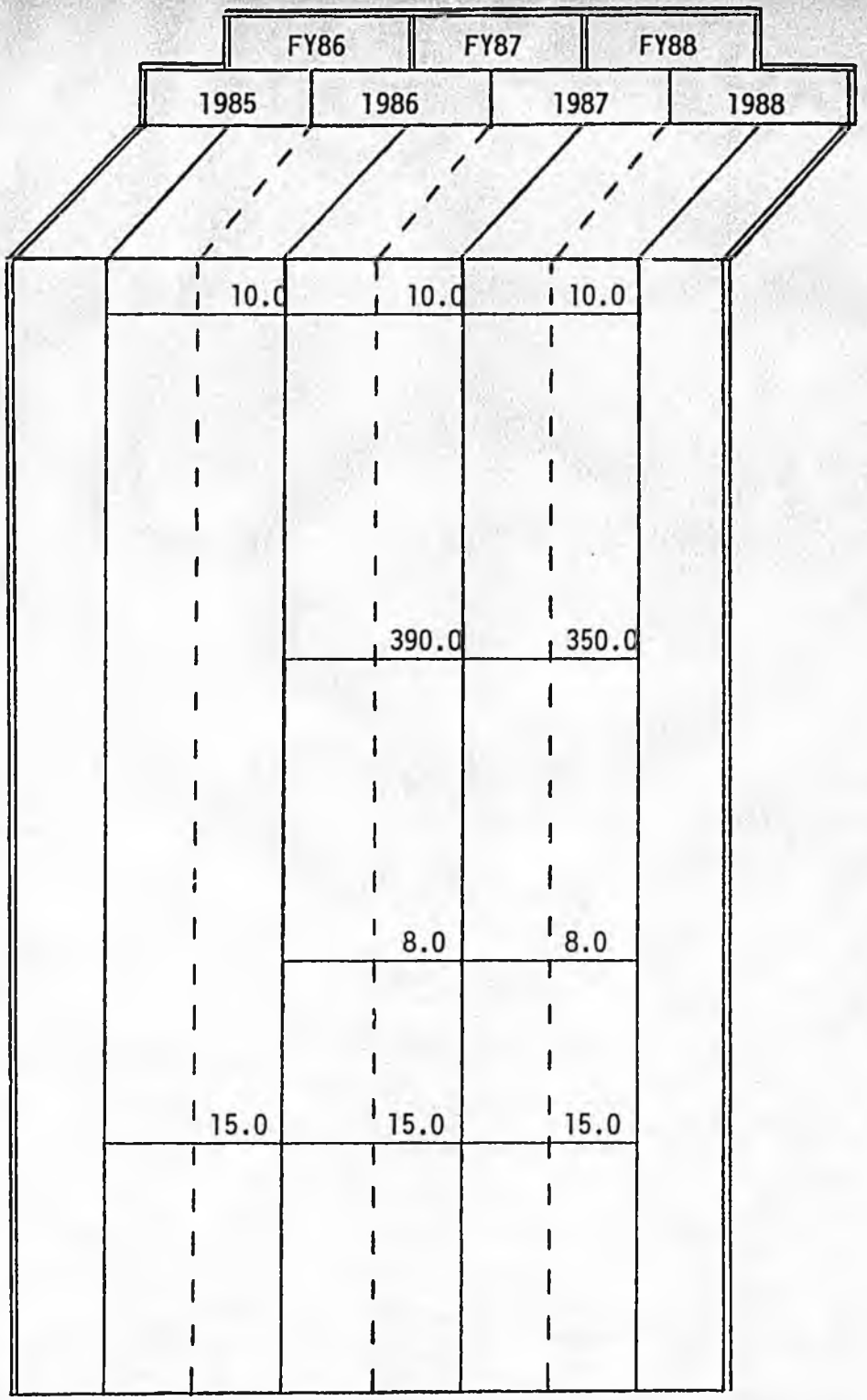
The State Fire Marshal's Office, in conjunction with the Alaska Association of Fire and Arson Investigators, will explore the establishment of a statewide, toll-free Arson Hot Line in the State Fire Marshal's Office, and availability of private funds for an award program.

APPROACH (e)

Part of the fire education program within the State Fire Marshal's Office will contain information about arson prevention.

GOAL E - CODE ENFORCEMENT

Ensure that at least minimum fire and life safety codes are adopted in a timely manner and enforced, at the state and/or local government levels.



(GOAL E - CODE ENFORCEMENT, Continued)

OBJECTIVE 1

The state shall promote a uniform interagency system for building and safety code enforcement to encompass all aspects of construction and building maintenance, including but not limited to fire, electrical, structural, plumbing, sanitation, energy, handicapped and accident safety, and provide incentives for local jurisdictions to administer their own programs.

APPROACH (a)

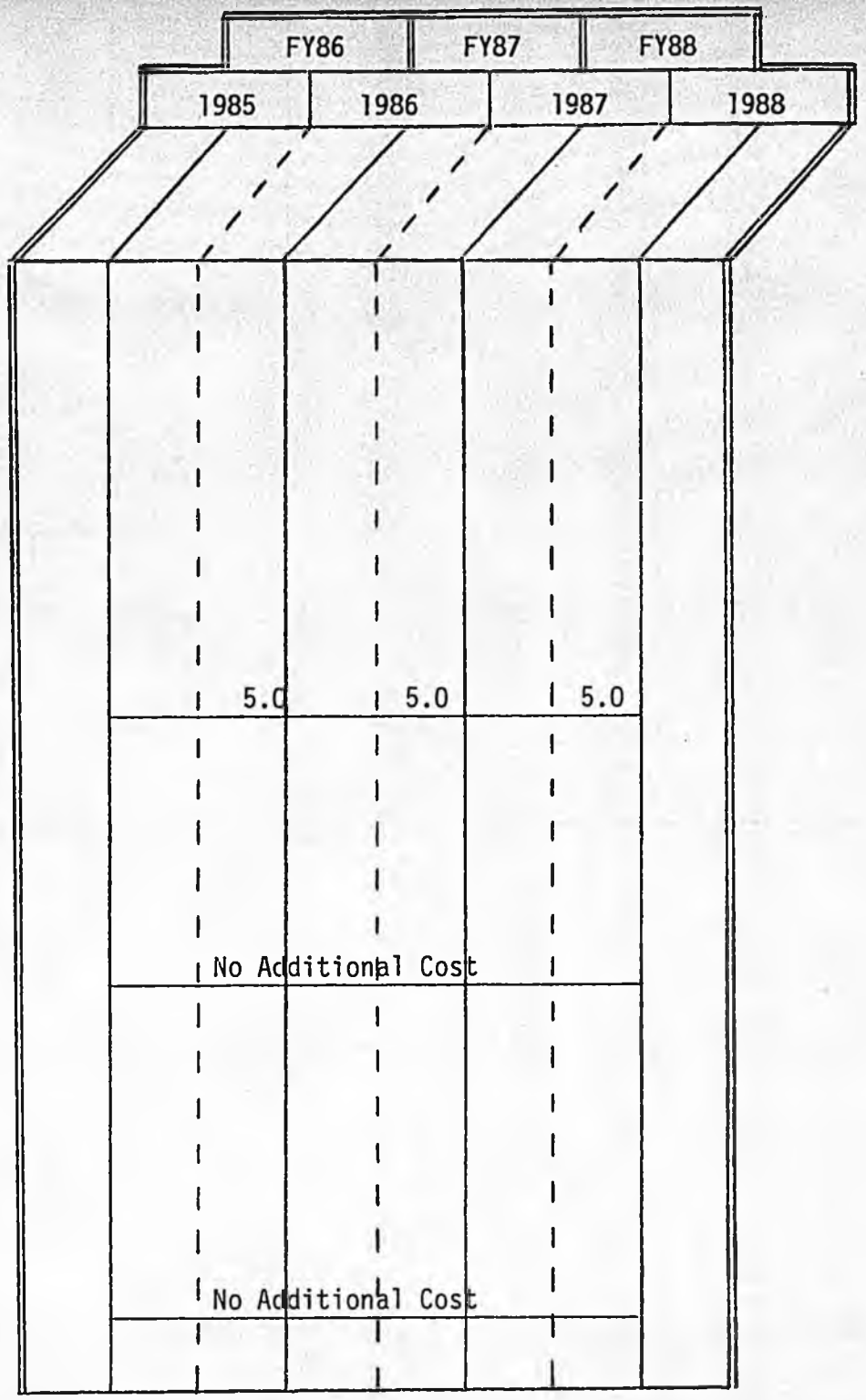
The State Fire Marshal's Office will conduct semi-annual interagency workshops involving all agencies charged with code enforcement to resolve interpretational differences, overlapping authority and related problems, and to establish consistent enforcement procedures.

APPROACH (b)

Through the State Fire Marshal's Office, all state agencies charged with code enforcement should mutually explore the establishment of professional standards for all personnel involved in code enforcement, to ensure creditable service to the citizens of Alaska.

APPROACH (c)

Through the Division of Governmental Coordination in the Office of Management and Budget, all state agencies charged with fire and life safety code enforcement should review their respective new safety standards as quickly as possible after they become available, and should prepare them as a package for review to the Department of Law, leading to their adoption or rejection, within six months of their publishing date.



APPROACH (d)

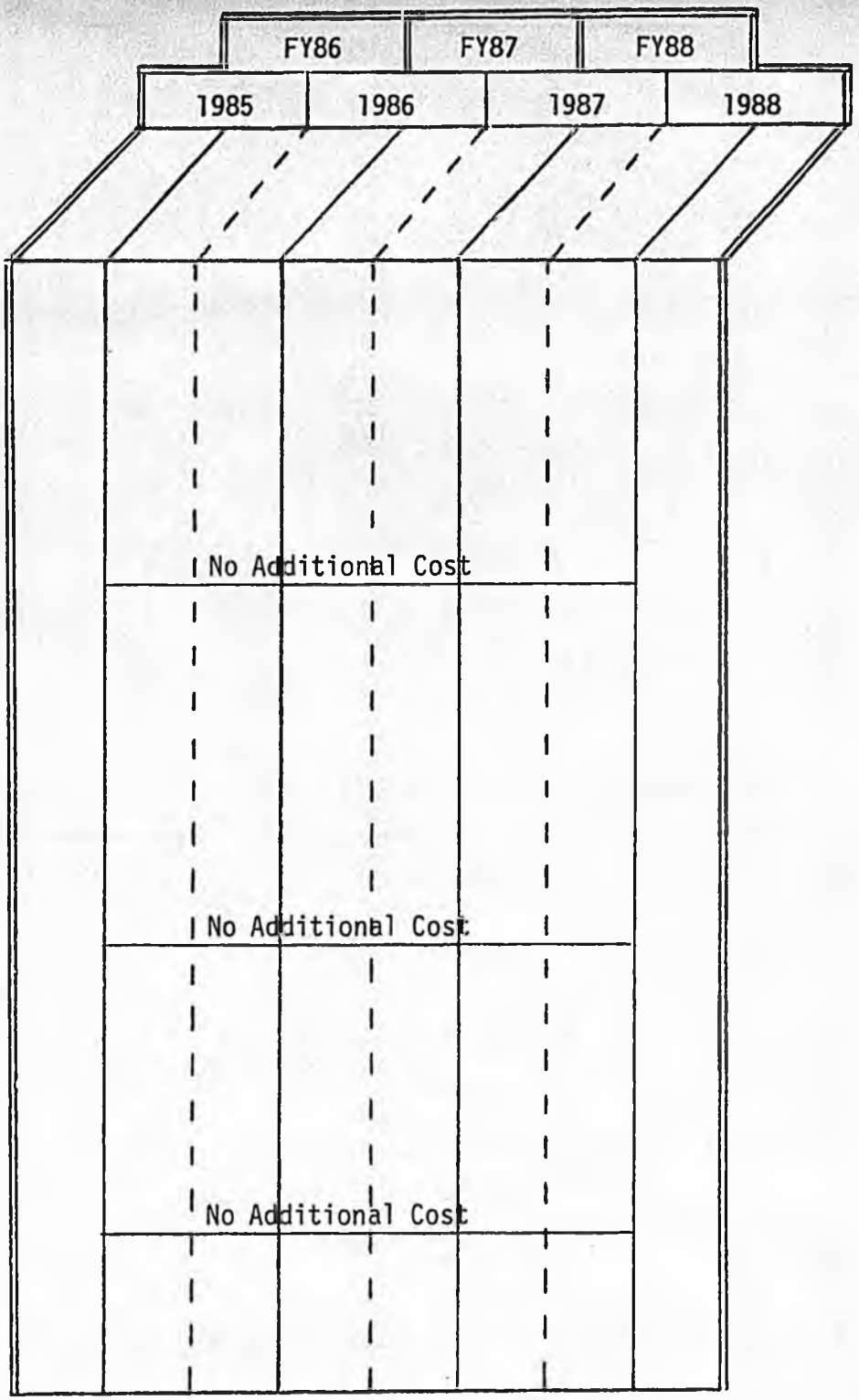
The State Fire Marshal's Office and the Department of Labor, Division of Labor Standards and Safety, will explore the concept of state and local code enforcement and plans review personnel being located together, while retaining individual agency identification, thereby creating a one-stop shopping center for architects and others seeking building safety approval and to explore the concept of code compliance for both new construction and remodeling of single-family dwellings, where not performed by local building officials.

APPROACH (e)

Legislation should be developed by the State Fire Marshal's Office providing for substantial sanctions against anyone who knowingly changes approved plans and specifications relating to new construction without obtaining prior approval by the State Fire Marshal, and to anyone who circumvents life-safety codes thereby endangering the life and safety of future building occupants.

APPROACH (f)

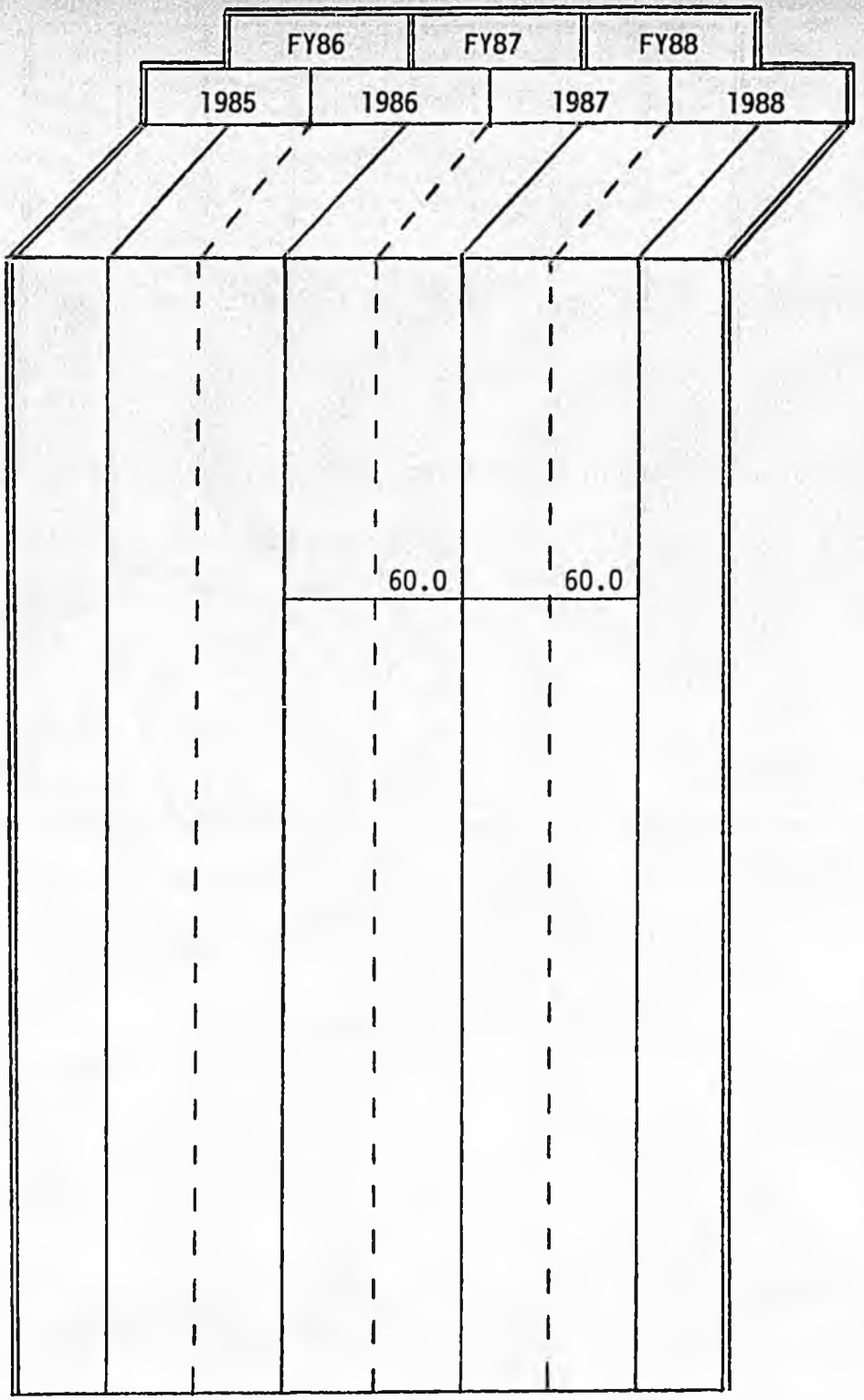
In cooperation with appropriate federal agencies, the State Fire Marshal's Office and local political subdivisions will explore the adoption of NFPA 101 standards and/or the state will impose its own standards for health care facilities in coordination with federal authorities.



(GOAL E - CODE ENFORCEMENT, Continued)

APPROACH (g)

Through the State Fire Marshal's Office, local governments will be encouraged to undertake fire and life safety code enforcement, consistent with their desires and long-term objectives in fire prevention. In support of local code enforcement, legislation will be prepared by the State Fire Marshal and the Department of Community and Regional Affairs for funds to provide the cost of the first two years' efforts by three local governments for plan reviews and subsequent building inspection. Provisions will be made whereby the State Fire Marshal's Office visits these communities periodically to support local code enforcement.



GOAL F - EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

The overall goal of the Alaska Emergency Medical Services (EMS) program is to establish a comprehensive, coordinated system of emergency medical services to the citizens of Alaska.

OBJECTIVE 1

Ensure that citizens and visitors gain easy access to Emergency Medical Services, that initial response is expeditious, that appropriate lifesaving and stabilization measures are rendered at the scene, and that patients are transported or transferred in a timely and efficient manner to facilities capable of effecting maximum recovery and rehabilitation.

(GOAL F - EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES, Continued)

APPROACH (a)

The Emergency Medical Services Section, within the Department of Health and Social Services, should continue to coordinate federal, state, and regional official and volunteer agencies involved in Alaska EMS system by providing overall medical direction for statewide EMS system development.

APPROACH (b)

Certify emergency medical personnel and services according to state statutes and regulations to ensure certain minimum standards of emergency medical care.

APPROACH (c)

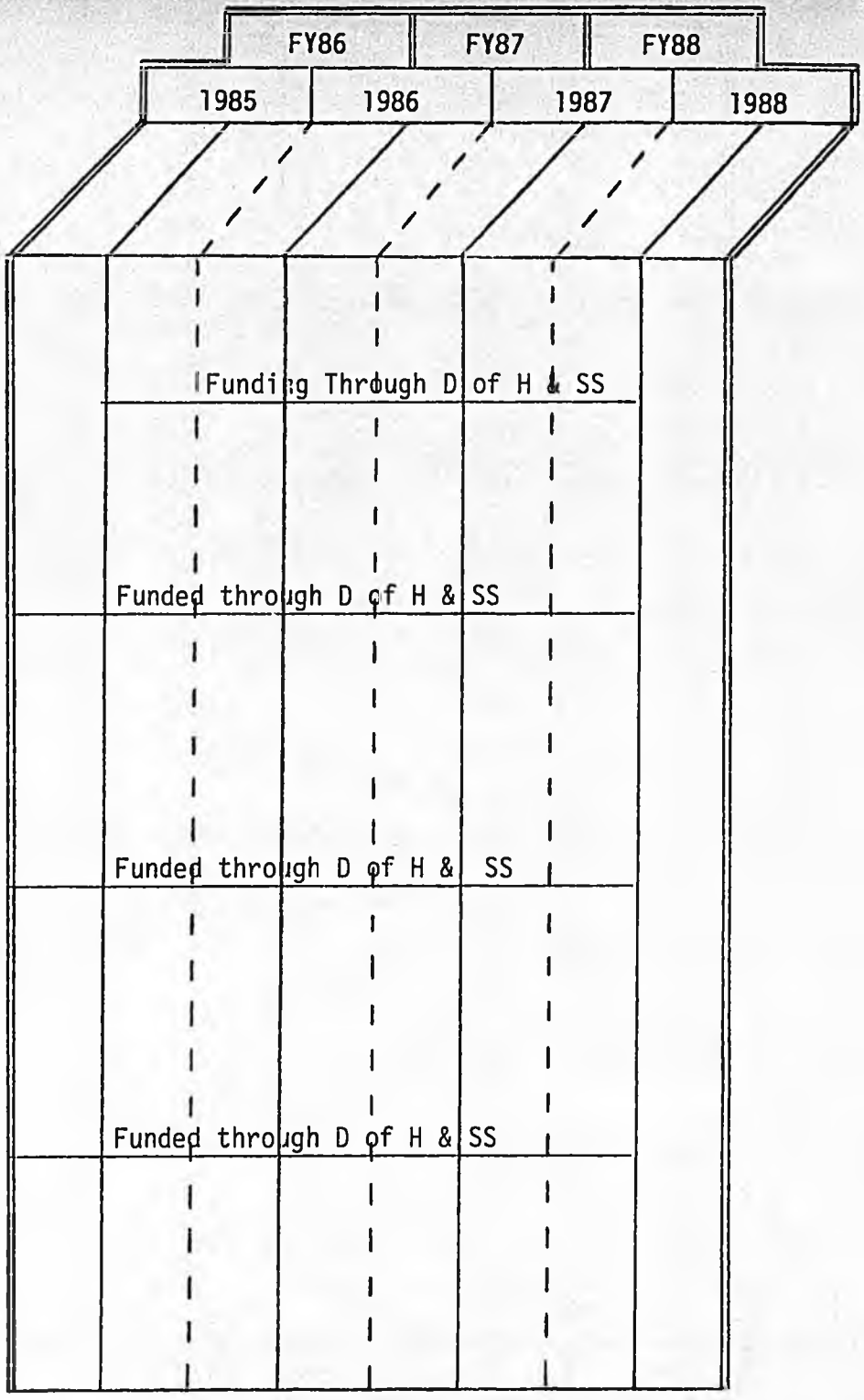
The Regional EMS Councils should continue to provide and administer financial assistance for Regional EMS development, provide technical assistance to regional and local EMS agencies, and educate the public about appropriate action in emergencies and emergency procedures.

APPROACH (d)

Seek improved Emergency Medical Services through legislative action by monitoring and evaluating EMS system development throughout the state and by planning and prioritizing continued program development based on systematic needs assessment and epidemiological research.

GOAL G - WILDLANDS FIRE PROTECTION

Improve the system of fire protection for both wildlands and structures in all areas of Alaska.



(GOAL G - WILDLANDS FIRE PROTECTION, Continued)

OBJECTIVE 1

Better utilize, and increase existing fire protection capabilities of the state and local level through a closer working relationship of wildlands and structural firefighting resources.

APPROACH (a)

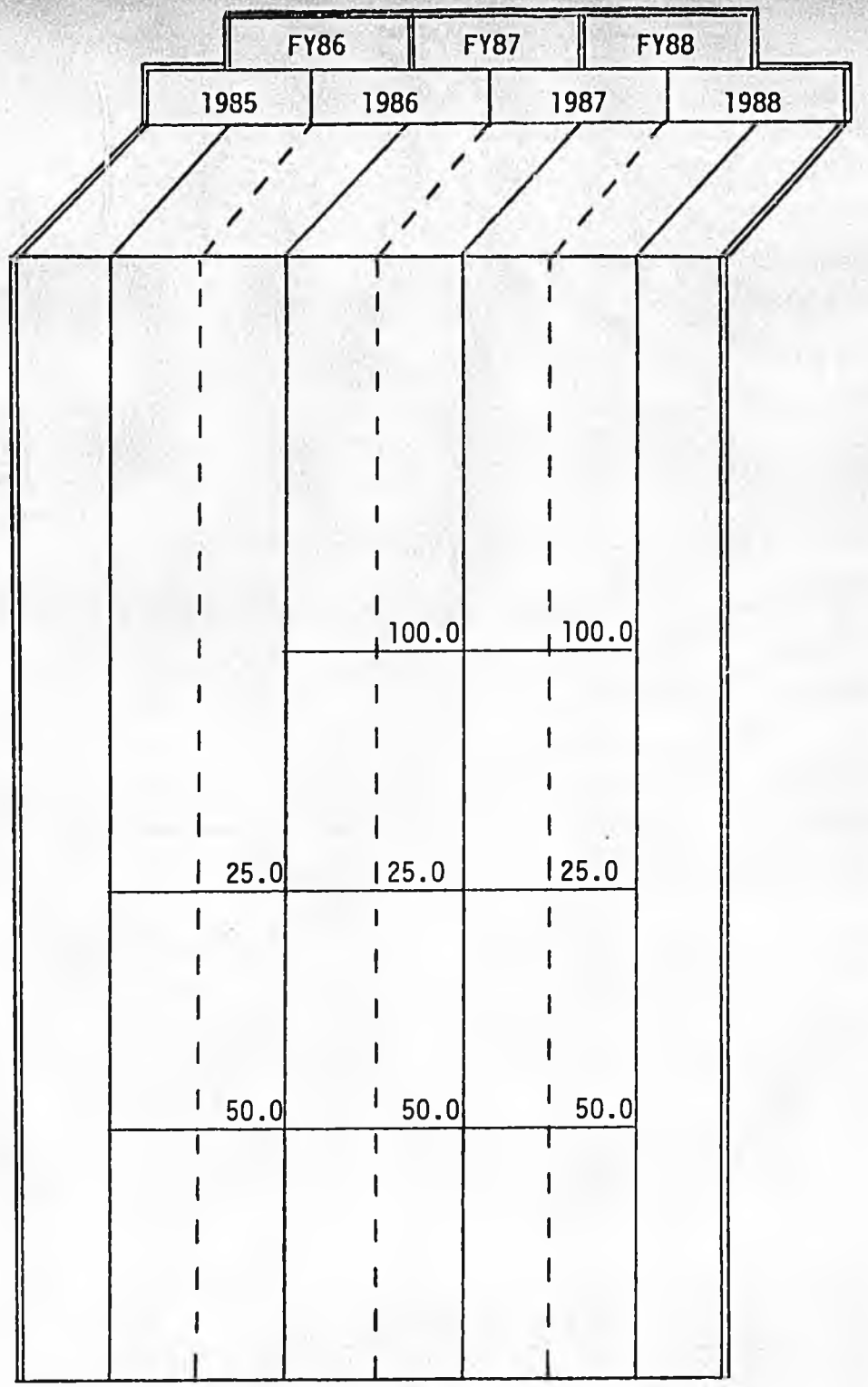
The Department of Natural Resources will request an appropriation of $100,000 for the Division of Forestry for each of two years to expand the presently-funded, primarily wildlands fire protection-oriented Rural Community Fire Protection Program that provides $64,000 annually, which has been administered by the Department since 1976.

APPROACH (b)

The Division of Forestry will transfer or make loan of wildlands fire prevention and suppression apparatus, equipment and tools from the Division of Forestry to structural firefighting agencies, primarily during the nonfire season.

APPROACH (c)

The Division of Forestry, in cooperation with the State Fire Service Training Program expand the existing level of training of local fire departments in the techniques of wildlands fire prevention and suppression.



(GOAL G - WILDLANDS FIRE PROTECTION, Continued)

APPROACH (d)

In coordination with the State Fire Marshal, the Division of Forestry will provide technical assistance to groups interested in forming a volunteer fire department where none now exist, and develop agreements with local fire departments concerning their assistance in wildlands firefighting.

APPROACH (e)

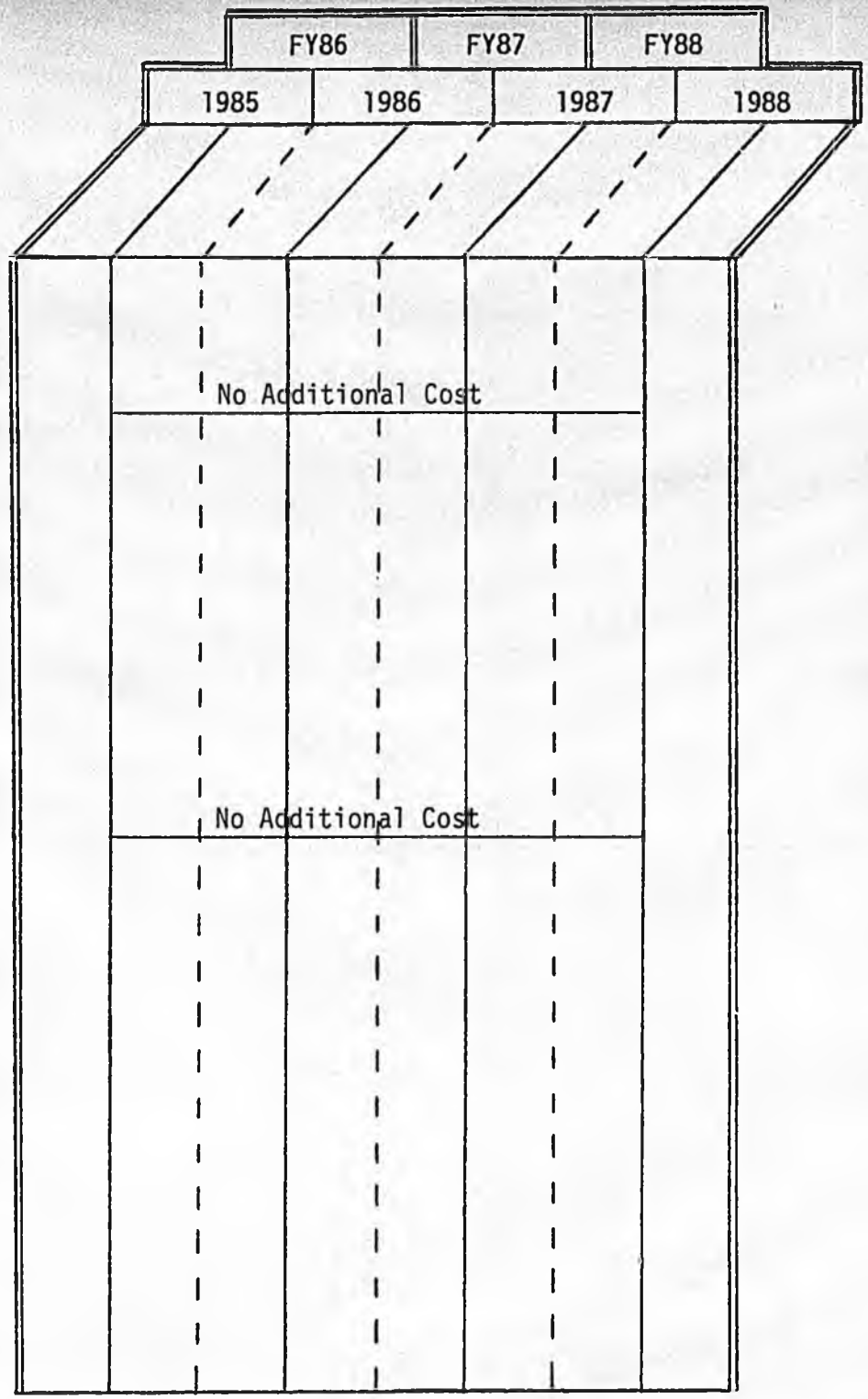
The Division of Emergency Services within the Alaska Department of Military Affairs, the Division of Forestry within the Department of Natural Resources, and the State Fire Marshal's Office within the Department of Public Safety should plan for and implement a program that will provide the trained and organized manpower and the suppression equipment that will be needed to meet the demand of rural fire disasters that will occur within the state because of the increase in urban-rural interface.

APPROACH (f)

Structural and wildlands firefighting agencies should provide mutual assistance to each other in matters requiring legislative action.

GOAL H - INTERAGENCY PLANNING, COORDINATION, AND CONSOLIDATION

The Governor shall require interagency planning and coordination by all state agencies having fire safety responsibilities.



(GOAL H - INTERAGENCY PLANNING, COORDINATION, AND CONSOLIDATION, Continued)

OBJECTIVE 1

Increase the accuracy, timeliness, and scope of all fire-related data in Alaska.

APPROACH (a)

Expedite final approvals by Department of Administration and Department of Public Safety, to implement the micro-computer project involving local fire departments and the State Fire Marshal's Office.

APPROACH (b)

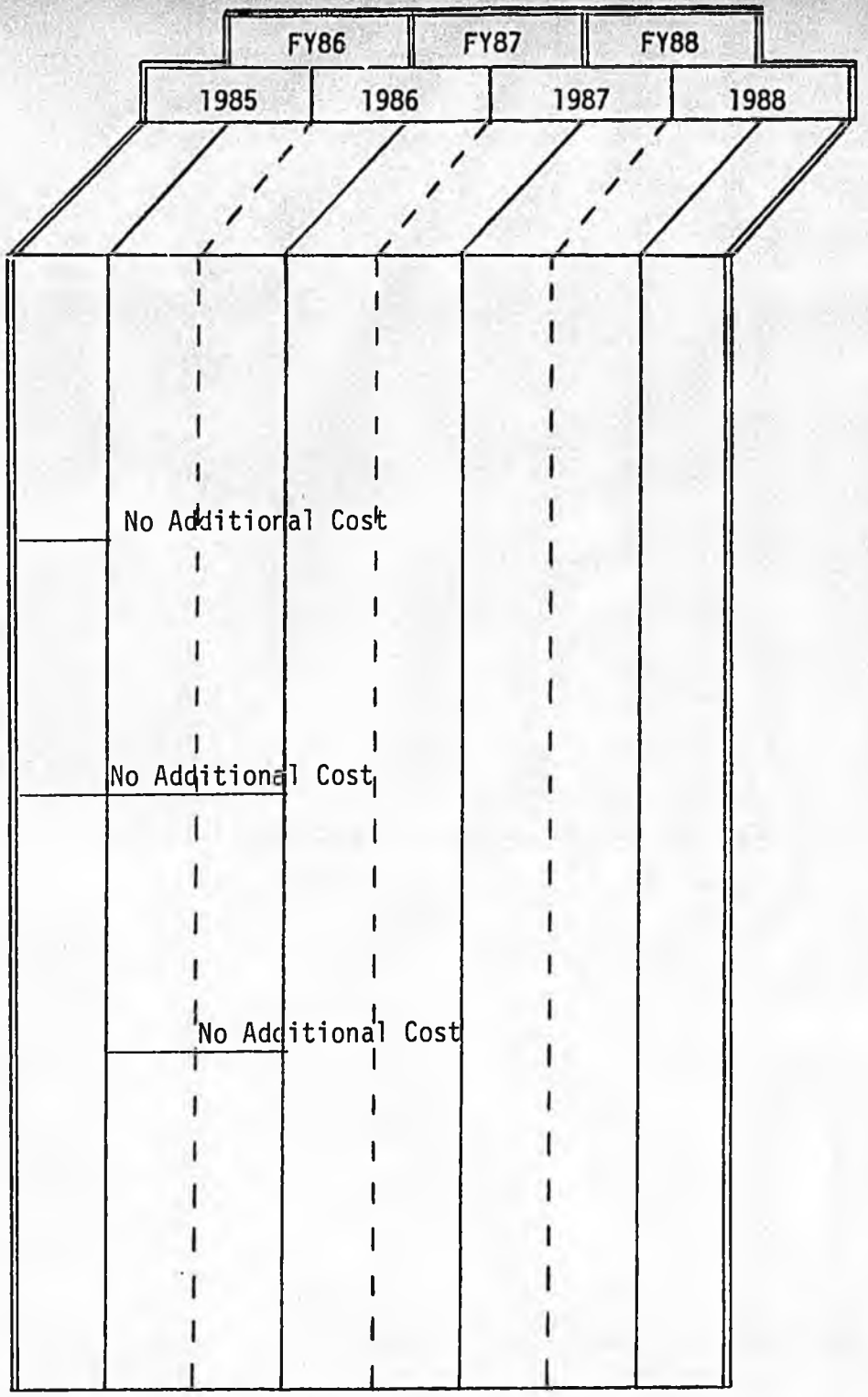
The State Fire Marshal's Office and the Department of Natural Resources should jointly explore whether the ANFIRS data base can be expanded to include wildlands fire data, thereby creating a single point for compilation of all fire-related data in Alaska.

APPROACH (c)

The State Fire Marshal, in conjunction with the state's forensic pathologists, will determine how to improve the reporting data concerning fire and fire fatalities caused directly or indirectly by alcohol abuse.

OBJECTIVE 2

The state will perform Master Fire Planning as a cooperative venture with related agencies at the federal, state, regional, and local levels.



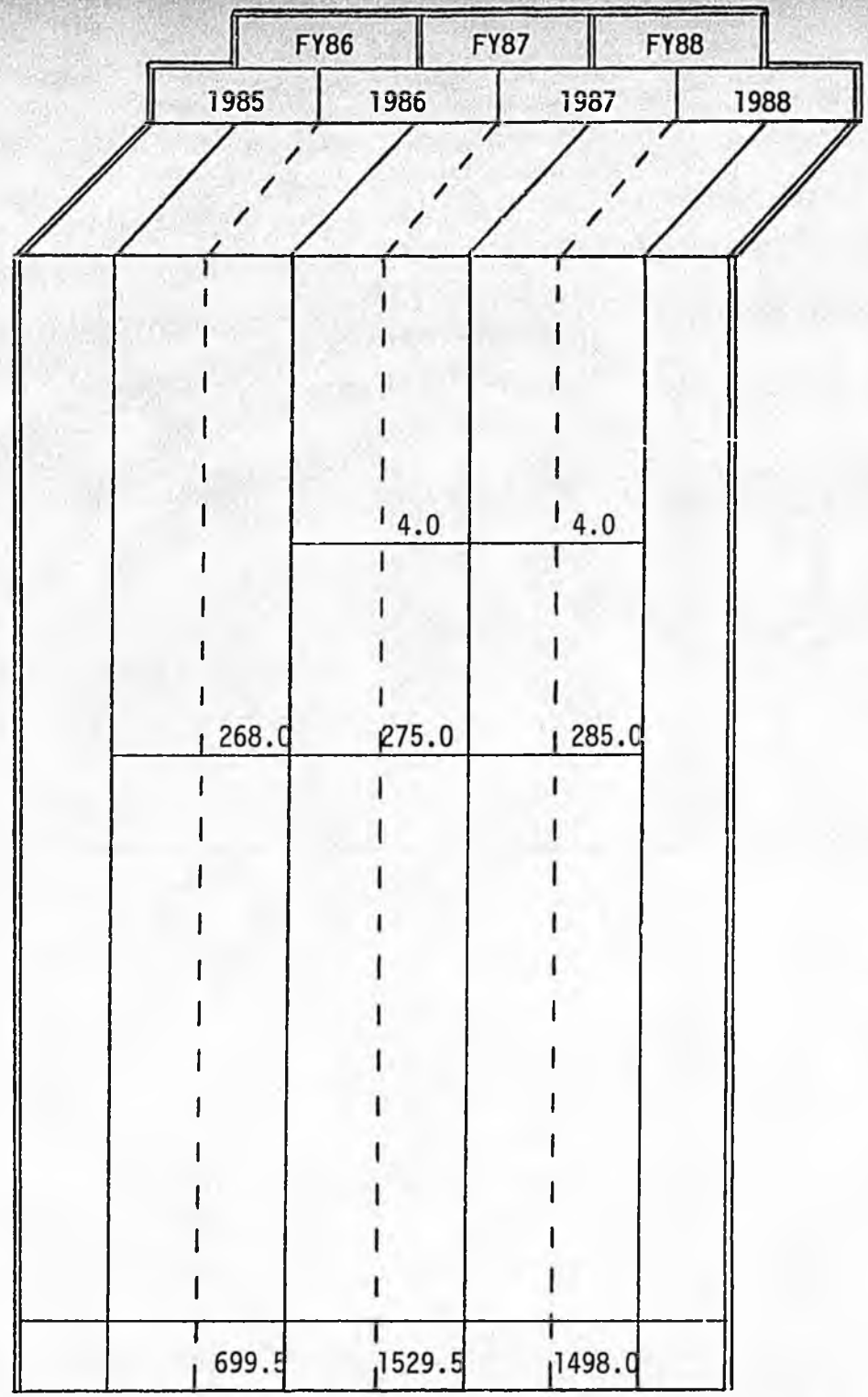
(GOAL H - INTERAGENCY PLANNING, COORDINATION, AND CONSOLIDATION - Continued)

APPROACH (a)

In cooperation with the Department of Law, and the several borough governments, the State Fire Marshal will research whether future Fire Service areas at the local level will, to the extent possible, be developed in such a manner as to preclude creation of islands with no fire protection services and whether existing islands with no fire protection services will, to the extent possible, be incorporated into one or more of the existing fire service areas.

APPROACH (b)

The state will establish by legislation a State Fire Commission as a part of state government, to function as a central focal point for all fire-protection-related projects and programs.



V.

PROPOSALS FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION

V. PROPOSALS FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Although each of the legislative proposals recommended by the Task Force are contained in the previous Goals and Objectives Section, they are also restated here, both as an aid to monitoring the implementation of the recommendations, and to comply with the provisions of the enabling legislation.

Following are the recommendations of the Task Force that require legislative action:

1. Provide low-interest loans to homeowners for the purpose of installing sprinklers in residences. (Recommended for introduction in 1985-1986 session).

   (GOAL A, Objective 1, Approach (b), Page 40)

2. Provide for an appropriation to fund the program development of both an urban and a rural fire training center.

   (GOAL B, Objective 3, Approach (a), Page 47)

3. Provide for sanctions against anyone who knowingly changes approved building plans and specifications relating to new construction without obtaining prior approval by the State Fire Marshal, and anyone who circumvents life safety codes thereby endangering the fire and life safety of future building occupants.

   (GOAL E, Objective 1, Approach (e), Page 56)

4. Provide an appropriation to fund start-up expenses for the first two years for local governments who elect to perform fire and life safety code enforcement.

   (GOAL E, Objective 1, Approach (g), Page 57)

5. Provide an appropriation to the Department of Natural Resources for a grant program to local governments for the improvement of rural firefighting capabilities.

   (GOAL G, Objective 1, Approach (a), Page 62)

6. Provide for the establishment of the Alaska State Fire Commission and its funding to act as the coordinating mechanism of all fire-related functions and responsibilities of government and private organizations in Alaska.

   (GOAL H, Objective 2, Approach (b), Page 67)

VI.

PROPOSALS FOR EXECUTIVE ACTION

VI. PROPOSALS FOR EXECUTIVE ACTION

Most of the recommendations of the Task Force can be implemented through increased attention, priority, and resources, by the various department heads in state government, as approved by the Governor. A few actions, however, seem more appropriately implemented by an Executive Order or similar support by the Governor. These are as follows:

1. Provide for consolidation of fire-related programs by relocating the Office of the State Fire Service Training Program from the Department of Education to the Department of Public Safety, Division of Fire Prevention.

   (GOAL B, Objective 1, Approach (a), Page 43)

2. Provide for consolidation of fire-related responsibilities, specifically fire and life safety code enforcement, by having code enforcement personnel in the Department of Labor co-located within the Department of Public Safety, Division of Fire Prevention, while maintaining existing departmental identities.

   (GOAL E, Objective 1, Approach (d), Page 55)

3. Provide for the continuation of the Alaska Fire Prevention and Control Task Force on an ad hoc basis, through request to the Commissioners involved, in order to continue to develop approaches to fire safety in Alaska, and to monitor the progress of the recommendations in this report, as required by the enabling legislation.

   (Part VII, Page 92)

4. Expand the existing "ad hoc" Task Force to include at least one member from the wildlands firefighting community.

   (Part VII, Page 92)

5. Adopt the concept of the Alaska State Fire Commission and include it as part of the Executive Budget to the Legislature for the 1984-85 session.

   (GOAL H, Objective 2, Approach (b), Page 67)

VII.

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

VII. REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

The enabling legislation that created the second Task Force on Fire Prevention and Control (SB 80 and 81, HB 687 and 688) required that the Task Force identify methods "to review the progress of the implementation" (emphasis added). This provision seems to indicate that the Legislature intended that the work of the Task Force would in some way continue after the Task Force itself ceased to exist after the legislatively prescribed 120 days. With one exception, all Task Force members are government employees at the local or state level. Each has volunteered to continue in an ad hoc capability after the Task Force expires should that be desired, since each member wants the efforts of the Task Force utilized to reduce Alaska's fire losses. Each has indicated the possibility of attending additional meetings utilizing respective agency funds for any required travel. The Task Force could therefore continue in an unofficial capacity to monitor the implementation of its recommendations - at least until July 1, 1985.

The Task Force as presently constituted does not include anyone representing wildlands fire prevention and control. If the Task Force continues as an ad hoc group, it could better represent the entire fire service community if a representative of the Division of Forestry was appointed by the Governor to the ad hoc Task Force.

Without doubt, the recommendation of the greatest impact is to legislatively create the Alaska State Fire Commission, as more completely described in Goal H. The primary purpose of the Commission is to be the single state focal point for all aspects of the fire service in Alaska. Within this broad mandate is the inherent responsibility to coordinate the numerous and presently diverse fire-protection-related efforts of federal, state, and local governments, as well as professional organizations, private industry, and the public at large, into a cohesive, well-planned effort to reduce the fire problem in Alaska.

Legislative action to create the State Fire Commission is recommended during the 1985 session of the Legislature. If enacted, the Commission would become active on July 1, 1985, replacing the ad hoc Task Force.

Therefore, it is recommended that with the Governor's approval, the Task Force continue the momentum developed to date by shifting into and acting in an unofficial status until July 1, 1985, when it is hoped the State Fire Commission comes into being which can then continue to oversee the implementation of means to reduce Alaska's fire burden in an official capacity.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Indentical enabling legislation was introduced into both Houses of the Legislature. HB 687 which follows and the HB 688 which was the appropriations measure was introduced and passed in the House. SB 80 and SB 81 were indentical measures in the Senate.

IN THE HOUSE BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 687

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

A BILL

For an Act entitled: "An Act providing for a task force on fire prevention and control; and providing for an effective date."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

* Section 1. TASK FORCE ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL. The Alaska Task Force on Fire Prevention and Control is established in the Office of the Governor.

* Sec. 2. MEMBERSHIP. The task force consists of seven members appointed by the governor, without regard to political affiliation, to be selected as follows:

(1) one person who is a member of both the Alaska State Firefighters Association and the Alaska Fire Chiefs Association from a list of nominees provided by the associations;

(2) the state fire marshal;

(3) the supervisor of the fire service training program in the Department of Education;

(4) a representative from the emergency medical services advisory council from a list of nominees submitted by the council;

5) a representative of the division of local government assistance in the Department of Community and Regional Affairs;

6) a representative of the division of labor standards and safety in the Department of Labor; and

(7) a representative from the Office of the Governor who shall serve as chairman of the task force.

* Sec. 3. OBJECTIVES. The objectives of the task force are to complete

the work of the former Alaska Task Force on Fire Prevention and Control established in sec. 1, ch. 157, SLA 1980, including to

(1) identify and provide a detailed account of the fire loss problem in the state, including causal factors;

(2) identify and define the present roles and relationships of the agencies in the state that are involved in fire protection activities at the local, regional, state, and federal levels;

(3) recommend organizational or operational modifications to improve the effectiveness of the state's fire protection system;

(4) provide documentation that will assist all government agencies and fire fighting services in effectively meeting their fire protection responsibilities.

* Sec. 4. MEETINGS AND HEARINGS. The task force shall meet at the call of the chairman. Public hearings and meetings may be held in areas of the state that are representative of its urban and rural fire protection problems.

* Sec. 5. COMPENSATION. The members of the task force serve without compensation but are entitled to per diem and travel expenses authorized for boards and commissions under AS 39.20.180.

* Sec. 6. DUTIES. The task force shall

(1) request and review information concerning the causes and nature of fire losses in the state;

(2) study the activities of the various fire protection agencies in the state;

(3) submit to the governor and the legislature its final report making recommendations to improve fire prevention and control in the state, identifying methods to implement the recommendations and to review the progress of the implementation, and proposing legislation for recommendations needing legislative action.

* Sec. 7. This Act is repealed 120 days after the effective date of this Act.

* Sec. 8. This Act takes effect immediately in accordance with AS 01.-10.070(c).